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QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE 29 AUG 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M. J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W. D. Hewitt
Mr. C. J. Miller
Mr. L. W. Powell
Mr. E. F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:

Dr. R. D. Goodman
Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P. A. B. Krebs
Mr. K. P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E. S. Newton

BRISBANE, 29 AUGUST 1978

TENTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 10 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, this morning I am very pleased to welcome executive officers of the Queensland Teachers' Union. I underline that today. In the early days of this parliamentary inquiry there was a little dissidence between us because of misunderstanding, I am sure. I wish to recognise completely the full co-operation of the Queensland Teachers' Union and Queensland teachers in general. We have had a wonderful and helpful response. I thank you very much for that. The Teachers' Union submission has been in the hands of the Committee for some considerable time and it has been studied by members. It is coded JL-539. I am to understand, am I not, that there is a second edition, a chapter 2 under process. We look forward to receiving that when it is available. Today we are talking to the submission JI-539, this document.

MR. SCHUNTNER: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: This morning, I am very pleased to welcome Mr. Schuntner, Ms. Anstee and Mr. Clark. It would be useful if, in the first instance, you would indicate for the record your executive positions with the union.

MR. SCHUNTNER: I am the President of the Queensland Teachers' Union.

MS. ANSTEE: I am the Assistant Secretary and Research Officer.

MR. CLARK: I am the General Secretary of the union.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think Mr. Hewitt is opening the questions.

MR. HEWITT: In the early stage I shall strike a note of agreement with your submissions. It is one which strikes a very responsive note so far as I am concerned. On page 6 you say -

> "The present system of teacher transfers compounds rather than removes the disadvantages suffered by children in country schools and it causes great demoralisation among teachers."

You then go on to say that you believe these problems should be overcome by an incentive scheme. Your point of view there is very much emphasised by a number of submissions that we have received from country schools. I believe that this is one of the pressing problems that the Education Department has to address itself to in order to somehow encourage teachers to remain longer in the country, and certainly in the remote schools. When you talk about an incentive transfer scheme, can you tell us if you have thought that out a little bit more, and precisely what you have in mind?

MR. SCHUNTNER: Going back to Sir Alan Fletcher's time as Minister for Education, he asked the Education Department and the Teachers' Union to work jointly on proposals for improvement to the transfer scheme. There have been ongoing discussions for some years now. I think within a matter of two or three weeks we should see the finalisation of a report from the joint working party, which would then be submitted to the Minister for Education.

THE CHAIRMAN: The submission by the union is divided into sections A, B and C. It may be a good idea to deal with them in order.

MR. SHAW: I would like to refer to that point. As you probably know, as Mr. Hewitt said, we have had a considerable feed-back. If there is a problem with teacher attitudes it rests in this transfer field in that perhaps in country areas teachers are not happy in their work in some cases. There is this problem, as Mr. Hewitt said, of teachers not being in one place long enough to put down roots. I would like you to comment on that if you have any suggestions or feelings about it. We have had remarks, for instance, that teachers do not take as much interest in the marking of work and that sort of thing in those country areas.

MR. SCHUNTNER: The union has long felt that it would be desirable to offer some incentives to teachers of a financial nature and otherwise to encourage them to stay longer and identify more with the local communities. I believe that the joint working parties' report will lead in some of those general directions.

MR. CLARK: May I say something on this? I have made many visits to these country places - perhaps far more than most of the people here have made. One of the things I noticed at, say, Kowanyama, or in the early days at Normanton, was that we had a preponderance of single male teachers and young teachers in those areas. It struck me that there ought to be incentives for married people to go to those places. Married people are more likely to be happy in that environment than the young person who wants to get out for every holiday and finds that impossible because of the extreme cost. I know that the Government has now given us some sort of way in which people can get out of these communities from time to time for various reasons - they might need dental care, hospital care and so on. But I should imagine that if a man and his wife, and probably a young family, could grow up in happiness in these areas, with proper amenities supplied to them, we would have a better teaching force - a teaching force that would be more interested in the community that it is serving. I am not denigrating our young teachers because they do a mighty job under the circumstances.

MR. SHAW: The sort of thing we have been told about is that a new inexperienced teacher will be sent to a country area and, because of the lack of continuity of other teachers in the area, there are not sufficient experienced teachers there to help them over the initial stages.

MR. SCHUNTNER: That has been our perception for some time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we should now move to the first section relating to social education, with Mr. Miller being the first to ask questions.

MR. MILLER: Why has social education assumed such importance to teachers? I think you have devoted 20 pages to social education, 9 pages to the professional rights of teachers and 15 to literacy and numeracy.

MR. SCHUNTNER: I would not judge the relative strength of any of the areas by the number of pages devoted to each area.

MR. MILLER: It is also the first item listed.

MR. SCHUNTNER: Yes, it is, but social education, we believe, is nothing particularly new to education. There is probably an increasing need in these more complex times, but I would hasten at the outset to indicate that it is nothing dramatically new. After all, the good manners chart that some of us read when we were at school in Grades 1 and 2, was a form of social education. Ms. Anstee has been the officer in our organisation primarily responsible for that section. Maybe I should ask her to develop this matter further.

MS. ANSTEE: Social education is probably a fairly complicated task to deal with at the moment. It is a fairly new area although there have been ad hoc subjects which you could call social education, integrated into the discipline. What is sort of significant about social education is that it is not based on what we traditionally call disciplines. It is not an area that we teach which is part of a discipline, you know, that comes from mathematics, history, English or geography.

It is not a traditional-based discipline. It is more based on a contemporary societal area. It deals with social issues and its relevance comes from a contemporary society. What we are saying in the submission is that social education is necessary in schools because it is a subject that is contemporary and relevant to students' lives. I am not saying that the other disciplines are not relevant; what I am saying is that if you concentrate on the traditional disciplines in schools you will probably produce socially aware students but they will not be possibly socially competent. They will not be aware of issues such as pollution. By teaching them only history, geography and mathematics you are not going to stop them from polluting, which is a social education issue, or from throwing rubbish in the street, fighting, or all the other societal ills we have at the moment. You may be able to bully them into not dropping rubbish or not fighting in gangs or whatever through the traditional disciplines or a discipline type of learning, but you will not bring them to a rational analysis of why they should not drop paper or should not fight in gangs. What we therefore try to do is to move away from traditional authoritarian approaches and make children look at themselves rationally and come to conclusions why they should not do certain things rather than believe that they should not do certain things without any reasoning or internalising feelings behind it. I think that is a concept we are trying to get through in social education, which might be why it was so lengthy. There is little work being done on it. It is a new area that began in the 1960s and is gradually developing in response to community needs.

MR. MILLER: Do you see this as the greatest problem area or do you see it as an innovation that you think is necessary in the education system?

MS. ANSTEE: I do not know. Obviously I see it as necessary because the community sees it as necessary. They are crying out daily for social education in schools. They are blaming schools for the evils of society.

MR. MILLER: We did not find this to be the case. In the schools we visited we have not found that to be the case. We certainly have had a few submissions on social education but only a very small percentage - in fact, I would go so far as to say fewer than 5 per cent - have given us any submissions on social education.

MS. ANSTEE: I would have to say that that is probably because it is a fairly new area. I am talking more about the community than just teachers, especially teachers in country areas who have not been exposed to much in-service education because of their sheer isolation. I am talking about daily newspaper reports saying, "There's another group of kids in a fight", or there are kids shoplifting in the school holidays. What I am saying is that social education encompasses ills of that sort and tries to get students to accept that those ills are not socially desirable, rather than an adult saying, "You should not do that. That's naughty," or whatever. That may be why teachers are not aware of it. Teachers in most States are probably just as slowly realising that there is a need for social education as an integral part of other disciplines, not as a separate subject. We are not arguing for that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who decided that we now have to ask students and pupils to clarify their traditional values, to examine their consciences to see whether all these normal traditional things are in fact basically right or not - whether it is a good thing to throw rubbish on the footpath and so on?

Why have we suddenly to get everybody to clarify their values?

MS. ANSTEE: To take the example you just gave of whether it is a good or bad thing to drop rubbish on the ground - I think people are just becoming through education more aware that these problems do exist. They may be becoming more acute and we are more aware of them. Teachers are feeling that a disciplined approach to students is not going to prevent them from doing those things any more.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why?

MS. ANSTEE: It is obviously not effective because we still have vandalism and pollution.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is probably not a good example. Supposing I tell my children that they have to be home by 10 o'clock at night. Is it necessary to say, "Well, is that right? Is the old man right? This is 1978. It's not 1968 any more. He's living in the past."

MR. MILLER: Is that what it is really all about?

MS. ANSTEE: No. That is not social education. That is a parental approach to it. I do not think any teacher would enter into that type of discussion with students on whether they should or should not obey their parents.

THE CHAIRMAN: But there are lots of values clarifications questions being put. That is probably not a good example.

MS. ANSTEE: Values clarification is an integral part of social education. It is not the only part.

MR. MILLER: Will you explain what you mean by "values clarification"?

MS. ANSTEE: Values clarification means that students, rather than just accepting that they should not, for instance, drop rubbish or be racist and isolate blacks as people who are inferior, are taken through a rational approach to find out why they believe blacks are inferior or why they believe you should drop rubbish on the ground. You take them through a balanced sort of argument as to why that disadvantages certain groups of people. You might not like seeing rubbish on the streets so you take students through an approach showing why it is not fair to other people to do those things.

THE CHAIRMAN: It might be efficient to pick it up.

MS. ANSTEE: That is right. You make students think about what they are doing. If you do not go through a values clarification exercise they are just accepting certain things as norms, which they perhaps would get from reading a particular comic strip, seeing a particular television programme, reading a particular newspaper article, a book or listening to one particular teacher or a friend.

THE CHAIRMAN: At what age do you think this ought to begin?

MS. ANSTEE: It varies. You cannot just take students through a values clarification exercise in isolation. It is linked with the whole curriculum. On page 3 of our submission we say that there is a model which shows that anything you do in the curriculum or the classroom, any student must have all those integrated areas of learning experiences, teaching strategy, objective evaluative measures. You cannot just

give them one part because if you do that you virtually indoctrinate students because you are not giving them the skills to rationally work out what they are thinking and why they are thinking it.

MR. POWELL: There is one thing that I should like to come back to and that is the example used by the chairman about children being told that they have to be home at 10 o'clock. You said that that is not part of the social education scene and that teachers would not use it. But that was part of the family section of SEMP - the questioning of parental authority.

MS. ANSTEE: I suppose that could be part of SEMP.

MR. POWELL: It is, and you said it was not.

MS. ANSTEE: I was thinking of it in that context. I think the implication was that students should disobey or obey and that was it. If it became part of social education as to whether a child should or should not be home at 10 o'clock because his parents asked him to be home then, the exercise would be taking students through it and saying to them, "If you disobey your parents you are not only being irresponsible towards your parents. You are possibly upsetting them as well because there is an emotional factor in it, and is it worth it?" You would get students to assess that sort of thing. You would say, "Do you respect your parents or don't you?" All I am saying is that a teacher cannot be expected to tell a student to obey or not to obey his parents. What the teacher should do is take students through a certain set of skills so that they can reach a conclusion.

MR. HEWITT: What we are all getting around is this: are there any absolute values that should be taught, or are children encouraged to challenge every value?

MS. ANSTEE: I do not see that as challenging values.

MR. HEWITT: Are there any absolute values that should be taught to children and established at an early age - respect for parents, respect for society, not to steal and so on?

MS. ANSTEE: "Absolute values" is very difficult to define. Social education obviously is trying to make students become responsible citizens. I suppose you would accept that as an absolute value.

MR. POWELL: In that case, why take the social implications out of the other disciplines? Why not leave them there so that the children are in a normal class-room situation in a normal subject-area situation facing up to his type of thing daily or weekly or whatever rather than withdrawing?

MS. ANSTEE: If I might interrupt - that is exactly what we are saying.

MR. POWELL: That is not what you said to start with.

MS. ANSTEE: No, I said it should be integrated into all subjects, traditional disciplines.

MR. POWELL: It already is.

MS. ANSTEE: It isn't, actually. Teachers don't have materials for a start. The MACOS and SEMP materials are the first resources ever in Australia to help teachers go through this sort of social education process with students, providing them with materials that balanced.

MR. POWELL: But the sort of values you are talking about have been taught in Queensland schools for as long as I can remember and very effectively in ordinary subject areas - in maths, English, history and so on.

MS. ANSTEE: Can you give me an example?

MR. POWELL: Sure. You talked about mob violence. It is taught very effectively in a history lesson when you look at mob violence in historical events and you can show the students that that is not good.

MR. CLARK: Do you give any reasons for the mob violence?

MR. POWELL: Yes. That is part of the history lesson.

MR. CLARK: It might even be good, then. You would have to go into what is good and what is bad. You could write books on that.

MR. POWELL: But is that what you are aiming at in social science?

MR. CLARK: I think we are aiming at making people think.

THE CHAIRMAN: Even at primary school?

MR. CLARK: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Primary Principals' Association of Queensland has told us that the values clarification exercises ought not be happening in primary schools. Is this something that children at these tender ages ought to be presented with - black-and-white situations?

MS. ANSTEE: That actually is not the aim of social education. Whoever is giving you that impression has misinterpreted the whole system. Social education is not presenting a value in a black-and-white context. "It is right to disobey your parents" - that is not what social education is on about. They are trying to encourage students to work out why they want to obey their parents and probably might encourage them to obey them more. They are doing it because they feel they want to. What I am saying is we are trying to help students clarify their thinking and that will inevitably be part of values education, inquiry education.

It is trying to clarify their thinking processes rather than accepting anything blindly like a belief in anything.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you see that all this questioning has created an unsettled position among a fair number of groups of parents - this questioning of traditional values?

MS. ANSTEE: I think that once parents have had explained to them what social education is they are quite happy with it. I would say that the people who are unhappy about it do not really know the full story of what social education is on about.

MR. SCHUNTNER: There is far more to the question than just relationships involving parents and children, and I think we are concentrating very heavily on one particular aspect. I would like to make it clear that the Teachers' Union is not challenging the right of parents to assert the authority, discipline and values that they would see appropriate. Teachers are not attempting to impose new sets of values on the children. Perhaps what is far more relevant in a lot more discussions about social education would be the things that are happening every day in society, for example, classification of buildings for preservation in the National Trust. That is just another isolated example, but we have judgments and values to be made there about whether you knock an old building down because it is getting old or whether there is some value in retaining it. That means looking at social questions. Similarly, whether streets should be converted into pedestrian walkways calls for a consideration of the rights of shopkeepers, the rights of pedestrians and so on. I know that by contrast to the sort of thing that we have talked about these things sound fairly mundane issues, but a lot of social education, as we envisage it, comes into those broad areas. We have been concentrating very much on a rather narrow perception of social education.

MR. MILLER: Could we look at your recommendation 7 on page 2? Are you suggesting that teachers and students should have group therapy - is that what you are suggesting - where they can examine each other's values?

MS. ANSTEE: What do you mean - group therapy?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MS. ANSTEE: Could you define what you mean by "group therapy"?

MR. MILLER: I am trying to find out what you mean in your submissions

MS. ANSTEE: Your question is am I implying there should be group therapy?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MS. ANSTEE: What do you mean by "group therapy"?

MR. MILLER: Joint sessions, for instance, of students and teachers, discussing just how they feel about things.

MS. ANSTEE: Right. Take, for instance, the topic of racism, which could be part of a history lesson. It is also sort of social education. We take racism and examine the values behind racist ideologies or views. Obviously this is in a class-room setting and we are talking about hidden values underlying that sort of assumption. You could

call that group therapy, but it is just a class-room situation and asking students to put forward their views on what they think racism is, why people are discriminated against and whether they think that is a good way to behave towards other human beings. You get them to work it out and provide views. You let them go on in a class-room situation between peers, between students, with the teacher overviewing all that.

MR. MILLER: But that is not between peers, is it?

MS. ANSTEE: Students in a class-room.

MR. MILLER: Yes, but you explicitly say here "teachers".

MS. ANSTEE: Could you read the sentence?

MR. MILLER: Yes. It says, "Where this does not occur teachers should be unauthoritarian enough to have their own explicit values examined as part of the teaching procedure."

MS. ANSTEE: What that implies is that a student should be able to ask a teacher questions and the teacher should be able to honestly answer what the teacher's values position is.

MR. POWELL: Isn't that contrary to the traditional role of the teacher, the traditional role being that he does not impose upon the student his own views and his own attitudes?

MS. ANSTEE: No, it is not contrary, and the teacher would not be imposing any values unless the student asked what the teacher felt in relation to the discussion that the teacher generated amongst the students.

MR. POWELL: Surely the teacher's own biases and judgments should not enter into the matter.

MS. ANSTEE: What I am saying there is that by the teacher being unauthoritarian enough he should declare his biases too. The teacher should be declaring what he believes in. He might believe in God, and a student in the class could be an aethist. They might have a discussion. The teacher might be saying, "My belief is in Christianity," whereas the student might be saying, "We have just had a discussion and you have expressed Christian views." The teacher would have to explain why he holds that belief or whether it is a bias or whether it is logically arrived at.

MR. POWELL: Coming back to all you have said since we began this discussion - is it not true that social education in the manner in which you are describing it cannot best be used within the current courses of citizenship education, history, geography and economics?

MS. ANSTEE: I agree. Precisely. It should be part of the integrated disciplines a teacher should have in service to know what social education is all about. They should have back-up services from the Education Department.

MR. POWELL: But they have got it; it is there.

MS. ANSTEE: They don't have the materials. MACOS and SEMP have been banned, and they were the only materials available to them.

MR. POWELL: What about the library? It is full of stuff.

MS. ANSTEE: It is not contemporary. It does not talk about contemporary issues like uranium, racism and Aurukun.

MR. POWELL: What do you mean by "contemporary"?

MS. ANSTEE: All the contemporary issues that are going on.

MR. POWELL: MACOS isn't contemporary to Australian standards.

MS. ANSTEE: The other thing that social education is is that it's not parochial; it tries to give students a world-wide context so that they can compare Queensland with other parts of the world.

MR. POWELL: But you just used a whole pile of parochial subjects.

MR. ANSTEE: No I didn't.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we had better move into some other areas. Before we move out of social education, though, you made a statement in relation to the new human relationships course which the union has developed. Perhaps it could be considered here. Could you tell us who developed it?

MS. ANSTEE: That is one that went through conference.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the headline was, "New human relationships course gets teacher nod".

MS. ANSTEE: I think that policy has been developed on an outlining of the course operating in Victorian schools at the moment. It is run by Diller-Sargent, a human relationships biology section based at Melbourne University, based on that outline.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who do you think should teach?

Ms. ANSTEE: In our policy, and I am not sure if you have that there, there is provision for teachers to be adequately trained.

THE CHAIRMAN: Specialised?

Ms. ANSTEE: Or specialised in that area before they enter into that sort of course, which is the same as in Melbourne.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting it should be compulsory?

Ms. ANSTEE: If teachers are going to teach it, it is compulsory that they be trained.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, I mean do students have to attend?

Ms. ANSTEE: That would obviously be up to the teachers and parents to decide whether they wanted their students in those classes or not. It would have to be community agreement. I believe as part of social education that the relevance of the subject comes from the community that education is serving, not from some sort of outside area, so if the parents of that community do not wish their students to attend they should not be running the course or those students should not be permitted to attend it.

MR. HEWITT: We heard a lament yesterday about the decline of religious education in schools. Do you believe that religious education should reasonably be a part of the social education course that you are presently talking about?

Ms. ANSTEE: Obviously that is social education; that is part of a belief that is held by many members of our society so certainly that comes in, but as well you would have to consider other beliefs, Hinduism and whatever other religions are around, to present students with a balanced view of what does exist basically, so it would be in that context.

THE CHAIRMAN: So you do not approve of the religious education course that is operating now?

Ms. ANSTEE: No, that wasn't the question.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thought I heard an indication from that that you were not happy with the present construction of religious education in Queensland.

Ms. ANSTEE: No, I did not imply that at all. I don't even know enough about it.

MR. MILLER: In the fourth paragraph on page 14 you argue that a continuous effort must be made to bring children face to face with real dilemmas. Why?

Ms. ANSTEE: I hate to use another example, but I have to do it, because it is the only way you can explain social education. Children going through secondary school at the moment are obviously trying to work out what they are going to do with their lives when they leave, what career they are going to do, or what job they are going to do. Given the high percentage of unemployment of school leavers at the moment, students have to be confronted before they leave school with the reality that they may not get a job.

They have to realise that they are going to have to make a choice when they leave as to what they want to do, but they must also realise and have in the back of their minds so they can cope with it that they may not be employed for up to two years, given the statistics at the moment. That is confronting them with choices and real dilemmas that they are going to be faced with in society when they leave the school situation. Social education is also about those types of problems and I do not think it is fair to any student to not confront him or her with that choice, to give them the dilemmas of society, confront them with the dilemmas apart from school leaving.

MR. MILLER: Can you give me other examples besides work?

Ms. ANSTEE: Another one may be religion. A student may be religious, may hold Christian views.

MR. MILLER: I am glad you have come onto this one.

Ms. ANSTEE: I think it is probably fair for an education system to show the student that they may have Christian views but not everyone in our society is Christian so they are going to be confronted, when they leave school or before they leave it, with other people attacking their views and saying, "I don't hold your view, your view is not very good." They have to be confronted with human relations, that people are going to argue against their views and they have to be able to cope with the arguments and still retain their own belief.

MR. MILLER: Are you suggesting a child should have to stand up in front of a class and prove he is a Christian?

Ms. ANSTEE: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you understand how parents are going to get upset with a child saying , "We were questioned about our Christianity and had to make some justification of it.", or were encouraged to, even?

Ms. ANSTEE: You have to accept the professional ability of teachers. No teacher is going to stand a student up in front of a class and make him convince the class why he holds a particular view.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is a very sensitive area, is it not?

Ms. ANSTEE: Yes, and you have to accept that teachers are mature and professionally trained and they would not jeopardise the feelings or emotions of a student by putting them in a situation like that, putting them up in front of a class of 30 students. That is a ludicrous suggestion that a teacher would do that to a student.

MR. SCHUNTNER: That consideration is expressly mentioned in some of the SEMP materials too, that if you are raising questions in children's minds that might concern them this has to be very carefully considered by teachers before they move into that situation in any way.

MR. MILLER: Wouldn't that depend on whether the teacher was a Christian or not?

MR. SCHUNTNER: I don't know.

MR. MILLER: You don't know!

MR. SCHUNTNER: I doubt it.

MR. MILLER: You don't think it would make any difference if a teacher was not a Christian?

MR. SCHUNTNER: The point that I mentioned is the question of posing dilemmas in some way to children and the teachers are expressly advised in SEMP materials, and their professional training anyway would tell them this, that they would need to be very careful about the feelings of their children in moving into any of these dilemma situations. You are raising a particular example there. I am talking about the general situation and I would like to just restrict my comments to that general situation, that teachers realise the difficulties and feelings of children and would be very loath to move into any situation that would cause concern for children.

MR.POWELL: One of the criticisms that has been levelled at the Radford system of assessment has been that in effect no student really fails, and the first time they can fail is when they leave school with their Junior or Senior certificate and they fail to get a job. Does the union see this as a problem or acknowledge it as a problem, and if so, is there some way out of it? Under the old system you got an A, B, C, or N and you really did fail, and the student , at the moment, even if he gets a 1 or a 2 still thinks he has passed.

Ms. ANSTEE: That is a really heavy debate you have just entered into. and I suppose it is indirectly related to social education. But I would probably have to throw a question back at you. If a student had failed under the old system and got an N in his last year at school and still went out into the work-force , I mean they are still going out anyway - that student is going out with a really inferior feeling because they have failed school.

MR. POWELL: They usually received a few Ns before they got to the Junior. They knew they were low achievers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe they are going to get a few in the work-force, too.

MS. ANSTEE: Are you implying the Radford scheme is producing inferior students?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, it was just on the concept of failure, to encourage a child to think that there is no failure in the school situation might encourage them to think there is no failure in the work situation, which is quite wrong.

Ms. ANSTEE: Hopefully social education would balance that attitude that they may be failing and other people fail and they are not the only people in the world that fail, but I really can't answer that question without going into it.

MR. CLARK: I think you are entering into a big question. I can remember - not in this century - when they used to shoot people to encourage the others, and if you are suggesting that you must fail people to encourage them, I think you might be wrong. I knew a teacher who made his class average 30 per cent so they might get a high pass in the Junior, and he did not do any better than I did, and I marked normally.

MR. MILLER: You have a lot to say about a teacher's professional rights. What are his duties as an employee of the State and his responsibilities to parents?

MR. SCHUNTNER: To carry out the aims of education as indicated in the legislation according to the Education Act , to be aware of all the responsibilities that his profession demands, including compliance with his profession's code of ethics, to take note of views expressed by parents in the local school community, to comply with the various school policies and so on. There are so many responsibilities and obligations and I have really just touched on a few in a spontaneous answer to your question.

MR. SHAW: On page 6 you talk about the advantages of longer periods of training for teachers. Half way down the page you talk about Queensland teachers, more than teachers from any other State, expressing concern about their ability to handle the job. You say that this is obviously correlated with their low qualifications. Don't you really feel that there would be more of a problem with the adequacy of their training rather than the amount of qualifications or the relevancy of their qualifications and the volume of them?

MR. SCHUNTNER: There would be some correlation between the teacher who has had four years of training and feels adequacy, partly through length of training and partly through the content of the particular subject content of that, as opposed to perhaps the teacher who had had one or two years of training and is thrown into the teaching of senior physics. Both the length of training and the actual subject content would militate against the feeling of security that that second teacher would have. Have I missed some aspect of your question?

MR. SHAW: What I am trying to get at is what suggestions you have for improved teacher-training for teachers. If teachers, as you are saying, are feeling inadequate, does not this perhaps indicate that their training should perhaps be along different lines?

MR. SCHUNTNER: I think since this study was done the teacher-training has probably been lengthened. I am not just sure when Professor Campbell's study was done. Certainly we had a fairly small percentage of four-year trained teachers and a much larger percentage of one and two-year trained teachers than we do now. In fact, of course, we don't have any two-year trained teachers coming out of teacher-training institutions right now. It is a problem, of course, when we have art teachers in some provincial Queensland towns who are not trained to teach art. That comes right to the heart of your question. If you don't have the qualifications in the area that you are supposed to be teaching in - that you are required to be teaching in - obviously you do suffer morale. I can name schools in Queensland where one-third of the classes in art are taught by non-art teachers. They take physical education, English, general subjects, and are required to take art. That is where the very heavy loss of morale occurs, I believe. I think that is central to your question, really, about the qualifications and the relevancy of those qualifications causing morale. Indeed, it does.

MR. SHAW: One of the things that has been pointed out to us by teachers is that they felt they were not sufficiently trained to use the internal assessment procedures in moderation.

MR. SCHUNTNER: When the scheme was introduced in the early 1970s the Teachers' Union did feel that there should have been much more adequate preparation of teachers to implement the scheme.

MR. POWELL: Some of the criticism we have received on that point has come from first and second-year teachers 1978.

MR. SCHUNTNER: If you looked at the Scott Committee report you would find that one of the recommendations there is that teacher-training institutions place far more emphasis on the policies of the Queensland authorities - the department, the Board of Secondary School Studies and other employing authorities, particularly the Board of Secondary School Studies - so that they come into the system knowing something about the operation of whatever the assessment procedures are at that time. Our young teachers come out of training institutions

with very little, if any, knowledge of -----

MR. HEWITT: What is the union's attitude to those Scott recommendations?

MR. SCHUNTNER: I can't answer that in one or two words. Cautious - cautiously accept the main thrust of the Scott Committee recommendations, but we have some considerable concern about some aspects of them. Do you want to move into those or will I just leave it at that broad answer at this point?

MR. POWELL: Just one point about teacher-training before you do. You said that the colleges should pay far more attention to the policies of the Board of Secondary School Studies. Should they also be doing a lot more work in methodology?

MR. SCHUNTNER: Teachers for many years, over the decades, always feel that the teacher-training institutions should concentrate a little more on the practical aspect.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should spend a little time on finding out a little more about the union's attitude towards the Scott recommendations. I am going to allow the interview to proceed until 11.10 in order to make up a little lost time and to allow a little more talk. I invite you now to devote five minutes or so in expanding a little on the union's attitude towards the Scott recommendations.

MR. SCHUNTNER: The Teachers' Union was heavily opposed to external examinations. I have copies here of a little section of the Radford Report that I can pass around in a few moments. It deals with the criticism of external examinations. When the Radford scheme came in the Teachers' Union gave an acceptance in principle to an internal assessment scheme. However, the Teachers' Union has been heavily critical of the moderation procedures that are a fundamental part in the implementation of the current internal assessment scheme. I think it would be reasonable to say that the pressures from teachers who found it very difficult to implement in a meaningful way those moderation procedures have at least partly or perhaps to a considerable extent resulted in these changes that are now suggested from the board. The central principle, of course, is the competency based concept, and the Teachers' Union in its submission to the Scott Committee did in fact suggest that it approved assessment based on agreed standards rather than on assessing students on some sort of rating system where they were compared with each other. We feel that it is better to pit the student against the criteria of the syllabus rather than to pit the child against another child. After all, if you do that you don't know anything about standards, and teachers are as much interested in improving the standards of education, and probably more interested, than others in the community. So that central concept is accepted by the Teachers' Union. I might say though that it is impossible really to make a statement that reflects consensus amongst 20,000 teachers on this point. As you travel around the State you get a different view from just about them all.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I interject at this point and ask you how you are going to do that without being more prescriptive with curricula?

MR. SCHUNTNER: That is one of our very serious concerns. We want to stress very strongly that there must be some balance between giving assistance and guidance to teachers, at the same time not making an over-centralised, highly prescriptive set of criteria. That I say is one of our major concerns in the implementation of these proposals. We are also very concerned that employing authories will need to ensure that the teachers

have time to digest these proposals if they are to be implemented properly. It has implications for staffing, for provision of seminar time, for provision of sheer time for people to read the literature and understand the material.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would anybody like to ask questions about teacher professionalism? In a general way I would like to ask you about the whole thrust of teacher professionalism. That is a word that has been used a lot. You compare it with other professions.

Is it not a fair observation that the outcome of the teaching profession is so much more difficult to quantify than, say, the profession of medicine and I instance a doctor whose patient dies or, as another example, an architect whose buildings fall down? Is this not a special situation that requires special responses where outcomes are so enormously difficult to quantify?

MR. SCHUNTNER: It is difficult. It is not like the profits of a company or some other things that are easy to measure. When we get on to literacy and numeracy and Mr. Clark's comments there, I think we will find that the product we are turning out these days is every bit as fine and indeed finer than the product of yesteryear. I would not say that other professions can have their products judged easily, either. I do recall some conflict about the qualities of a Mr. Brych and whether he was accepted or not accepted.

THE CHAIRMAN: The judgment was made though, wasn't it?

MR. SCHUNTNER: By some.

THE CHAIRMAN: Most of us.

MR. SCHUNTNER: By most, yes. But I do really make that point that it is fairly difficult to judge whether a lawyer is a good lawyer or a doctor is a good doctor always in the nice, simple terms in which some other things can be judged.

THE CHAIRMAN: You do not have to go to that doctor but you have to go to that State school, don't you?

MR. SCHUNTNER: No, depending on the geographical circumstances.

THE CHAIRMAN: Distance makes it quite restrictive?

MR. SCHUNTNER: In some geographical areas, but we do have a dual system and, even within the State system, such as at the secondary school I taught at last year, we had children coming to that school, which was Toowong High School, from Carina, from Aspley, just as I am sure we had some children from Toowong going to other parts of Brisbane, so that argument, while having some validity in the more remote parts, is not totally valid by any means in the more densely settled areas.

THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps I have been on a hobby horse.

MR. HEWITT: We have been told by people in the Education Department that it is almost impossible to dispense with the services of an unsatisfactory teacher, and the department's statistics bear that point out. Under what circumstances do you believe that the department should be able to dispense with the services of a teacher who is proven to be totally unsatisfactory? At the moment the solution seems to be to transfer him.

MR. SCHUNTNER: The first thing is that it is simply not true, what you have heard. They do have a procedure, the Education Department.

MR. HEWITT: It is almost impossible. It does happen, but rarely.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the outcome? How many times does it happen in a year?

MR. SCHUNTNER: Not very often. Mr. Clark might have more details on this than I do, as a matter of fact.

MR. CLARK: It depends what you mean by, "unsatisfactory". We have a Role of Inspectors' Committee. The union and the department got together on this to try to improve the inspectorial system, and there is always an out for getting rid of the unsatisfactory teacher. After the second year, teachers are not normally inspected - it is not necessary to do that - but if a teacher, for some reason or other, is not performing well at all in the opinion of the principal and his peers in the school, he can ask for that person to be inspected. If that inspection proves that he is incompetent, he can be dismissed.

MR. HEWITT: Who can ask for him to be inspected - the principal?

MR. CLARK: The principal can.

MR. MILLER: Hasn't there got to be three inspections and not one?

MR. CLARK: It is normally two inspections. You give the man a chance. You never know what caused him to be like that. He might have had some illness.

MR. MILLER: We were informed it was three.

MR. CLARK: Three? I did not know about the three. I thought it was two. It is two in the normal circumstances.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is important that we move on.

MR. MILLER: Still on the professionalism of teachers, in the second paragraph on page 3 are you saying that teachers and the administrators of the Education Department should not be accountable to the director-general and the Minister?

MR. SCHUNTNER: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we can now move on to the question of literacy and numeracy. The major thrust of your submission is that a task force should be set up in connection with the Australian Council for Educational Research. Are you suggesting that part of this exercise should be to determine or try to determine community attitudes in relation to education?

MR. CLARK: I think community attitudes to education are very important; they certainly are.

THE CHAIRMAN: Throughout the State? The one objective assessment we have seen - the one survey that we have seen - was an urban study by Dr. Botsman.

MR. CLARK: Yes, I think it would be throughout the State. If you read towards the end of literacy and numeracy, you will see a survey that we made and there are some disconcerting things about country schools that are mentioned in that, with regard to the need for remediation. There are one or two things - naturally it is such a big subject that we have not included everything in this, and there are one or two things that I have not included in there. That is the need for language teaching right throughout the school from the earliest days in primary school to the earliest days in the secondary school. I do not mean foreign languages; I mean English particularly. It is very important. If this was done well and the teachers were properly trained for it, we would not need so much remediation. But if you have a look at that

summary - this C.R.C.D. report which I suppose you have - it is the Keeves report - and you read Mr. Christensen's comment on it, you will see that there has been a great deal of exaggeration about that, but there is at least some measure of concern that we have about the need for improving the education system and I have suggested various ways of doing it. There is another report that just came out very recently. I have it here. I suppose the Committee now has access to this; if not, I will supply a copy of it. It is the summary of the Research into Reading Standards of Queensland Grade 5 Pupils. I was pleased to see that because, generally, we have not had any comparative data on the ability of people in literacy and numeracy. I did not go into oracy but it is a related thing. People learn to read much more quickly if they are able to speak better, if they come from a community, that is their parents and the people who surround them, who use words that are not of the low socio-economic type. If you look at Bernstein's study, you will find out that there is a certain amount of proof in that, and Dr. Goodman will be able to tell you all about that. I think that there has been a lot of hysterical things said about literacy and numeracy. I am personally quite proud of what teachers do in the Queensland schools. I am sure that some of you know some very good teachers. There are probably a few of these teachers you are talking about who are unsatisfactory teachers, but, in the future, I do not think there will be as many of them.

THE CHAIRMAN: For your information, Dr. Keeves will be appearing before our Committee tomorrow morning at 11.30.

MR. CLARK: I am pleased to hear that.

MR. HEWITT: Could I put this proposition to you? Literacy and numeracy is the foundation on which one's whole future education is based and if that foundation is faulty, obviously the way you can embrace your future education is also faulty. Instead of debating whether or not the standards are declining, do you think that it would be useful to determine a standard of literacy and numeracy that children should reach at a certain age, and that they be examined at that age and not be allowed to proceed further until they have attained that standard?

MR. SCHUNTNER: That would be nice.

MR. CLARK: I am not too sure about that. When you say, "a certain age", you are talking about a chronological age?

MR. HEWITT: Yes.

MR. CLARK: When you were 6 and I was 6 we were at different stages of mental development. You realise that.

MR. HEWITT: We were both bright.

MR. CLARK: We were both brilliant, but we were different. Brothers and sisters are different. If you have raised children, you know that your two or three children are different. They maturate at different levels. You have to take that into consideration if you are going to have that concept.

MR. SHUNTNER: There is another problem, too, of course, that some children cannot help their parents.

MR. CLARK: That is quite right.

MR. SCHUNTNER: No matter how hard you try and no matter how skilful some teachers are and no matter what programmes you have, there may be some children who will never, because of the lack of intellectual capacity, who will never reach a particular prescribed level. That is an unfortunate reality of life. We have to do the very best we can for those children but it is a reality that I am afraid a lot of people fail to confront head on.

MR. CLARK: Another thing, Mr. Newitt, with respect to what you are saying - if you follow that through it will mean that children will move through school at different rates. I personally agree with that. I think that some children are quite capable of that and some children are not capable of moving through at the same rate as others.

I think pre-school is a wonderful thing to have been introduced into this State in that we can find out a lot about children at that stage. Perhaps it is even better to keep children in pre-schools for another year. I know that there are economic difficulties in doing that. Maybe we should not let all the children in Grade 1 move to Grade 2 at the same time; maybe Grade 1 and 2 could be integrated-and not be just a Grade 1 and a Grade 2 - with children moving through at different rates. It is much harder to teach in that way but I think our colleges will have to look to their laurels and see that teachers learn to teach in that way in the future if every child is going to be given the opportunity he should have to develop his intellectual capacity to the fullest.

THE CHAIRMAN: On the matter of remedial teachers, can you quantify the problem, what sort of a problem we have, and how many extra remedial teachers we need?

MR. CLARK: It is a complex problem. Remedial teachers are not the total solution to the problem. Class sizes should be reduced dramatically. I know that cannot be done immediately because you have not got the money, and we are in an economic mess. But at one stage we thought we were moving towards it; we had an objective this year to get classes down to 30. If you have ever taught classes you know that very small classes are not desirable, but with classes, say, from 25 to 30 you can at least do something about remediation. Every teacher who comes out of the teachers' college should have some knowledge of remedial work. He or she should be able to deal with that problem. If you do that you will not need as many remedial teachers. At the moment we need thousands of remedial teachers throughout the State to overcome the backlog. When I went to Winton and places like that I was particularly worried to find that the teachers out there were the ones who were asking for more remedial assistance than their counterparts in the cities.

MR. SCHUNTNER: Expanding on Mr. Clark's answer, and in direct answer to your question, I would point out that the Australian Teachers' Federation survey asks teachers to identify how many children need remediation. We do have a number of children, according to that survey in Queensland, who would need remediation in reading and numbering. I do not have the exact-----

MR. CLARK: It is in my submission, at the end; you just have to read it.

MR. SCHUNTNER: I understand that it is about 16,000.

MR. HEWITT: When you said that teachers should have some instruction in remedial teaching, in what context did you use those two words, "should have"? Is that part of the present programme or are you advocating something that should be, Mr. Clark?

MR. CLARK: I think there should be more of it than there is now.

MR. HEWITT: There is some content now?

MR. CLARK: Yes, there is some, but there should be more of it. As you know, I was a teacher for 26 years and I had a great number of problems in the early secondary schools with regard to remedial teaching. I set about trying to do a lot for myself. By actually doing that I saw what each teacher could be doing to improve the child. If you get a very big class, of course, it is difficult. In a high school, it is

more difficult, perhaps, than in a primary school because you have so many different classes from day to day. So you have to keep a book and find out the various deficiencies, be clinical with it and try to find out the causes of those things.

MR. SCHUNTNER: If you have a class of 20 to 25 you can do quite a lot of this. If you have a class of 36 or 37 you cannot do it.

THE CHAIRMAN: At this stage may I give you, Mr. Schuntner, or any of the others an opportunity in the remaining few minutes to tell the Committee of something you have not been questioned about? Is there some particular item you would particularly like to deal with that has not been covered so far.

MR. SCHUNTNER: We have not really talked about the structure of education and the way decisions are made in Queensland. I do not know whether any people have questions on it. The point that concerns the Teachers' Union very greatly is that within the legislation that Parliament has every right to enact, and within broad Education Department policies, there must surely be room for local school communities, including parents and others in the community, and teachers with their professional judgment and expertise to operate in the best interests of education. We would make the point most strongly that ad hoc intervention which cuts right across the various policies of a Minister or a department must not be continued if Queensland education is to go soundly into the future.

THE CHAIRMAN: We thank you very much. At this stage we will have to conclude your submissions because the Creche and Kindergarten Association is to appear before us at 11.30. If you would care to join us we would like to have you with us for morning tea. The Committee will now adjourn until 11.30 sharp.

The Committee adjourned at 11.6 p.m. till 11.30 a.m.

The Committee resumed at 11.30 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: The meeting is reconvened and we are now very pleased to welcome representatives of the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland. We welcome Mr. Keith Hayes, Miss Peggy Banff and Mr. Allan Fazldeen. The submission has been received and studied by members. For record purposes, it is coded JL-656. In the first place, I would ask each representative to indicate the executive position held in the association.

MR. HAYES: I am president of the association. I am a layman but my fellow representatives are professionals, one being our administrator and the other our educational expert.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is your position, Miss Banff?

MISS BANFF: My position is Director of Community Early Childhood Services and as such I head the advisory services department of the association.

MR. FAZLDEEN: I am the administrator of the association and I am responsible for the general management and finance aspects of the organisation.

THE CHAIRMAN: As chairman of the Select Committee I am entitled to some privileges, one of which is to ask a question that is not dealt with in the submission. I was looking to see the attitude of the association towards the current suggestion that there should be an amalgamation of the Kindergarten Teachers' College with another C.A.E., the Kelvin Grove college. What is the attitude of the association to that suggestion?

MR. HAYES: Only now do we realise that we were probably remiss in not dealing with that and making it part of the submission.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not at all.

MR. HAYES: We have made a submission to the board voicing our objections basically to the proposed amalgamation. It is a very emotive issue for the Creche and Kindergarten Association because we were the ones who started the college. It is only a few short years ago that it was transferred from this association to a C.A.E. It has been very difficult for us to try to look at it in an objective sense because, as you can appreciate, we have been under a lot of pressure from teachers. For 70 years the association has been in the business of early childhood education. We started the college and watched it grow to a C.A.E. just a few years ago. We are now very concerned at possibly the diminution of emphasis in pre-school education. This was brought classically to my attention by a doctor who was with the Brisbane Children's Hospital. When it was made part of the Brisbane General Hospital, the emphasis on children as such, to his mind, fell away. I personally am very much afraid that if the college becomes part of a larger C.A.E., the emphasis and philosophy that this association first instigated, and which has been maintained ever since, will be watered down and possibly lost. We believe that that would be detrimental to the children of this State.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your frankness.

MR. POWELL: You would not see the kindergarten college going across to the Kelvin Grove C.A.E. remaining as an identifiable unit as the section of the Kelvin Grove C.A.E.

that dealt with early childhood teacher education?

MR. HAYES: That probably would happen but I think the philosophy that this association implanted in the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College, and which has been maintained to date by choice of staff, history and to some extent tradition, will be watered down when it becomes part of an overall conglomerate. That is one thing that I personally am much afraid of and I know many others think similarly.

MR. POWELL: The appointment of staff is one point that you emphasise?

MR. HAYES: Yes.

MR. HEWITT: A number of submissions have argued that education is too compartmentalised - too sectionalised - and that there does not appear to be enough evidence of a continuing flow of the child's education. There are arguments that education should be seen to be starting from pre-school days and going right through to high school days. There are those who argue that there should be greater relationship and co-ordination between pre-schools and primary schools, and there has even be one argument that primary schoolteachers should in fact have authority over pre-school centres. That would relate mainly, I should imagine, to Government centres. Would you give us the benefit of your observations on these points of view?

MISS BANFF: I would be pleased to speak to that. I think there would not be an early childhood educator who would not agree that there should be continuity of philosophy right through. One of the compliments, I think, we were paid when we met with the Board of Teacher Education was that they felt that because we were not considering a merger as one that we would like we were depriving other areas of education of our philosophy. I maintain that if the philosophy is as good as we believe it is and other areas of education also believe in the same philosophy, no fence or wall would keep out that philosophy. It is up to the people who are running that educational institution. I certainly see early childhood education as leading in that philosophy. To my way of thinking, it has been one that has led other areas of education and I see that this could be lost if a merger took place. I might also say that recently I had the experience on my way back from overseas of spending a very short time in the Northern Territory, where early childhood education has now become part of the total education system. Kindergartens, or pre-schools as they call them there, are now very much part of the total education system in the Northern Territory. Teachers are very much feeling that they are at the beck and call of the primary staff who in fact are not knowledgeable about early childhood education. The people who are working at the head of the department there, who are themselves early childhood educators, certainly see a watering down of the philosophy that they have espoused for many years. Further to that, I might say that recently in Japan when I made from the platform the statement that we had the fear in Australia that because of the merger of specialist colleges with larger colleges there would be a watering down of our philosophy, the representative from Great Britain said to me, "I could have cheered when I heard you say that because this happened in Britain several years ago." She felt that since then standards in Britain have deteriorated extremely in the area of early childhood and now, she said, there is such a struggle for funds and anything else in that area. Early childhood education feels that it has been pushed right out. I quote those as examples of what I have heard just recently.

MR. MILLER: If pre-school education is so important to each child, would you not agree that pre-school education should be made compulsory by lowering the age by one year?

MISS BANFF: I think one of the benefits of pre-school education is that there is freedom of choice. I would hope that in a democracy parents would always have this freedom of choice. I certainly believe that most children benefit from pre-school education. I have never espoused that every child must go to kindergarten. I believe that what kindergarten does supplements a good home as well as adds to the education values that may be there. I think there are some children who benefit from kindergarten much more than other children, because of their backgrounds. What we must do in Queensland is make pre-school education as widely available as possible but at as high a standard as possible and with programmes diverse enough to meet the needs of all children who need pre-school education.

MR. MILLER: Is a full-day programme of 5½ hours too much for pre-school children?

MISS BANFF: Not for many pre-school children. I think the 5½-hour programme is often not seen as a total education programme. I would refute this. I think a 5½-hour programme for many communities is necessary because of the distances that some parents have to travel, because the parents who bring children to kindergartens cannot always be available to come and go within three hours in the morning when mothers are perhaps busy with younger members of the family and have babies who might be sleeping in the morning. Here again I think that freedom of choice in that community to decide whether it should be a 3-hour or 5½-hour programme should be protected.

MR. MILLER: I ask that question because I am having trouble filling the pre-schools in my electorate. At the same time the kindergartens are overcrowded because of the half-day programme.

MISS BANFF: We have always felt proud of the fact that we have been able, because we are a community group, to meet the needs of a community. One thing that does happen when Government works come into this area is that it becomes a cut-and-dried sort of thing, and we like to preserve the freedom of choice for parents.

MR. HEWITT: Do your programmes complement early programmes in the primary schools?

MISS BANFF: Sometimes there is a gap in the programmes as we see them, but this is not necessarily the fault of the pre-school programme. Many of our kindergarten teachers certainly make an effort to get to know the primary teachers in the area and there is quite a deal of co-operation between the two. Sometimes criticism has been levelled against the community kindergarten when they say that because it is separate from the education system there is no flow-on. I believe that if the philosophies are right in all areas of education there should be no gap in the flow-on.

MR.HEWITT: What is the difference between a kindergarten and a pre-school centre?

MISS BANFF: No difference that I can see, except in terms. They both have qualified kindergarten teachers and they both have similar types of equipment. In community kindergartens the parents pay for the children to go there; in the State pre-schools we all pay for the children to go there. In whatever respect, payment is made. The only difference as I see it is that community kindergarten parents are paying double. From the programme point of view there should be no difference at all.

MR. MILLER: Can I become really parochial now? The Bardon Community Kindergarten does not benefit from the full subsidy, I am told, because the Creche and Kindergarten Association does not recognise the teachers who are employed there.

MISS BANFF: To my knowledge, the Bardon kindergarten has never asked the advice of the Creche and Kindergarten Association, nor has it ever requested affiliation with the association. It is one of the very few in the State at the moment that is receiving funding through the association without taking the benefit of advice from the association. To my knowledge, the Bardon kindergarten does not have a qualified kindergarten teacher.

MR. MILLER: You are right.

MISS BANFF: When we discussed this with the Bardon kindergarten some years ago the Bardon committee was very satisfied with the staff it had. Again it is freedom of choice. If that suits the Bardon community there is nothing the Creche and Kindergarten Association can do about it.

MR. MILLER: Can I say that they are very satisfied with the teachers they have, but is it possible for these teachers to be examined by the association and if they are found suitable could a recommendation be made to the State Government to give the full subsidy to the Bardon Community Kindergarten?

MISS BANFF: One of the requirements of the affiliation grant that is paid is that the centre has a fully qualified kindergarten teacher. That is a requirement of affiliation. The requirement of a Government grant centre is that it has a teacher of some approved standard. If the teacher is of approved standard, that is, if she has some qualification but not necessarily the qualification of a kindergarten teacher, it is possible that some grant may be given. At the moment the Bardon kindergarten does receive a grant, but it is not the State Government grant. The chairman might like to make a comment, but all I can say is that whenever a request comes in to the association for a report on a programme or for advice to be given or for a visit to be made, we have never refused that. We would be quite willing to do that again if a request came officially from the Bardon Community Kindergarten.

MR. MILLER: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: That seems to have solved one of Mr. Miller's problems!

MR. POWELL: If we might get back to the submission - on page 9 in paragraph 4.32 you say that a pre-school child's autonomy is respected and this is clearly shown in teaching methods. Have you found this to lead at any stage to tensions within the parents when they find the pre-school child is resisting parental direction because at pre-school he is allowed greater freedom than the parent might let him have?

MISS BANFF: Yes. I am not for one minute presuming that conflicts don't sometimes arise. I believe our philosophy of human interaction in the pre-school programme has not found a way to solve all human conflicts. Certainly sometimes the expectations of teachers might vary from the expectations of parents. But this again is where I believe we have the strength in the community kindergartens. Parents themselves have a say in what happens in the community kindergartens. As well as being the parents of the children, they are the committee. I believe there is opportunity here for parents and teachers to work together. I believe teachers have a responsibility to interpret the objectives they have in relation to education and I believe the parents have the right to question. Certainly some children, because they do become more confident, appear to be more precocious because of some experience they have outside the home. I would hope that if this happens the parents and teachers get together and have a discussion on it. I am not saying every teacher is perfect. I would always advocate that parents and teachers work together as a team and not in conflict with each other.

THE CHAIRMAN: What ongoing structures exist for consultation with the State Government in relation to policy matters? I note that in your submission you refer to the fact that some three-year-olds are admitted to State pre-schools when there are vacancies and that might create some problems for community kindergartens. Is there a formal structure of ongoing consultation with the State Government in relation to policy? Are you represented on any organised structure?

MR. HAYES: Nothing formal.

THE CHAIRMAN: Should there be?

MR. HAYES? Under the present system and particularly over the last month we have been approached by the Minister and Mr. Ashby, the Director of Pre-school Education, to form a consultative committee to advise the Minister on what is

termed a rationalisation programme in this time of hard finance. We are looking at an overall situation. Right from the very outset, when the State came into the pre-school area, there was a lot of consultation, particularly in the early stages. We received a lot of promises, which unfortunately were not kept in entirety. This led, in my own mind and I think in the association's as well - I can speak for it in this instance - to duplication, which was unnecessary, and costs, which were unnecessary. We were never advised on it or asked for advice, although in the initial stages this was going to be the case. There was a drifting apart and there now appears to be a coming together again. But as you suggest, there is nothing formal. But I do not think it would be a good idea to have anything tied down hard and fast. We would hope there is continued co-operation between their system and our own.

MR. MILLER: With the declining birthrate are we likely to come into a situation of overcapitalising in this area?

MR. HAYES: Undoubtedly so. I think that has already arrived. What is surprising - this surprised the Government, not so much ourselves - is that the communinty kindergarten movement has continued to expand in the State despite State pre-schools being built in large numbers. We have continued to have new affiliations every year, and we have some more for next year. That is an indication of community awareness of pre-school and of the desire of the community to be actually involved. It is the only area of education in which the parent does have some say, on a management committee. Once you go to the State primary and secondary systems you are one of a multitude and you don't have any say.

MR. HEWITT: Have any closed down or found it necessary to be taken over because of the State entry into this field?

MR. HAYES: Yes.

MR. FAZLDEEN: Perhaps I could answer that. In the first three years something like 20 centres transferred from the community area to the State area; in the last few years, however, the number has been minimal. I think there have been two in the last three years.

THE CHAIRMAN: There has been some going back, of course, as the State has caught up with its building programme? Some kindergartens have re-opened.

MR. FAZLDEEN: I think there are one or two cases also where the State took over temporarily and provided staff and used the community building until its own State pre-school was built and they have recommenced.

In this instance the unfortunate part has always been that that centre, prior to being transferred to the State, was affiliated. When it reopened it never reopened as an affiliated centre because it could not fill the necessary capacity to operate at full standard. The other situation which is quite unusual is in three cases where the community buildings were transferred to the State for pre-school purposes. Community associations subsequently grew up in the same area and are now looking to build new buildings.

MR. HEWITT: I suppose you would assert that children who go to pre-school are advantaged in some way when they go into primary school contrasted to those who have not had that experience. In what way are they advantaged, and have you ever been able to measure this in precise terms?

MISS BANFF: I think there are great disagreements about this. From the very practical point of view I think that the moving into the school environment from the pre-school environment just allows the child that advantage of being used to being away from home, taking direction from others apart from members of the family and used to being in a crowd situation and therefore does not have to overcome the social problems and interaction problems which they might otherwise face. I think that there have been researches done to say that there is no advantage intellectually after a number of years. There are other researches that apparently say that there are. In the programmes in America they seem to be finding now with some of the head-start type of programmes that the advantages come seven or eight years later. I do not feel competent at this stage to say that there is a great advantage or that there is not a great advantage. The researchers disagree on it, anyway. But I think in the short term that teachers themselves working in the practical situation would generally say that the child who has been to the kindergarten or pre-school certainly has an advantage in the initial stages over the child who has to settle into a new situation.

MR. MILLER: Would you favour a reorganising of the lower school units; say, for instance, pre-school grades 1, 2 and 3?

MISS BANFF: Could I say here that though I have done some studies overseas in the area of early childhood education up to the age of eight years I do not sit here and profess to be an expert on that area of education and I would not like anyone who is qualified and working in that area to feel that I was saying I am an expert. As a general observation I would say I think that the more flexibility we can have in the early years for children up to eight, the better, and if this means children move through at their own pace and some children move through slower than others and therefore I would like to see more flexibility in that area. But I would not like to be reported as saying what should be done.

MR. MILLER: What would be the ideal arrangement for the changeover from pre-school to grade 1?

MISS BANFF: I think that it is good when the staff meet together to discuss the various children. I think it is good for parents to feel that they would be as welcome in the primary school as they are in pre-schools.

MR. MILLER: Has this ever happened?

MISS BANFF: It probably does in some schools, I don't know. I cannot speak for all schools. All I know is that

parents are very welcome into the kindergarten centres and the State pre-schools, and I hope and believe it is happening that parents now feel they can be more involved with the other grades in the school too, and I would see this as a very forward step in education.

MR. MILLER: Is there any discussion between the teachers at kindergarten level and grade 1?

MISS BANFF: This depends a lot on the individual teachers. In some communities there is quite a deal of discussion and in other communities not. I think a lot still depends on the teachers in the situation. Could I just add one thing in relation to this? This is an example of something that has happened in Brisbane that we are quite happy about. You might know that in the Paddington kindergarten, which is one of our very old branches, we have Aboriginal and white children. We started that off as an Aboriginal project because we were not too sure just what the community would feel about keeping their children in a kindergarten. We did find we had to bust the Aboriginal children in in order to have a continuity of enrolment of those children, but we now find, having had Aboriginal mothers working in our kindergarten encouraged them to come in on the programmes. Those mothers felt confident enough to apply to the Education Department to become aides in the school over the road at Paddington. Those mothers, because of their experiences at the Paddington kindergarten, are now some of the leaders in the Aboriginal communities in getting the Aboriginal children to continue at the school situation. There is such a close working together between the kindergarten teachers in the community kindergarten and the primary teachers in the school over in Paddington that the teachers themselves have a lot of interchange. The other day we even heard of case where a little child who had not settled well into the State pre-school system is coming back for several hours a day into our own community kindergarten, though he is past kindergarten age. Our board does not know about this. But it just shows an example of the kind of things that are happening when the teachers are working in unison with each other and the philosophy is spreading, not just through the staff but also through the parents involved.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for the preparation of your document and for the very competent way you have presented it to us today. May I add, too, a word of congratulations for the work you are doing in the community.

MISS BANFF: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am very pleased to welcome now Mr. Howard Pickering, the President of the Queensland Manual Art Teachers' Association, Mr. Bill Nason, the treasurer, and Mr. Harry Doherty, the secretary. The Queensland Manual Art Teachers' Association submission has been received by the Committee and studied by members. For the record, its code is J1-32. Your submission is very critical of the present education system and is not unlike another submission we received from the principals of technical and further education schools in Queensland. I think that is the right organisation, a Mr. Harry Robertson from Ipswich?

MR. PICKERING: I am not familiar with him.

THE CHAIRMAN: In respect of the trenchent criticism you offer to the outcome of the present education system I would like to ask you what quantitative information you have to justify your talking about language and communication quibbles?

MR. PICKERING: This is a consensus of opinion that has been arrived at over a number of years by talking to members of our association in various parts of the State, teachers who have had many years of experience. This is probably more so from the older teachers than the younger teachers.

THE CHAIRMAN: And things are going down, you say?

MR. PICKERING: The general feeling is that students are not comprehending and are not understanding written direction and verbal direction as well as they were a number of years ago.

THE CHAIRMAN: You say -

> " Problems in simple communication skills exist amongst a greater proportion of the high school population than was the case 10 or more years ago. This fact accentuates learning problems in all other subject areas including manual arts."

This is very serious criticism that you make. Would any other member like to pick up the questions?

MR. MILLER: I am wondering if there should be a pre-determined standard. Do you think there should be a pre-determined standard that each student should reach before leaving one grade to go to another?

MR. PICKERING: Before leaving, say,primary school to go to high school, yes.

MR. MILLER: How about each grade rather than just going from primary to secondary? At the present moment we are told that students at primary level, for instance, are not kept back if they do not attain a certain level. Would you suggest that these students should be kept back to obtain a certain knowledge before continuing?

MR. PICKERING: Yes, basically that is what we are saying. They should attain a certain knowledge before they continue. But we would also look at the reason why they are not attaining that knowledge now. I think this is more the feeling. They are not attaining the knowledge and we wouldn't be -----

MR. MILLER: Do you know of any reason personally why they are not attaining the knowledge?

MR. PICKERING: No, I don't profess to know any of the answers at all. We are putting forward what we feel. There are problems in the education system at the moment - problems that we are coming across as high school teachers. We tend to look at things probably from a practical basis. Most of our members worked in industry for a number of years before we began teaching. We had rather a practical background before we came into the education system. Most of our feelings are based on this practical background, I would say.

MR. POWELL: On the first page of your submission No. 3 you refer to the almost complete lack of education goals recognisable by students in primary education. What goals do they lack and what goals do you believe they should have?

MR. PICKERING: We would probably be referring there to something like the old scholarship examination.

MR. POWELL: In other words you want a definite test?

MR. PICKERING: Something to aim towards.

MR. POWELL: Are you talking about the student's lack of ability or the high school teacher's lack of information about the ability of the student? I find it hard to understand exactly what you mean.

MR. PICKERING: Our opinion seems to be an opinion held by a lot of our older members, anyway, that is, that the students do not appear to have any goal as far as education goes. They don't seem to know why they are at school; they don't know what they are going to get out of school.

MR. POWELL: The student's ambition is lacking?

MR. PICKERING: Yes. We feel that one reason why it is lacking is that he has not got that goal to aim at. If you are training an athlete for a race he has a goal, and he will work towards that goal. This is the type of goal we are talking about.

MR. HEWITT: Do you think the criteria based assessments which are now being talked about might give them better goals to seek?

MR. PICKERING: Yes, I think that is possible.

MR. POWELL: Each of you has come into the teaching service from a trade, but I understand that the situation today is different. There are manual arts teachers coming into the service today who have not performed in a trade. Do you think that is a good or a bad thing?

MR. PICKERING: I think the ones that have not performed in the trade probably lack some of the basic attitudes that working in industry develop. There has been a fair amount stated lately that it is considered that most teachers should get out into industry and have a little bit of practical experience in industry. We sort of can offer that practical experience because a lot of us had many years in industry.

MR. NASON: One of the things I find as an ex-tradesman is that students relate to me more than they do with an academic teacher. If they are interested in a trade they come to me and say, "What do we do in this trade?" It may even be out of my own field yet they say, "How do we go about getting an apprenticeship?" At the school where I am based we have a permanent guidance officer. Even with him there the students still come to me and say this - not only to me but the other teachers on the staff. If you have the students that come through from the college from Senior they have this little bit of knowledge which they are taught, but not the practical experience in it. This is why the students come and relate to the older teachers - "older" meaning the ones that came through from the trades.

MR. POWELL: Are you answering the question by saying, "Yes, you should have the trade experience first."?

MR. NASON: No, I wouldn't say that. All I am saying is that the person with the trade experience, the students come and ask him. I am not saying they should take them from there. If you take them from the schools as such you are getting this variation within your staff. I think this is a good point. You get the student who comes through from the school from Senior level, and also the tradesmen's entry. Where the cut-off line is and what percentage of each, I couldn't answer.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would it be more preferable to have them come from industry?

MR. PICKERING: I think the experience in industry would be preferable for them.

MR. POWELL: Do you see a desirability for taking the manual arts section out of the secondary school and giving it entirely to technical and further education?

MR. PICKERING: Not really, no. I think it should stay in the secondary school. If we developed the system as I believe exists in Victoria where you have technical high schools catering for our type of education plus trade education, I think you have big problems. I don't think the system down there would work as smoothly as it does up here.

MR. POWELL: This is part of the same question, which I am sure you will understand. Do members of your association feel a limiting as far as promotional opportunities are concerned?

MR. PICKERING: Yes. I think that limiting factor is disappearing recently, though.

MR. POWELL: Should then there be a freer exchange of manual arts teachers from the secondary system to the TAFE, if necessary, if they so desire?

MR. PICKERING: There always has been an interchange. It hasn't perhaps been free.

MR. POWELL: The emphasis is on the "free"?

MR. NASON: With regard to that, I think this varies from person to person. I know from experience with teachers that some have been across to technical and further education, but have transferred back to manual arts. Others are very keen to go across to technical education. I think it is something that can't be laid down specifically as such. Many years ago when I first came into manual arts the little booklet we received from the department - the final clause in it was that promotion to

technical and further education could be obtained. In those days it was a form of promotion, but today I don't feel that it is. We have had teachers recently who have transferred to senior positions in technical and further education.

MR. POWELL: What promotional opportunities are available for manual arts teachers?

MR. PICKERING: Under the present system there is no limit really. It has been opened up. A manual arts teacher can go through to principal now.

MR. POWELL: Provided he has a degree?

MR. PICKERING: Provided he has a degree. Quite a number of manual arts teachers, ex-tradesmen, have gone through the university and have degrees. So probably the only limiting factor now is the desire of the teacher to go that far. That would be in secondary education, not outside of secondary education.

MR. MILLER: Would you look at page 5 of your submission. You say there that the Radford scheme has increased the work-load of students, made for more tension and nervous problems. You say that it has led to more drop-outs. Has your association submitted those views to the Board of Secondary School Studies?

MR. PICKERING: Not directly, but we have a representative on the syllabus committees of the Board of Secondary School Studies who offers the association's views at those meetings.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask you in relation to paragraph (a) (4), which appears at the top of page 2 of your submission and reads -

> "The almost complete lack of teacher 'Accountability' in the present Queensland school system has led to a loss of teacher credibility in the eyes of the public."

That is a pretty harsh statement to make. Could you amplify it for us a little? What do you mean by "teacher accountability"? Is this an attitude among the teachers?

MR. NASON: This accountability is spoken of again among the senior teachers, I feel, more than the junior teachers. Around our association meetings, the subject-masters' meetings and things like this, the feeling is that the teacher does not have to be accounted for his final results. As I say, it is among the senior teachers, who have been under the older system where you have had the Junior examination and the Senior examination and everyone eagerly looked in January to see how their students performed, and they felt that there was something there. I do not know whether you want to class that as accountability, but this is the way they felt. Now, in the accountability today, as it reads further down about inspection systems, we were inspected once a year. Now, the system of course is that you are inspected in your second year and if you apply for appointment and, of course, you have the system whereby a principal can also put in for an inspection if he feels that the teacher is not working up to his capabilities. I think this is along the lines that that is there with the accountability, is that some of the senior teachers feel that there should be more along these lines, not necessarily back to what we had before, but more of people from outside coming into the school and looking at the teacher as he is teaching.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think that there is a serious teacher credibility problem in the eyes of the public today?

MR. PICKERING: There is a fair amount of teacher problems. You only have to read letters to the editor and reports in the Press through the weeks. There has got to be a problem.

MR. MILLER: Your evidence on page 4 suggests that the C.A.E.s should be more accountable for the quality and competence of graduating teachers. Would you favour an induction year for beginning teachers so that they gain this competence?

MR. PICKERING: This is to perform basic - we are not criticising the competence of the teacher as a whole. What we are concerned about is the ability to perform basic class-room procedures and strategies.

MR. MILLER: Would you like an induction year, though?

MR. PICKERING: I do not think we would like really to comment on that. It would appear that it would be a help.

MR. MILLER: Do you believe they are competent when they leave the college?

MR. PICKERING: In the knowledge of subject-matter, yes, but how to relate that to class-room strategies and basic procedures there would appear to be - this criticism comes from a lot of subject-masters in our association who have first year teachers on their staff and who have problems, and it is also a statement that comes from inspectors - our manual

arts inspectors - who visit schools.

MR. MILLER: Do you think they are taught to teach?

MR. PICKERING: No, I would not think so.

MR. MILLER: They have the knowledge but cannot impart it.

MR. PICKERING: It is a little bit difficult to describe, I suppose. In our situation, when I went through, basically all we learned was the syllabus, how to teach the syllabus. Basically that is what we learned, so that when we went into the school in our first year, we may not have known too much about education psychology, but at least, on our first day, we knew how to impart the syllabus to students, and the educational psychology we picked up as we went along, one way or another.

MR. POWELL: Experience being the best teacher?

MR. PICKERING: Experience, but the students did not suffer from our lack of being able to impart the basic syllabus principles, and this is the type of thing I think we are getting at.

MR. POWELL: Getting on to the criticism you make of the vacation set-up and the two pie graphs in appendix A - I am rather alarmed to note that in the first one, you have an 11-week period, including the first test, then you show two weeks where apparently little is done, and then for the next test there is a seven-week period and then six weeks from then to the August holidays where you indicate that very little is done. Can you give me some indication of why you feel this is happening?

MR. PICKERING: Simply because the holidays are around the corner.

MR. POWELL: It is a long corner.

MR. PICKERING: Yes, but it is in size. I think anybody who sat for an exam or who has built himself up for an exam has a let-down period afterwards, and the let-down period is not overnight - basically, what is expected at the moment, where there is not a break between the two semesters, and that let-down period would probably be a week. Then, in the next week, the teacher sort of has to do something to get that enthusiasm back into the student, and if you are lucky you may have built the enthusiasm up again by the time the August holidays are around, but basically it becomes a bit of a fight.

MR. POWELL: Therefore, in your second pie graph you are suggesting instead of ten weeks holiday per annum, there be 11 weeks?

MR. PICKERING: This is only a suggested system that we have come up with.

MR. POWELL: There have been a number of suggestions.

MR. PICKERING: There has been a lot. We are more concerned that a semester system of holidays is developed to match the semester programme, with the holiday breaks organised so that students have a holiday after an exam, not a few weeks before the exam.

MR. POWELL: This is the first time that I have personally seen this sort of set-up brought before us. Previously we have been offered the suggestion of one week in May, two at the end

of July and then one in September or something like that, and industry has reacted rather violently to that sort of suggestion. Have you tested with any industry this suggestion that you have here before us?

MR. PICKERING: No. This suggestion has been submitted around the State to all - every educational body and institution that we could think of. There must have been at least 18 different ones. Unfortunately we did not submit it to any industry, so we haven't any reaction from industry, how they would feel, but we feel a system like that would benefit the tourist industry where you have four breaks in the year where the tourist accommodation can be used far more effectively than three weeks.

THE CHAIRMAN: We do have a survey response conducted by the Queensland Confederation of Industry in relation to that particular suggestion.

MR. POWELL: It is not quite the same as this one, though.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not quite.

MR. POWELL: This one has 11 weeks instead of 10. It has two weeks in April, two weeks in July, two in September and five at the end of the year.

MR. PICKERING: We realise it had an extra week. I did see that survey from the Confederation of Industry and I think there was a fair support for it, wasn't there - the semesterisation and the results of that?

THE CHAIRMAN: There was; true. They are not the only people interested, of course.

MR. PICKERING: We realise that.

MR. MILLER: You are suggesting a 50-50 external examination and internal testing. What subjects do you propose should be examined externally?

MR. PICKERING: I think some of our members would feel all subjects - particularly some of the older ones - would feel all subjects should be examined that way.

My personal feeling would be perhaps English, maths and science would be the critical ones that would need to be judged that way.

MR. MILLER: Externally?

MR. PICKERING: Fifty-fifty - English, maths and science being what we would perhaps call core subjects. There are a lot of our members who favour all subjects being tested in that way.

MR. NASON: Some of our members are even strongly in favour of returning to the old system of full external examinations. I think we should put their view as well, at the same time. Some members are strongly in favour. I am not saying the majority of them but there are still quite a few of our members who are strongly in favour of full external examinations.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you amplify on the reasons?

MR. NASON: Mainly I think it is what we have stated previously, that is, accountability, and the student having something to aim for. The students, especially in our field, on the practical side of it, after two years they feel that they have built up to the stage where they can be given something large and constructive to make, and at the end of two years they can make this, and it can be examined on what they have done previously as a build-up over the two-year period in the practical sense. It is like sending someone out to build a shed and then sending someone else out to build a house. If you send him out to build the shed you send him out after 6 months, but after 2 years you can send him out to build a house. I am not saying that our students could do this; that is just an idea of how these older teachers feel.

MR. PICKERING: If somebody is talking about developing a student's body physically he gets plenty of hurdles to overcome; he could be a prize-fighter, a world champion swimmer or something else. But the tendency is not to put that hurdle there to develop the intellectual ability of the student. We feel that if he is to develop intellectually he needs these hurdles put in front of him because he will find a lot of them when he leaves school; when he leaves school and grows up there are hurdles everywhere. This relates particularly to the older teachers; we seem to come back to the older teachers who know the old system all the time, and what was happening under it. We feel that that was far better. The students related to school better.

MR. HEWITT: I would like to know a little more about the open text-book examination system firstly, and secondly, when you say that years 11 and 12 chemistry have been using this system for some years, are they external students, or what are they?

MR. PICKERING: When senior was an external exam they used their text-books in an open text-book exam mainly because a lot of the relevant tables and information they had to refer to - atomic tables and quite a number of other tables - were far too expensive to reproduce just as a set of tables for an examination. So the examinations were made open text-book exams and students would walk in with a large bundle of papers. On the results I was quoted one year the pass rate was about 35 per cent. This was going back to about 1970. There was no indication that the students benefited, but there was plenty of indication that the kids were set a more comprehensive test

which tested their ability to apply information they had learned and to demonstrate their understanding of the subject, not just their ability to remember something.

MR. MILLER: What changes would you like to see implemented in the manual arts curriculum for Aboriginal children, if any?

MR. PICKERING: We feel first of all that there has to be somebody given a specific task covering a number of months to go into the area to make an investigation into the area of what needs to be done. We believe it is a full-time job. We could refer you to a report produced by the Australian Council of Education through Technology. It is confidential, but it is a draft report for a project to the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra. One of their specific recommendations is that field officers be appointed for 6 months or so to investigate this area before any action is taken. Speaking to members who teach in Aboriginal areas, we see this as a necessity. I must admit that in Queensland, probably more is done in that regard than in any other State, according to this report.

MR. MILLER: I gained the impression from some of your members in another part of the State that they were very reluctant to come before our Committee because they were under threat of transfer if they said the wrong thing. Is this a general feeling amongst your members, because it has come out only from the manual arts teachers?

MR. DOHERTY: I certainly have not heard anything about that. I certainly have had no feeling of a threat because of coming here today.

MR. PICKERING: I don't think so. I think they are just a bit scared of the microphone, like we are.

THE CHAIRMAN: I point out to you that I am certain that is not the case. Were it to be the case in the hypothetical situation it would be viewed very seriously by the Committee. I am sure it will not happen.

MR. PICKERING: I would like to point out that we have not set out to criticise the Department of Education in any way. This is an indication of our members' feelings of what could be wrong with the education system.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very grateful for your honesty and the comprehensive nature of your submissions. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your members. I shall now adjourn this part of the hearing and invite the Social Sciences Advisory Committee to appear before us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the Select Committee has reconvened. I now invite the representatives of the Social Sciences Advisory Committee to please announce their names and the position which they hold on the committee.

MR. MAHONY: I am the Chairman of the Social Sciences Advisory Committee to the Board of Secondary School Studies.

THE CHAIRMAN: And of course Mr. Winkle is the executive officer of the Board of Secondary School Studies. The submission has been received and studied by the Committee. We are very grateful for the assistance you have given us. The submission is coded JL-638. It is a very relevant submission in that the matter of social education has been raised with the Committee on a number of occasions, particularly the social education materials project, which has been discussed with us on a number of occasions as has the course Study of Society, which has cropped up several times during the submissions.

We are grateful to you for placing these matters before us in concise form and for coming before us today to discuss them. I will now invite Mr. Miller to pose a question.

MR. MILLER: In the revised syllabus for the study of society, year 11, the stated objectives of the course are, among others, to recognise the values inherent in social issues and to clarify their own values in relation to them; to clarify and develop their attitudes and values and adopt logically based value stances. Some parents object to values clarification in schools. They do not think it is the school's task to straighten out their children's values. Would you like to comment on that?

MR. MAHONY: My reaction to that at once would be that it is not the school's function to straighten out the values of children. My own view would be that the family has a quite sovereign kind of authority here. One would hope that if a values education proceeded it would proceed in a very informed, enlightened and sensitive kind of way in which the role of the family and parents would be extremely important. Clearly there are certain values that are beyond classroom discussion. I imagine it is a matter of degree. I imagine as well that the community that the school serves and society at large are of quite profound importance and one could not uphold a situation in which the school went along divorced from the community. The reality is that the school is one of the most important socialising institutions within our society. It is there to serve society and to serve parents as well. That would be my reaction to that question.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are saying on page 1 of your submission that for many students the social sciences offer the only systematic formal courses which seek to examine their society and values in relation to it. You are asking for an examination of all values that are traditional in the community. Is it necessary in relation to religious values, for instance, that they be called into question at all?

MR. MAHONY: Certainly not. That would be my reaction to that. On the other hand, I would react to a value like we are a democratic society. That is a strongly held value in our society. Why do we hold it? Why does that particular value make our society distinct from almost any other in the Southern Hemisphere. This is a value that is held very dearly by members of our society. Since it is an important value, what rights and, in particular, what responsibilities flow from that kind of value? In other words, when you think of the term "values" I do not think we can see it as an umbrella type of term. It probably needs a rather qualitative kind of response. One would be very opposed to a values kind of situation which had as its result the disorientation of children, on the one hand, or the upsetting of values which in the family are regarded as of quite prime importance.

THE CHAIRMAN: In this very sensitive area, are you not concerned about the outcome of discussions of this sort? No matter how professionally a discussion might be conducted, there is a hidden attitude implied or a curriculum coming through. Whilst it might be clearly understood that someone has tried very hard to maintain objectivity, at the end there has been a very subjective result. I am worried about the outcome of social education in these very controversial areas.

MR. WINKLE: I think it is necessary to distinguish between identifying values and establishing values. I think that is what this syllabus is attempting to do. I think it is

trying to identify so that people can look at it. I think it is better that it be done systematically rather than unsystematically, formally rather than informally, and I do not think there is any attempt here to push or distort values but really to identify them so that people are aware of them and no more than that. That, I think, would be the role of the classroom. The assumption that people are going to push values is not inherent in that statement.

THE CHAIRMAN: In the statement of the study of society syllabus that was provided by you, it is stated on page 5, "To clarify and develop their attitudes and values and adopt logically based value stances". That is the statement in the syllabus. Your statement of what it is and what is in the syllabus are, to me, a shade different.

MR. WINKLE: I do not see it that way myself. I do not see any conflict between what I said and what is in there. To develop a person is to make him aware of all the possibilities and let him make the decisions.

THE CHAIRMAN: Identification and clarification.

MR. WINKLE: Yes.

MR. MILLER: What about moral values?

THE CHAIRMAN: I should like to finish the point I am pursuing. Surely there is a difference between identification and clarification of values?

MR. WINKLE: To be able to identify it, the situation must be clarified. I do not see that enormous difference. There might be subtleties of meaning of semantics but it is the same issue of knowing what it is about.

THE CHAIRMAN: These seem to be the controversial areas that have been stated to us. Parents are saying that despite the fact that teachers say that they are giving a balanced view, in fact the outcome is not balanced.

MR. MAHONY: My reaction to that is that that is most unfortunate. You gave the example of somebody coming to a subjective conclusion. It would seem to me to some extent that the teacher has failed in that kind of situation. One understands why the area of "values" education is so controversial and I am the first to acknowledge that it is a highly complex area. It is one in which subjectivity could easily come in through the response of one student in the room. One of the problems about values education comes with a negative kind of values or values that are held to be controversial in our society. Let us take a value like the dignity of the individual. That is an important value in our society. It would seem to me that the identification of that value is important in the first instance and so is its clarification. In other words, why is it important that we hold that each individual has a certain dignity in our society? If we hold that value, what flows from it in terms of the voting rights of individuals within our society? What flows from it in terms of the rights of citizens before the law? I think there are very positive areas of values with which there is general accord within society and proper identification and clarification of those values are important in the social education of the student.

MR. HEWITT: I should like to read a statement to you and I should like your observations on it. The statement is, "A continuous effort must be made to bring children face to

face with real dilemmas and choices must be made in accordance with the levels of development and maturity of children."

MR. MAHONY: My first reaction to that was a rather negative one in the first part of the statement. I would react to it by saying that the part of it that needs to be underlined is the development of the child and the child's level of maturity. I think it is most unfortunate if children are thrown into a dilemma type of situation which is more appropriate for an adult. One is more than sensitive to the fact that various people in the community are concerned about a whole range of dilemmas. I suppose it is the nature of a democratic society such as ours that it is full of dilemmas. But that is not a ready excuse to impose an adult type of complex dilemmas upon children. It is counter-productive and one would argue that if there is any role that a school needs to have it is one in which children are happy and adjusted and continue with constructive tasks.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yet this is one of the devices of the SEMP materials, is it not?

MR. MILLER: How about the dilemmas in MACOS for primary children?

MR. MAHONY: If somebody asks, "What about the dilemmas in MACOS?",without being a serious student of MACOS I would say the dilemmas in MACOS are something that we should examine very thoroughly indeed and we should relate them to a child's age and answer to ourselves, "Are those dilemmas far too advanced for that child? How does the child react to that in a psychological sort of way?" and so on. Yes, these kinds of reservations are valid in every way.

MR. POWELL: By introducing into the school curriculum or schoolroom the possibility of values being discussed - that is basically what you are doing - how would you as a teacher deal with the situation where in a class of year 10 students you find a couple who are very devout Christians and a couple who are not devout Christians having a very strong argument on the Christian ethic?

MR. MAHONY: Firstly I suppose it is a situation which one would really need to be rather reserved about. I don't think anything is gained at all by involving children in confrontation situations like that.

MR. POWELL: Can you see the possibility of this occurring?

MR. MAHONY: No doubt this will occur in an informal kind of way. One would hope it would not occur in the normal situation in the class-room - a confrontation situation like that. One of the positive things that might flow from that - I am not saying it should be engineered; it certainly shouldn't - might be the rights of people to have their own viewpoints and positions, their own philosophical beliefs and so on in a democratic society like ours. A rather important difference could be drawn between a society like ours, which permits this kind of thing, and other societies that do not permit them at all. In other words, from the rather unfortunate confrontation situation that you described to me very positive things could flow.

MR. POWELL: In the course "Study of Society", as I understand it, there is a theme of membership of the world community. Do you see that as being pushed perhaps at the expense of the idea of loyalty to one's own country?

MR. MAHONY: No, I don't. It could be argued that since a world community and loyalty to one's own country probably go together, in other words one relates one's country to the world community at large and appreciates that as a patriot and a citizen we have particular responsibilities to countries outside Australia - that is how I would react to that. I would certainly say that if our students had a sense of being Australian, a rather distinctive sense of that, in a constructive and not in a chauvinistic way, it would be most useful. We have the analogy of the global village, and I think it is a fair one. Australians travel internationally more frequently than they have done before and we have our responsibilities towards particular nations in Asia and the Third World generally. It is part of being a good Australian to appreciate that one is also a member of the world community.

MR. MILLER: You do not mention the home economics subject in this paper, yet many parents are concerned about

the extension of home economics into sex education and family relationships.

MR. MAHONY: As home economics does not come within my responsibility, I have not mentioned it. I do not know whether the home economics people will be appearing before the Committee.

MR. WINKLE: I do not think they are. It is not real to be talking about sex education in the home economics course, because it is not part of the existing home economics course, it is a false assumption that it is. It is an extension of what has been a syllabus since 1968 when Miss Marks was in charge and she began the idea of family relationships within the home. But I do not feel competent to talk about that other than to say that what you talk about is within the present home economics syllabus.

MR. MILLER: Would homosexual marriages be included?

MR. WINKLE: No, that is not in it at all.

MR. HEWITT: They find out a few things about the birds and the bees, though, don't they?

MR. WINKLE: I would not think that is right. I would like you to show me where that is so. I am being sincere here. I think there is some misapprehension about what is in the syllabus.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have had people say to us that in social science today the entire emphasis is on processes not on content and that children go right through the system and come out without knowing where various countries are. They have no basic knowledge of the map. Surely this prescription of a certain amount of content is essential in social science courses and it is essential that it be known and retained.

MR. MAHONY: I concur with that in every way. It is extremely important. You might notice that I mention that in the course of the submission. My attitude would be one of complete concurrence with what you say. We need to have a fundamental body of knowledge - that is of profound importance - otherwise we would be almost socially illiterates in the terms of our State, our nation, and the world. The second point is probably even more important than that. This concern with process probably flows from new developments in curriculum and so on. The basic reality is that process can never be meaningful unless children have a substantial body of data - unless they have factual knowledge. Without that, process can occur in something of a vacuum. Yes, I concur in every way. In many ways it is probably useful for teachers to set down for themselves over a term's work what they regard as basic factual material that must be known about by children.

THE CHAIRMAN: Should that be in the syllabus?

MR. MAHONY: One reaction to that might be that one would hope that the teachers through their sheer professionalism would not require that kind of prescription. The other reality is that if there is real concern in the community about this it should be translated into the syllabus. As I see the situation, schools, syllabuses and so on constantly relate one to the other.

THE CHAIRMAN: We could possibly occupy an hour here, but I feel we must talk about SEMP. The question I would like to put concerns the committee of review appointed to look at the

SEMP materials. What was the relationship between your committee and that committee? Did you approve of it? Did you recommend it? How in the opinion of that committee was the SEMP material to be used? Or was it just given into the hands of the teacher professional?

MR. MAHONY: The Social Sciences Advisory Committee had nothing to do with the development of SEMP. The committee is concerned with the development of syllabuses within this State. SEMP could be regarded as a resource material that might be used in a number of syllabuses. I have seen the SEMP materials. Those I have seen are useful. It would be silly to suggest they are the final answer in social educationl they are not. Some perceptive is probably needed upon them. They are a useful resource, and that's it. Probably in some areas they might suggest to teachers how they can develop their own resource materials and so on. I am more than sensitive to the fact that certain areas of SEMP have resulted in social controversy. One would hope that in areas like that there would be close consultation with parents and the community so that accord could be developed. I am aware that in one provincial Catholic diocese SEMP has been approved but certain deletions were made from the unit on the family. That kind of editing or reaction to materials like that is acceptable and expected. Nothing in education in particular has an infallible life all of its own. It doesn't exist divorced from the community at all.

MR. MILLER: Do you see any problems with some teachers being Christian and others not being Christian in the teaching of SEMP? Would their attitudes be completely opposite?

MR. MILLER: Would their attitudes be completely the opposite?

MR. MAHONY: My reaction to that would be really, "Heavens, I hope not." Teachers are not there to push their own particular prejudices or whatever; they are there very much as agents of our society.

MR. MILLER: Can't we all read into each subject our own interpretation?

MR. MAHONY: Yes. No doubt we do and no doubt we constantly do. On the other hand we have to constantly remind ourselves in these sorts of things,"Am I doing this objectively? To what extent am I being covered by my own particular beliefs or prejudices and to what extent am I handling this particular material in respect of the students in my room? How would the parents of these students react to this kind of situation?" In other words, this is a matter of looking at oneself with some measure of detachment.

MR. MILLER: I asked that question because I had one person who went to the Teachers' Union to study the books on SEMP. He was the sort of person from whom I expected to received a phone call about sex. He was a landlord, and when he phoned me up he did not have one word to say about sex but he was very concerned at the attitudes put to students about landlords. He told me that according to that book there are no good landlords. So we can read into these books our own interpretation.

MR. MAHONY: Sure. Not only that, there could well have been considerable substance in what he had to say. I am not so familiar with that unit on shelter but I could imagine that occurring. But I think what is important in the development of materials like SEMP is this: you can get the best innovators around the place in an educational kind of sense but what is most important is that during the development of those curriculum materials we trial them not only with students, experts and all the rest of it but we trial them out in the community, too. In other words, as something is being developed like that we let a whole number of people within the community look at it. My reaction is that it would be most unfair if the materials conveyed that kind of prejudice. It would certainly be unfair to many landlords.

MR. POWELL: Going on perhaps from the sort of circumstance you are talking about, can you see that people in the community are very, very concerned with the introduction of values not only being discussed in schools but being so-called clarified in schools and perhaps think it is none of the teachers' business to enter that field.

MR. WINKLE: I think we are crossing boundaries of responsibility here about who is responsible for teaching within the school and who is responsible for setting down syllabuses. I think it is fair to say that the board has set down syllabuses which provide a framework within which people can work. I think Mr. Powell's question relates to what is the responsibility of the school authority in what happens within that school.

MR. POWELL: But if the board is laying down the syllabus it has to be taught somehow by somebody.

MR. WINKLE: That is the point I wish to make. I do not think we are laying down a syllabus in the terms being

discussed here at the moment. I would like to go back briefly, Mr. Chairman, to your question about students having to know something. I think you would get the wrong impression if you think the syllabus was the statement of what they learn. The real statement of what students learn comes in the schools' programme of work which is submitted for approval, and without doubt there is a lot of factual material presented for acquisition by the student - knowledge to be acquired by the student. So we come to this other point then on SEMP. This was a matter for decision by the school authority whether it used it or not. All that the syllabus is saying is that the school should consider as one of the possibilities the discussion of values which are even traditional in our society so that people will be aware of them and know the basis. But I think we would have to look at the school system to be responsible for what teachers do and don't do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you understand what is meant by sensitivity training and group therapy, and are these processes which are used or recommended for use in social education?

MR. MAHONY: I am a rather unconstructed historian so group therapy is rather beyond me in every way. I understand it is something to do with the area of psychology and so on. I suppose a number of observations can be made about that. In all these things my reaction is that it really depends upon the context into which one places one. For example, if one had an art appreciation lesson it would seem obvious to me that sensitivity training is very important. In the rearing of a child in terms of the child's relations with others, the rights of others and so on, if that is sensitivity training, well and good. But I get your point. Once again these are areas of legitimate community concern because of the particular context in which they are placed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Sensitivity training along these lines, of blindfolding children and encouraging them by touching each other to establish their sensitivities to each other, that is part of one of the programmes in the MACOS course, for instance. We had one submission from a Cairns parent that her child had participated in one of these programmes in a school in that area.

MR. WINKLE: No board syllabus remotely approaches that kind of direction about sensitivity training in its courses. I wouldn't know in what context that sensitivity training took place. It could have been in any context whatever. I have heard a lot of stories about things happening in home economics that had no relationship to the class-room at all, it was outside the class-room.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is recommended as part of the MACOS programme.

MR.WINKLE: As I was saying, MACOS has nothing to do with what the board is involved in.

MR. MILLER: Should a teacher discuss his own personal values with children?

MR. WINKLE: Again, I think this is a matter for the school authority. If it employs teachers it has a role to lay down the guide-lines for those teachers. This board, and we are talking about the subject advisory committee of the board giving the board advice about syllabuses, I do not think should be concerned - it has a concern but not a responsibility in that area, and I am afraid it would be unfair of me to discuss

what is another area's responsibility and problems.

MR. MAHONY: My reaction as an individual now is: generally, no, because one of the problems that could occur in an area like that is that students can perhaps be too impressed by their teacher or something like that. In other words, a teacher as an objective agent of society is really most important. A class-room cannot become the platform for a teacher's prejudices or whatever.

THE CHAIRMAN: You feel guide-lines for social education are at present quite adequate and that there is no cause for community concern, or is there a need for a restatement of some guide-lines for the discussion of controversial material in schools?

MR. MAHONY: One of my thoughts would have been that the guide-lines would have been sufficient, but let us not have a conclusive attitude to anything at all. Let us see how the inquiry moves along. Let us look at the degree of community concern and then let educationalists in a responsible way react to that measure of community concern. This constant dialogue, it would seem to me, between teachers and the community is really of profound importance.

MR. MILLER: Can we go to "A Study of Society" for a moment. On page 10 under the short list of books there is reference to "Desert People", an account of Aboriginals in Central Australia. Are you aware of the concern in New South Wales about this book?

MR. MAHONY: Could I just put "A Study of Society" in some perspective now because this needs to be stated? As a general rule children study "A Study of Society" as a matter of choice to start off with and fewer children in this State study "A Study of Society" than any other social science discipline. The numbers are very small indeed. The most popular junior social science syllabus in Queensland is the citizenship education course.

MR. MILLER: But there is concerned in New South Wales about it and not about SEMP.

MR. MAHONY: We have discussed this, of course, because it was an area of community concern. My understanding of it is that that particular book, "Desert People", was put down there as a teacher's resource and that was it. It certainly was not given as a student's resource, and once again one would have hoped that teachers would make a professional decision in this area along with their peers.

MR. MILLER: It has been suggested in New South Wales the children are playing roles about ritual rites.

MR. MAHONY: That's not on. It is not regarded in that way here in Queensland at all.

MR. WINKLE: I would doubt whether any school in Queensland had that book in its library. It is certainly not even recommended other than as a teacher resource in a very specific area - for Aboriginal background and culture.

MR. MILLER: It is only for a teacher resource?

MR. WINKLE: Yes.

MR. MAHONY: Yes. It is not for students.

MR. WINKLE: Absolutely nothing to do with students.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to continue the discussion but we have stuck very strictly to a schedule this morning and we must do so again this afternoon. I thank you gentlemen very sincerely for coming before us. I thank the Board of Secondary School Studies for its continuing effort and the help it is giving our inquiry. It is very much appreciated.

The Committee adjourned at 1.1 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 2 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, this meeting of the Select Committee is reconvened. This afternoon we are very pleased to welcome representatives of the Queensland Technical and Further Educators' Professional Association. I emphasise the words "Professional Association" to separate that organisation from an organisation termed the Technical and Further Education Teachers' Association of Australia.

Could I ask the executive officers who are here to present the submission which is coded AU-52 and to identify themselves.

MR. WILSON: My name is Peter Wilson. I am the president. On my far left is Laurie Lingard, who is secretary; next to me is Kerry Kreis, our vice president, and on my right is Keith Wood.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would someone care to commence the questioning? The submission, gentlemen, has been read and studied by the members of the Committee.

MR. MILLER: You say on page 12 that all teachers and instructors in TAFE colleges should have refresher training within industry. How would this be organised?

MR. LINGARD: There is one point there that creates some problems with organisation in as much as the responsibilities of the teaching staff to their employer. That creates some problems. This would have to be resolved, and it is not easy. The other problem is the continuity of personal responsibility with respect to the work that they are doing when they are in industry. This also creates a problem. We are not suggesting that we have the answers to these problems, but we are suggesting that they will need resolving, and the need is acute for recurrent training.

MR. MILLER: You actually envisage these people going back into industry for a certain period of time?

MR. LINGARD: Yes.

MR. MILLER: To refresh their knowledge?

MR. LINGARD: The problem is, of course, with new innovations coming into industry. The problem is a twofold one: one is refresher requirements and the other one is familiarisation with new developments that our people are not exposed to.

MR. MILLER: This really shouldn't be any problem with industry. Surely industry would welcome that sort of thing.

MR. WOOD: Yes. Indications are that industry would welcome our co-operating there. There is a general feeling that in fact we are not up-to-date with what is happening outside, and we concede that.

MR. MILLER: It would be of benefit to the industry if the teachers were in fact up-to-date?

MR. WOOD: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lingard, what is your association with the Technical and Further Eudcation Teachers' Association of Australia?

MR. LINGARD: That is the national association, with which we are affiliated. Keith Wood in fact is the president of that association. He is also an executive on this Queensland organisation.

MR. KREIS: If I might expand that a little - industrial representation of TAFE teachers in Queensland is carried out by the Professional Officers' Association. Q.T.E.P.A. is an autonomous subcommittee of the P.O.A. We are not specifically responsible to them. We only make recommendations on professional areas to them, so we are virtually just a professional association. As far as T.A.F.E.T.A.A. is concerned, it is the national body. Q.T.E.P.A. is representative of professional areas as far as TAFE teachers are concerned, and P.O.A. is representative on T.A.F.E.T.A.A. of industrial areas. We can only speak on professional areas. We are not in the industrial area at all.

MR. MILLER: I refer to paragraph (c) 2. on page 8. You see the need for standing committees to review the curricula for trade courses, with such committees to include wide representation. What is the present position?

MR. KREIS: The present position is that in very few areas are there any types of advisory committees in existence. Most of those areas have been piloted only recently. In general the curriculum have been constructed through the formation of a committee which has then more or less disbanded on the finalisation of the curriculum. What we are suggesting is that ----

MR. MILLER: A permanent committee?

MR. KREIS: It should be a permanent committee which should be constantly looking at curriculum and determining whether it is in need of updating.

MR. MILLER: It makes a lot of sense to me.

MR. LINGARD: There are in fact two distinct fields within TAFE. The other area that has not been referred to is of course the apprenticeship, which has a limited advisory committee advising to the executive apprenticeship -----

MR. MILLER: Made up of all trades?

MR. LINGARD: The representation is there but it is a little limited we feel.

That does have some essence of what we are asking for on a much broader scale.

MR. HEWITT: I am interested to know how you answer the basic problem that you pose on page 9. Do you educate for a surplus or a deficit? How do you determine, at the end of a training period, what demands there will be for the people you turn out?

MR. WILSON: In the specific areas of trade based areas - and TAFE includes a very broad base so far as education is - but if we talk in trade areas we have no choice over enrolments. Enrolments are purely by employers. Therefore, we have no control over what types of enrolments we get. This also has a logistics problem associated with teaching staff. If the employers for some reason or other boom and decide to employ a large number of apprentices or trainees in any areas, we have problems in accommodating them at the institutions, so I think there is a recommendation here that we are doing away with such tied arrangements with employers.

MR. KREIS: We suggest at the moment that we are in fact educating for a deficit. One of the optimum figures is that for every 100 professional people in the community today, something like 80 are now in training to take their place, but for every 100 tradesmen or skilled people there are only something like 16 to 18 presently being trained to take their place, and this is further emphasised by the fact that many of these tradesmen are, shall we say, getting on in age and will in fact be leaving the industry over a period of, say, the next decade and the deficit will be even greater than it is today.

MR. HEWITT: That is pretty alarming. What is the explanation for it - that employers are not putting people in to be trained? Is that the reason for it?

MR. WILSON: That is one of the main reasons. If they haven't employment at the present time they just won't employ people. It is obvious that if the work is not there, they cannot employ.

MR. MILLER: Would the cost of training also be a factor?

MR. LINGARD: The cost of employment is a factor.

MR. WOOD: The training, in a lot of cases, is covered by Commonwealth grants in this regard. If you look at the time of the apprentices' attendance at college and, for a lot of employers, the grant from the Commonwealth, and work out the apprentice's salary for that time, for that period, I think the point that we would like to make -----

MR. WILSON: Mr. Hewitt, when we look at the surplus problem, perhaps what we should be looking at is being done in the pre-vocational area, where we are giving people a broader range of skills, so that in fact we might have a plumber who also knows something about some other trades that go along that line, so that people might become more portable. If we look at it, the trend seems to be that if people have to be retrained, we would like to see, within TAFE that we can give that basis for retraining so that when a plumber finds he no longer has that employment he might look towards another vocation and he might have some of those basic skills already prepared. We would also suggest, to support the pre-vocational area, that when the plumber does go along for the job as a plumber, he has been through a pre-vocational

course where he has had these four modules, where he has done the whole range of things, so that he is a better plumber because he knows what the electrician is all about, he is a better plumber because he knows what the painter is all about, and the bricklayer, and I think that is one area we should be investigating, which is an expansion of that pre-vocational area, and obviously we should be questioning the narrow structure of each trade so that the person does become more portable.

MR. MILLER: Would you like to see the knowledge he has gained, say, in plumbing, taken into consideration if he is going to continue in another trade?

MR. WILSON: For sure.

MR. MILLER: This is not the case at the moment?

MR. WILSON: No, it is not the case at the moment. It is a start off again, which is somewhat crazy. What we would like to see is, in fact, looking at the whole family of trades and seeing what commonality there was between them, and he might have a credit for so many modules. For example, mathematics must apply to a number of areas and you have fitters and turners who do welding, for example. You have other trades which also do welding. So that there should be a welding module. It is not much different for a welder to be welding as a fitter and turner to be welding, I suggest. It is the same job.

MR. POWELL: I refer to paragraph 2.2 (a) 1 on page 6 you say -

> "Q.T.E.P.A. has no hard data which supports a popular contention that school standards have been lowered.
>
> There is however, some evidence from in-college testing that at the time of entry to a TAFE College the school ratings on subjects such as English, Mathematics, and science bear no relationship to the students relative abilities ....."

You are obvsiously casting doubt on the validity of the assessment procedures in the seconeary school. Can you elaborate on the in-college testing that you do which casts doubt on the secondary school evaluation system?

MR. WILSON: The in-college testing varies from college to college and I can specifically speak on the case that is being carried at Yeronga, whereas each new apprentice - we are speaking specifically in the apprentice area now - comes along and he has an ACER testing on numeracy and literacy, and what has been shown up in these tests is that if we have a student from one particular high school - in the case that came up the other day we had a student from Inala who got a four for mathematics. A student from another school also had the same rating, but the levels were entirely different. So what we are saying is that somewhere along the line the assessment procedure does not indicate the student's ability in a specific subject.

MR. POWELL: Had they done the same level of mathematics?

MR. WILSON: Yes. This shows up quite a bit in these particular tests.

MR. POWELL: And you are using ACER tests?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are blaming assessment. Do you think ----

MR. WILSON: I would not say that I am blaming assessment. I am not blaming anything.

MR. WOOD: Lack of uniformity in assessment. I have had one student in an electrical class who did not have a basic understanding of mathematics. Involved in giving the student some assistance I looked at the record cards and found them to be accurate. This student from a private school had a seven in maths and did not have a basic understanding of mathematics.

MR. POWELL: Seven as a Junior Certificate?

MR. WOOD: That is right.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think there has been a decline in standards?

MR. WOOD: We have no hard data. That has always been suggested by teachers. I think it has always been suggested by employers. I personally could not buy into that one. I think teachers have always complained about students when they come to TAFE not knowing enough. I think employers have always complained about it.

MR. MILLER: May I ask how long you have been teaching?

MR. WOOD: I have been teaching for 12 years.

MR. POWELL: In a TAFE college?

MR. WOOD: Yes.

MR. MILLER: He does look young.

MR. WOOD: You are kind. Is that on record?

MR. LINGARD: If I could comment a little further - it is not so much the method of moderation, I think, though. I think the question is perhaps the objectives that are being set by the various schools and probably even the method to determine whether those objectives are being reached appears possibly to be a problem. The system of moderation, of course, like all good systems, depends entirely in what is being put into it and if that information is not necessarily relevant, then, the way it is handled does not really matter. The information coming out of the system is just as useless as that which went into it.

MR. WILSON: There is just one thing I would like to mention on this subject. If we are looking at a situation of TAFE education, TAFE education usually came from basically the middle percentile of the society. As we have an increase in people entering the tertiary institutions in the form of C.A.E.s and universities in the last decade - it has gone up from 5 per cent to 25 per cent - obviously the percentile which we are receiving must be low. I think it is virtually impossible for us to make an assessment on those grounds.

MR. POWELL: What professional training is required of teachers at TAFE institutions?

MR. WOOD: A two-year preparation programme now. It is a sandwich programme where the beginning teacher does one

semester - a six-month period - in a TAFE college, one semester at the Mt. Gravatt College of Advanced Education - previously the Mt. Gravatt Teachers' Training College - another six months in a TAFE college and another six months at Mt. Gravatt. While he is in college, he is under the wing of a teacher preparation co-ordinator who basically oversees his teaching practice. At the same time he attends from time to time a teacher preparation centre where he is given further preparation in basic TAFE teaching practices.

We are reasonably pleased with our preparation programme currently. There are a number of problems with us. It is a very expensive process and takes up a lot of our time. But it has been a progressive step.

MR. POWELL: At the TAFE college, do you call yourselves lecturers or teachers?

MR. WILSON: We are teachers. I think everybody who teaches should be called a teacher.

MR. POWELL: Are you registered teachers?

MR. WILSON: A number of us are registered but the Act does not apply; it applies only to those who teach in schools and a TAFE college is not considered to be a school so registration does not apply to us.

MR. KREIS: However, I would point out that the present course being undertaken at the Mt. Gravatt college by our beginning teachers will in fact give them a diploma on completion and it will entitle them to registration.

THE CHAIRMAN: On page 7, in (b) 2, you say -

> "Q.T.E.P.A. would like to highlight the general lack of co-operative interaction between the various Branches of the Department of Education in this State."

You make a generalisation there. Would you particularise for us?

MR. LINGARD: The thrust here, I believe, is the interaction between the teaching staff and perhaps the possibility of solving a lot of the problems at sublevels within the department. As educators we are not even aware of what interchange goes on at high departmental levels but our concern is that there appear to be differences in opinions, needs and requirements, and all types of problems running through from the teaching staff of the different departments and there is no simple solution to resolving these other than if they end up in the Press or some such place.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are talking about the Technical Education Branch, particularly?

MR. LINGARD: I am talking about interaction between Technical Education Branch personnel and personnel of the other branches.

THE CHAIRMAN: Primary and secondary and advanced education?

MR. LINGARD: That's for sure; the need is the same.

MR. WILSON: To add to that, I believe that most secondary teachers probably have no concept of what we require of our students and, by the same token, I doubt whether very many TAFE teachers really understand what is going on in secondary schools. In smaller areas - country areas - there is a greater interaction between personalities. You find that TAFE teachers in country towns tend to belong to similar organisations together with secondary and primary teachers. In city areas such as this we are virtually two separate organisations; two separate groups of people who just do not interact with each other.

MR. MILLER: How could you be brought together?

MR. WOOD: We suggest that we be brought together under one commission.

MR. MILLER: No, just for discussion purposes. In country areas they come together-----

MR. WOOD: There is a great need for it even when we have a college and school side by side. Last week I heard that in their Grade 10 classes now, in the maths at Yeronga High School, they don't deal with vectors. It is a basic thing which I think just about every trade would require in resolving forces, that is, to know something about vectors. There is no appreciation of what we require whatever.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why do you think an education commission would be any better? Is it just an aversion to the present system and therefore something else must be better? The education commission might end up by being quite political, too. The difficulty there is that you cannot do anything about it. You can vote out a government but you can't vote out a commission.

MR. LINGARD: That is a problem, yes. We will have to concede that there are problems.

THE CHAIRMAN: It might end up making the wrong decisions, too.

MR. WILSON: We do not dispute that.

MR. KREIS: We do feel, however, that a commission would, in fact, be more capable of having community input.

MR. POWELL: Even though it is not directly responsible to the community?

MR. KREIS: We probably look at it from the point of view that it is not directly responsible to the Government, more so than the way that you put it.

MR. POWELL: It would still be responsible to government; where would it get its money from?

THE CHAIRMAN: Why would it be naturally more responsive to the community? There is nothing in any commission that I have been associated with which has had that natural feeling.

MR. KREIS: Maybe that was a poor choice of words. It depends on the way it is structured and the structure of the commission would be very important, of course. We do not mean to imply, by the way, that the present Education Department is not satisfactory, one in which TAFE can function. It is quite to the contrary. A lot of people in other States are pushing very strongly for some form of autonomy for TAFE in a way similar to how the C.A.E.s have autonomy. I don't think we favour that at all; certainly TAFE fits fairly well into the present structure of the Education Department in Queensland, anyway. I would say that. But the education commission is something that we, as an association, have favoured for some time. We feel that many of the points we have put forward in the submission could be brought about, and the one mentioned earlier with regard to how secondary and TAFE teachers can be brought close together could perhaps be achieved by such a commission - only perhaps.

MR. MILLER: In the last paragraph on page 9 of your submissions you mentioned the high unemployment rate among teenagers and school-leavers. Are you claiming that this problem would be alleviated, in part, if these people had more

training in employable skills?

MR. WOOD: There are two areas here. One area that we are not exploring at all in this State is the self-employment aspect of it. It certainly is being done in other States; programmes run in TAFE institutions, for example, for people who wish to be self-employed as office cleaners. My understanding is that there is very little employment for people cleaning offices but there are a lot of offices out there to be cleaned and there are people prepared to have the offices cleaned. There is work out there and there is one thing in TAFE in Queensland that is left out completely - giving people skills for self-employment. Once again, I think pre-vocational courses tend to do that. We are very disappointed that it has not been expanded this year. We certainly have the applicants. We certainly have a high acceptance rate - and those exiting from the courses - and it is highly accepted by the participants. I think for sure that an employer is more likely to put a person on if he has a number of skills even though sometimes those skills are not direct. For example we had a student who was employed because he happened to pick up skills in regard to first aid in courses. That was the skill the employer happened to want at the time. There is a lot of personal development that takes place when a person goes through a basic course in preparation for a trade and I think he becomes more employable because of that. I think employers are more inclined to take people after they have done some sort of course; it is evidence that they are prepared to work. Whereas, if they don't have extra skills they are considered guilty without any trial.

MR. KREIS: I would support that with the evidence brought out in South Australia. They have run many courses there for unemployed youth. It has been found, just as Keith said, that although they apply for a job for which they have not the particular skill the fact that they demonstrate the ability to attain a skill in that area is more likely to help them get employment.

MR. WOOD: The other point sometimes missed is the personal dignity given to a person. That is something worthwhile. I think we are abandoning our youth by not giving them such programmes.

MR. LINGARD: I think there is a practical aspect, too, that in spite of all the aid that various employers get there is a real cost to the employer in employing a person while in fact for some period of time he is effectively quite useless and unproductive. This tends to be a factor that is causing most employers I know of to be very wary about putting young people on.

They are not a productive unit and employers do not see them as an investment.

MR. WOOD: I am in a college where pre-vocation training is run. We see a complete change in the attitude and behaviour pattern of students from school coming into a TAFE institution, where they come a bit closer to the real world.

MR. MILLER: That is interesting.

MR. WOOD: Yes. There are simple little behaviour patterns and it is almost "kindergarten" to talk about them. On walking down a passageway students will stand in the way on day No. 1 and teachers have almost to push their way through. That does not happen in mid-term. It is as quick as that. Students are different then.

MR. MILLER: What you are saying is that students then have more respect for TAFE teachers.

MR. WOOD: Yes, or more respect for people. I think, once again, as they pick up a skill they feel better for it. They are proud to go home and tell Mum they can weld or paint or knock two pieces of wood together to make something. I think, particularly in the courses in the personal development area, it is working. In TAFE we have brought people in - in the human movement area and so forth - and developed them in a number of ways, which is something of a departure from what technical education has been. We would certainly like to see an expansion of it. That is obvious from my comments. We hope you will recommend that some money be directed to that area.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid time has beaten us. I should like to thank you very much for appearing and giving us of your time. I would be pleased if you would convey to your association our sincere thanks for their co-operation and the preparation of their submission.

MR. WILSON: Thank you for giving us the opportunity.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now welcome before the Committee representatives of the Geography Teachers' Association. The association's submission is coded JL-603. It has been received and studied by members of the Committee and we are now pleased to welcome executive members of the association here this afternoon. I would ask if the representatives would in turn identify themselves and give the executive positions that they hold in the association.

MR. FLINT: My name is Graham Flint. I am president of the Geography Teachers' Association of Queensland.

MR. GERBER: I am Rod Gerber, vice president, G.T.A.Q.

MR. SUTTON: I am Ken Sutton, immediate past president of G.T.A.Q. and the Australian Geography Teachers' Association.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I will now ask Mr. Powell to commence the questions.

MR. POWELL: On page 6, section (h) "Other matters", you say in paragraph 1 -

> "G.T.A.Q. feels so strongly about the need for adequate, effective in-service education that we would suggest that teachers lose their registration after a period of three years unless they can produce proof of having attended at least one five day in-service course."

When would you suggest that teachers should undertake these in-service courses - during school-time or vacation-time?

MR. FLINT: I suppose we would all like to do it in school-time but we realise that this would cause problems with other teaching arrangements and so on. I would say that most teachers in secondary schools would be prepared to attend conferences in the May or August holidays. This leads us to another problem that we have with holidays.

MR. POWELL: I noticed that you have something in your submission about the holiday system. Earlier today we had a submission that put forward another idea which is different. If you will bear with me for a moment, I will throw it at you and see what you think about it. The suggestion was that there be a 10-week period as a first half semester, which would include a test week. There would then be a two weeks' holiday, which would occur some time in April, probably around Easter but, as Easter moves around, it would be difficult to pin it to Easter. That would be followed by a period of nine weeks in which there would be a test week. There would then be two weeks' holiday in July. That would be followed by another period of nine weeks, with two weeks' holiday in September. That would be followed by a fourth period of nine weeks that would end with the Christmas vacation. That would mean an extra week's vacation overall. It is a bit hard to throw that at you so quickly, but how do you like the idea of having a period followed by two weeks' holiday, another period followed by another two weeks' holiday, another two weeks' holiday and then the Christmas vacation of five weeks instead of six?

MR. FLINT: In many ways I do not think that is very different from what we suggest except that we like the semester period. Our senior geography is, of course, divided into semester units. There are eight geography units, of which a child may choose four. This process may not be very different.

MR. POWELL: I suggest that system to you because it has

not been suggested to us before. A suggestion similar to the one that you have made has been made and industry has objected to it because it would not allow them to reorganise so that their workers could have a number of times during the year in which they could have a period of time with their families. Under the system I have just mentioned there would be four occasions during the year when at least two weeks would be available for workers to go off with their families. Under the other system there are, I think, two periods of a single week.

MR. FLINT: One big problem that we find is that Queensland is the odd man out so far as national conferences are concerned. This is a great difficulty. I am a member of the Australian committee and there are great problems in arranging national conferences. I think it is important to have national conferences to see what is going on in the other States.

MR. SUTTON: Having been Australian president, I can say that this has been the biggest problem that I had to face in organising Australia-wide conferences. We were fortunate occasionally to have Christmas holidays in January which fitted sometimes but it meant that Queenslanders from Brisbane were all right but Queenslanders further north were not because we could get back at the week-end to start school but they could not. The other comment I would like to make is that the two weeks mid-semester may perhaps be a little long. One of our aims is field work, tours and exercises based on that, and this has become a much more viable proposition recently with more flexible transport. This may stop some of that if there are two weeks in between. It may stop longer tours.

MR. POWELL: Do you do field work during school-time or vacation-time?

MR. SUTTON: This is vacation-time.

MR. POWELL: This would give you three opportunities, each of a fortnight.

MR. SUTTON: Yes, it certainly does give an advantage for shorter trips but a number of schools now go overseas to places such as Indonesia and New Zealand in quite large numbers and they are getting very valuable information about other cultures.

MR. HEWITT: You mention a number of things that you believe require research. I should like to ask you about a few of these. First of all, there is the feasibility of separate matriculation colleges for years 11 and 12. Would you like to support your reasons why you think research is necessary on that?

MR. FLINT: The three of us attended the national conference in Canberra last January and we were rather impressed with the new ACT matriculation colleges which we were very strongly told were an old thing in Tasmania. They had been going for about 10 years there. I think the three of us were very impressed with the nature of them, mainly from the discipline point of view. A lad of 18 going to a matriculation college is a very different disciplinary problem from, say, an 11 or 12-year-old who may still be at the same school.

MR. GERBER: Perhaps another of our concerns in relation to the National Matriculation College is one of the things that were lacking as seen by the recent Schools Commission report, in terms of the lack of challenge provided in our senior school for some of our students. We feel that they are perhaps not being stretched to their abilities. Perhaps this is one of the means - it is not the only means - by which we foster a transitional type of learning experience for the student who is reaching adulthood, by official terminology now, and the student who seeks responsibility.

THE CHAIRMAN: You talk about the innovations programmes and you seem to imply that some bad decisions have been made there. I am referring to page 6.

MR. GERBER: In terms of a number of areas including innovations and disadvantaged, the impression is that we are not saying that the systems or the programmes are not working. What we are saying is that there are probably areas of improvement that we would detect in terms of a needs basis. I know that the innovations committee has a large number of proposals put before it each year but it faces difficulty with the available funding in making a selection of innovations based on the definition of "innovation", which has a range of meanings. Obviously we are suggesting that there be a closer look at the moneys that become available in terms of other learning situations, innovations being one of them, cultural disadvantagement being another area as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: So you are not saying really there have been any bad decisions?

MR. GERBER: In relevant terms we may be able to detect what we in our association regard as a certain school, as it were, getting funds for a particular project that seems menial, but we also are aware that there is in the definition of "innovation" innovation within the local context as being a possibility. It could well be that not being on the State committee - I don't think any of our executive members are - we are not fully aware of the decisions by which these decisions are made. But in relative terms some appear to be for menial experiences.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you give us an example?

MR. GERBER: There are certain local area studies, for example, where a grant has been received. One is for the study of local vegetation within the local environment. Many geography teachers would do that in the normal course of events. If we were to put down a number of priorities in terms of innovation perhaps we would have a different pecking order.

MR. FLINT: This particular case that we were discussing a moment ago-provided this information is disseminated amongst all teachers, maybe it is a good thing. But in fact the innovations programmes aren't being done. It is being done for an individual and that is where it stays. That is the big problem with it. Another case in the Brisbane area is that in which something like $14,000 was spent on a geography room. That is great for the particular school, but that is where it stays.

THE CHAIRMAN: If there is a paucity of curriculum materials in geography wouldn't that be the target area for that sort of money? Wouldn't it be more efficiently spent there?

MR. GERBER: This is part of our major concern in relation to curriculum materials. As listed through our submission, we have made overtures to departmental agencies, to the A.B.C. and the like. We are finding that in many cases we are not receiving sympathetic support, so we have had to get voluntary support in the creation of our own teacher curriculum materials and in disseminating them to teachers. Without boasting, we must admit that this has been a successful exercise, but we are working on an honorary basis. There are certain areas in the Education Department which would argue that it is their role to produce and disseminate this sort of thing. We have had some success with the A.B.C. because we protested very loudly to it. It is now on side with us. But we would argue very strongly that we need Government support to create curriculum materials which are very useful. This is one of the reasons why we were quite disturbed to find that the only large-scale Australian attempt at curriculum materials has been withdrawn from use in Queensland schools.

MR. MILLER: Could we turn to page 3. Are you in favour of importing total curriculum packages? I read that into the second paragraph on that page.

MR. GERBER: The answer would be no. The social studies area is an area which is ripe for the importation of overseas materials, as you all well know. We could quote exemplary examples, such as the High School Geography Project and the Geography for the Young School-leaver Project from the United Kingdom, which have admirable qualities and usefulness. We would argue that parts of them are very relevant, but what we are seeing in the tendency towards school-based curriculum development as it is occurring in Queensland is that the teacher adapt those materials to his or her setting. If that would occur and these good products would be disseminated we would argue that the teaching of geography and social studies in primary school would be greatly enhanced in Queensland. But as at the moment many of the imported packages are limited.

MR. MILLER: Do you see a need for the Curriculum Development Centre?

MR. GERBER: We would see a great need to liaise with the centre, and this is one of the basic problems we find in Queensland. It is sad but it is true that as Queenslanders we tend to be neglected by C.D.C.

MR. MILLER: What is the role of our curriculum department?

MR. GERBER: We have at least one person on that who has a strong interest in geography, but he has been through pressures of work in general curriculum needs and assisting the department in other areas and he has been able to devote only about 1 per cent of his time to furthering our cause, as it were. He, together with a co-opted advisory teacher, who is working in an honorary capacity, has been able to put together a booklet on simulation games and that is going through the pipeline now . That has been the sum total of the curriculum department's assistance.

MR. HEWITT: When you say that these comparable courses and units could be produced for the local scene, you mean in Queensland or in Australia? You would like to see more in Queensland?

MR. SUTTON: Yes. We have the people here who can do it,

but they haven't got the time in their teaching situations to be drawn out from their schools. This becomes a problem for the administration in a school and for the teachers themselves. It also upsets the family background if you are working them 24 hours a day.

MR. HEWITT: You are satisfied that we have professional expertise in Queensland?

MR. SUTTON: Yes. Having been on the Australian scene, I would say yes. In fact we have been commended by other States for our advances in geography that we have made in this State and for the materials that we are producing.

MR. HEWITT: Are you talking only in the geography context now?

MR. SUTTON: Professional expertise in geography, which is my special field, but having had some knowledge of trying to set up a national subjects association, I would say we have similar people in other teacher associations and in the professional field of curriculum and development.

MR. FLINT: There are two appendices which we did not add to the submission. One concerns unit development, which we produced at the end of last year, in school time. We had 18 teachers who were freed from their teaching in the last week of school. We produced 350 copies and we have had to reprint another 150. We are getting applications from all States for that unit of work. We have the expertise and we have the ability to produce.

MR. HEWITT: That is a great compliment to you, isn't it?

MR. MILLER: Is there anything of value to geography teachers in the SEMP material?

MR. GERBER: Yes. We would argue there are materials of value. We would argue that SEMP being a set of materials has areas within the urbanism unit and within some of the community material. We would say geography teachers who are playing their role actively in schools are resourceful teachers. By "resourceful", they are able to evaluate resources and implement them in a school situation. Therefore with SEMP as such, and as some independent systems are doing, they would take relevant aspects out of those units that would supplement their school-based programme. They would not be taking the whole package and simply using it per se, so the purpose is to use these materials as curriculum materials and that is the emphasis we would place on it. That is the reason why we reacted with a letter to the editor in "The Courier Mail" when this decision was made, because we had and been involved with some of this material-----

MR. MILLER: Only some?

MR. GERBER: Yes, only some, because we argued strongly that with a teacher of geography there is not any knowledge that is special to geography. It is characterised by a way of looking at things, just as history and the other disciplines are, so we argued strongly about the students' development of an understanding of what we might call concepts regarding the way things are organised in space and around the earth's surface. By developing these things we need ranges of curriculum materials and so we would say parts of SEMP are very useful in this regard.

MR. MILLER: Did you make that point in your letter to the editor? I cannot recall the letter.

MR. GERBER: Yes, and we also made the point about Australia's major curriculum development project being rejected by the Government system in Queensland and here we are, as a voluntary organisation, set to create our own resources again, and we were decrying that sort of deprivation as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I ask you to respond to the criticism that has been put to us in a number of submissions that children are not being taught enough content in geography today, that there is too much emphasis on process and that children do not know where the countries are?

MR. GERBER: That is a reaction to what we might call lack of literacy in geography. This touches on a broader issue. This comes back to what you might call basic skills in geography. Our emphasis in terms of basic skills is not the three Rs as such. We say that there are basic types of communication which a child needs to display an understanding thereof and to be able to live in the world - education for living. So just knowing where a place is is nice, but it is not the be all and end all of geography.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is important, though, isn't it?

MR. GERBER: It is important, sure, but just the knowledge of a strange place name in Africa may not mean anything. Facts per se change throughout time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Africa doesn't.

MR. GERBER: No, but the argument about the highest mountain in the world has now been challenged. It depends how you measure it. Mt. Everest was the highest mountain in

the world. Now there is argument that if you measure it from a different perspective Mt. Chimborazo is now the highest mountain in the world. That fact by itself is a waste of time, but the important thing is we regard facts as important as a means of understanding.

THE CHAIRMAN: The knowledge of the basic spatial arrangement of the countries is certainly surely a basic skill that everybody ought to have?

MR. GERBER: The reason we are opting for process, as you have called it, is because we are saying that the means to the end is an understanding of a number of concepts and there are skills that the children develop to be able to live in the world, to find their way around the world. To do that they require facts and knowledge.

THE CHAIRMAN: So they carry an atlas, a map?

MR. GERBER: Yes, they could carry an atlas.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no need to know where Moscow is.

MR. GERBER: I would imagine that learning the development of where these places are could very much be a learning experience in developing a concept of location. Yes, they would develop these understandings.

THE CHAIRMAN: They should know where Moscow is?

MR. GERBER: I would expect in relation to current issues - take the Commonwealth Games of late, the Olympic Games, yes, Moscow is very relevant in that sort of situation, the location thereof.

MR. FLINT: This is included in the Grade 8 syllabus at present, a knowledge of current events. I think I am right in saying it is included in 9 and 10, that current events should be taught by teachers. I think possibly I am a little older than Rod and I do tend to be sorry that some of the place names have disappeared slightly in our geography teaching. But I still agree I would not go back to capes and bays as I learnt as a boy.

THE CHAIRMAN: You don't think we have gone overboard on the process?

MR. FLINT: I would like to see perhaps a middle-of-the-road course, myself.

MR. SUTTON: I would too.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have criticisms that children do not know where Africa is, whether it is in Europe or where the hell it is.

MR. MILLER: There was a letter to the editor not very long ago about this.

MR. GERBER: There have been a number of case studies done using Australian, Canadian and American students in terms of their plotting the location of places in relation to their knowledge. These have been done. I think the slight difference in terms of emphasis is what we are arguing for. We are arguing for a situation where the geography teacher's role is not that of learning off lists of names and where places are by teachers telling all the time. The role of the geography teacher is to structure these inquiry situation so that the students develop some understandings and are

better able to stand on their own feet, and perhaps if in doing so they neglect, say, five out of the 50 capitals of the world I would not regard that as a bad thing if in the process they became better able to live in their own environment and find their way around, and to be able to work as geographers would do.

MR. MILLER: Did I understand you to say a few minutes ago that we are educating our students for life?

MR. GERBER: We would hope that this is what we would be doing We would not be teaching geography for geography's sake, to train geography teachers. What we would be doing would be encouraging the students to use the skills or techniques that the child has learnt in school to actually use them in later life. If we don't do that we don't see a lot of relevance in what the children are doing.

MR. MILLER: Yet in a submission we received yesterday we heard of a survey that was carried out in which 87 per cent of parents wanted their children trained for work and not for life.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I could explain that a bit better. They wanted a greater emphasis on vocational skills.

MR. GERBER: In addition to this you have research that has been done for the Australian college by Dr. Peter Botsman.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is the one Mr. Miller is referring to.

MR. GERBER: There was a reference in that as well in terms of public attitudes that most of the parents in terms of their attitudes to, say, a subject such as geography - most of their attitudes are based on what they experienced when they were at school. So most of those parents who are making those observations would have experienced capes and bays geography. So we have the situation where, if I could just relate back to that first question as to why we thought about deregistration after three years, we do not subscribe to this notion of a vaccination theory whereby once you have had it it is good for the rest of your time. This sort of notion of recurrent learning is very basic and we see a problem that teachers of, say, 30 years' experience do experience what we might call the generation gap.

MR. SUTTON: The problem is that a lot of the information which was relevant for them is now irrelevant. For instance, the naming of a capital such as Djarkata was Batavia for them and that is learnt and never forgotten. Cities change their names three times in 10 years, as, for instance, in West New Guinea. You cannot cope with them. Once a student is finished at school they are not going to go back and be aware of those sorts of things. Certain ones have to be dealt with as important facts and this will depend on the area in which the child is living. Here comes another problem, that we move about with great frequency today, and what are you going to take as your area of living?

In the olden days it was a small area, and we did not move very far. Here to Caloundra was a day's journey. Now it is here to London or the South Pole. So you cannot cover these in the length of time you have available for all the educational processes available.

MR. FLINT: Learning for a job is very dangerous. In my own family my sons have changed their jobs within the last five years. One lad was a forester for a while; now he has decided he is going to become an engineer. How can you train for one very narrow feature? I would be very sceptical about that one.

THE CHAIRMAN: It does not necessarily follow that you cop out altogether, does it? Therefore you don't try at all because there is a natural movement around in the population? Because there are changes taking place you don't give any emphasis at all to vocational training?

MR. FLINT: This is what Rod was saying. Geographers are looking at a wide view, not just lots of little narrow facts. They are looking at a wide view so that the kids can go into whatever fieldthey like - say, the skill of knowing where the north point is, scale, and looking at those basic features. We think this is the important point. I didn't learn about scale until I was much older.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think most people would agree with you, but what a lot of people are saying is that there should be a base of factual information regarding the spacial arrangements of the States and the countries of the world. This is an important part of life's skills, so that they can understand newspaper reports and so forth. That base of information ought to be there. Just the fact that you can carry a map with you is not in the opinion of our petitioners good enough.

MR. GERBER: We would say that you would do that via developing understanding of some simple little concepts like relative location, in other words the position of places in relation to each other, so that when you start looking at the movement of locusts, as they are on the move at the moment, you should be aware of the proximities of various facets of Africa to other parts of the world, so that you can get some idea where they may link with climate.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you sure we are not overdoing this - that we are so sure that these facts are not necessary that we will not go into them at all?

MR. SUTTON: We are not saying that the facts are not necessary.

THE CHAIRMAN: Surely a mental picture of the spacial arrangement of the world is an enormous asset to be committed to memory?

MR. GERBER: We are saying that that is very relevant. That is basic. But we are saying that the means to get it is not via rote learning. The means to get it is via the student being encouraged to solve problems - seek and investigate certain happenings.

MR. SUTTON: Observe and interpret and have experiences he can draw on later on when no situation is exactly the same again.

THE CHAIRMAN: At the end of the programme do you ask him to write it down to see if it has worked?

MR. GERBER: The test is not a rote-learned type test. I will quote the example of some of the applied type of tests. We are seeking understanding. Understanding comes in an applied way, rather than simply recall. Our major objective is really to seek whether or not understanding has occurred and whether we have achieved our objective. We see facts or knowledge as being vital in that regard, but not being predominant. It is a means to an end. And so, yes, we would still have all those facts you were talking about, but the organisation or the ordering of them has meaning rather than being haphazard as it has been in the past.

MR. HEWITT: Would that be the same approach in primary schools or is it a bit more basic there?

MR. GERBER: In terms of primary schools the geography teachers and the Australian basis group now is moving into the primary area in support - not as a take-over area but in support - and we are finding that the development of what we regard as the basic competencies or skills - primary teachers and the students are showing great awareness of capabilities with them. It is burgeoning in the primary area. The efforts that are being publicised by our advisory teachers and the like seem to show that yes the same is true.

MR. FLINT: One of the things I have been pushing as president is greater co-operation between primary, secondary and tertiary. I was interested in those TAFE people saying that there is not enough co-operation between secondary and tertiary people. I think that is a very important one.

MR. HEWITT: It seems to be a criticism in too many areas.

MR. FLINT: We have invited primary teachers to come to our conferences.

MR. SUTTON: We have. On the Australian scene that has been Queensland's contribution. That has been my theme too. We set up committees and workings, and reports have come through. This is a very important area, and we initiated the report there some four years ago.

MR. MILLER: We receive that message loud and clear everywhere we go.

MR. GERBER: One other parting message that we would like to express - in terms of the encouragement of curriculum development, school programmes and the like, it is very much becoming school based. In other words, individual schools have the responsibility to create their own learning programmes and the like. Geography teachers are quite disturbed at the way in which the support services offered for these programmes are being whittled away. We quote, for example, the advisory teachers' service which is being scaled down. People who are serving their three-year term in primary and secondary, especially primary, are not being replaced. The support in terms of curriculum programme is not forthcoming. We are being restricted to a degree in terms of State development funds that we can get made available for our own disposal. That means conscientious, honorary people in the education field, both practising teachers and those in tertiary institutions who wish to assist. We feel as if there is a dichotomy here in terms of the trend in curriculum development and the trend to give support - they seem to be moving in opposite directions.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why is it necessary to create all that learning material at the school level? Lots of teachers are saying that they don't feel qualified to do it. They feel that

up to 70 per cent of it could be done at State level and save all that dreadful duplication and all the necessary support services that are required to undertake it.

MR. GERBER: There is also a diffusion process which is required here as well. It is all very well to create new units, as it were. If these units use a different approach to what the teacher has used in his or her practice, not only just the creation of units but the actual implementation of them will not be successful if the teacher is not introduced to different approaches. We argue for a balance of types of teacher approaches. We are not saying that any one is better than the other, but we are encouraging the diffusion of this, and teachers often will not implement unless they see it in operation. We have a challenge in terms of how do you diffuse something - a new idea or technique - which has been found to be useful if you cannot get the support. We would be perfectly willing to assist if a centralised agency was to provide funds and clientele who are going to create many of these resources. What we do with our members is encourage them with their good ideas, to bring them along so that they can be disseminated. The emphasis is on dissemination, not as perhaps occurred under the old system whereby you secreted all your good techniques in the cupboard and told nobody about them because your students were going to get all the good results. The emphasis is on disseminating good ideas. This is where these teacher units and what-have-you have been so successful. They have been showing teachers concrete means of invoking these ideas, and getting apparently good response from the students.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have had a very satisfactory discussion. Thank you very much for your frankness. Would you please convey to your association our sincere thanks for the preparation of the document. Thank you personally for appearing before us.

The Committee adjourned at 3.10 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 3.23 p.m.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the representative of S.T.O.P. and C.A.R.E. has been detained. I hope that it will not be inconvenient for the representative of the Progress Party to proceed with his submission at this stage. It is Mr. Sturgess?-- That is right.

Could you proceed now to discuss your paper? We will take the S.T.O.P. and C.A.R.E. submission later. Would that be convenient to you?-- I have forwarded a written submission.

We have it. I shall announce to the Committee that we have with us Mr. Sturgess from the Progress Party, from whom a submission has been received. It is coded Au-87. It has been discussed by members and studied by them, so it will not be necessary to read it. We will now proceed to have a discussion on the basis of the material that is contained in it. Would you indicate firstly the executive position you hold with the Progress Party?-- I am research director of that party.

BY MR. MILLER: In the third paragraph in your letter you refer to denationalisation of the education industry?-- That is right.

What do you mean by this?-- We believe that while public funding or public financing of the education industry - and that is what it is, an industry - is permissible, we do not believe that public or Government or State control of that industry is proper, and of course the proposal for voucher funding is such a move.

That is close to my heart and I was going to come to it in a moment. Therefore, you are advocating that all Governments should be out of the field of education?-- Out of the field of control of curricula and so on. With respect to financing, that is another matter and, of course, a voucher scheme presupposes Government involvement in financing.

You want the area of the curriculum decided by a regional council or by the individual school or how would you see that?-- One of the problems for liberals, of course, is that they have a fear, a concern, that the Government will use, the State will use, vested interests will use the education system to push their particular philosophy. For that reason, it is our desire that curricula control as much as possible be taken back to the individual school level.

Not a regional council?-- Again we are still facing the same kind of problem in that case. It is still one particular group controlling, coercing, directing.

BY MR. HEWITT: Just a point of clarification. As you come from a political party, I think it should be understood that when you are talking about liberals, you are not talking about the Liberal Party but about liberals in the broader context?-- Yes.

BY MR. MILLER: We have a lot of complaints about students coming from interstate and the fact that their standard of education is different from ours. Would you not accentuate that problem if you allow a school to decide the curriculum in each individual school?-- There is the difficulty, of course, in that this is a State inquiry and, to some degree, that problem must exist if Queensland only were to go to a voucher system. Just as we do not have that kind of problem

existing in other industries - for instance, if I belong to a health insurance scheme or if I belong to an insurance scheme of any other kind, I can, without very much difficulty, go from State to State. Similarly, no doubt corporations would grow up, religious organisations and charitable institutions would grow up, which would provide a co-ordinated system of education even on that kind of scale.

BY MR. POWELL: I believe that the voucher system that you have documented here has a few problems. For example, many of the Catholic independent schools have shown a disinclination towards the system. Would you force it on every school and on every school situation?-- When we speak about forcing, what we are saying is that in such a situation it would be necessary for them to completely fund their own activities on the vouchers.

Who would pay for the vouchers?-- The Government, with tax money.

So you would not be really denationalising education?-- As I said, to the extent that we would be removing State control of curricula, it would be, so that funding would be simply channelled through.

How are you removing State control of curricula?-- The submission proposes that the only requirement for accreditation of a school would be that it meets certain requirements with respect to the basic skills - reading, writing, arithmetic, comprehension and so on, not contained information, the kinds of areas where there is some sensitivity, not control with respect to discipline levels - the percentage of sport involved and so on. Just on your point, I am not aware - I was not aware that some of the religious schools were opposed to such a scheme. It perhaps might interest you to know that in 1926 some of the earliest moves for a voucher scheme were made by the Archbishop of Westminster in England, so there have been times when the church institutions have in fact actively promoted the voucher scheme.

Would you see under a voucher system the State imposing some sort of standard on schools with regard to teacher qualifications and the qualification of teachers?-- We have not specifically addressed our attention to that in the submission. However, a study done by a book produced by a man named Robert Love in America, who in fact advocates a totally denationalised education industry, with not even a voucher scheme, points out in that particular case, where they have produced a completely independent school without government funding of any kind that they could hire teachers who had not technically received degrees and qualifications and, in fact, they were getting high-grade teachers, particularly among people who had graduated in the arts area and did not want to go through another three or four years to get formal teacher qualifications but still were well educated and qualified to do it and had some natural skill to do it. It is my belief, and it is not specifically discussed in this, which has been approved by the party, that teacher qualifications can be handled at a school level.

Who would run the school? Would you have an elected body?-- It is entirely up to the school. It is feasible, as I said at the close of the submission, that teachers themselves could set up a school and run it the way a normal business would be run. No doubt some companies would be interested in this. Such is the case in America. It is no real problem.

BY MR. MILLER: If a voucher system were introduced and there was a massive movement from the State high schools to independent schools how would they cope with this transfer of students?-- Presumably by some quota system. I would think, on my observations of how the market-place normally works that they would begin raising their fees.

I am thinking about capital costs of buildings and so forth?-- Obviously there is some advantage in schools which presently exist, where a great deal has been paid for. They have the natural advantage so, in effect, the change would be gradual. Any additional capital costs must be funded from within the voucher sum or, alternatively, by levying an extra fee. We are not proposing any additional Government expenditure in this area.

BY MR. SHAW: Assuming as Mr. Miller said, that there would be an influx into the private schools from the State schools, would not the cost per head of teaching in State schools then increase, so would there not be an ultimate increase in the cost of education in that way?-- A possible problem. There are limits as to how many the private schools can presently take. Whatever change took place would have to be gradual. They would have to use a quota system because of the natural limits of their present facilities. There is an opportunity for it to grow gradually.

BY MR. POWELL: You seem to indicate that if the result of a school falls below the average for a district that school would either close down or receive less money. Do you think that this might encourage schools to expel the low-achieving students?-- Again, I would draw on Love's practical example of a school where, in fact, there was no voucher funding at all and where they relied on complete funding by those who attended. I guess that is a fairly similar situation and certainly it is closer than we would get in the private schools. The situation there was that the headmaster, being a fairly normal teacher, having come out of the normal teaching system, when faced with a problem child adopted the traditional pattern of expelling him, at which point the board of governors at that school said to him, "Well, that's fine, but where will

you get the extra sum to cover the expenditure that we are committed to?" Competition and efficiency necessitate meeting your expenses so that there is a much greater effort to strive with the student to keep him there.

Don't you feel that perhaps the system is avoiding the question of the person who just cannot achieve at the average level? There are a number of children in the school community who just cannot get up to the normal standard. What will you do with them?-- We are suggesting, for instance, that there is such a thing as a normal standard. That normal standard is based on a fairly homogenous education system that caters for a particular kind of student. We are presupposing that they are sublevel - sub par- rather than saying, I would suggest, that they are not well suited to the present education system. Schools would arise like Hubbards, or whatever, which would cater for the particular interest or style of those students. It may well be that there are some who are not well suited for any kind. That then raises, perhaps, the question of even greater diversity than we have suggested.

You are saying that the low-achieving student in the school today is low achieving because the school is not reacting correctly towards him?-- I am suggesting that there is a fair possibility in a system which is as homogenous as ours that there will be individuals who will not fit into that system and, for that reason, will be low-achieving.

BY MR. SHAW: You said previously that the Government, in deciding which schools would be accredited, would look at the basic things like reading, writing and arithmetic?-- Yes.

Would not that in effect be exactly the same as establishing a core curriculum?-- I guess it depends on what we mean by a core curriculum. The problem is that areas which, on the surface, appear as unsensitive as history and, perhaps geography - but certainly history - that I can think of specifically, can be very much biased to a particular viewpoint. Certainly economics is a good example of that. We get into areas, as we begin to see proposals for human relationships courses - these are very sensitive areas, areas where there are personal philosophies and ethics which come into it a great deal. Those, we certainly do not see should belong to it. The proposal that it should be limited to schools limits the amount of interference and philosophical imposition by those who are making decisions, no matter who they may be, whether they be a religion, humanists, a human relations commissioner or whoever.

BY MR. HEWITT: A number of submissions have argued that the Government should be removed more and more from education. Some proposals regarding an education commission, and your thinking, go along similar lines. Few governments are perfect and most governments make mistakes. We concede that very readily but, in the final analysis, governments are answerable to the people. Don't you see a great risk in removing education from the ambit of government and putting it in the hands of people who are not answerable to the people and who could become remote and start processes that may not easily be reversed? With all the manifest weaknesses of governments administering education, the great strength is that ultimately they are answerable to the people?-- Well, quite to the opposite; I would have thought that a voucher system made those who were making decisions far more answerable to the people than a system where people vote once every three years and probably, at best, only get to vote against the other lot rather than for any particular group they support.

In that context I was talking more about determination of curricula than arguments about your voucher system?-- Again, I would have thought that a system as localised and as responsive as a voucher system would have enabled a more direct control by the consumers of the commodity than the very really indirect process. Probably at best, it is only a body of this nature, or some kind of permanent commission within a government system, which can provide any kind of responsiveness. A voucher system provides that at a more local level, whether it be local geographically or within certain interest groups.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Who would set the exams?-- That is a difficult problem, and no doubt one that you are facing and of course one that this State has been facing for the last couple of years. There has been some proposal within the party and it appears within our policy document that there should be an external examination.

G.L. Sturgess
(Progress Party)

That, of course, has its problems. But if we are limiting it to a public examination in the skills, we are perhaps avoiding some of the problems that have existed formerly. We have not specifically addressed ourselves to that problem. It is a difficult one, and, being a political party and unpractised in the nature of examinations and how people perform under examination systems, it is particularly difficult. Obviously there are problems with the Radford scheme and moderation as well.

BY MR. POWELL: Who would set this examination?-- It would be the State.

So the State would still have some say in the field of education?-- Certainly, in the sense that it was controlling accreditation. We are suggesting that that should be limited only to the skills in those unsensitive areas.

BY MR. MILLER: Let us turn for a moment to the middle of page 5, the paragraph starting, "Any school may participate in the voucher system ....." Are you not introducing the concept of payment by results here? I was hoping the voucher system would enable the parent to decide the school of his choice to which to send his child. I think you are restricting it now to a very small area?-- What we are saying is that it is only in those basic skills in certain non-sensitive areas that that examination and that State control should apply so that the parent has a wide range with respect to everything else but, when it comes to certain core subjects, the State would maintain some standard. The philosophy of the party is that there is no need to stop at that point but certainly that is an acceptable level.

You want every child to achieve a certain level, otherwise there is payment deducted?-- We suggest in that sense -----

No slow learners?-- Again we get a problem. Slow learners, the mentally handicapped and so on are not a separate category but some kind of continuity and as such there is a difficult problem at that end of the scale. We are getting in fact into the area of welfare. Should there be welfare funding for people in that condition? The submission has not addressed itself to this matter at all. My observations, having looked at the problem at some length, are that we have a situation in this State now in which some of the systems for educating the disadvantaged, the handicapped - whatever you like to call them - are illegal. The Government has made them illegal and it seems to me that by getting back to a voucher system and the kind of flexibility in getting into the specifics of it at that end we would at least be attempting to cure some of the problems that exist at present.

I was not looking so much at the area of the disadvantaged as I was at the slow learner?-- There is some sort of continuum, yes. There is not a cut-off point.

You would actually penalise a school that could not achieve the desired result with each student?-- That is correct. Again, I must go beyond the limits of the submission. The kind of thing that presumably would exist is this: those schools that decided to cater for the special student would apply to the Government for some kind of special categorisation under a welfare arrangement rather than strictly educational.

Do you know of any country in which a voucher system is operating successfully?-- I know of only one that has even tried it. I know that in England recently there has been a

proposal by a group in the Province of Kent. They made a recommendation that there should be such an experiment for a brief period of time. In the United States, the Alum Rock school attempted it. That was not a voucher scheme as simple as ours. They attempted a fairly comprehensive scheme with a great deal more curricular control. Some people say it succeeded and some say it did not. There are some published works on that experiment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for coming before us today and explaining your submission which is, I think, the first we have received from a political party. We will be hearing from the others. Thank you very much for giving us your time today and for the preparation that you put into your submission. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your party members who participated in its preparation.

MR. STURGESS: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite representatives from the S.T.O.P. and C.A.R.E. organisations to appear before us. They are Mr. and Mrs. Joyner and Miss Joyner. Thank you for appearing. I think I could describe your material as not one submission on its own. We have had a number of submissions that have been studied by members of the Committee. For record purposes, they are coded AU-38. I would ask you, Mrs. Joyner, if you would let us know first the executive positions you hold with these organisations.

MRS. JOYNER: First of all, I would like to apologise for being late this afternoon. I have not been feeling too well today. I have been burning the candle at both ends and it has been catching up with me. I am the director and organiser of S.T.O.P. and C.A.R.E. My husband is the treasurer and Lexie is now working only part time and works the rest of the time at home with me as assistant secretary because I have too much office work to manage on my own.

THE CHAIRMAN: The wealth of material that you have provided for us does convey a serious concern with what is happening in education generally today at almost all levels. I do not know whether anything was spared. What reason do you have for believing that these concerns are shared by the community in general?

MRS. JOYNER: I personally have spoken, just since the MACOS course got into the news, at 60 meetings in Queensland and I would have spoken personally to over 2,000 people. I also accompanied Mrs. Gabler when she was here for the MACOS course in the beginning and she spoke at, I think, 14 or 15 meetings and her audiences would have been about 2,000. From the feed-back that we get from those people who come to our meetings, I am quite sure that the majority of them by far are favourably disposed to what we are doing. The only objectors we seem to get at our meetings are when they are stacked with some teachers and student teachers. Normally we do not get any objections from parents at all. Lexie has some folders of letters there. We get anything up to 15 letters a day from people asking us for help, offering their support, sending donations and saying how much they are appreciative of what we are doing.

THE CHAIRMAN: You see your organisation as having wide community support and growing?

MRS. JOYNER: Yes. We are getting new members all the time. My husband will tell you about that. He handles that side of it.

MR. JOYNER: Membership has grown to over 2,000 now. Revenue for the last 12 months was $6,000 up on the previous best year we ever had. That was for one year. It would be over $10,000.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is the gross revenue?

MR. JOYNER: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is your membership fee?

MR. JOYNER: $5 membership fee and $3 if people just want to subscribe for literature.

MRS. JOYNER: When we say our membership is 2,000, that is membership plus subscribers plus donors. The subscribers are not necessarily 100 per cent in favour of what we are doing. That is why we have the subscription fee.

People like teachers, news people, students and people like that like to know what we are doing and subscribe to us without necessarily agreeing with all our aims and objects.

MR. POWELL: On pages 1 to 3 of your submission in a number of instances under the general heading of "General Principles of Education "- I refer specifically to 9, 15, 17, 18, 21 and 23 - you contend virtually in each instance that the Christian ethic should be taught within the school and that anti-Christian "isms" should not be taught in schools. Do you feel that there could be an opening for people with anti-Christian attitudes to denigrate Christianity in the way they teach Christianity?

MRS. JOYNER: I quite realise that could happen, but what we are having now is the denigration of Christianity without the chance of Christianity being presented in a good light at all.

MR. POWELL: Do you feel that the safest way out would be for the school to have nothing at all to do with any form of religion?

MRS. JOYNER: We cannot do that legally because of the referendum that was held back at the turn of the century. It outlawed secular humanistic-type religion. This is what I am so concerned about. What our referendum was held to outlaw we now have in our schools.

MR. POWELL: But if none of that was used in the schools at all there would not be the opportunity for anybody who has a bent towards any "ism" to advance his ideals, would there?

MRS. JOYNER: The whole problem now is that with the change and the twist in educational materials,MACOS, SEMP and Study of Society are good examples - we have material that is geared to the teaching of the religion of humanism. We cannot avoid it; it is the whole box and dice of our education system at the moment. I have material here to show you that this is all stemming from a treaty made between UNESCO and the Federal Government. This is why our education system has changed. It has had to change because of the treaty, to keep within the terms of the treaty. My proposition to you is that we as Queenslanders and the Queensland Government should annul thetreaty or withdraw from it. It is now governing our education system rather than you people in the Queensland Parliament governing it.

MR. MILLER: Could you give us any idea of which countries attended that UNESCO conference?

MRS. JOYNER; I do not remember offhand. I am not sure whether I read that part. The part I was concentrating on was the part to do with the treaty as it affected our State education system.

MR. MILLER: It would be interesting to know which countries attended that conference.

MRS. JOYNER: I believe Australia is a signatory to it, during the Whitlam period.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have mentioned SEMP, MACOS and Study of Society. I have not seen much detail about the condemnation of the study of society, which is a course for grade 10 students at the moment and it is being trialled for grades 11 and 12. I have not seen much detailed criticism of it; it has just been lumped in with other things.

MRS. JOYNER: I have here some information about it that was sent to me by a lecturer at the Mt. Gravatt C.A.E. about four or five years ago. He wrote to me asking why I wasn't taking up a campaign against Study of Society. He said he was quite sure it would interest me. He asked, "Are you unaware of it? Or don't you mind?" I asked him to send me the information, which he did. There are about 200 books listed, all recommended by the Board of Secondary School Studies. One of them is "Desert People", from which I have circularised extracts. With the exception of five or six at the very most, the other 200 are very slanted towards Communism, towards one world Government, denigrating America, denigrating Great Britain and denigrating Australia. They are very unpatriotic books. This is the problem: 200 books are listed, and whilst I have rung up a couple of schools to try to find out which books are used, it all depends on individual teachers. So it depends on which teacher chooses to use which book. I cannot even say that I know "Desert People" is being used. All I know is it is recommended. This is the problem with Study of Society; I have not been able to pin down exactly what is being taught.

MR. MILLER: Could I ask you to state briefly what your objections are to SEMP?

MRS. JOYNER: It would be impossible to be brief.

MR. MILLER: Well, as briefly as you can.

MRS. JOYNER: It was implemented and designed and the material was specially chosen to fit in with the UNESCO anti-discrimination treaty, which calls it anti-discrimination in education. Boiled down with the facts I have here, what it really means is that they take the worst country in the world and the type of education that country has got and then say that nobody else can be better than that. They say that would be discrimination. All education has to come to the level of that country. Mind you, they might be trying to uplift other countries, too - I am not saying they are not. An example given in here is the reason why our schools now are not using textbooks but newspapers or books compiled by the students for themselves is that that is the way it is in India, and if it is like that in India we have to be the same over here. The reason is that in India they cannot afford textbooks.

MR. MILLER: Would it be possible for us to be given a list of the countries that attended UNESCO? I would like to know the countries that attended.

MRS. JOYNER: Could I hand around extracts from a book called "Educating for a Changing World"?

MR. MILLER: Does it have the list of countries?

MRS. JOYNER: No. This is a UNICEF production, showing what the aims and objects of the United Nations through its various agencies are. Practically everything we are finding as a problem here can be pinpointed in some of those articles that have been written.

MR. POWELL: While they are poring over that - much of the evidence we have had before us from various people indicates that they believe our society is a changing society and that the education system should be able to cater for the dilemmas and conflicts that occur within society, so that when children leave school they have some background way of preparing themselves. Do you accept that idea and, if you do,

how do you think these types of programmes should be implemented in the schools?

MRS. JOYNER: That we should be preparing children for change in the type of life-style?

MR. POWELL: The conflicts they are likely to run into later on.

MRS. JOYNER: That is what UNESCO and UNICEF are saying they are trying to do; but I have given you in the submission you received yesterday contrary arguments. As a person who has done child psychology, I am quite convinced that you don't make a child good by feeding him what is bad.

MR. POWELL: So you would reject the proposition that the schools should be undertaking that type of work?

MRS. JOYNER: Yes. We want positive education, presenting the right side - as I have shown in one of those articles that I gave you yesterday.

MR. POWELL: The difficulty is there with the first question I asked you. With the teaching force that we have it cannot be said that every one of those teachers is a committed Christian and therefore the value that they place on things is the same value that you place on them.

MRS. JOYNER: I believe that we must have a return to standardised textbooks and the textbooks must be written, as they were before, with the Christian philosophy coming through, with respect for God, respect for parents, respect for authority and loyalty to one's country. That is the sort of thing we used to have. The McGuffey Reader is recommended in one of those articles that I gave you yesterday. It stipulates the sort of thing that you need to uplift children.

MR. POWELL: You would say there is no place in the school for this arrival at values and values clarification?

MRS. JOYNER: No. Values clarification is the brainchild of Simon and a few other men like him, behavioural scientists. It is prepared by these people who are clever at what they are doing and experts in their field. They know the effect it is going to have, and the effect it is going to have is the undermining of Christianity and the reinforcing of values of humanism - which, of course, are geared towards producing autonomous people - individuals - which is just a nice way of saying, "anarchists".

MR. MILLER: While we are on value classification your submission refers to this quite a lot. Can you explain a little further just what your understanding is of value classification?

MRS. JOYNER: It is brainwashing, actually. They wash the child's brain of all the values and standards they came with from home and then they present them with moral conflicts and dilemmas, all the things which will place them in confusion, and then by questioning and peer influence and group discussion they gradually make them come to see that that which is good and pleasant and makes me feel nice is the right thing to do, whether it is right or wrong. So virtually the wrong attitude is locked into the psychological part of the child's brain. It actually says in the MACOS booklet - one of the teachers' booklets - that education now is to be psychological education, it is to get into the subconscious.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask you for your response to this: would you care to comment on the proposition that any material is safe in the hands of a good teacher?

MRS. JOYNER: In order for SEMP and MACOS to be safe in the hands of a good teacher it would mean that they would have to contradict all the aims and objectives of the promoters of them. They would have to go against all the directions that are given to them in the teachers' handbooks and they would have to have survived sensitivity training at in-service training courses. So the chances of a good teacher handling the material in a Christian way would be very small.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you just amplify that point about the sensitivity training at in-service training courses?

MRS. JOYNER: Sensitivity training is another part of the psychological techniques to brainwash the teachers, first of all. I have had a lot of first-hand experience of teachers who were brainwashed who have come to my meetings. No matter where I was speaking, on the Darling Downs or in Cairns, the same things were said to me, exactly the same questions asked and the same comments made. So it is very obvious that at all the in-service training courses the teachers were attending they have been fed all this sort of thing through the psychological techniques that are employed and these things have been instilled into their minds so that is the way in which they think and those are the things they come up with because it has been put into them as part of their attitude the same way as they have to do that to the children.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you talking about teacher effectiveness training?

MRS. JOYNER: That does do some of it but that is not what I am talking about especially at the moment. Teacher effectiveness training is based on sensitivity training, but sensitivity training has lots of different facets to it. Each one is a different approach and has a different objective. But in the teacher training course for MACOS and SEMP they are specifically trained in how to handle objections from parents. They are specifically trained in how to use the material so it does the most psychological good, they would call it, or damage, as I would call it, so by the time they have finished with the course the promoters of the course know that it will be used the way they want it used.

MR. MILLER: You are said to be a fundamentalist and say that our school policies should be bound by Biblical truths. Is this the case?

MRS. JOYNER: I was asked that at a meeting on the Darling Downs recently and before I answered the question I asked the questioner to explain what he meant by "fundamentalist". He could not tell me so I asked the audience could anyone tell me what is meant by it. Finally, one teacher got up and said, "I believe it means you believe a literal translation of the Bible." I asked the first questioner, "Does that suit you. Is that what I have to answer? Do you want to know if I believe the Bible literally?" He said, "Oh, yes, that will do." I said,"I don't, so I can't be a fundamentalist. I believe in all sorts of interpretations in the Bible being applied in different instances and so I certainly don't believe in the literal interpretation of the Bible from cover to cover. So I am not a fundamentalist, obviously." But I do believe that the Bible should be the guide-line for our education system.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think it is better to have controversial subjects dealt with in the class-room than have them thrust onto children over the T.V.?

MRS. JOYNER: If we could be sure that the questions dealt with in the class-room were going to be dealt with from the Christian standpoint that would be all right, but from all the evidence I have at hand, it is being dealt with from the humanist point of view when they are being discussed in the class-room. It is situation ethics that is being taught, not the Biblical standards at all. This is why I say we should get back to traditional textbooks where the child will be given the tools with which to handle this society. If you have had the right information, standards and factual background given to you in your formative years in school you will be able to handle the world when you get into it. But as it is now they don't want them to handle the world, they want them to adjust to the world. In other words, they want the child to change, to become like the world, not to go out and reform the world.

THE CHAIRMAN: What do you think is the big solution to the problem?

MRS. JOYNER: Standardised textbooks is one; respect for authority, respect for God , respect for adults. For another, external examinations, perhaps in conjunction with some internal examinations as well. Also, where the external examinations are concerned or, for that matter, any examination, the same as they do at Q.I.T., a post for anyone who had a reason why they did not do well the first time.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the Board of Secondary School Studies and boards of advanced education?

MRS. JOYNER: I think I put in my submission that I am opposed to too many boards and councils because I find, particularly with the idea of setting up school councils and boards in the local area, that this is only taking the control of education away from the Government. I have the Australian Union of Students policy booklets which came into my hands in 1970 and 1971 and they outlined their plan for taking over the education system in Australia. Part of it was to break up education into regions and localised areas because they felt that education was too firmly in the grip of the Government. They wanted to take it out of their hands so they could take over each individual section one by one. So I am very much opposed to the regionalisation of control of the education system because ~~you don't get~~ people are not compelled to vote for a school board or council or whatever it might happen to be. The only compulsory voting is for your representative in Parliament.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about parental involvement?

MRS. JOYNER: That should be through the local member of Parliament because you will never get 100 per cent parental involvement in the school board or council and you will tend to get those who are not parents because the parents are home looking after the children, in most cases. I have been to some p.and c. meetings, especially where it was a meeting to decide on sex education in schools, where out of 120 people present there were 20 parents and 100 students and academics from the university.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the universities and C.A.Es.?

MRS. JOYNER: How to run them?

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you suggest restructuring them?

MRS. JOYNER: I feel it was a wrong step in making them autonomous because they have confused autonomy with license. They do not believe any more that they are still under the control of the frame of reference of the Act. The Act is still their frame of reference and yet they are not abiding by it. I have had many instances where we have pointed out sections in the Act that were applicable to things that were happening at the C.A.E. or university and we have just been told, "Oh, we are autonomous." They seem to think they are not under the framework of the Act any more, and this is in relation to types of textbooks being used and persons like Bettina Arndt,for instance, being allowed to come and lecture students. I was at lectures she gave at the university during orientation week for two years in succession.

THE CHAIRMAN: She is from what organisation?

MRS. JOYNER: She is the consulting editress of the "Forum" magazine which at one stage we had banned for six weeks through the Literature Board. One issue was banned last December. Yet she is out there lecturing to the freshers and at one meeting I was attending she was actually telling them to come to her afterwards and she would initiate them into lesbianism. Sixteen or so went to her afterwards - I saw them go - and the sexual things she described I could not repeat here.

MR. MILLER: On page A13 under the heading "Questioning Innovations" you accuse a minority of teachers of using their academic freedom to, "justify blatant indoctrination of our student children with alien philosophy."

Have you any evidence to substantiate that serious charge?

MRS. JOYNER: Of course, one instance is through MACOS and SEMP. That is blatantly indoctrinating our children with alien philosophies, because humanism is an alien philosophy in a Christian country. I have instances here of complaints I made to the Education Department. This is my file of complaints about textbooks. This is a copy of "Messageways". Book 1 or Book 2 was banned. This is Book 3. Actually Book 2 and Book 3 were even worse than Book 1. I don't know why they haven't been banned. Book 1 was banned because it suggested children should write essays about how to murder somebody and what it would feel like to be a murder victim. This one continues that same thought even further.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is "Messageways" used for?

MRS. JOYNER: In English.

THE CHAIRMAN: In what year?

MRS. JOYNER: I am not certain what year.

THE CHAIRMAN: Grade 8?

MRS. JOYNER: That is one of many. "Actions and Reactions" is another. There are five books in "Actions and Reactions". I have been complaining about that for four years, yet they have not been banned at all. I sent a list into the Minister that was prepared by the Board of Secondary School Studies. It included 10 or 12 books I had been complaining about individually, without knowing they were being recommended by the board. I sent the list to Mr. Bird and asked would he revise the list and wipe off all those books that were being recommended. "Actions and Reactions" was one of the series of the books there. "Patchwork" was another one. I have "Patchwork" here. It is a shocking book. There is not one page in that book that I would say was a worthwhile page to read in a school, yet that was a high school book for Grade 9 in the year I first complained about it. They stopped using it in that school as a result of the complaints from the parents and myself. It could be getting used in many other schools. It is still being sold through the bookshops.

MR. MILLER: Could I see that book?

MRS. JOYNER: I have a photocopy of it if anyone would like to pass that around.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should soon start to conclude. Are there any questions you would like to address yourself to very briefly that the Committee members have not asked you about?

MRS. JOYNER: I do not know whether you can grant this request but so far in the submissions I have sent into you there has only been MACOS, SEMP and values classification. I have no end of material that I want to prepare to send into you as I can get it done. Will there be any opportunity for me to appear before you again at a later date? I have so much more I would like to talk about.

THE CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately the Committee plans to complete its public hearings next Thursday, and we are hoping then to proceed with deliberation. We have had a great volume of material from 3,500 parties. I think we have a fair base upon which to begin our recommendations.

MRS. JOYNER: I have with me today copies of one sex education programme that was being used in a Catholic school until I complained about it as a result of a parent complaining to me about it. I would like to distribute that just to let you see what I mean by the sort of sex education programmes we are concerned about. I have worse evidence than that at home but I couldn't find it before I left. The one I have at home is evidence of a course that was going to be used when Mr. Pat Doherty was organising to put sex education in schools some years back. He was actually speaking at this meeting I mentioned where there were 120 people. I asked him at the time if this particular sex education course I had with me was the one he was going to use, or was it similar to it. He told me it was identical. It was the one he was going to bring into the schools. I believe he is now in New South Wales, and it is in use in New South Wales. I believe he is responsible for having put it in. It lists some questions to do with sexual activity, starting with holding hands and going right through every incident that you can think of right up to sexual intercourse. Down one side of the page a column is provided for the boys to write down at what stage in their relationship with a girl would they demand these various forms of sexual activity. On the other side they have to write down at what stage in the relationship with a girl would they think she would allow them to do these sort of things. The girl has to do the same thing. She has to fill in on the girl's side what she would expect the boy to do or what she would be willing to do, and what she would expect the boy would demand.

THE CHAIRMAN: What school was this being used in?

MRS. JOYNER: In all the schools in New South Wales, I believe, because it is part of their course that is now in use down there. A parent sent it to me in great distress. Her son had filled it in. She sent it to me filled in, and it wasn't very pleasant reading.

MR. MILLER: Have you got it there?

MRS. JOYNER: Unfortunately I couldn't find it before I left. I can get it and send it to you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would be very pleased to receive that. We must be quite firm that the submission date has closed as from 4 July. Permission was given for some late entries. We are very hopeful that we will conclude the information-gathering phase of this inquiry shortly. I am certain members would be interested in that particular item.

MRS. JOYNER: I would like to explain the use that this questionnaire is put to. The children were told before they filled it in that whatever they filled in on the form would be their standard of morality. As long as they adhered to that standard of morality they would not be doing anything wrong. Obviously if the boys wanted to be permissive they would fill it in in a permissive way, and therefore they would be convinced there was nothing wrong. That was their standard to them, and if it felt right for them it was right.

MR. MILLER: You are very critical of the influence of humanists in our education system. It is recorded that there are only 5 per cent of humanists in our society. Is there any real danger from humanists?

MRS. JOYNER: This is my big argument. Five per cent of the community is having such an influence over the other 95 per cent. They are having that influence because it is a long-term plan going all this century that I know of, and probably longer.

They have been gradually working humanists into positions of influence so that they are there when needed to implement the things they want to implement. UNESCO, its whole policy is humanist. It is probably run by humanists. So SEMP and MACOS, especially SEMP when it was being prepared was prepared with the humanist philosophy undergirding it. That means that the children of 95 per cent of the population are being taught the humanist religion. It is declared a religion in America, and that is what they are doing here. I could pass around these sex education courses.

MR. SHAW: You said previously that children should be taught respect. You mentioned several things that they should have respect for. How would you teach them respect?

MRS. JOYNER: I am not a teacher. I sympathise with teachers at the present time because I know they are having problems where parents are concerned. Some parents don't want their children to be disciplined.

I believe it has got to be a case - if the child does not want to be or if a parent won't allow the child to be disciplined to the standard that we used to have anyway - and surely that could be implemented again - then there might be a case for a child being - or a parent being - warned that the child cannot stay at the school, because I do not believe that we should undermine the standards of the 95 per cent of the children for the sake of 5 per cent.

MR. SHAW: Do you then see respect and discipline as one and the same thing?

MRS. JOYNER: Pretty well, yes. That book there would undermine respect and discipline because that is the way it is written. Incidentally, in the front cover there, mention is made of the principal of the school down in Melbourne, I think it is the Huntingdale school, and his name was given there as being one who helped to prepare that book. Well, Huntingdale school is one of the alternate schools where they have no discipline. He has said himself - I have heard this second hand through Mr. Phil Cullen actually, but Mr. Cullen was down there and he was telling a meeting I was at the result of his visit there, and he said that that particular principal said that the children could come to school but not be asked to come into the class-room because education was not compulsory, only school attendance, so that is the reason I put in my submission that I believe we should change that and make it that education to an acceptable standard is compulsory rather than school attendance and that the exceptions could be made for those children who are mentally incapable of reaching that standard.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to thank you very much for all of the effort that you have made to produce the information for our inquiry. I have no doubt that this has placed a strain on you and your family and I thank you for all the attention that you have given to us. Along with the other very many submissions we have received, it is appreciated and I thank you for it.

MRS. JOYNER: May I put a little request to you? I have a little bit of information that I would like to give you in camera, privately, confidentially. I do not know whether you can arrange that or see me afterwards or what.

THE CHAIRMAN: For how long?

MRS. JOYNER: It will not take long. It is a little bit of evidence of harm caused, ~~what~~ I believe, through the setting of certain essays and the reading of certain books in a school where the teacher, according to my information that was given to me by the deputy principal of the school, did have an illegitimate child and was teaching the children to live the same sort of life-style that she lived.

MR. SHAW: I think we have heard that story.

MRS. JOYNER: I definitely do not want to say what I want to say in a public way, you know.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask the members of the Committee if it is the wish of the Committee that we proceed immediately to hear it? Could I ask for your advice? Up until this time we had determined that we would not have any confidential information in case there were leaks so there could not be any leaks. There is the question of the "Hansard" staff. I think it might be best if the "Hansard" staff -----

MRS. JOYNER: Well, put it this way: I will not mind telling you publicly provided I do not name - I was going to give the names and so forth, but if I ----

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I would prefer that you just did it quickly, without names.

MR. SHAW: We have heard the story without names before. I think it would be better if you spoke to Mrs. Joyner yourself confidentially.

MRS. JOYNER: Well, I will give you what I can give you first and you see what you think. I put a complaint in about this.

MR. HEWITT: Mr. Chairman, I have structured my day to finish at 4 o'clock and I have a commitment which I must now discharge. Have I your permission to withdraw?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MRS. JOYNER: I would like to pass this around, too. It is just one copy. I could supply you with other copies later on. That gives you an idea of why I started S.T.O.P. and C.A.R.E's work in the first place, because these were the books coming home from our school library. All of those came from our school library.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could we proceed reasonably quickly? We have to be back here by 10 a.m. tomorrow and some of us have meetings in our electorates tonight.

MRS. JOYNER: This is part of the letter that I sent in to Sir Alan Fletcher when he was Minister for Education and I said -

> "Undermining of Christian Faith and Standards of Conduct:
>
> 2. By Essay Titles - Certain teachers are, in my opinion, undermining the Christian faith and moral standards through the type of essay they are allowing or encouraging students to write. Such titles as 'Sex Before Marriage', 'Drugs', etc. coming under the theme of 'Let's Be Natural', give great scope for the radical student, and this Society takes exception to any teacher who apparently takes advantage of a classroom situation to allow, through discussion or essaywriting,
>
> (a) any form of education in amoral human sexuality
>
> (b) any inference that it is 'being natural' (and therefore more or less inevitable) for students to indulge in either fornication or drugtaking.
>
> 'Abortion', 'Hell is of the People' and 'At What Age Should a Girl leave Home' are other essay titles to which parents have taken exception. The fear of daughters leaving home is a very real worry for many parents, without the thought being put into the minds of thirteen and fourteen-year olds that there is an age at which they should do so, and it is for them to decide when.
>
> .....
>
> 3. By Thematic Assignments - Some teachers have suggested such topics as ('War', 'Hate', 'Love', 'Racism', 'Changing Family Structure', 'Permissive

Society', 'The Role of Religion', 'Ideas of the New Left', 'Youth Culture', 'Drugs', 'Religion and Philosophy', etc. In connection with certain Grade 9 students who chose the theme of 'Love', the controversial 'Love Story' was suggested by the teacher, but my information is that most of the students actually used as their source books such doubtful quality magazines as 'True Love', 'True Romances', 'True Confessions', 'Real Experience', 'Dolly' and 'Seventeen'."

THE CHAIRMAN: How long ago was this?

MRS. JOYNER: That was back in 1969 or 1970, I think, or 1971. I complained about it in, I would say, 1971 or 1972. Anyway, the sequel to that is that at least one child who was in that class and did those essays and assignments and took part in those discussions has now left home and she has intimated that it was the influence of the class and the peer group that established her viewpoints in opposition to what her home viewpoints were or standards that had been given to her by her home.

MR. POWELL: At what age was this person when she left home?

MRS. JOYNER: I think it was Grade 9 and, as I say, the teacher, according to what information I received from the school, was a teacher who was either living in a de facto relationship, but at least she had an illegitimate child, and that the theme of everything she taught the class was that this life-style was acceptable.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. I appreciate your efforts. I now adjourn the meeting. It will be reconvened at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The Committee adjourned at 4.30 p.m.

FRYER
Mss.
81/12

DAY 10

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE 30 AUG 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M.J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W.D. Hewitt
Mr. C.J. Miller
Mr. L.W. Powell
Mr. E.F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:

Dr. R.D. Goodman
Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P.A.B. Krebs
Mr. K.P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E.S. Newton

BRISBANE, 30 AUGUST 1978

ELEVENTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 10 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are pleased to welcome this morning Mr. John Douglas Tucker, Senior Lecturer in Public Administration at the University of Queensland who is to discuss his submission to the inquiry. It is coded J1-69. We are very pleased to welcome you, Mr. Tucker, and we thank you for coming.

JOHN DOUGLAS TUCKER, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: We have scheduled your appearance before the Committee today because of your attitude to the question of an education commission for Queensland. We have received a number of submissions from the Queensland Teachers' Union, the Queensland Parents and Friends' Association and other organisations who have been arguing that an education commission would be an apolitical approach to this question. You have suggested that it is a political approach. I wonder if you would care to amplify that statement a little?-- Thank you. In putting that point to the Committee, perhaps I should first of all say that I have some sympathy with the motives of the proponents of an education commission. Quite obviously some instances in the past - this goes back some years - have caused them concern over the relationship of elected politicians and the expert administrators in the education field. I could perhaps take the SEMP decision as one illustration of the sort of problem that I think is exercising the minds of the proponents of this sort of scheme, but only as an illustration and not as the main core of the problem. It seems to me that what worried them more than anything else was the fact that an announcement was made about, I think, 2 February of this year by Mrs. Rona Joyner that she was about to open a campaign to have SEMP banned in schools, and then on 23 February, I think, an announcement was made by the Premier that Cabinet had in fact ordered the banning of SEMP. In discussing this particular issue I want to separate the SEMP banning from the MACOS decision, which I see as quite a different matter. So far as the proponents of an education commission are concerned, this shows that a situation can arise under the present circumstances in which a body of 18 men at best, not experts in education by any means and with perhaps very little or no consultation, can make a decision on a matter of educational policy. That is the best interpretation. Some people would say

that the decision was made by one man on the advice of two women. That might be an uncharitable interpretation. But regardless of how it happened, that sort of situation has led these people to think that the best way of ensuring that decisions will be made by people who are knowledgeable on educational matters would be to take decisions of that sort out of the hands of politicians. They argue therefore that there is too much politics in education. I have some sympathy, as I have already said, with that point of view on the facts that have worried them but I reach a totally reverse conclusion. My argument is that far from there being too much politics in education, there is in fact too little. It seems to me, in the case of the SEMP decision, for example, that here we have a situation that was not thoroughly canvassed in an election campaign. It was not really an issue at that point of time. Had the normal processes been followed and had there been a public debate about the issues in question - had newspapers carried feature articles, had the correspondence columns been filled with letters to the editor discussing the pros and cons of the matter, had there been editorials, discussion on talk-back radio programmes and had there been current affairs television programmes discussing the issue - that would have given our elected representatives time, as both opinion leaders in the community and also as people who listen to what others have to say, to take the necessary soundings, to talk about it in the party room and in public places, and to make their views known to the Government. I am sure that what I am saying is like teaching my grandmother to suck eggs. Basically my point is that had those normal democratic political processes been followed, when the final decision had been made, whatever its contents, it could not have been argued that the proper democratic processes had been bypassed, as I think they were on this occasion.

That was in relation to SEMP but not in relation to MACOS?-- I think MACOS was pretty well canvassed. I myself would not have any argument with the MACOS process at all. Let me emphasise, too, that I am not particularly interested in the content of either decision. It does not concern me whether the Government had said, "Yes, let us ban SEMP" or, "No, let us not ban SEMP." It is the process leading up to the actual decision that interests me. The point of my submission was simply this: one sort of reaction to this situation is the **reaction** of proponents of an education commission; that is to say, if this is what is going to happen, let us for heaven's sake do away with the politician entirely. Let us insulate important matters of educational policy and administration from political influence. Let us wall it up behind an education commission and if a small number of men are going to make decisions, let it be a small number of knowledgeable men, professional educators, Teachers' Union representatives, even perhaps some nominees from the Government to represent the public interest. In that way if the democratic process is not going to work, at least let us have a situation in which the people who do make decisions will be knowledgeable people. In that way we might get better quality decisions out of the system. My reaction to that is to say, "No, let us make our democratic processes work properly. Let us ensure that we tell our elected parliamentary representatives that we are unhappy that this sort of thing happens but let us retain the very important principle of accountability." We must do this because education is a most important area of Government activity. At the present time, whatever else we may say about education decisions, if we do not like them at least we know who is making them and we can dismiss them at the next election.

If we adopt the sort of proposal that has been put forward for an education commission, it would be very competent for our elected representatives to say to us when we go to them with our complaints, "I am sorry but there is really nothing very much that we in the Parliament or Government can do about it because this is a matter for a virtually autonomous education commission and you will have to direct your complaints to that commission." The problem there, of course, is that if we do not like what the commission is doing, we cannot dismiss it. Again, of course, I am sure I am teaching my grandmother to suck eggs when I say that that is one of the great strengths of the representative system. That basically is the reason fundamentally why I oppose an education commission. I should like to add the point that the proliferation of statutory bodies of this kind adds to the complexity of the machinery of the Government.

It makes government increasingly less intelligible to the man in the street, who does not know whom to blame when things go wrong and it also creates additional problems of co-ordination, because bodies like this tend to develop their own aims and objectives, and it is very hard to make their aims and objectives and priorities fit into the aims and objectives and priorities of other bodies.

BY MR. MILLER: Would you favour an education commission in an advisory capacity to the Minister?-- I would have no objection to the Minister seeking advice wherever he wanted to seek it. If he decided to formalise it by setting up a commission of that kind, yes, I would have no objection to that. Let me say, however, that the bodies which have been put up to be represented on the commission already have access to the Minister in other ways, and I would think that there would be a certain duplication of access, of communication channels, if you did that. But no objections in principle, so long as we knew finally who was responsible for the decisions that were made.

BY MR. POWELL: Do you see one of the problems of the administration of the Education Department being the fact that the Boards of Secondary School Studies, Teacher Education, etc, are between the director-general and the Minister?-- I am not sure that they are exactly between the director-general and the Minister, are they, so much-----

In the hierarchical position that we have been shown, they are?-- Could I say that I do not think, for example, that the director-general really is responsible, essentially, to anyone else but the Minister. He is not responsible to the Minister through the boards.

That is quite correct, but the boards are not responsible to any departmental officer before the Minister?-- That is so. They have direct access. That is quite true.

Do you see that as a problem?-- If one can take the Board of Secondary School Studies as an example - I have mixed feelings about such a board, because one can see that there are some advantages in giving that particular function some autonomy to go to work and develop curricula. One can see that there are great advantages in having a Board of Teacher Registration separate from the department. From the point of view of the director-general, it would be much easier if there were no boards, I would imagine, and it does complicate matters; it does make the machinery of government more complex, but so long as, in the final analysis, we can say that the Minister is responsible for what goes on, through the Cabinet to the Parliament, to the people,then I see no great problem, other than the unfortunate complexity of the present arrangements.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: How do you react to the assertion by the proponents of education commissions that the essential part of accountability in education is the parents, employers and other interested groups who would be represented on the commission?-- If the community at large could dismiss the commission, as they can dismiss their representatives-----

They could dismiss their representatives?-- That may be so. I have two things to say about that, though. One is that I think, by and large, the citizens of this community are already fed up with the number of elections that they have to participate in, and to ask them to participate in more - if they are compulsory - this will be regarded as a great burden and I think as people will not have a clear idea of what the issues are that they are voting on, they will tend to adopt,

in their voting behaviour, simplifying strategies such as, "Who is the Labor man on this ticket? I will vote for him" or, "Who is the Liberal man on this ticket; I will vote for him" without having a very clear understanding of what the issues are. Personally, I would prefer accountability to be of the kind that we have now where you hand over the management of a multitude of affairs, including education, to the Government through your elected representatives and if you get unhappy about what is going on, then you have somebody you can go to and tap on the shoulder and blame and finally dismiss. If, on the other hand, you had a voluntary system of voting for the people on the commission, I suspect that the sort of thing that you would get is what you get in other States where local bodies of various kinds have elected representatives and, in the United States, where local school boards are often voted on, on a voluntary basis, and that is a very, very low elector turnout. So that the people who were on the commission supposedly representing the community would in fact represent only a very small portion of the community in those circumstances. Either way, I think it is unworkable and undesirable.

BY MR. HEWITT: I find myself at the disadvantage of being full of praise for the comments Mr. Tucker has given us, in that he has presented, very succinctly, the counter-proposal and presents his case so well that there is very little I want to evince. I ask this question maybe: have you ever considered if there is any virtue in the executive form of government in the United States, as contrasted with our Westminster form? I ask the question in this context, that, with the executive form of government, an incoming Government would appoint its Minister extraparliamentary and, for the duration of the life of that Government, he then finds the best expertise in the State to run that department and, on the change of Government, that person and all the people he has appointed move aside with him?-- Yes, well, if one enters the complexities of grafting on parts of the system of another form of government in which the separation of powers is such a basic tenet, although in fact we know that the separation of powers is really a myth and it is a sharing of powers in the United States between Executive, Legislature and Judiciary, one gets into all sorts of difficulties, I think. One variant of the proposal might very well be that instead of separating the Executive from the Legislature as they do in the United States, perhaps incoming Ministers might be given the opportunity of installing from outside the Public Service or wherever they want a permanent - the word should be in inverted commas - head, a chief manager, of the department who would be removable and who would probably go when that particular Minister went.

Do you know that the Commonwealth Public Service Act has in fact been amended to provide for that?-- Yes, although I think one expects that in practice it will not make a great deal of difference, but it will enable an incoming Government to remove obvious political appointees of the previous Government.

That is the intention?-- Yes. I think there is some advantage in this. In Europe there is a well-known arrangement in which you do not have clean sweeps as they sometimes do in the United States and in various States and at the Federal level, but you have what is called a system of posts of confidence. If the Minister believes that he cannot really work with the incumbent - the permanent head of the department - then he is free to look around for somebody he believes can do the job. I think that might very well be a desirable form of convention for us to think about some time in the future,

where you have posts of confidence, not clean sweeps, not out-and-out political patronage, but a system which enables Ministers to find somebody with whom they can work more closely than the present system allows.

BY MR. POWELL: If I might move off the administrative side - in your submission, you have made some criticisms of the literary standards of students entering the tertiary field. Given that there could be a change in standards, do you find that there are improvements in other areas, for example, maturity of thought or judgment, better social adjustment or independence of students than was previously the case?--

Could I make a preliminary comment? I regarded the machinery of government aspects and the political aspects of the submission as the major thing I wanted to say, and in making the submission I thought I might add one or two impressions of an educational nature. I wouldn't want to die in the ditch in defence of those comments I have made. Having said that, though - it is true that there are literacy problems or problems of illiteracy in some students, and I attached a copy of a newspaper article only to point out that I was not alone in thinking this. Having said that, I really do find it difficult to make a judgment about the social maturity of students. I would say I think that the best students that we see at the university are equal to any of the best that I saw when I was a student myself. It is just that I think that further down the line there are worries. What the problems, what the difficulties and what the causes are ------

BY MR. POWELL: Could that be because there are more people of a lower intellectual ability attending university?-- I would imagine it is in part a function of the fact that there is a greater percentage of people attending university than was the case previously. I have the feeling that perhaps the teachers are not teaching students as well as I personally was taught at school. For example, just looking over my youngsters' work books when they brought them home I have noticed words that were correctly spelt marked wrong and I have found myself in a position of correcting comments and spellings of words written by teachers on my children's reports, and things of that sort. I would also say that it seems to me that a lot of very bright people who in years gone by would have gone off to the teaching profession have alternative opportunities and that may well leave somewhat less capable people now taking the future careers of our youngsters in hand. This may be part of the problem. I think there is a multiplicity of causes.

In your submission, on page 6, I think, you have made a suggestion that the subject of government should be taught in all schools. Do you see this as a factual exercise? Or could the subject matter be distorted by those whose sympathies do not necessarily lie with the democratic system under which we live?-----

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Could I put on the end of that: and is not that covered under social studies now?------

BY MR. POWELL: Citizenship education?-- If I can take the questions in the reverse order - if it is, I must say I think the teaching is singularly unsuccessful. If one can judge from the standard of knowledge of people coming into our political science and public administration courses - I suppose such people might be expected to have taken a greater interest in the subject at secondary level than most and that their interest has carried over into the tertiary sphere. Yet their abysmal ignorance of very elementary facts constantly appals me, so I find myself being a little sceptical of the effectiveness of teaching provided so far. As to your point about distortion -- yes, I would basically see it as a factual exercise. I would like people to know that there is such a person as the Ombudsman and I would like them to know what his functions are and the sort of redress that is available to the ordinary citizen if he runs into the usual bureaucratic red tape that we all know about. I would like them to know about such machinery as the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, which has been developed in the Commonwealth sphere, and the redress on the merits of decisions that is available through that sort of machinery. I am quite sure that most citizens in the street have no idea of these avenues

through which they might obtain a better deal from the huge governmental machine, which frightens them off so much. Because government seems to me to form an increasingly large portion of our daily lives and intrudes into them and because it is getting very much more complex I would like to see people have a greater understanding of the machine that confronts them and is growing bigger and more complex all the time. This does not really call for discussions on political parties, ideologies and things of that sort. Let me make one final point: that was a very tentative suggestion. I realise that almost every academic thinks that his particular subject ought to be given a greater run at secondary school level, and that might be seen as pushing my own barrow. If I can enter a word of self-defence - in fact I am a psychologist by profession, but I would not advise people to study psychology at the secondary level of education. I think I am trying to be objective about it.

BY MR. MILLER: You challenge the proposition that a Minister should automatically accept the advice of his departmental head. You say it may be that the salaried officers have forgotten what their constitutional role is. Would you care to elaborate on their constitutional role?-- All I am saying is simply that basically the ministerial department is really an extension in the final analysis and constitutionally of the Minister's personality. The only reason we have a department is that the Minister does not have 600 pairs of hands, or whatever the size of the department is, to do all the jobs himself. He has experts to advise him, and the most sensitive and critical matters will ordinarily be pushed up the line for the Minister's decision. He will be advised by experts, and if they are any good you would expect the experts most of the time to be giving the Minister sound advice which will take account of political realities. If they are not able to do that the Minister ought to have the means to get rid of those so-called experts and substitute for them other people who can do that. Normally the supposition is that Ministers should get advice that they can accept, most of the time, without too much worry. But that is a very different thing from saying that the Minister should automatically accept the advice of his expert advisers. I rather think that some people, in discussing these matters of SEMP, MACOS and similar issues, such as the Tarong Power House, slip on the one hand from noting experts are there normally to give the Minister advice that will be accepted to the proposition that the Minister is bound in some fashion or other to accept the advice. I reject that totally. That was the point of that sentence.

BY MR. SHAW: If I might elaborate on that - I would like you to clear up that point. You are not saying the professionals have an obligation to give the Minister the advice that he wishes to hear?-- Oh, most definitely not. What I am saying is that the professionals should, in formulating their advice, take account and must take account of all the circumstances. We know the sort of sensitive issues that will come up for ministerial decision do not involve only technical considerations; there are political realities to be considered as well. Any expert who goes ahead and proceeds to give advice on the basis purely of technical considerations should not be directly advising the Minister. Maybe he should be one or two down the line and he should be telling people who can then take account of political realities and give a balanced view of the situation to the Minister. The pure technician who wants to ignore political realities is not going to help his Minister. That is the sort of person the Minister may be able to get rid of and in a posts-of-confidence situation should be able to do so if he

finds that he cannot accept the advice a fair bit of the time.

BY MR. MILLER: You make proposals for upgrading p. and c. associations. If only 5 per cent of parents actually attend p. and c. associations, do you think that is a fair representation? Don't parents already have theopportunity of making recommendations through the p. and c. associations to the principal?-- I am a little worried about the content of Regulation 48, which really gives p. and c. associations - having been a member of one for a number of years, I have had a bit of personal experience in this, as have, no doubt, other members around the table - I am a little worried that eally their role is confined apparently to raising funds and providing the school with amenities of a physical variety, running tuckshops and so on. Personally - I believe this applies to many other people - I have gone along to p. and c. associations because I have been basically interested in the education of my children. The education of my kids goes a long way beyond the physical facilities available to them.

Therefore if a new principal, for example, comes to a school and changes what looks to have been a very satisfactory and working situation in the past it is natural for parents to want to discuss that, and the p. and c. seems to me to be the natural forum for them to do it in. If however this is ruled out of court and reference is made to the rather restrictive terms of regulation 48 then I think that is a matter for some concern.

BY MR. HEWITT: I think you were completely germane in what you said. You have the situation of the p. and c. which raises thousands of dollars for a capital asset but the moment it is acquired it is immediately and automatically vested in the Education Department and that committee does not have any say then in whether it can be disposed of, traded in or anything else, and that is a form of nonsense. I know that the Government is sympathetic to the proposition you are putting forward and I agree readily that that statutory recognition should be forthcoming?-- Thank you very much.

You made reference to the ombudsman. Would it be overburdening the ombudsman to ask him to adjudicate on educational disputes, or do you think some different authority should be established to handle that area?-- As far as overburdening is concerned, this is simply a matter of work-load. If the ombudsman's work-load increases by 100 per cent then presumably if the staffing arrangements are satisfactory already then a 100 per cent increase in staff should look after that matter. I think that the ombudsman should retain the role of looking after these sorts of disputes, for two reasons. First of all, he has a wider view of administration. He is not merely narrowly focussed on problems within the education system, but he has developed rules, procedures, and various other standards from operating elsewhere. After all, education should not be seen in isolation. It is part of a parcel of Government service and Government-controlled activities. Secondly, I think if you had yet another statutory body directly responsible to Parliament it adds to the complexity of the machinery of Government and makes it less intelligible for the citizen. It is already hard enough for the citizen to understand what is available to him. If there were, in effect, two ombudsmen, one for the education system and one for the rest, it seems to me to unnecessary complexity, and I must say I am all for simplicity.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing. We appreciate your submission and your making available the time today?-- Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite representatives from the High School Principals' Association. They are Mr. Keith Pembleton, the State President, Mr. Neville Fynes-Clinton, an executive member, and Mr. Colin McCallum, an executive member. They have presented us with a detailed submission which, for our record purposes, is coded AU31. This has been received and studied by the Committee prior to the hearing today so it will not be necessary to repeat any of the matters therein.

MR. HEWITT: In the summary of your recommendations and observations you say -

> "In the task of curriculum enrichment schools found themselves hamstrung by the unwillingness of students to take school subjects, by spiralling costs and, more recently, by restrictions on staffing."

Could we take that point about the unwillingness of students to take school subjects? Why is this so? I was of the opinion that schools tailored their subjects to the requirements of the students.

MR. PEMBLETON: This is quite so, but unfortunately a lot of students, although they will never go on to tertiary level, still desire to get a T.E. score to put down against a future need, and under the system as it exists now a school subject cannot be counted towards a T.E. score.

MR. SHAW: Do you think that one of the things that follows is that the employers and those outside the school system do not recognise the school subjects as an important consideration?

MR. PEMBLETON: I think this is so. I think it is a great shame, for instance, that a very common school subject at the present time is manual arts at Grades 11 and 12 level where most schools try to introduce students to as many different facets of trades as they possibly can such as bricklaying, fitting and turning, welding, and oxy work, just to name a few, and yet quite often although a student will do very, very well in those as a school subject it is completely overlooked by employers who want a youngster for a trade. It is very hard to understand, but, still, that is the way it is.

MR. MILLER: You make the point that knowledge is changing rapidly and what is learnt today may be out of date tomorrow. I gathered the impression from reading this and listening to other submissions that this could well be a reason for asking, "Why learn any knowledge at all?" Would you agree that students still have to be taught and learn even though the information may be outdated tomorrow?

MR. PEMBLETON: Of course he must learn, but the most important thing of all is that he must learn the necessary skills to acquire knowledge. On your immediate left you have a gentleman whom I am sure would concede the fact that many of the statements made in the days that I did education 1 with him would now be outdated. I can remember - I very nearly brought the book with me today - learning that the atom was so small that it was indivisible. I do not think anybody around this table, male or female, would agree with that statement nowadays, but the important thing is that a youngster must be taught how to learn, must be taught the skills, so that they can deduce from the wealth of information that is available. I contend that this emphasis on skills is one that has come into our schools over the last 10 to 15 years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Surely one of the necessary skills is learning to retain and to reproduce a certain amount of content?

MR. PEMBLETON: Quite so. No-one has ever said that that is not one of the aims.

THE CHAIRMAN: But there is a de-emphasis today on content and a re-emphasis on process.

MR. PEMBLETON: There is an emphasis on processing so that information can be put to good use. For instance, the doctor who qualified in the years when I qualified, if he was still practising medicine as it was taught, would know nothing about penicillin, the idea of transplants would be out of the question, and so we could go on. But this is not to say that basic knowledge should not be taught and that youngsters should not have to retain, but I would like to know the school that doesn't.

THE CHAIRMAN: A hell a lot of human anatomy has not changed - 99.9 per cent of it.

MR. PEMBLETON: No, we still have a heart and a brain.

THE CHAIRMAN: There have been small changes in nomenclature, in processes observed and so on, but having gained the base knowledge of human anatomy and remembered in a form that can be reproduced - that is a critical skill.

MR. PEMBLETON: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: They don't teach doctors to carry a book with them in relation to anatomy. They insist that that be retained.

MR. PEMBLETON: Quite so. Even medicine at the moment is finding it necessary to put out work - there are some systems now that are putting it out on T.V. programmes; doctors are encouraged to purchase their own videotape machines; there are journals that come out - the doctor that does not keep up to date with his journal soon becomes a very antiquated doctor.

MR. POWELL: In your submission you refer to the declining influences of the family and the church, and the rise of influences such as television, media etc. Are there any of the eternal virtues left that can be said to be accepted by the majority of society? If not, are not values clarification exercises merely situational ethics at the best and the blind leading the blind at the worst?

MR. PEMBLETON: I hope that in my submission I did not make out that the vast majority of the population has surrendered all of their ethics. I did imply that there was an increasing number. I don't think anybody at this table would deny that to be the case. Definitely the ministers of religion that come to my school for religious instruction would agree with that matter. As a matter of fact I put that point to them, and they agreed with it very strongly.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you mind me picking up that point, Mr. Powell? At page 4 of that particular segment you say that the instruction by the ministers of religion is so limited that it has little acceptance by most children. Is that fair, general criticism or is it something that is localised in your experience?

MR. PEMBLETON: That, if I remember correctly, was a statement made on a particular school where an investigation was carried out.

MR. POWELL: It would be a fair criticism of all high schools, would it not?

MR. FYNES-CLINTON: Religious instruction itself is fairly unpopular amongst students. I think that is probably a fair statement.

MR. POWELL: Could this be partially because the people who are delivering the lessons are untrained in teaching?

MR. PEMBLETON: I would say it is due to a lot of things. It is due in many instances to the fact that religious instruction in the schools quite often took a second and third place, and so often ministers of religion would ring you five minutes before they came along. I think you would agree that where there is not regularity with youngsters the thing loses a lot of its value. I would concede the fact that in many instances this lack of acceptance by youngsters is due to the fact that the person is

not trained to where they must capture an attention where they are not surrounded by the motivation of the church itself. They find it very difficult to get active little Johnny just to communicate with them.

MR. POWELL: Before we were taken off the subject I was asking whether you would like to comment on values clarification exercises. I will repeat the question if you like. That part of my question was: if you do not think there are any of these eternal virtues left - you have said there are - would you like to comment on the values clarification exercises that are being suggested in social education type courses as being a type of situational ethics course or perhaps a matter of the blind leading the blind when it is done very badly?

MR. PEMBLETON: I never look upon a school as a school in isolation. One of the greatest assets - I have tried to make this point - in this changing society unless all of the organisations that are working for the good of mankind all support each other there is something very very wrong. Therefore I would look forward to the time when all parents - I know it will never arise - would be interested in the schooling of their children; where they would not beget them and forget them; where they would not be prepared just to hone them over to somebody else. God gave them to them to start with, and they have and must have a commitment to them.

MR. POWELL: Take that a bit further. It has been suggested to me that parents are not neglecting their responsibilities to their children but rather they are afraid of approaching teachers on a subject about which teachers know most and the parents know least. They get confused by the jargon and the attitude of the teachers.

MR. PEMBLETON: The feeling that this type of attitude has been promulgated by some - this was one of the things that led me to invite the five of you to several functions that have been conducted at my school. I did want you to see the interaction between parent and teacher and between parent and student. I think in the North Brisbane area this was made very clear this year. I can see several principals around the place where I know parent nights and parent days are held. But it is very hard quite often to get through to the ones that most need it. I had one mother most disgusted with me just before the August holidays. She rang me up; her child felt it was being neglected. Why hadn't I discovered this and why hadn't I discussed it with her? I said, "Well, I haven't had the possibility of discussing anything with you. This is the first communication." She said, "But you should have made an opportunity to discuss it with me." I pointed out the number of nights we have had this year in the school.

MRS. HERRON: The mountain going to Muhammad.

MR. PEMBLETON: I have sent the mountain to Muhammad or Muhammad to the mountain - whichever way we want it. Quite often you get there and the welcome mat is by no means out. They look upon it as an interference.

MR. McCALLUM: Out of 1,000 families in my school there would be 150 one-parent only families. Most of those have young children. It is extremely difficult for parents in that situation to take an interest in anything because the parent is so tied up with the children at home. Unfortunately most of our problem children seem to stem from such areas, for a lot of reasons.

MR. POWELL: Would that be a low percentage - 15 per cent?

MR. McCALLUM: It is greater in other schools, certainly.

MR. PEMBLETON: It would be greater in mine.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Pembleton, on behalf of the Committee could I thank you for all those invitations you have given us. We have had many invitations, but we have very little time.

There is an important question that probably flows on from what we are talking about. Is there a discipline problem in high schools? If there is, can principals handle it or do they require more authority?

MR. PEMBLETON: I would say there is definitely a disciplinary problem in schools - greater in some areas than in others. I would say the most important thing the principal requires is support.

THE CHAIRMAN: Support from whom?

MR. PEMBLETON: Support from all concerned. I have made that point, too - that we expect support from Cabinet, from Parliament, from the department itself, from churches and, most important of all, from parents. I think I made that point.

MR. HEWITT: Is there not a line of command? The teacher should be able to discipline in the expectation that the principal will back him up.

MR. PEMBLETON: Definitely.

MR. HEWITT: And the principal should discipline on the understanding that the department will back him up.

MR. PEMBLETON: Quite so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Has not this problem been improved by the regional officers?

MR. McCALLUM: I wrote a bit of an article on this which I thought might have got to the Committee, but it did not, did it, Kevin?

MR. O'CONNOR: It did not formally.

MR. McCALLUM: It was outlining the problem as it is, and what was done in Western Australia for what is happening at the present time and I made several suggestions.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we have seen it but we have received about 3,500 submissions.

MR. HEWITT: I think it was the Tasmanian Teachers' Federation which gave us what was probably the best paper that I have yet read on an in-depth study of discipline. They are very sympathetic to the problems of the children and I suppose it is the easiest thing in the world to say that you discipline a recalcitrant child, put him out of the classroom or do certain things to him. But they put the proposition that you take it one step further to find out why he is difficult, why he is undisciplined and what are his personal problems. Acknowledging that each child has problems that we should understand and try to solve, when he is in the process of suffering from those problems and disrupting a class, ultimately you have to arrive at a judgment on whose interests must prevail, and the interests of the greater number in the class must prevail. In those circumstances you must look at ways of getting him out of the classroom situation on a temporary, or even a permanent basis.

MR. McCALLUM: Yes.

MR. HEWITT: It seems to me that this is one of the problems that we are not facing up to.

MR. McCALLUM: We are making the problems for those students worse by what we have to do with them. We have not got the facilities or the resources to deal with students like that.

MR. HEWITT: Are we too inflexible on our leaving age?

MR. McCALLUM: Yes, so far as I am concerned.

MR. FYNES-CLINTON: Yes.

MR. PEMBLETON: I would say so. Quite often a child who could be a pest at 13½ or 14 is a pest purely and simply because he cannot see the need - he could be allowed to go into employment provided we were not closing the gate completely. I see of this a lot at Kelvin Grove because of the 2,000 or so adult students who come back there at night. It is quite strange, especially in the early part of the year, when I spend a fair bit of time there at night, to see the number of youngsters

who were really pests. They come along and are happy to see you. They will stop and have a chat. You ask them, "What are you doing?", and they say, "Oh, gee, I wish I had had enough sense to see; you told me often enough." I usually try to follow them through then. I see the teachers who take them of a night and find that they are no problem at all. It is a crash course but they now see the need or the necessity. This is a point that has been raised by the university on many occasions - that work experience for a person quite often makes him a far better student.

MR. MILLER: You say that remedial work in high school is too little, too late. What should be done at the primary level about overcoming this problem?

MR. PEMBLETON: I don't want to sound like the eighth grade teacher blaming the seventh and the seventh grade teacher blaming the sixth, until you get down to where the Grade 1 teacher blames the kindergarten, and the kindergarten blames the mother and she says, "Oh, yes, but you should see the father." It is not that at all. That joke is dated now because quite often there is no father. My point is that we learn to read by reading. So much of our schooling depends on reading. Therefore the earliest that this problem can possibly be tackled the better. I am most loath to say - just as we would laugh at the fact that we would say, "The seven-year-old must be able to run 100 yards in 15 seconds, or we destroy him, gas chamber him or get rid of him by any other humane way." But at the same time I think that if it is discovered in the first few years of a child's life at school that he cannot cope with the reading or basic number work it should be realised that this is the time when all other things should be almost dropped so that these two vital things can be stressed. Imagine the frustration for a youngster who goes right through finding it difficult. About two years back I had an Aboriginal lad - I would much prefer it if the Press did not quote this because I do not want to embarrass the lad - who won the junior marathon in Queensland. That lad had to carry in his pocket a piece of cardboard with his name on it. He was a great kid. I had him up to give out the cross-country prizes. He spoke, and he spoke quite well. I feel it was only the frustration that had built up through the years because attention was not given to this youngster early.

MR. POWELL: Would you argue, then, for a system of retardation in the primary school so that children could achieve a level of competency in reading skills?

MR. PEMBLETON: I would not say retardation. I think social development is vital. But I would say added assistance, where a youngster would devote more time to reading and less time to the other things.

MR. POWELL: What other things?

MR. PEMBLETON: The rest of the curriculum. I think so much of the curriculum depends on the student's ability to read. But I would not want to tie all kiddies down to the fact that we are to spend 20 hours a week learning to read. You get youngsters who are quite capable of mastering this art and skill early in the piece. We would frustrate them if we said, "No, you will learn 'A, like an apple on a tree.'"

MR. POWELL: You advocate special remedial reading classes.

MR. PEMBLETON: Yes.

MR. POWELL: During school time when, say, the rest of them are doing craft?

MR. PEMBLETON: In my estimation the principals of the primaries - I say that in all humility, having been the principal of a large primary school for many years - would be quite capable of making any decision on what would be best for these youngsters to sacrifice.

MR. FYNES-CLINTON: It was not so many years ago that we would find pupils of 13 and 14 sitting in Grades 3 and 4 classes at primary school. At that time the system was "meet the standard or be retarded". I venture to say that today for students of that age, with the new forms of social pressure being placed on them, should not be left in the presence of children of eight and nine years of age.

MR. HEWITT: You believe they should be kept moving up with their peer groups.

MR. FYNES-CLINTON: Yes, that is fairly important.

MR. POWELL: What do we do with them?

MR. FYNES-CLINTON: We should be able to make some sort of arrangements for the special teaching necessary to make up the leeway in their backward subjects.

MR. MILLER: You emphasise that the spoken word has improved greatly. You obviously don't believe that reading and writing has improved to the same extent.

MR. PEMBLETON: I would say that reading and writing have not improved to the same extent as the spoken word because at one stage the spoken word was so neglected. If you want bearing out on that, just listen to any C.B. radio and you will get more "ums" and "ahs" and "you have got that?" -----

MR. POWELL: And, "you know".

MR. PEMBLETON: Yes, of course you know.

MR. HEWITT: A bloke named Fraser can't talk without using those two words.

MR. FYNES-CLINTON: I think speech mannerisms tend to be fashionable things and they are likely to turn up at any time.

All sorts of work seems to have been done on the reading and writing standards of people of 14 up to 18 years of age. I wonder how people of our generation would measure up to the same sort of tests? I do not think they would do particularly well. I distinctly remember being in a class of Professor Fred Schonell at the university when he gave a spelling test to first-year students in education. The failure rate was 60 per cent.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is another matter also of interest. I am not being devilish; it is just that this is the first time it has been mentioned to us. On page 3 of your submission you mention the problems and stresses of administrators. You talk about some problem with the Queensland Teachers' Union. I feel that this requires some amplification. Is this a serious problem? What are the outcomes? What are the decisions made? Do these reports not go in on the instruction of the union, or do they go in anyway?

MR. PEMBLETON: The point we were endeavouring to make there was that these stresses do exist, and when one set of instructions is sent to a school by the department and another set of instructions is sent by the union, the principal can very easily become the meat in the sandwich. He has his first obligation which I say in all sincerity is not to the department or the union but to the students under his care. He must have not only his legal but his moral responsibility to them satisfied if he is worthy of the name of principal. He may then have this conflict that can arise. I cannot gag the Press all the time but I would much prefer it if they did not mention this. The present situation in this respect is far better but the condition is there in which this sort of conflict can arise.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do the scripts go in? Departmental instructions are that they must be supplied to obtain board accreditation.

MR. PEMBLETON: They went in, of course, because your first and your moral obligation is to the student. We cannot say that it is unfortunate but all the youngsters born in such-and-such a year have to drop out of society because no accreditation could be given. It was fortunate that a compromise was reached at that time between the department and the union. That is just an instance of the pressures that can apply and it was quoted as an example of the pressures to which a principal can be subjected. If I remember correctly, at the time that that came about the present president of the union was an acting principal and was subject to pressures himself.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, thank you very much for appearing before us. On reading that part of your submission in which mention is made of a heavy work-load, I was reminded of discussions among parliamentarians about their work-loads. The sad stories told in the party room from time to time would make some people cry. You certainly have made a point in relation to the burdens carried, particularly by high school principals today. Thank you very much for doing that and for coming forward to appear before us this morning. I also thank you for the preparation of your comprehensive submission.

The Committee adjourned at 11.7 a.m. till 11.30 a.m.

The Committee resumed at 11.30 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the meeting of the Select Committee is reconvened. I wish to register the sincere thanks of the Select Committee on Education in Queensland for the appearance this morning of Dr. J.P. Keeves, Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research. He has flown up to Queensland especially to appear before the Committee. He is appearing at the request of the Committee. We wanted quantitative information on standards in our schools. We had received a great variety of an anecdotal type of information on this subject. An enormous amount of opinion has already been received, so we were anxious to have whatever objective information it was possible to be provided to us. It was suggested that Dr. Keeves had been directly involved in research in this regard, so we wrote to him and asked him if he would be prepared to present some information to us. He has done so and today he has come to Queensland to present it. We appreciate it very much and ask the doctor to accept the personal thanks of all members of the Committee.

JOHN PHILIP KEEVES, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Would you now present your submission, doctor?-- It gives me very great pleasure to come to Queensland to present the findings of the study of literacy and numeracy in Australian schools, partly because I have, I believe, a fairly clear and fairly useful picture to present to you and partly because I see the issues that you are giving attention to as important ones, and I believe that the council has a service to Australian education to bring forward evidence on issues such as the ones you are examining. The study into literacy and numeracy in Australian schools, as you probably know, was undertaken at the request of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Specific Learning Difficulties and was reported initially in one volume that you might have seen. It is an E.R.D.C. report. The project was funded by the Education Research and Development Committee. We then went on to present a report on the performance across Australia on all items in the tests and subsequently went on to prepare a final report on the study. In addition - and I note that you have copies - we prepared a brief report on Educating for Literacy and Numeracy in Australian Schools, where we examined some of the more specific findings of the investigation. In addition, I will draw on findings from two studies that were carried out by the ACER, the first in 1964, into performance in mathematics at the 13-year-old level and secondly in 1970 into performance in science at the 14-year-old level. These studies were undertaken in collaboration with other countries through an organisation known as the International Association of the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, which is a co-operative association of research organisations in other countries. Towards the end of the submission I will draw briefly on material published in the paper Curricular Factors Influencing School Learning and I will be able to leave a full copy of the paper behind after I refer briefly to it. The major aims of the Australian Studies in School Performance into literacy and numeracy in Australian schools were to estimate for Australia as a whole, and in particular for each State and territory, the number of children who were failing to attain the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and, secondly, to specify relationships between various other factors such as age, grade, type of community, learning difficulty, ethnic origin, language of home and sex and the attainment of competence in the basic skills of reading, writing and number work. We decided to test at two age levels - the 10-year-old level when

it might be expected that children would have acquired some degree of competence in the basic skills to enable them to go on with their schooling as independent learners and secondly at the 14-year-old age level which is the last stage in the Australian States prior to which a student can leave school, so that it is the end of a period of compulsory schooling and it is unlikely that students who have not mastered certain skills of literacy and numeracy by the age of 14 will pick them up at a later stage, because many of them would have left school. Altogether, we tested 1,000 10-year-old and 1,000 14-year-old students in Queensland schools, going to 40 schools and taking 25 students per school. ACER asked each school to send a list of all 10-year-olds and 14-year-olds and we drew the sample of students within each school.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Miller has asked for clarification of one point.

BY MR. MILLER: Could I ask why you take years rather than classes? Wouldn't the ages of 10 and 14 years spread over a number of classes?-- Yes. They spread over three grade levels but it was important that we made estimates for Australia as a whole rather than just for each State, and the different patterns of grade promotion, of entry into school, mean that you have students of different ages in the different grade levels.

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Consequently we had to go across three and sometimes four grades to pick up the 10-year-old. The one thing that is fixed is the age of the student. We can then combine the data from the six States and the two Territories to produce Australian figures. One other point that should be made is that in some cases at the primary school level there are very small schools, particularly in the Queensland rural areas, and we combined small schools to form compound schools so that we could take 25 students from the group. So that the small schools were adequately represented in the sample. We had a very good response from Queensland schools. At the 10-year-old level 978 students were tested out of 1,000 and at the 14-year-old level 902 students were tested. Of course there were some students in special schools undertaking special programmes who were omitted from the sampling frame. Approximately 450 students at the 10-year-old level and 550 at the 14-year-old level were not included in the frame from which we drew samples. Not all of these students would have had difficulties in learning to read and write, but a substantial proportion of this group would have had some learning difficulties. In the development of tests we went about the job in a rather different way from that which has been used on previous occasions. We set out to try and identify the objectives of schooling in relation to literacy and numeracy and then to identify particular tasks that were seen to be essential for further learning in school or for living in Australian society. Having identified the important tasks, we tried to devise some test items to assess level of performance on those tasks, so that we had specific tasks and specific criteria in mind and we were interested in whether students could achieve mastery of those particular tasks. In reporting on the study we provided information of performance on individual items, seeing these items to be assessing particular tasks, or performance on certain important subtests or the test as a whole assessing performance in certain important areas. The level of performance that we expected for mastery was approximately 80 per cent of a pool of items assessing a particular task or subtask, and we argued that if a student could answer correctly 80 per cent of items he could be considered to have mastered that task. We were also able to draw on some items in the reading test that had been given to students in a testing programme conducted in 1970 by I.E.A. The tests were testing reading comprehension. In number work we included some items that had been administered in the national assessment of educational progress in the United States, so we are able to make some comparisons with students in other parts of the world. I should now like to refer to Table 1, at the top of page 4.

Table 1 Reading Comprehension Performance in English-speaking Countries

	Average percentage correct				
Level	Australia	England	Scotland	United States	New Zealand
10-year-old	71	72	72	67	not tested
14-year-old	73	73	74	76	77

There is no evidence from this investigation to decry the level of performance in reading of students in Australian schools. You will see from Table 1 that Australian students are on a par in reading with students in other English-speaking countries. At the 14-year-old level perhaps they are

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marginally below New Zealand, but the surprising thing is the close level of agreement across the four main countries, English-speaking countries, at both the 10 and 14-year-old levels. In general the performance of students in Queensland schools on individual items in the reading tests was consistently above the Australian average overall. In Appendix 1 we record performance on individual items. If anyone wished to check through on particular items reported they are set out in one of the volumes I have with me. On average, Queensland students at the 10-year-old level - 2 per cent more of the Queensland students were able to answer correctly the items than across Australia and at the 14-year-old level 1 per cent more of Queensland students answered correctly.

THE CHAIRMAN: At this stage the table constituting Appendix 1 will be included in the transcript.

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APPENDIX 1

Performance on Items in Tests

Table A.1 Performance in Reading

	10-Year-Old Students				14-Year-Old Students			
	Australia	Queensland			Australia	Queensland		
Item No.	Correct %	Correct %	Incorrect %	Not Answered %	Correct %	Correct %	Incorrect %	Not Answered %
1	92	95	5	0	96	98	3	0
2	94	95	5	0	99	99	1	0
3	98	98	2	0	99	100	0	0
4	96	97	3	0	99	99	1	0
5	98	98	2	0	99	100	0	0
6	97	97	2	0	99	100	0	0
7	92	94	6	0	96	97	3	0
8	90	93	7	0	97	97	3	0
9	92	92	7	1	98	97	3	0
10	92	92	7	1	98	99	1	0
11	95	95	5	1	98	99	1	0
12	88	91	9	0	98	99	1	0
13	93	94	5	1	99	99	1	0
14	94	96	3	1	70	72	28	0
15	60	66	33	1	90	91	9	0
16	58	62	37	1	84	83	17	1
17	72	73	26	1	53	53	47	0
18	91	91	8	2	60	65	34	1
19	90	90	6	4	81	86	14	0
20	94	96	2	2	97	98	1	1
21	27	29	60	11	59	59	38	3
22	52	52	46	2	63	66	33	1
23	46	48	47	5	75	75	24	1
24	53	51	41	8	85	86	12	2
25	78	82	12	6	79	82	18	0
26	80	83	12	6	67	71	26	3
27	35	42	44	14	74	77	20	3
28	57	60	26	15	85	86	12	2
29	77	78	11	12	76	80	18	3
30					88	90	6	3
31					94	96	1	3
32					49	45	48	7
33					89	91	3	6

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DR. KEEVES: When we look at performance on important subtests we will note that in the reading of very simple sentences which assist performance of students in being able to read the simplest material that we could present, at the 10-year-old level there were approximately 2 per cent who had not mastered this skill but at the 14-year-old level a very high proportion - very close to 100 per cent of the sample - were able to read the simple sentences presented. In the paragraph reading, that is, reading the type of material that is presented in ordinary school textbooks, Queensland again has a higher proportion of students who have mastered the skill than in other parts of Australia and at the 14-year-old level approximately 75 per cent could be declared masters in this area.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Are you relating these comments to Table 2?-- Yes, I am. That table is as follows -

Table 2 Percentages of Students Achieving Mastery on the Reading Tests and Subtests

Subtest	10-year-old Students		14-year-old Students	
	Queensland % Mastery	Australia % Mastery	Queensland % Mastery	Australia % Mastery
Reading simple sentences	98	97	100[a]	99
Linguistic competence	89	87	98	97
Paragraph reading	69	66	78	75
Newspaper items	31	27	66	64
Total reading test	57	53	73	72

[a]99.7% achieved mastery.

I think it is important to draw attention to the figures in the bottom right-hand corner of the table, where it is shown that 73 per cent of Queensland students have achieved mastery level on the total reading test. While this is commendable, it still indicates that there are approximately 25 per cent of students in our schools, not only in Queensland but also in other parts of Australia, who are having difficulties with their reading. I believe it is fair to say that this is a matter of some concern and that it is desirable that schools should do everything possible to ensure that as high a proportion as possible are able to master the skills of reading. If such skills are not mastered, students are going to be handicapped in their daily lives.

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I now turn to examine performance in writing, which is contained in table 3.

Table 3 Performance on Writing Tasks

	10-year-old students		14-year-old students	
	Queensland % Mastery	Australia % Mastery	Queensland % Mastery	Australia % Mastery
Writing messages	88	86	-	-
Personal letter	81	76	96	92
Formal letter	48	50	82	74
Letter of application for job	-	-	65	50
Telephone message	75	73	91	89
Writing directions	23	24	48	52
Writing reports	47	41	35	34

I believe, generally speaking, the Queensland students were above the Australian average. The levels of performance of Queensland students on the writing tasks are presented in table 3 and you will note that on some tasks, for example the writing of a formal letter at 14 years, the Queensland students are distinctly ahead of students in other parts of Australia, and on the task of letter of application for a job the Queensland students are also well ahead. Nevertheless, there aresome tasks such as writing directions where the Queensland students at both age levels are marginally below students in other parts of Australia. The evidence for number work was very clear in that Queensland students were markedly superior to students in other parts of Australia. This superior performance was first picked up in the 1946 curriculum survey, and the evidence that we have presented in this study indicates that even 30 years later the superior performance of Queensland students has been maintained. Knowledge of number facts necessarily underlines computational work and I turn now to table 4.

Table 4 Performance on Number Facts of Queensland Students

Item	10-year-old students		14-year-old students	
	Queensland % Correct	Australia % Correct	Queensland % Correct	Australia % Correct
9 + 6	93	91	99	99
17 - 9	89	87	97	96
7 x 6	86	83	98	96
56 ÷ 7	80	73	96	92

You will notice that on simple addition facts such as 9 plus 6 the evidence shows that 93 per cent of Queensland students were able to handle the fact at the 10-year-old level, and at the 14-year-old level 99 per cent of the students answered this item correctly. At all points for the number four number facts you will note that Queensland students are superior to students in Australian schools overall. Clearly, knowledge of the number facts would assist Queensland students in carrying out simple computations. I now turn to table 5

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Table 5 Performance on Use of Four Operations by Queensland Students

Item	10-year-old students		9 year-old students	14-year-old students		13 year-old students
	Queensland	Australia	USA	Queensland	Australia	USA
38 + 19	87	83	79	96	94	94
36 - 19	82	74	55	94	90	89
38 x 9	67	55	25	88	80	83
125 ÷ 5	76	65	15	94	90	89

We have recorded performance on four simple calculations that were also used in the National Assessment of Educational Progress in the United States with students at the age of 9 years and 13 years. Here Queensland students are once again above students in other parts of Australia and, as might be expected, distinctly ahead of 9 and 13-year-old students in the United States. So that superior knowledge of the number facts leads, I believe, to better performance on the four operations and, for example, such an exercise as 125 divided by five. You will note that the Queensland students record 76 per cent responding correctly whereas across Australia 65 per cent have responded correctly. Then we turn to examine performance on the number work tests as a whole, which is table 6.

Table 6 Percentages of Students Achieving Mastery on the Number Work Test and Sub-Tests

Sub-Test	10-year-old students		14 year-old students	
	Queensland % Mastery	Australia % Mastery	Queensland % Mastery	Australia % Mastery
Addition	99	98	100	99
Subtraction	96	94	97	91
Multiplication	96	93	93	86
Division	91	87	84	75
Number Work Test	81	75	84	75

You will see a high level of performance amongst the Queensland students at both the 10-year-old and the 14-year-old level. I now turn to table 7 in which we record information on performance on a word knowledge test.

Table 7 Change in Performance on Word Knowledge Test for Students Age 14 Years Between 1970 and 1975

	IEA Science Project 1970		ASSP Project 1975		Difference between means (1975-1970)
	Mean	N	Mean	N	
Queensland	16.5	895	15.0	902	- 1.5
Australia (weighted)	16.1	5290	14.8	5619	- 1.3

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This word knowledge test was administered as part of the IEA Science Project in 1970 and again administered to comparable samples in the literacy-numeracy in 1975. You will note that both across Australia and within the State of Queensland there has been a drop in performance in this test in the five-year period. Five years is really not long enough to condemn a school system, or any part of it, for a drop in performance, but the evidence does suggest that monitoring should continue in the years ahead. There are many reasons why the drop in performance could have occurred. It is possible that it is a sampling fluctuation and, of course, this would very likely disappear in subsequent testing. It is also, however, possible that language usage both in the home and the school, has declined and this is reflected in a lower level of performance on the work knowledge test. It is important to note, though, that in all six States a similar pattern was recorded of a drop in performance over the five-year period. The investigation provided evidence that approximately 2 per cent of Queensland students in normal schooling at the 10-year-old level, and less than half a per cent of Queensland students in normal schooling at the 14-year-old level had not mastered the skills of reading simple sentences. However, there were slightly in excess of 1 per cent at the 10 and 14-year-old levels in special education programmes who were unlikely to have been able to handle the reading of simple sentences. It was also shown, however, that approximately 30 per cent of the 10-year-old students, and 25 per cent of the 14-year-old students, had difficulty in comprehending the type of prose that is normally encountered in a school textbook. We do not know whether all students in normal schooling could cross the basic thresholds of performance. However, we do believe that a much higher proportion of an age group could attain sufficient competence in the basic skills to become independent learners, provided there was an emphasis upon learning for mastery in the schools. In turning to examine some of the factors which might influence performance in such subjects as mathematics and science I have recorded in table 8 information on the achievement of students in the eighth year of schooling.

Table 8 Achievement and Time Spent in Learning Mathematics at Eighth Year of Schooling

State	Mean Score	N	Index of Time for Seven Years Hours/Week	Index of Time in Eighth Year Hours/Week
New South Wales	16.1	685	22.5	4.74
Victoria	21.0	743	26.8	4.68
Queensland	24.0	732	35.0	4.74
Western Australia	17.0	505	21.2	4.90
Tasmania	15.9	413	26.2	3.68

You will note in this table that Queensland students are markedly ahead of the students in other States, and in the examination of the evidence available we sought reasons as to why this might be so. We calculated an index of time spent over the first seven years of schooling and you will observe that in hours per week added over the seven years the Queensland students had spent considerably longer on learning mathematics. Again during the eighth year of school we calculated hours per week spent learning mathematics and there was a degree of uniformity across four of the States, but students in Tasmania were spending less time. It is very difficult to portray the relationships between mean score

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and time spent with two factors associated with time, but a more detailed analysis showed very convincingly, and it is recorded in this brief article, that both time spent over the first seven years of schooling and time spent during the current year on learning mathematics account for the differences between the States in levels of performance.

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So that the message from this evidence is that if the learning of mathematics is considered to be important then it is essential that time should be given to this work in the school programme.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Particularly in the early years?-- Yes. I believe probably at all stages. The current year is probably more important than the early years, but there is an additive effect right through the school programme for the learning of a subject such as mathematics. Again to test the same ideas we examined the evidence in 1970 for achievement in science, and you will note in table 9 that we have recorded the performance of 14-year-old students in large samples from each of the six States.

Table 9 Achievement and Time Spent in Learning Science at the 14-year-old Level

State	Mean Score	N	Amount of Science Hours/Week
New South Wales	23.5	701	3.0
Victoria	20.8	699	2.5
Queensland	25.3	668	3.6
South Australia	26.5	786	3.8
Western Australia	26.3	669	3.0
Tasmania	21.6	631	2.8

You will see that Queensland is slightly below the leaders, South Australia and Western Australia, but well ahead of students in the other States of New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria. Once again the reasons for the superior performance of the South Australian students, for example, will be shown by the fact that they were spending 3.8 hours per week learning science, whereas Western Australian students were slightly below and performing well with three hours per week, the Queensland students 3.6 hours per week, but the students at the lower end of the scale, such as the Victorian group, were spending only 2.5 hours per week. This, I believe, accounts for their lower mean score. The correlation between these figures is surprisingly high at .8, and suggests quite convincingly that once again time spent in learning is an important factor in the study of science. The findings from studies conducted by the ACER indicate a high level of achievement in Queensland relative to that in other States. The evidence of the IEA Mathematics and Science Projects suggests very convincingly that this superior achievement is related to the time spent in learning and the opportunity consequently provided for learning the material presented in each subject. So I would suggest that if curriculum planners believe that the learning of a subject is important, they should determine what level of performance they expect within schools at successive stages of schooling, and then what proportion of an age group they would expect to attain that level, and then to provide adequate time in the programme of each school to allow students to reach this level of mastery. Inevitably - the points are elaborated in this book "Educating for Literacy and Numeracy in

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Australian Schools" - there will be some students who attain a level of mastery relatively easily and quickly. These students will be able to go on with new work, but when we are looking at a system as a whole and are looking at the average level of performance of students within a system it is important to consider that the average amount of time must be adequate to allow students to master the material being taught.

BY MR. MILLER: If a student had not mastered the desired information should he repeat that grade?-- My own views on grade repeating are that some balance must be maintained between mixing with peers of approximately the same age group and being able to cope adequately with the material being taught. Grade repeating was a practice that allowed students the opportunity to cope with the material being taught, but sometimes it removed the student from living and working with age mates of the same level of maturity.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: I think if you completed the presentation of your document then we could go into discussion ?-- I would like to come back to the point because it is a very interesting one. That was the difficulty. I do believe that at the present time when open educational practices, flexible timetabling,general studies programmes, project methods and, to some extent, deschooling are being advocated it is essential that we keep in mind that time spent on task, time spent in learning the material presented, does seem to be a key factor influencing student performance across a system. Of course there will be exceptions. The individual student who is bright can learn very quickly. The student who is a slow learner will have to take longer time. But in part, you are considering planning for a system - curriculum planning for a system - and it is essential that if a satisfactory level of performance is to be achieved adequate time be provided within the timetable of each school.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. We greatly appreciate what vou have presented to us. Could I ask for my own benefit what you actually mean by "mastery learning"? It is a new item of the jargon to me. I would like you to explain that fully. You are emphasising it as being very important?-- One of the shortcomings of teaching practice has sometimes been the tendency to go ahead with new work and presenting new material to class groups of students without ensuring that every student is able to follow - going on to present more advanced work in arithmetic while some students have not mastered the simpler skills that are necessary for the further work. This , I believe, is especially important in language studies and in mathematics. Unless a student has achieved an adequate level of performance at certain stages he is unable to learn effectively at a higher stage.

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This requires that teachers should develop attitudes and practices of teaching that try to ensure that every student is reaching a minimum standard and is working at a standard appropriate to his stage of learning. It must be very difficult for a student to be sitting day by day in school unable to read or write or calculate simply because he has not crossed an initial threshold. I believe that there is a need for remedial work both within the class-room by the regular class teacher, sometimes by special teachers coming into the class-room to assist students, sometimes by students being taken from the class-room for short periods for personal tuition to try and ensure that learning handicaps that are preventing the student from crossing this threshold of learning are overcome. Many teachers in the past have intuitively taught for mastering but it is possible that there are cases where students are in classes in which the on-going work is so far ahead of them that they are learning very little and I believe that work should be done - research work and development work - to try to devise techniques to ensure that each student is learning at an appropriate level and is mastering the work presented to him so that he can continue with his learning.

Is it the older teachers whom you are talking about mastering the mastery and the newer ones not doing so well? Is that implied?-- No, I do not think it is implied. I believe it is more an attitude of concern for the learning of individual students that is involved rather than age and experience.

BY MR. HEWITT: Your booklet refers to the necessity for a greater number of remedial teachers and also to pre-service and in-service training of teachers. Those comments are very germane but I am interested in the technique of teaching to read itself. I would be interested to know whether you measured the efficiency of different methods of teaching reading, for example, comprehending the whole word as contrasted to the old phonetic way of teaching and other styles that I may know about. Have the efficacies of different methods of teaching been measured?-- My understanding of the research in this area is that it is inconclusive; that no one method is appropriate for all children; that a skilful teacher probably uses a variety of methods. The good teacher is the teacher who is flexible and who can not only teach the class group effectively, but can also diagnose the needs of individuals and can provide the personal assistance and personal attention to help the student at a particular level in an appropriate way.

That begs a further question, namely, that if the teacher is expected to be flexible and use a variety of techniques, the teacher, in his turn, would have to be instructed on an amalgum of techniques and, in fact, is he instructed on an amalgum of techniques?-- Here I would like to quote the evidence from the House of Representatives Committee on Specific Learning Difficulties (the committee Mr. Cadman was chairman of) that suggested that from the evidence that they could collect the time spent in preparing teachers for teaching of reading was extremely low in some colleges. They quoted evidence from colleges (not in this State) where as few as, I think, 16 hours were being devoted during a three-year course to learning the techniques, or learning how to teach reading. It is not just a matter of techniques. They also drew attention to the fact that, I think, it is the International Reading Association, had recommended standards for the time to be given to the teaching of reading in the initial preparation of teachers and that the Bullock report from Britain had endorsed those recommended standards. If I recall correctly the time to be given was something like 120 hours during the course of the three years of teaching.

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BY MR. MILLER: If time spent on learning some tasks is important, does this mean curriculum planners might consider some core subjects which require more time, and perhaps less time on options and electives?-- I would hesitate to argue exactly what curriculum planners should do but I believe that there should be some guiding principles underlying the courses that are planned for schools. Let me just illustrate one of the findings of the curriculum survey in 1946. Time spent in learning was examined, or time in the curriculum was examined at the same time as level of performance was examined. In the revision of the primary school courses in Queensland in 1951-52, following the curriculum inquiry, increased time was given to reading, and a slight drop in time given to the learning of mathematics. Here, a curriculum decision was made that performance in reading needed attention and that the performance in mathematics was high and nothing would be lost.

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Clearly both within a system and within a school some balance must be maintained between different subjects in the core area and the many other aspects of schooling that come forward from time to time. You are probably well aware that there are constant pressures on schools to take on different jobs and the curriculum planners must, I believe, examine each new pressure, recalling that time spent in learning is important and asking if time can be afforded for each innovation recommended.

BY MR. POWELL: I am interested in the relevance of the tables that you have given us, because they are very important. I refer you to page 25, table 6 in the booklet, and the comments in the summary on page 28. The summary reads in part -

> "It is also evident that there is a minority of students, estimated to be approximately 25 per cent of the 14-year-old cohort, who shortly before they are free to leave school have not achieved mastery of the fundamental tasks included in the tests."

On looking at table 6, that 25 per cent figure is difficult to ascertain. I find it difficult to work out how you arrived at the 75 per cent figure?-- It is really saying that there are different component skills in number work, such as working with whole numbers, fractions and measurements, as well as the simple skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Those are components of the total performance in number work that was tested. We argue that we expected mastery of the total test at the 14-year-old level but we record that only 75 per cent have achieved mastery. We are saying that whilst there are higher proportions of students who are able to handle certain skills, such as addition, subtraction and multiplication, when we come to division the 75 per cent emerges again. That means that when we come to more complex tasks approximately 25 per cent have not mastered one of the component skills such as division and hence, when there are tasks involving application or social usage, they are unable to handle them.

Do you find it unusual that 10-year-olds were better able to apply their skills than 14-year-olds?-- Admittedly we are testing at a simpler level appropriate for 10-year-olds. However, we were most interested to find that with certain tasks involving money and simple measurement, the 10-year-olds were well able to do those tasks. It was almost as if they were handling the practical applications of mathematics more effectively than some of the operations taught within the schools. It was almost as if the practical relevance was important in the learning of numbers at the mid-primary stage. Tasks involving money were skills that they could not do without in their daily lives and a higher proportion had learnt to master those tasks.

That leads me to the point that we have really been revolving around for a long time. I refer to the public accusation that standards have been lowered over the years. Concerning these tests that show that Queensland is superior in most things to other States, have you any testing data showing that Queensland is either superior or inferior in 1977 or 1978 compared with 1957 or 1958?-- No. The ACER has not undertaken testing work of this kind. You are probably aware of the work done by the Queensland Institute for Educational Research, which is linked with the ACER, in pulling together material over the last 30 to 40 years.

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That is the only evidence that I know of in Queensland, and indeed probably the only evidence available across Australia, to show change in performance.

Is there now then a 1978 bench mark in literacy and numeracy?-- We would like to think that the material reported here could be used in this way. There is one study in progress in which the tests that I have referred to in maths that were administered in 1964 have been readministered across Australia to similar samples in 1978. We have been working during recent weeks to collect evidence but I am afraid it will not be available in time to be of assistance to you. By early next year there should be evidence available to show changes in performance in maths.

Are you familiar with the practice in Queensland in October each year of giving Grade 7 students, who would be aged 12½ to 13 years, an ACER test? Over the years, would that test show any movement in skill and ability?-- It probably would if the data had been stored in such a way that it was accessible. So often schools have not facilities for the storage of data so that it can be examined from year to year. Consequently a sampling that the research branch has done over the years in reading, with sound samples and a careful recording of the evidence, is really the only way in which you can make long-term comparisons.

BY MR. SHAW: I was wondering whether in making your comparison from State to State of problems or otherwise with reading and writing you came across any effects of the predominance of non-English speaking families in certain areas?-- In the reports that we have presented on the studies we examined the performance of different ethnic groups and we were very interested to find that in some cases children from a non-English speaking background were performing above Australian standards, at least in some cases. Certain groups were on a par and occasionally they were above. These are students from Northern European countries. Students from the Mediterranean area seem to be having far greater difficulty in their school learning than those from Northern European areas. This sort of difference also occurs within a country such as Italy. There are students from Northern Italy who are performing markedly above those in Southern Italy.

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(Australian Council for
Educational Research)

In an international study I was involved in we were extremely surprised at the level of difference between the three groups in Italy - the north, the centre and the south. If our country is drawing migrants from the southern part of Italy, there is a low educative level of the home and probably a lower level of achievement at school before the students came to this country, and consequently I believe that in many cases our schools have done a remarkably good job in the education and the assimilation of students from different backgrounds and different parts of Europe and Asia. The learning of a new language such as English can be a handicap. Some students can overcome it, but I believe it depends very much on the educative level of the home.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: In the broad, your surveys have compared Queensland with the remainder of Australia. There are still some areas that are still substantially less than 100 per cent in terms of mastery. How do you relate your research work with the general level of public concern in relation to literacy and numeracy standards? Do you say that the public does not know, or, in the broad, is there some substance for their concern? It is probably a bit hard to summarise?-- I believe - this is a personal judgment - that it is unlikely that there should be such a degree of uncertainty in the general public about the work of schools that has not some foundation. On the other hand, I think it is important to recognise that we are concerned with a very complex situation; that as we look to the upper secondary school - year 12 level - it is important to recognise that the proportion of an age group staying on has increased markedly since 1940. The estimates that I was able to make for Australia overall suggested that before the Second World War approximately 5 per cent of students were staying through to year 12; by the end of the 1940s it had risen to just on 10 per cent; by 1964 it had risen to 23 per cent; by 1970 it had risen to just on 30 per cent, and now the best estimate is 35 per cent. Clearly with a higher proportion of the age group staying through to the final year of schooling, there are going to be many more less able students at the upper secondary school level and what might appear as a decline in standards from the time when I was at school in the mid-1940s to the present time is probably related to the proportion of the age group staying on. Here is one aspect that needs to be taken into consideration. I believe there is also evidence that there is less recreational reading now in homes than there was 20 years ago and although Australians buy books in fairly large numbers, the pressures of daily life have meant that there is less reading. I believe the amount of reading in the home is likely to be related to reading in the class-room; hence in performance in all aspects of schooling. On the other hand I cannot document this. I have been most interested to read the evidence that has been presented in the United States for decline in performance on certain scholastic aptitude tests and to see the complex network of factors that has been suggested as reasons, as causes, for a possible drop in performance. The key ones are certainly the higher proportion of the age group staying at school and the changing composition of the upper secondary school population, together with a drop in the importance of reading in daily life. So that it is an extremely complex issue.

It is probably unfair to ask you for a bald conclusion on such a complex matter?-- I do believe that schools have improved in their techniques of teaching and that there is a wide range of excellent materials available for use. I believe that Australia has assimilated to a greater or lesser extent a substantial number of migrants, and inevitably the migrant students coming into the country are going to have some learning

difficulties. Consequently I see the complexity of the situation. I hesitate to be critical of the work of schools. On the other hand I have this nagging concern for the 25 per cent who are having difficulty reading and calculating and I have a concern for what this means for them if they leave school not having mastered these skills.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for that. All members of the Committee are trying to catch my eye so that they can put questions to you. It will not be possible to put many more questions to you. I know that you have a plane to catch and that I must adjourn at 12.45 p.m. There is one area that we really have to go into - ASAT. You have made reference to it and I imagine there are two questions in members' minds. Is there any cataloguing of results based on ASAT - any ups and downs relevant across the nation or in any other State? We have had ASAT criticised by the senate of the University of Queensland. Is there going to be a mark II version coming up shortly - a re-draft of the ASAT programme? There have been criticisms about its bias towards mathematics and science students. Can you deal briefly with those questions?--

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No comparisons are possible with respect to performance on ASAT over time. A version of the Tertiary Education Interest Project test (the T.E.I.P. test) was prepared in 1970. It was a similar test. But no way of chaining one year's test to the next to examine performance over time has been attempted. As a research organisation we recognise the deficiency and are currently working on ways of changing for the future so that we can examine performance of one year's testing group with another. The second question that you have asked, the possible bias of the ASAT test - this is being taken into consideration in the preparation of the 1979 test. Here the balance of items will be changed. For 1978 30 items out of 100 were mathematics, 20 were science, 30 were humanities and 20 were social science. For 1979 20 items will be mathematics and 30 will be science. This is in response to criticism that the test is overemphasising mathematical skills, mathematical abilities and aptitudes.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is time for some other questions.

BY MR. HEWITT: There is a statement in the book that begs some further elaboration. On page 51 it says -

> "Family size was found to be one of the more important variables in mastery on the reading and numeration tests. As a consequence, changing customs related to completed family size and the spacing of child births might be expected to lead to an increase in the average level of educational achievement in schools."

Can you elaborate on that? Is that arguing that smaller families increase incompetency or vice versa?-- The evidence that has come forward from several studies that we have undertaken indicates that there are not large differences between the performance of families with one, two, three or four children, but when the number of children in a family gets to five, six, seven, eight or nine there is quite a marked drop in average level of performance. The evidence also indicates that this drop in performance remains even after adjusting for social class background. It is not just a consequence of working-class families being larger. You control for this, but there is still an effect. The other piece of work that is referred to here is a most interesting work undertaken in the U.S.A. by a man at the University of Michigan. It showed that it is not only family size but family spacing that is involved, that where children are packed together in years there is a drop in language performance of those children. The hypothesis is that interaction with adults in the family setting is an important component in learning language skills. The paragraph here is supported by Australian evidence and amplified from work done in the United States. The suggestion then is with the move to smaller families we might expect some rise in average level of performance.

BY MR. POWELL: At the bottom of page 54 of the booklet you are saying -

> "It is by no means as certain that all teacher-training graduates can compute accurately."

Do you know of any tests that have been made on the standing of literacy and numeracy among teacher trainees?-- Only informal studies that have been done by members of our staff and by people whom I have worked with in teachers' colleges, particularly the mathematics staff. They have been somewhat distressed to find the low level of performance of some of the students entering college and are greatly concerned that

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they have not had the opportunities during the three years that those students have been in the college to try to lift their level of performance in mathematics. I am quoting here a mixture of anecdotal evidence that has been collected by people in teachers' colleges, particularly in Victoria. I have no evidence from Queensland.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that at this stage we must adjourn the proceedings. I thank you very sincerely, Dr. Keeves, for travelling all this way to be with us today and for presenting the facts of your research work and discussing them with us so frankly.

The Committee adjourned at 12.45 p.m.

J. P. Keeves
(Australian Council for
Educational Research)

The Committee resumed at 2.5 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very pleased to welcome this afternoon a representative of the Australian Democrats, Mr. Michael Macklin. The submission is coded JN 278. It has been studied by members and I would now ask members to proceed to ask questions about it.

MICHAEL MACKLIN, examined:

BY MR. MILLER: On page 1 you claim that if certain changes are made the Queensland education system could achieve parity with the systems of other western countries within a generation. Have you any evidence to suggest that the Queensland education system is as far behind the rest of the world as that, because we had Dr. Keeves here this morning who showed quite substantial evidence that Queensland leads all other States, New Zealand, Great Britain and America in the areas of literacy and numeracy?-- In the introduction there the goals of an education system, according to the party, were set out. As we see it, the education system in Queensland is deficient in meeting those types of goals. For example, in terms of things like the life skills of people as workers, spouses, parents and voters, education which fosters individual initiative, creativity, flexibility and openness to new experiences. So the type of claim that is being made there, indeed, is one which is very difficult to give an empirical justification for. It is an evaluative statement of the fact that we consider the Queensland education system is deficient in terms of certain life skills. There are some empirical evidences, of course, for this; things like the high incidence in Queensland of illegitimate births would suggest that certain life skills are deficient here compared with other States, let alone compared with overseas. The types of claims, though, that we are making are more ones of an evaluative nature rather than an empirical one.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: You say that legitimacy rates are higher in Queensland than the rest of Australia?-- Than the other States. Certainly on the latest figures I saw most of the other States.

BYMR. POWELL: In the second paragraph on page 1 you refer to, ".....an acute awareness of the individual's responsibilities as a world citizen." Would you include loyalty to one's own country as equally worthy or of greater worth than responsibility as a world citizen?-- No, I think the emphasis there is correct, at least from our perspective. The perspective is certainly one in which a member of this particular country has a responsibility not only to the country but rather to the world. The view taken there, of course, is one which looks towards the future in terms of technological advances, shrinking boundaries, the way that economies interact, so the interaction of economies and the way that I think we saw within the last nine months the movements of things like the dollar not only in America but also here.

So therefore you would say that a responsibility as a world citizen has greater precedent than loyalty to one's own country?-- The emphasis there is not to rather pit one against the other but actually put down that unless loyalty to one's own country includes the responsibility as a world citizen then it would be extremely deficient, so that the larger perspective is to look towards the interaction of countries rather than to look towards one's own country above others. We feel we cannot progress here in Australia without in fact the world progressing.

On page 3 you say in paragraph 2 -

"A multi-pronged campaign against illiteracy and numeracy should be mounted through:

(b) the reintroduction of methods courses in pre-service and in-service education programs for teachers, particularly for primary school teachers."

Firstly, I would like to know why you singled out primary school teachers and, secondly, do you believe at the moment that there is a lacking in methodology at the teachers' colleges?-- The singling out there of primary school teachers is simply in terms of the development of skills in terms of literacy and numeracy, where fairly obviously the primary school has a greater responsibility for those initial skills. The reintroduction of method courses there is not necessarily to be seen that some of these courses are not already in the institutions because many institutions in fact do run them. The point we were making there in fact was the reintroduction of specific method courses in relation to arithmetical skills and literacy skills, and these courses are often missing from pre-service education whereas method courses, for example, in the trade disciplines may be there but particular emphasis on the skills is sometimes missing.

Would you be surprised to learn that A.C.E.R. tests have shown that Queensland performs very well in relation to the other States on literacy and numeracy?-- Yes, I am aware of the standing of literacy and numeracy. The import of No. 2 in fact is not to go along with what we see as rather an inane campaign in the Press about literacy and numeracy but merely to point out that literacy and numeracy are important skills and that we have in fact still too many people in our society who are deficient in these skills.

That is not to say that it is worse now than it has been in the past.

You say "a multi-pronged campaign against illiteracy and innumeracy" - what do you believe is the incidence of illiteracy and innumeracy in the community?-- I am sorry, I don't have the figures with me, but I do know that far too many people from my own experience in both secondary schools and tertiary institutions are deficient in these areas. I have the possibility every year of visiting a very large number of schools and talking with a very large number of teachers as I go around visiting my students. I have 300 pre-service teacher education under my charge. Therefore I do get to meet an awful lot of teachers and principals. The teachers and principals express to me - and I do know from my own experience - that a lot of people are still deficient in these disciplines and these skills. We would like to see further work done on it. That is why we are suggesting in these particular areas that further work be done.

BY MR. MILLER: On page 6 you emphasise education as a life-long process, yet you want to pack into secondary school courses human relationships, marriage and parenting, citizens' rights, social services, voting, drugs health, road safety, courteous driving, etc. Surely some of these could be given at either evenings or week-ends. Dr. Keeves pointed out this morning that Queensland was very high percentagewise compared with the other States in Australia, New Zealand, America and Great Britain in certain solid-core subjects because we spend more time than they do. If you are going to break down the time by introducing all of these courses you would expect literacy and numeracy to be improved?-- The import of the question would place a certain priority on certain skills. The top priority I think this submission places is on the skills for life. It is not necessary to see it - in fact in the earlier pages the submission has suggested that we don't look at the school as a be all and end all in terms of education. However, the intent of this particular number here is to say that at each stage certain things are necessary; for example, in primary school certain things are necessary and in secondary school certain things are necessary, and later on in tertiary. It is not that they would do all of those and that would be the end of it, but that at that time certain things in relationship to all of those are pertinent to them.

That time has to be taken from another area?-- That time has to be taken from another area, and therefore the suggestion certainly is to move an emphasis away from the traditional disciplines, as it were, into these areas.

BY MR. HEWITT: What about extending the school day?-- The extension of the school day certainly is a possibility, and it has been tried in other States. We are not looking for a rigid system but rather for a flexible system that will take account of these particular factors. We do believe, for example, that drugs is an extremely important area for young people in secondary schools. We happen to believe that since 18-year-olds now vote that voting is obviously a very important area. It does not mean that other skills such as reading and writing cannot go along with those. They don't have to be excluded; they can be done in conjunction with them. Reading and writing skills - any skill in fact - can only be learnt when there is a content. What the content is is not all that important sometimes.

BY MR. MILLER: Certainly you wouldn't be opposed to the suggestion of having evening or week-end classes for these subjects?--No, not at all, as long as the facilities in fact were there for them to inquire into them, and it is done in a reasonable, level-headed way. In fact,in the first part of the submission the suggestion is that there ought to be incentives to diversify the education system into other areas within our community - in other words, that the school should not be seen as the only institution involved in those types of educational endeavours. So it is not necessary that we lump them all in as particular courses, but rather that they are available within the community to young people.

BY MR. POWELL: Are you aware that in the United States materials on drug education have been withdrawn from the schools because they seem to have a counter effect of awakening an unwholesome interest in and experimentation with drugs?-- I was aware of the report. The report seems to me to be deficient in a number of ways. First of all it takes no account of the particular literature that in fact was being discussed. This is extremely important, as any teacher knows. It is the way these things are presented that is often more important than what you are in fact presenting. Whether or not we like it, as any teacher will tell you, in a secondary school drugs are available to young people, and all young people come in contact with them at some time or other. It is very difficult to actually get a cause and effect relationship going in terms of what actually has awakened a person's interest. If you want to do something on their interest not being awakened, for example, we might have to do something about our other sources of information. The school is only one. In fact, it is probably becoming a decreasing one. Television, for example, the popular media, are very large sources of information about drugs. Probably the major source about drugs for young people is their fellows. Unless the adults in fact take some stance in relationship to it, and some reasonable stance in relationship to it, it may very well be that the experimentation will grow rather than decrease.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Surely there should be a measurable response to drug education, otherwise there is no point in going to all the trouble about it?-- Measuring the response to any educational task is sometimes very difficult.

But on drug education it ought to be ------?-- It is very difficult to know why The report on that particular reason for withdrawing it seemed to me to be fairly shallow. I would need to be convinced in much more detail of the relationship between the material, its presentation and the effects of experimentation. I am still firmly of the belief that some materials and some presentations will in fact decrease experimentation.

BY MR. MILLER: Turning to page 4, paragraph 5, you recommend grants to universities to develop programmes of informal adult education. Is not that the responsibility of technical and further education?-- It is being done. However, I think that as suggested in No. 2 above we should move away from the classification of tertiary institutions. By that was meant that if one seeks to diversify - and here we are referring particularly to Queensland - if we seek to arrange our tertiary institutions on a decentralised basis then it may very well be that certain courses, which are now not degree courses, would be offered by universities. In other words, universities may take on some of the roles of community colleges. Likewise, some community colleges might include certain things which are now the prerogatives of the universities. The plea was made strongly in the beginning that we have a problem in Queensland; and indeed, we have a problem with some very small tertiary institutions. The suggestion was made that some of these could be closed in a rationalisation process, but it may be socially undesirable to do so. Therefore, various institutions such as universities and regional colleges should be granted funds to expand programmes in informal adult education, with an interflow between the various colleges, community colleges and universities.

When you say "community colleges", you are thinking of the community college in the Northern Territory?-- Yes, I am thinking of the Darwin Community College model. It seems to us that we need constantly to look at providing educational resources across the board, not just in the beginning of life. In fact, it should be spaced out more. Adults ought to have this access. In Queensland a very large proportion of the population is not within driving distance of any tertiary institution. That is why we recommend in No. 7 that we set up a State institute of open tertiary education to try to take into account the very large body of rural population.

Would it not be just as easy to extend the technical and further education?-- Yes, where the technical colleges are in fact available. Given the types of possible resources that may be available to education in the near future it did not seem to us terribly feasible to suggest the holus-bolus construction of new colleges. There does not seem to be that type of money around for that type of education.

When you talk about money and look at the amount of money spent per head of population in the universities, and the amount of money given for students at TAFE institutions, I think we could educate a lot more people for a lot less money if we expanded the TAFE institutions rather than the universities?--Yes. That is on the model which exists at the moment. The submission contained here is that those models should become more flexible, with the universities, C.A.E.'s, technical colleges interchanging some of their facilities so that the largest proportion of the population in Queensland would have ready access to these.

BY MR. HEWITT: On page 8, you make what I think is a rather uncharitable assertion when you say -

> "It is unacceptable that in Australia the education of handicapped children should be left largely to chance and to private charities."

On what basis do you say that it is left largely to chance and to private charities? In making that statement, did you measure the degree of involvement of the State in the problems of handicapped children?-- Yes. We were well aware there of the amount of the involvement in the education of handicapped children that is carried on in the State institutions. The intent was not necessarily to cast any aspersions on anybody and,

indeed, I would take the opportunity here to say that we fully support the type of work that is being done in the schooling system and that the submission here only seeks to expand some of the areas we think could be improved. The idea here is to again take up the notion of education, which is not one that is institutionally specific, but rather is looking at the entire education of handicapped children right through their younger years, through their youth years and into their adulthood. The education of handicapped children is obviously not something that is related to just one aspect of their life. It often takes over their whole life. That is why we suggest that, in all areas, and for all handicaps - here, of course, the definition would be very wide - the State would see itself as being ultimately responsible for the education of those people. In other words, it is a social obligation that we would like to see the State taking on for all of them. The private charities would still operate but with full subsidy from the State rather than part subsidy from the State.

BY MR. MILLER: While on page 8, you say that Australia is not an Anglo Saxon country. Yet the evidence given to us shows that at the last census 89 per cent of the population was either born in Australia, born in Great Britain or in an English-speaking country; that English is the only official language and all the institutions are Anglo Saxon. Are you overstating the migrant case a little?-- I don't think so. Firstly I would say that the migrants actually include people from English-speaking countries. Certainly the problems that migrants from English-speaking countries have are often qualitatively different. However, I think that we tend to underestimate the social differences between other English-speaking countries and our own. That is one point I would like to make. The other factor, I think, is that since 40 per cent of the population, in fact, was not born in Australia, we do have a large proportion of people who come to this country from outside. They may come from different types of political and social milieus to the ones that exist in Australia. Therefore there needs to be some idea of educational consideration given to those. In addition, there is the language situation. I do not think it is being over-emphasised here. In fact, I would merely give an example of that. At the moment, in Australia, we have nearly three-quarters of a million Italian speakers. We also have 200,000 people learning Italian. It has been estimated that by the year 2000 there will be well over 1,000,000 people speaking Italian in Australia. That is a very large number of people speaking only one of the very large number of languages that are currently being spoken in Australia.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Some of them would be speaking English, too?-- For sure and, in fact, many of them would be bilingual in the best sense in that they would have command of both languages and be able to operate in both of them. It seems to us that that should be fostered rather than depressed. We do not see it as an Anglo Saxon society. We see it as a multi-cultural society.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Macklin, for appearing, for your submission, and for taking the time to be with us today. I would be pleased if you would convey the thanks of our Committee to your membership for the preparation of the submission.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now welcome before the Committee representatives of the Kindergarten Teachers' College. I understand Lady Thomson is deputising for Mr. Alan Grant-Taylor.

LADY THOMSON: That is correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: Miss Carmel Byrne is, I understand, director of the Kindergarten Teachers' College. Is that correct?

MISS BYRNE: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand that Mr. Ian Ferrier has been delayed but will probably be here in a short time.

MISS BYRNE: I am sure he will be here in a moment or two.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your information. The submission we have received has been coded Au-86 and it has been studied by Committee members. In order to save time, we will proceed directly to questions relating to the submission. Lady Thomson might perhaps care to respond to my first question. I think the submission relates to the threatened transfer of your college to the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Edcuation. Who is doing the threatening?

LADY THOMSON: At the present time the threatening has arisen from the Board of Advanced Education. We have been negotiating with them. The first indication of this proposed merger came from the Board of Advanced Education and our negotiations have been carried on with them to date. I understand, though, that the ultimate decision is a ministerial matter at State level.

THE CHAIRMAN: Where did the initiative come from?

LADY THOMSON: The Board of Advanced Education. It came from "Canberra" when we asked about it.

THE CHAIRMAN: From the Tertiary Education Commission?

MISS BYRNE: Yes. I would have to say that the previous tertiary commission - the advanced education commission - recommended that there be a close association between the Kelvin Grove college and B.K.T.C. Following that, from about 1976, we acted on this and indeed established quite a good staff-sharing arrangement with Kelvin Grove - not only regarding staffing but also the use of resources. In fact, the two new buildings have been recommended because of the joint usage expected from both colleges. That is where the stimulus came from in the first instance.

THE CHAIRMAN: Surely it is reasonable that there be some form of integration between the early childhood years, say to Grade 4, in the training of teachers so that there is some understanding between all of those involved in that area, which is pretty much an early childhood problem. The very fact that teacher training in this area is going on in different institutions may have created some interface problems.

MISS BYRNE: I would say that we have dealt rather well with the integration of kindergarten teaching and lower primary teaching up to the age of 8, incorporating years 1, 2 and 3 in the primary school, by extending our diploma. Our previous diploma was a kindergarten teaching diploma.

We have extended it now and it is now known as a Diploma of Early Childhood Teaching, so that it extends in actual fact to teaching from age 3 to age 8. I believe we have made a very good effort to integrate and to become part of the mainstream in doing this. It also means that our early childhood teachers have a far greater understanding of lower primary education, and possibly education in general, because of the integration that has occurred in the last four to five years.

MR. MILLER: If primary teachers can be trained in our C.A.E.'s, what is your argument for retaining the right to train pre-school teachers?

MISS BYRNE: I would say that the main reason is that our early childhood teachers are totally oriented to the young child. All their training is concentrated on that ideal, whereas primary teachers, good as their courses may be, are receiving what is really an option in early childhood studies, so that the training that they get is only partial to their main aim and does not actually orient itself to the full early childhood scene. They would not be able to work with children in day-care centres. They have none of the early knowledge needed for children from birth to 4 years of age because State pre-schools start at age 4.

MR. MILLER: Would you then transfer from C.A.E.'s to kindergarten training colleges those lower primary teachers?

MISS BYRNE: That would be the ideal. As a matter of fact, in the early days when we co-operated with the State Education Department and the State Government we expected that all early childhood teaching training would be done in the kindergarten colleges. While the emergency was on and they were wanting more kindergarten teachers, we were quite happy and indeed we assisted so that all the other colleges could have an input to the early childhood stream. However, we were of the opinion that this was to revert to B.K.T.C. as soon as possible.

MR. MILLER: What year was that?

MISS BYRNE: 1972 was the first time a conversion course was set up and in 1973 the first conversion course at another C.A.E. was established, at the North Brisbane college. We were instrumental in aiding and abetting this because we knew that there was a big problem to be overcome.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting then that you should take them over rather than that they should take you over?

LADY THOMSON: That would be a good idea.

MISS BYRNE: I think it would be a good idea to have the early childhood students who are there come into the full stream of early childhood education. We would then have similar training and similar objectives and - the thing I am really after - a similar philosophy.

MR. MILLER: There would be a smoother transfer at an older age, too, don't you think?

MISS BYRNE: In what particular?

MR. MILLER: For instance, proceeding from primary to secondary at the moment is very smooth. Going from kindergarten or pre-school to primary could be a lot smoother at a later age.

MISS BYRNE: That is right. I do believe that the idea of establishing junior schools, as in the United Kingdom, would aid the Queensland education system.

MR. POWELL: At what age do you think early childhood finishes?

MISS BYRNE: If we go by all the psychologists, the first stage of learning is up to age 8.

MR. POWELL: How many students do you have enrolled at the moment at the college?

MISS BYRNE: Approximately 565.

MR. POWELL: How many did you have last year and in previous years? Has it been that high?

MISS BYRNE: It has decreased. We had 605 in February 1975. We expect some slight drop in 1979 to 497 and 487 in 1980. With the expected introduction of a bachelor's course we would expect to be over 500 in 1980.

MR. POWELL: What is the minimum number you would consider viable to run the college?

MISS BYRNE: For 59 years the B.K.T.C. operated as a viable institution producing graduates of good standing with an enrolment of less than 200. But personally I would not like to see the college go under a 300 limit. I think that could be regarded as a minimum.

MR. POWELL: Does the college teach methodology?

MISS BYRNE: Most certainly.

MR. POWELL: In that case, is it different from other C.A.E.s in teacher preparation?

MISS BYRNE: I would say so, because our course has a great concentration on child development. Our whole philosophy of teaching is on the developmental interactionist-type of philosophy and psychology and here is where the difference lies.

MR. POWELL: Are there any pre-school teachers being trained in other institutions in Queensland?

MISS BYRNE: Yes. They are trained to have a section of their course in second and third year or in third year alone and these numbers of graduates with an option in early childhood teaching will actually be more than the total output of our third-year students with the full early childhood diploma.

THE CHAIRMAN: In item 3, subparagraph 3 on page 9 you are indicating, if I might summarise it, that you have been cut back but the others have not. Is that right?

MISS BYRNE: As far as we know it most certainly has not been cut back before 1978, and although I have made efforts to find this out during the last few months, I have not found any evidence to prove that the numbers in the options in the other colleges have been reduced.

THE CHAIRMAN: In other words, you have not been taken over yet, but it is happening by stealth?

MISS BYRNE: I would not like to put it that way but I would like to say that I believe it is being allowed to exist, perhaps without due consideration of what is actually the effect. I do not believe that there is really a genuine attempt to do it by stealth. I do not think there is anything like that attached to it.

MR. POWELL: Going back-----

MISS BYRNE: That was your prime question?

MR. POWELL: No, it wasn't quite. I am thinking of the employment situation. Going back to what you said about some being trained in other institutions and some in yours, do those trained at other institutions have preference or problems in being employed; is there any bias towards any one college or one type of training?

MISS BYRNE: There are two main employing authorities. One is the State Education Department and the other is the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland.

MR. POWELL: Does the association tend to lean towards students trained in your institution?

MISS BYRNE: The graduates of our course are considered to be totally trained in early childhood education and therefore we have found that the community kindergartens regard our students as 100 per cent market desirable and 100 per cent market utilised and indeed this is so. As of today there is not a student from B.K.T.C. 1978 graduating class or the few who were out-of-phase students and graduated mid-year who are without positions.

MR. POWELL: What is the situation with graduates of other colleges with Creche and Kindergarten Association?

MISS BYRNE: They are mainly bonded students and therefore have been accepted within the State pre-schools, whereas the numbers of our students who have gone into State education employment are very small in number in comparison, although I must say that the pre-school services department have made every effort to incorporate our students - to employ our students.

MR. POWELL: So you would say that there is no bias towards or against?

MISS BYRNE: There is equality, perhaps. That would be a better way of saying it. But where there is a bias is in the area where our students have had 2 years - you could call it or you could equate it with the option of early childhood which the primary teachers get now - we have an option - not an option - we have full courses in lower primary, throughout

second and third years and we have approximately one student from the 1977 class who was given employment and we have nobody, to the best of my knowledge, who gained a lower primary teaching position in a State school in 1978. So I would say that the private schools, the Catholic schools and other places have definitely employed our E.C. students as teachers of Grades 1 to 3.

MR. POWELL: With the experience that you have had in preparing teachers for a particular age level, do you believe that perhaps there is reason to believe that in the C.A.E. teacher education system we should have separate colleges for primary teachers and for secondary teachers?

MISS BYRNE: No, I do not, but I think that there is more to early childhood training than merely teaching methodologies, to use your own term. I do believe that we are preparing graduates who, while they are teachers and have requisite teaching skills and knowledge of education, are also able to be employed in a variety of situations which is rather different from the overall aim of a primary and secondary teacher. I have been conductig a survey throughout 1978 and have found new categories of positions which are open to pre-school teachers. Therefore this would again prove that even the community is accepting that early childhood teachers or kindergarten teachers have abilities, they have a trained capacity for dealing with other situations; situations other than teaching but which require teaching skills.

MR. MILLER: In view of the declining birthrate and the fact that we appear to have over-capitalised on pre-schools, are you training teachers or graduates for unemployment in the next few years?

MISS BYRNE: I would think not. Our students to date are employed.

MR. MILLER: The State has over-capitalised with pre-schools, hasn't it? And we have a declining birthrate.

MISS BYRNE: We cannot actually state that.

MR. MILLER: I have stated that.

MISS BYRNE: Maybe we should accept the fact that the State has determined the number of pre-schools but there are lots of positions and all sorts of extra tasks which pre-school education could be asked to perform.

LADY THOMSON: Perhaps if I could come in here - as you know, there has been a great proliferation of child care centres and, according to our standards, we consider there should be an educational programme in every child care centre. If funding was available, we would have a trained kindergarten teacher in every child care centre. We have them in some centres but that is another subject altogether. Sometimes you can afford a teacher and sometimes you cannot; it all depends on your attendance and the day of the census. That determines the allowance you get for that centre. If we could only have our standards accepted by the Commonwealth Government, perhaps regarding pre-school education, and we were able to place the required number of kindergarten teachers, then every child care centre - the children whom we consider already disadvantaged by having to be in a child care centre every day - would be less disadvantaged, if I can use that term, by having a pre-school programme. As I said, some have it already, but not all.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why doesn't the Commonwealth accept your standard?

LADY THOMSON: At the present time there appears to be a sort of downgrading of pre-school education as such at Commonwealth level and the Prime Minister himself has said that too much money was spent on pre-school education. He is under the impression that the so-called middle class have received all the benefits. I should like to take him round some of our community kindergartens and show him the sacrifices made by the average working man to provide his child with a pre-school education.

MR. MILLER: There appears to be still a lot of research necessary in early learning.

LADY THOMSON: Very much so.

MR. MILLER: Has your institution a research department?

LADY THOMSON: No, not at the moment. It is something we would like to have the opportunity to do; again shortage of funds. But I think that is a situation which should be improved on in the next few years. This is a request coming from all parts of Australia at the present time. I am speaking now under another hat and that is as national president of the Australian Pre-School Association. We are all very much aware of the need for further research in every area of early childhood services. I use the word "services" rather than "education".

THE CHAIRMAN: Does Kelvin Grove do any research in that direction?

LADY THOMSON: I would not know. I am not a member of that faculty.

MR. FERRIER: I apologise for having arrived late. Contrary to the opinion you have probably formed, I am not here as a bodyguard for these two ladies and I do not think they are in danger of being assaulted.

On this subject of research the college has gone to very great pains to obtain the best help it can. Due to deficiencies in this country it has gone to the United States for a number of its tutors and lecturers who have been at institutions which carry out a lot of this research. In a sense we are borrowing that research at second-hand because of our financial restrictions at the moment.

THE CHAIRMAN: On page 8 of your submission, in item 3.1, you say you do it cheaper than anyone else. How do you do it?

MISS BYRNE: Perhaps we are very cautious. Further, early childhood staff in Australia, in the main, have not had an opportunity to gain advanced degrees. Therefore, in the main, there would be a proportion of our staff who are on the lower levels of the salary range. Also, early childhood education would demand quite a deal of expenditure on practice teaching, because we have more than any other college. We have 22 weeks because of the variety of institutions in which they need to have expertise and abilities developed. But we are not like the School of Engineering, for instance, which would have very great expenditure on machinery and that type of thing. Perhaps that is a reason. That is why we have not pushed this angle very much. We do understand that there would be some courses that are demanding of more technological types of equipment than we need.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have less hierarchy?

MISS BYRNE: That is one point, yes.

LADY THOMSON: Perhaps I could say that the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College was reared in an atmosphere of poverty and some of us who have been handed on since it became a college of advanced education keep a very close eye on finance. I think we have always had to be very careful in our housekeeping. I am beginning to wonder whether we have been too careful in that respect.

THE CHAIRMAN: Might I ask, perhaps facetiously, how many of your students are male?

MISS BYRNE: Exactly 11.

MR. HEWITT: Out of how many?

LADY THOMSON: A total of 565.

MISS BYRNE: This would be a good proportion in comparison with any other college where early childhood students are involved.

LADY THOMSON: It is very necessary for the young lone-parent child particularly to have a sort of father image in the centre if possible. For a long time men were not attracted to that, but since employment conditions have improved we are attracting more men into the field.

MISS BYRNE: This is one reason why male entry into courses is so late. The parities with State salaries came about only in 1977.

THE CHAIRMAN: One of the pre-schools in my electorate is in charge of a gentleman, and he is doing a very good job.

MR. MILLER: Could we turn to page 8, paragraph 3.2? You refer to a number of new occupations requiring courses

of training. Are they properly the concern of the C.A.E., or should they be done at some other institution?

MISS BYRNE: These are not new courses that are called for. These positions are applicable to the early childhood teacher as she is now trained. If I had brought the full advertisements I would be able to show you that the qualification necessary for these positions was in all cases the holding of a kindergarten diploma from a recognised kindergarten teachers' college.

MR. MILLER: Would an institute of early childhood education within the Kelvin Grove C.A.E. be a satisfactory solution to your problem?

MISS BYRNE: No, we do not think so.

LADY THOMSON: We think our college should retain its autonomy.

MISS BYRNE: We would be submerged. Three years, and you wouldn't see us.

LADY THOMSON: We would be completely lost. This is happening in other parts of the world, and they are becoming very concerned about it. It happened in America and it is happening in Great Britain. They are very concerned about it. They are losing the whole philosophy of something that people worked for years to establish. It is something that we are very proud of in Australia. It had been brought about by **voluntary** organisations.

MR. MILLER: It would be a shame to see that happen here.

LADY THOMSON: It would be terrible to see it happen here.

MISS BYRNE: The United States personnel on our staff describe us as just about the last bastion of early childhood education in the world. Because colleges are always small they are submerged within larger colleges or universities and they become less than a department. The philosophies are gone and the early childhood people drift. Because there is not really much advancement for them they take off into the more general areas of education within the other university faculties.

THE CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee, I thank you most sincerely firstly for the preparation of the document, which we have been very pleased to study, and also for appearing before us this afternoon. It has improved our day tremendously. I congratulate you on the work you are doing.

LADY THOMSON: Thank you. I would also like to thank the Committee for affording us this opportunity of appearing before you. I would also apologise for the absence of the chairman of our college council, Mr. Grant-Taylor. Business commitments just did not allow him to attend this afternoon.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are now pleased to welcome the Queensland History Teachers' Association, whose submission is coded AU-60. It has been received and studied by members. In order to conserve time we will proceed immediately with questions, but firstly, I would ask the representatives of the association to identify themselves.

MR. PAUL: My name is Stephen Paul, and I am president of the association. I have with me our secretary, Mr. Robert Bailey, and Mr. Frank Underwood, who is one of our executive members.

MR. MILLER: On page 1 in paragraph 2 are you saying that a knowledge of history can help predict the future? Is this a realistic proposition?

MR. PAUL: No. What we are saying there is that by studying history we can help students try to assess for themselves what might happen in the future. We are not saying we can predict the future with great accuracy. Obviously similar sets of circumstances occurred in history and by studying these patterns we help students understand the future that will affect them. We are not in the futurology business by any means.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why should we be developing a questioning attitude to society? Why is that always of high priority in social education today?

MR. PAUL: My personal opinion is that we could constantly ask students to question their environment, not because the act of questioning itself is desirable but because they can assess for themselves what they consider to be suitable attitudes and values that are personally satisfactory to them within the mainstream of our whole society. The role of social education is to develop these abilities so that they become more fully rounded people and more effective active citizens and therefore able to contribute to the democracy in which they live.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I do not think this is new by any means. If we look back through the syllabi for primary school history, geography and social studies over the past 40 or 50 years we find that teachers have been encouraged to develop this attitude in children - the idea of questioning what they are about and what society is about. They have been directed and encouraged to do it.

MR. POWELL: Am I correct in saying that your association is dealing mainly with secondary schools?

MR. PAUL: Not completely. We have some primary members, but fundamentally they would be secondary school teachers, diploma of education sutdents, colleges of advanced education lecturers and university personnel.

MR. POWELL: Do you believe Australian history should take precedence over the history of other countries in primary and secondary education?

MR. PAUL: It is not a question of establishing priorities. Obviously the study of Australian history is essential and must come in. It is given very thorough grounding in primary school. It is the basis of much of the Grade 8 course as it now exists in schools. It is in fact half of the history courses in high schools and there is at the moment coming out of the Board of Secondary School Studies a unit on Australian history for the Grade 11 and 12 modern history course. So it is very well represented. I would not like to say it should take precedence but it certainly should be placed in the context of other areas. But I wouldn't like to say it was more important or less important - certainly it should be there.

MR. BAILEY: In,let us say, the context of modern history then I think Australian history should certainly hold a higher priority than, let us say, the history of the United States where the relevance of it to Australian schoolchildren would be minimal. But since children live in the Australian environment I believe that Australian history should take a high place there, and more broadly there, perhaps, an intensive study of Australian Government, Australian social momentum, social problems and so on.

MR. POWELL: Do you find that Australian history is being taught effectively in the primary schools?

MR. BAILEY: If you get feedback from some of the students in the class-room they will tell you they have had it, and their interpretation of having had Australian history is, "Oh, we have had all this before." But usually with a few questions to them you find they have had nothing. I think there is perhaps not enough emphasis in some areas of Australian history in the primary schools. I believe primary schools tend to dwell often upon things which are easy to teach and rather visual, which is all right, I think, in the concrete learning level of children in that area, and then forget the areas such as, say, the social areas of Australian history, stressing the socioeconomic development.

MR. POWELL: That would not be a bit above the heads of primary school students?

MR. BAILEY: I think it could be brought within their context of reasoning. You could be above it, but I think a skilful teacher could definitely bring it within the concepts of children of that age.

MR. UNDERWOOD: At the start of this year when there was a lot of discussion on social history and learning I made a special visit to a large primary school and spent all the time I could looking at social education in the school. I must say I was very impressed by what was being done in the school, both by the breadth of the conception they had of the history not only of our country but of the effect of other countries, the past, the navigators and things like that, but also the way the teachers went about it and the attractive way their

work was set out. In fact, it was an attractive school all round. I thought it was a splendid morning's work I did going to see what is happening in the primary schools. But there are some things like the question of Aborigines which loom large in our society. Secondary schoolteachers often tell me that youngsters say to them, "Oh, have we got to do that again? We've done that every year, we know all about that." But, of course, teachers do not see it that way. They see it as growing and developing more meaningful concepts.

MR. MILLER: While we are talking about Aborigines, it has been put to us that some of the SEMP material relating to Aborigines is incorrect historically and inaccurate. Should this be taught to children?

MR. PAUL: In what respect is it inaccurate?

MR. MILLER: I cannot tell you. It has been put to us that it is inaccurate.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I think part of the job of the history teacher is to sort out the inaccuracies in books. There are many things we have accepted in books as being accurate for a long time which people are now telling us are not accurate. Things about Aborigines and women, of course, are high amongst those things because people are becoming more conscious of them, and perhaps that is one of the skills that history teachers these days are stressing.

MR. MILLER: Would you withdraw that section of SEMP if it was inaccurate?

MR. UNDERWOOD: I suppose if you knew something was inaccurate you would be alert to it straight away and it would become marked in your books as one of the things you are not going to do next year, because one of the things we do these days in schools is evaluate the materials that we have used. I was at a school yesterday and teachers were telling me that they do history, geography and English as integrated units in Grade 8, and as soon as they finish a unit the teachers who are working it get together and evaluate what they have done. They look at the unit and see how it has gone. No doubt they find they have made mistakes or could improve on things. I hope this process goes on all the time. I'd say that as soon as teachers found out that some part of SEMP was in fact inaccurate then they would not use it again.

MR. MILLER: I was going to ask you if any members of your association have brought this to your attention.

MR. PAUL: No, this is the first I have heard.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I would say not many members of our association have had the opportunity to go through SEMP in detail.

MR. PAUL: In regard to the Aboriginal section of SEMP I have heard that there is some controversy over interpretation and point of view, but not historical inexactitudes, no.

MR. BAILEY: We have had only a few trials of SEMP materials. The only ones I have actually seen or used on a trial basis in the class-room were "The Consumer in Society", but I have had very limited contact with SEMP material to be able to found any kind of judgment.

MR. PAUL: I have used some of the Aboriginal component of SEMP in teaching race relations in Grade 11 modern history

but I selected parts of it that I thought I could use in the context of what I was teaching and I did not notice anything historically inaccurate. But I used about three or four pieces of the material, that's all, I didn't use it as a total unit in the class-room.

MR. HEWITT: I am interested in the political development of Australia and whether children have a sufficient knowledge of it. I refer particularly to the 1890s when we had the great Constitution conventions that led to our federation. That was in fact the birth of our nation, the writing of the Constitution and really the laying down of the rules by which our nation has functioned for the ensuing 77 years. I am never quite satisfied that there is enough knowledge about that historical background of our nation and I believe that certainly should be there. Can you give me some assurances that children are in fact instructed on the founding of our nation?

MR. BAILEY: At the school where I teach, Woodridge State High School on the South-side, we have a course in my department there called Government of Australia which takes the kids through Grade 11 to 12 in an intensive study of the Government of Australia. This is a school subject. It is very popular in the school. Indeed, it is more popular than history so they get that grounding in there. For my part, I would rather every student took Government of Australia because I believe this is one of the areas of their knowledge which often has gaps.

MR. HEWITT: You can talk about Government of Australia in a contemporary sense only, can't you?

MR. BAILEY: No, it is taught in the history department and it is taught in both the contemporary and the historical sense, that is, each of the items concerned, especially federation and the development of our Constitution, are done on an historical basis so that the kids do get an insight into that. I think that is truly the only valid way to approach our Government as an evolutionary thing in that way. We see this as an extension, essentially, of citizenship education, and at Woodridge, at any rate, even in the lower grades 8 to 10 we have citizenship education for both the lower level non-academic students, as it is more generally across the State, and also an academic citizenship education course which aims towards setting our precepts of Government in their historical place. So they get that from 8 to 10 as well as from 11 to 12, but it is an elective situation for the child.

MR. HEWITT: How much would one of your brighter children be able to tell me about the workings, the application and the effect of the Australian Constitution?

MR. BAILEY: One of our brighter children would probably be able to tell you quite a lot. It would depend upon what questions you asked - how technical you got and how involved with constitutional law. They would not approach it from the point of view of a constitutional lawyer, but they would approach it from the point of view of understanding the party dynamics. They do get quite a bit of introduction into political parties and their role in the interpretation and development of the Constitution. They would go into that type of approach.

MR. PAUL: There is a section on Federation and the background of Federation - the conferences and the intensifying nationalism which then culminated in the institutionalisation of the Federal Government, in Grade 8 and again in Grade 10 history course. These are essential. I don't think you could adequately teach Australian history without looking at them. It would depend on the teacher to what depth they went into that topic. It would have to be covered for the course to be done adequately in both those years.

MR. HEWITT: Most American children are given a good working knowledge of the Constitution. Indeed, they are given a love of it, and there is a sense of nationalism in the classroom. Should we move towards that or is that overdone?

MR. BAILEY: I think in America it is overdone. I went through all of that myself. I had civics from the time I started Grade 1 practically.

MR. HEWITT: Were you educated in the United States?

MR. BAILEY: Yes. I received my education in the United States. I have a Bachelor's Degree in political science from an American University and a Master's Degree in history. I combined both political science and history. I went further than most of the kids in that area. In those schools in the United States they do stress it, but it is not so much the structure and the content itself, it is the emphasis that really makes the course a bit difficult. There is extreme emphasis on nationalism - perhaps an overemphasis upon nationalism. However the content of how a Bill is passed through Congress and also the structure of the Constitution, and the provisions of the Constitution - the children are certainly grilled in that to an extent where you have to virtually list off from memory the ten amendments or the Bill of Rights, and be able to relate meaningfully what those are, so that if you were asked what the Bill of Rights was you would be able to answer it. Those are the most significant parts of the Constitution. Those are the rights of the individuals. We do get a grounding in that. I feel in comparison with what my experience was in the United States and here, there could be a lot more emphasis upon this without overemphasising or going into that area of supernationalism in Australia. I think there is a tendency here to be fearful of going that way, and underemphasising it.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is an area that is criticised in Queensland in submissions that are coming to us. It is suggested that there is not enough emphasis and, in fact, it is carefully avoided - the giving of emphasis to the Australian Government, its development and so on and the fostering of a sense of national pride and pride in our heritage.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I think the way our courses are structured in Grades 9 and 10 it means that history and social science are left out for many students. Other students do geography instead of history. A very large majority of girls and boys in Grades 9 and 10 in the State high schools in Queensland do not in fact do history and geography. That means to me that they are missing out on a very important part of what perhaps we should be giving them in schools. Perhaps we might also add that we should not miss out on the Australian literature in our English.

MR. HEWITT: Can we go back to the United States? If a number of children miss that history because of the course they choose, what American children, if any, miss out on some study of the American Constitution.

MR. BAILEY: I would say virtually none. The elective system in the American schools is fairly strong. It varies. There are 50 States and 50 different education systems, and beneath that there are several other subsystems. So you can generalise too easily about it. In most schools they have a group of core subjects. Amongst those core subjects will be a course in civics or a course in American history in which a study of the Constitution in its historical setting will be obligatory.

THE CHAIRMAN: May I be the agent provocateur for a minute and quote from page 1 of your submission and say that this means that what students learn in history should not be firmly rooted in the past and should not remain in that time context, but the emphasis should be on the present and the future, the study of the past being used to examine and understand the present and predict the future? Perhaps if this is the way things go today this should be integrated with social studies. Perhaps we should do away with history and just have a social studies course.

MR. PAUL: It depends on what you call a social studies course. What we simply meant by that statement was that what students want to understand is their present environment, how it evolved and where it might go. History is important in so far as it provides a background to that study - the essential background. Social studies courses and social science courses examine only the present. We feel this places bad parameters and restrictions on the study. We are not against social science courses. We think they have a place in the curriculum, but we think that they complement history courses or, if you prefer, history courses complement social science courses. We provide essential background.

THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe it should all be integrated.

MR. PAUL: As we mention in parts of our submission, we are a little worried that history may not be adequately represented in the curriculum. The only history 80 per cent of students in Queensland will do will be in Grade 8, and they will do that for only three periods a week. We feel that is inadequate.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Some of our schools, especially in these newly built first-year centres, have experimented with integrated studies of history, geography and English. I was at one of them yesterday. At this particular school they are not too sure yet just how it is going. At one other school where they have been doing it for about three years now I understand they are quite sure. They feel it is a good thing to integrate them. At the moment I think it is a matter of

debate amongst teachers and educationists whether integration of subjects is a good thing or whether the old traditional boundaries should be kept. There would be many teachers who would keep the old traditional boundaries.

MR. MILLER: We have received some submissions about values clarification to the effect that students should state their personal values for class discussion in the hope that these would be clarified. Would history teachers agree with this proposition?

MR. PAUL: It certainly does not loom as large in history teaching as it would in pure social science courses or civic social science courses. Certainly at times we get onto a current dilemma which is a historical one, when we might ask students, "What do you think about this? What is your opinion? Let us argue for and against." Certainly students are not brought out in front of the class or put in any sort of situation where we demand to know what their values are, examine them, attack them and so on. Certainly it is not really a major aim of history teaching at all. I do not say the situation will not arise when while discussing the Middle East situation we talk about atrocities. We may refer to the Nazi regime and talk about values implicit in genocide or terrorist activity. A discussion of that sort of topic involves values. Certainly students are not asked to reveal what their values are and make some sort of binding commitment.

MR. MILLER: Could you give me an example as to how far you would go on those issues?

MR. PAUL: Me personally in my class-room? If I was discussing the whole question of terrorism what I might do , for example, is that having traced through the history of the Middle East situation so that both points of view could be understood - the Israeli point of view and the Arab point of view - I would then attempt to get students to understand the values behind the actions of each. To understand why the Lebanese apparently feel it necessary to indulge in terrorist activities I would ask whether their values were good values or bad values, and whether they accept them or reject them.

There would be no way I could test that and say one side was right and one was inaccurate. I would not be teaching it properly unless I exposed students to the values involved in the whole situation. Of course, terrorism is becoming more familiar to Australians, unfortunately. We are failing in our education of students if we do not include topics like this.

MR. POWELL: History is obviously one of the social sciences. How would you react to the proposition put up that history and geography should not be taught as separate subjects but rather should be replaced by a topic called social science which would include history, geography and all the other social-type courses rolled into the one subject.

MR. PAUL: That could strictly be a logistical arrangement in the school whereby they are put under the one faculty, but still taught essentially. If you are looking at an integration of both courses it would be extremely difficult to do as they both exist in Queensland - or impossible.

MR. BAILEY: The syllabus of both of these is so widely different and varying - and even the methodologies used - that integration would be very difficult. I would also deem that any prelude to any type of integration of these subjects should be made with serious consideration of what has happened in Western Australia and Tasmania in this regard. They do not have history or geography as a disciplinary subject but they do have a social science course. They have had a considerable problem with the acceptance of these at universities around Australia. They have had to institute a specific course to train people in traditional disciplinary ways so that they will be acceptable in universities outside Tasmania and Western Australia.

MR. POWELL: What about the students who are not aiming at tertiary education?

MR. UNDERWOOD: I think that is the crux of the whole matter. In my experience of teachers, I think our teachers want history and geography as is. Many teachers would also like to see another study of society as well, but not instead of. They would like it added to a core as well, but not instead of. I think that they believe there is a place for history and geography. I think your other question is spot on. Most of our students are not aiming for tertiary study. This is probably where we are missing out because we are not giving them a study of history and geography which, after all, is a study of their society or parts of their society. This is something that we should be looking at.

MR. BAILEY: This is precisely why we wish to introduce the Government of Australia into the senior level. We felt there was not something for those students who did go out. The Government of Australia is a school subject for that reason. It is not a board subject.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Last year we had the Australian History Teachers' Conference in Brisbane. Stephen may remember that many of the people from the other States were very envious of the fact that all students in Queensland studied history - or most students in Queensland do. There would be a handful of schools where students don't do history in Grade 8, but not very many.

MR. POWELL: It is just Grade 8; they don't necessarily go on in Grades 9 and 10?

MR. UNDERWOOD: Not necessarily in 9 and 10. My personal view is that this is where we should have more of a social aspect.

MR. POWELL: Going back to what Mr. Hewitt was saying about the school-based subject that you have in Grade 11 at your school and Grade 12, do you believe that there is room in the secondary school particularly for greater emphasis to be given to the study of Australian Government, over the whole range of students, with more emphasis on the constitutional matters?

MR. BAILEY: I would go so far as to say that every student who comes out of an Australian school - and a Queensland school in particular - should have a course in citizenship education.

MR. PAUL: A civics course.

MR. BAILEY: In senior, more importantly, they should have a Government of Australia course. We are very gratified with the way in which students have fielded questions to various local members such as Mr. D'Arcy and others, who have come into the school and opened themselves up in forum to the students of this course, and how they have become keenly interested in political parties and what they do. We recently had an Expo '78 situation at the school in which, as part of our offering there, we had a model community built by the Cit-ed students, and around that we had a display of all the various policital parties. We had students representing each one of those political parties. Every student who came to see the display would vote on what party they would prefer - a preference vote. We actually made it into a preference vote. The response to this was very good. It was quite a colourful display and not only continued the interest of the students taking the Government course, but also was infectious with the other students as well to find something out about the political parties in Australia and how they operate.

MR. UNDERWOOD: When you get on to constitutional matters I think you should remember that you can lead horses to water but you cannot make them drink. After all, they are still children. The other day somebody gave me a document, a report from a British newspaper in about 1945, when the Minister for Education in Britain at that time pointed out most vehemently that children of Britain would not be made to study the citizenship things because they were not in fact citizens but just children who were developing. The climate we have today is so different; we are saying that everybody has to study. You can see the change in just 30 years coming over the aspect of social education. In that time it would have had a great stress on history.

MR. POWELL: When I went to school there was an emphasis on citizenship education, but it was not called Cit-ed in those days.

MR. UNDERWOOD: It was civics.

MR. POWELL: There was a very strong emphasis on it.

MR. UNDERWOOD: There is growing emphasis in Queensland schools. I think one of the other submissions you have might point out that a sort of soft option has developed in our schools; you do Cit-ed instead of something else. It was a subject instituted for children with lower ability but it has been fed into students with higher ability. This has caused a number of problems.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite students of the Lockyer District State High School to appear before the Committee. This is a very significant moment for the Select Committee. We have had a wealth of information from everybody interested in the education of students. To date we have not had students appear before our Committee in Brisbane. We have travelled to schools, we have visited high schools and tomorrow we are going to a high school, but this is the first time that we have received submissions. I thank you very much for responding to the Committee's invitation to make a submission. I ask you firstly, Mr. Cooper and Miss Fifoot to please say how you were elected as captains of the Lockyer District High School, and to give us your ages, please.

MR. COOPER: I am Paul Cooper, I am captain of the Lockyer District High School. The preliminary elections were held as prefects in November last year. There were six selection groups - three teacher groups and three student groups. To become a prefect a student must poll well in four out of the six groups.

Therefore they cannot be popular with only students or teachers; they have to be popular with both. From there, the prefects were assembled in early February of this year. The same number of staff as prefects cast votes. The prefects and staff vote on a preferential system and the winners are the boys' and girls' captains.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not one vote one value. It sounded very complicated.

MR. HEWITT: Your age please, Paul?

MR. COOPER: I am 17.

MISS FIFOOT: I am Penelope Fifoot and I also am 17.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite you to present your submission to the Committee. I think it might be appropriate if you, Penelope, read it.

MISS FIFOOT: We have divided our submission into four main groups. They are - 1. Ignorance regarding educational system; 2. Methods of assessing; 3. Introduction of modified subjects; 4. Hiring charges. The submission reads -

"1. In carrying out this inquiry, we have found that there is widespread ignorance amongst students regarding the system of education, of which the students are the most important factor. We feel that there should be more education in the matter of the applied Radford Scheme and how it affects the individual student.

2. The introduction of external junior and senior exams should not be brought about. Students feel that the method of testing, assessing, and moderation of results is adequate.

3. We feel that there should be modified subjects for students up to and including senior who are less capable of learning. These subjects should not be of a theoretical basis but one of a more practical nature to better equip them in a trade, because a great number of students are staying on until senior as they are unable to find suitable employment.

4. Hiring charges have been introduced into this school in recent years. We think this should be kept and expanded to cover the largest possible area of subjects to reduce costs of buying textbooks.

5. A board of review to follow up this inquiry should be a necessity every two to four years."

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. How was the submission prepared?

MR. COOPER: It was prepared mainly by a few senior students. We assembled on two lunch-hours and just put our thoughts together and put them into words.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did you consult with teachers in its preparation?

MR. COOPER: No. There was no teacher involvement in this whatsoever.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was it presented to your students for approval before presentation to the Committee?

MR. COOPER: Only to a few - the ones who were at the meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite members to pose questions.

MR. MILLER: Are you satisfied with what the school has done for you over the past five years?

MISS FIFOOT: Yes, quite satisfied.

MR. COOPER: Yes, I am satisfied with what they have been doing.

MR. MILLER: You would not like any change whatever?

MR. COOPER: I think the subjects we have at school equip us fairly well for a trade. However, we have found that a student may go through and obtain 7 in accounting, for instance, but when he goes for a job the people on the job still have to train him in the very basics of accounting just to get him used to the system that they have overlooked in the studies at school. Otherwise, in most subjects I feel we have been equipped but there should be a bit more emphasis on the social building - the character building - of students. Some students are dropping out of school and I do not think this is making very good citizens.

THE CHAIRMAN: How many children attend the Lockyer District State High School?

MISS FIFOOT: About 780 to 800.

MR. POWELL: In paragraph 1 of your submission you refer to "Ignorance regarding educational system." What sort of ignorance?

MISS FIFOOT: I myself like to know how we are assessed, how the ASAT tests work and how the T.E. scores come about. We are told a little about that but it is still not very clear.

MR. POWELL: Have you read any of the board literature in the matter? The Board of Secondary School Studies puts out some literature on the T.E. score and how it is arrived at and how the Senior certificate is arrived at. Have you read any of that or seen of it?

MR. COOPER: I have seen some of it. At the beginning of the year they put out pamphlets concerning assessing but, as usual, students sort of glance through the pamphlets as they are coming out and put them aside. But when the actual tests come up and ASAT is getting close, everyone is sort of wondering, "What the hell did I do with the pamphlet?" I think it would be better if some person came round and lectured us. If there were a person there at a blackboard telling us how it is done, we would remember it better.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you swot for ASAT? Do you prepare for the ASAT examination?

MR. COOPER: No.

MISS FIFOOT: There is no way you can, really.

MR. HEWITT: You mentioned modified subjects that you would like to see introduced. Can you give us some idea of subjects you had in mind?

MR. COOPER: We have had pointed out the fact that "modified" means a slight change in subjects we already have. What we meant was further subjects brought in to cover a greater area so that students would be better equipped for trades. These subjects could be anything from welding through to basic accounting, just to get students into more trade-orientated subjects.

MISS FIFOOT: Not only trade-orientated subjects but also basic English, maths and perhaps science subjects for students who do not learn so easily.

MR. HEWITT: There comes a time when schoolchildren have to decide what they want to do with their lives and it is a constant matter of debate whether their options are closed too soon -whether they are forced into a decision-making time before they are quite ready and before they have quite decided what they want to do. Do you feel that your options are kept open as long as possible, or do you get the impression that they are closed too quickly?

MR. COOPER: I do not feel the options are closed too soon because there are always counsellors available for any students who want them, so the options are open. They are slightly closed at Grade 9 level but they are still wide open for any trade if a student does not want to leave at the end of Grade 10. I do not think they are closed that much after Grade 10 because there are still guidance officers at the school to give advice, plus principals.

MR. HEWITT: What is the average student's attitude towards discipline? Does he think it is necessary in schools? Does he look for it? Does he respect it? Or does he feel that schools are over-disciplined?

MR. COOPER: I do not know what the average student feels but I do not feel it is over-disciplined whatever. There could be a lot more discipline, if anything.

MR. HEWITT: In what way is discipline lacking?

MR. COOPER: I feel that since corporal punishment has been dropped for girls they feel they can get away with slightly more. They are not breaking the rules but they are flaunting them to the limit.

MR. POWELL: Very well put.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to reply, Penelope?

MISS FIFOOT: I had better not!

MR. POWELL: Your fourth item dealt with hiring charges introduced to the school to reduce the cost of textbooks. Would you like to explain how that works?

MISS FIFOOT: The school buys a large quantity of not only textbooks but printed material and students use it during class-time. In this way they get a wider range of books available and it is much cheaper for them.

MR. POWELL: How much is the hiring charge?

MISS FIFOOT: It varies from subject to subject. For example, in English we pay $3 and we get the use of printed material.

MR. POWELL: $3 a term or per annum?

MISS FIFOOT: Per annum. It is more expensive with art and subjects like that where you use a lot of school material.

MR. COOPER: The material can be used year after year. The first year the school may spend a lot of money trying to get equipment and textbooks but the year after that they can spend money on a greater range of materials.

MR. HEWITT: Are you discerning in your choice of television programmes?

MR. COOPER: Not really. There are eight in my family so I do not get very much say in what I am going to watch.

MR. HEWITT: Do you sometimes feel that you are looking at television when you know in your own mind that you should be studying, or do you consider yourself to be a disciplined person who puts things into their proper perspective?

MR. COOPER: Well, it depends on the time of the year. Around tests, I usually prefer study to television. There is not much worthwhile in the programmes on television at that time so I prefer to be studying rather than watching Skippy.

MR. MILLER: Do you feel that there is too much testing and not enough teaching under the Radford Scheme?

MISS FIFOOT: No. The way we are tested at the moment, we are tested more or less continually throughout the year and that is good, because it makes us learn everything bit by bit and we understand it more. We are tested more than once on a particular part of a subject so we learn it twice or more and we understand it better each time we learn it.

MR. COOPER: It gives us a more intensified version of each subject. We go into the study deeper.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you under too much strain as a result of the Radford Scheme?

MISS FIFOOT: No.

MR. COOPER: Not really. It is spread out over 2 years rather than condensing it all and blowing your mind all at once.

MR. MILLER: Do you find it difficult to retain the material as you are tested early in the year?

MR. COOPER: Yes. I find it difficult, especially the first semester of Grade 11. The maths is in four groups with a semester for each group and I find it hard to retain the first semester maths and I think most students do. That is about the main problem.

MR. POWELL: Did you find a vast difference between the type of subject content in Grade 10 compared with Grade 11? Is there a big jump?

MISS FIFOOT: Yes there is. That is the first thing I noticed. It is completely different.

MR. POWELL: Was it as different as changing from Grade 7 to Grade 8 or more different?

MR. COOPER: Well, changing from Grade 7 to Grade 8 was more of a school change where you had to get used to the different type of school and changing rooms, but the work sort of seemed to follow on from Grade 7 to 8, but there is a big jump from Grade 10 to 11.

MR. HEWITT: Would you change any emphases on the school if you had the right to do so?

MR. COOPER: None I can think of at the moment.

THE CHAIRMAN: What sort of library do you have at Lockyer State High?

MISS FIFOOT: Reasonable. They are very hesitant about buying new reference books.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why - money?

MISS FIFOOT: Yes, money.

MR. COOPER: It is a two-room library which contains all the books as well as the audio-visual equipment.

THE CHAIRMAN: From time to time we have had people who are worried about the content of some books in libraries - about any pornographic material in them. Are you worried about that or do you think we should be worried about that?

MR. COOPER: Not really.

MISS FIFOOT: No.

MR. COOPER: I think that high school students should be able to know what they read and what they reject. If it is in the library, fair enough, a Grade 8 student will say, "There is a good book in the library, in such and such a row." They might go and get it. But if they cannot get it at school, they will get it somewhere else, so I do not think there is any real problem.

MR. MILLER: What new subjects would you like to see introduced into secondary schools? Would you like to see sex education, human relations, library education?

MR. COOPER: Maybe sex education should be in the schools. I don't know whether it should be full time or just for a small portion of the year.

MR. MILLER: By a specialised teacher?

MR. COOPER: Yes.

MR. HEWITT: I can think of alternate lifestyles, problems in contemporary society, abortion, aberrations in sexual behaviour and things like this. Are they things that should be discussed and understood in high school or do you think there are some subjects that should be treated as absolutely taboo?

MISS FIFOOT: No. I think they should be part of our education because it is part of growing up and we need to know about the good things and the bad.

MR. COOPER: This is partly covered now in the religious education course. I think the Board of Secondary School Studies has something to dowwith it. All the R.E. teachers go through the different points such as knowing, loving and caring, and these bring out a very wide factor. I think we learn morals because you sort morals out yourself in your own conscience.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who teaches the R.E. course?

MR. POWELL: Well, there are ministers and nuns who come to the school.

MISS FIFOOT: Also a couple of teachers.

MR. MILLER: Are you both prepared for tertiary studies next year or do you think you are too young?

MISS FIFOOT: No, I think the right age.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that what you are going to do?

MISS FIFOOT: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Where are you going?

MISS FIFOOT: The university.

THE CHAIRMAN: What are you going to do?

MISS FIFOOT: Hopefully medicine.

THE CHAIRMAN: Paul?

MR. COOPER: I am trying to get into the Air Force. That is my biggest hope at the moment, or I will go to the Q.I.T. and do a Bachelor of Business course there.

MR. HEWITT: If you have been brought up in a wholesome family environment where a certain value is established and you accept it without question, and that question is brought into discussion in the class-room and you are encouraged to question that value, what is your attitude to that questioning, and how do you feel at the conclusion of such a session, or hasn't it happened to you?

MR. COOPER: Children cannot go round with their eyes closed. If their parents are teaching them moral values, they have to sort them out for themselves because they are going to be parents soon and they have to either reject some of their parents' moral values or accept all of them, so this questioning has given them an insight into their own life and whether they should accept these morals. They might hear of different attitudes that they might adopt themselves. It sort of builds better parents all the time.

MR. HEWITT: Have you understood what is meant by humanist attitudes?

MR. COOPER: Not really, no.

MR. MILLER: Has there been enough emphasis placed on basic skills such as reading and writing in your years at school?

MISS FIFOOT: No.

MR. MILLER: Would you like to have seen more?

MISS FIFOOT: Yes.

MR. COOPER: Yes. I have been to five different schools. I do not mind saying that my writing is shocking. People find it hard to read. A big emphasis should be placed on this in the younger years getting writing just to be legible. I think basic arithmetic and everything is fairly well taught. But writing skills and English are forgotten. For example, we had just a little bit of revision in English last semester. They started talking about clauses and phrases and it just completely lost me. I could not remember. That was Grade 4 work. It should be taught right through from Grade 1 to Grade 12.

MR. HEWITT: Do you enjoy reading as a pleasure and a pastime away from study?

MISS FIFOOT: Yes.

MR. COOPER: I don't.

MR. HEWITT: Do you read widely, Penelope?

MISS FIFOOT: Fairly widely, I guess.

MR. COOPER: I read very little. I do not read much at all.

MR. HEWITT: Do you have a preference in the things you read?

MISS FIFOOT: Well, it changes a lot. I used to read a lot of science fiction. Now I read historical novels; more or less anything now to see what I like.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anything we have not asked you about that you are burning to say before this Parliamentary Select Committee, with the newspaper reporters present? Would you like to say, "Do this for us?" Or is there anything you overlooked previously?

MR. COOPER: Not really.

MISS FIFOOT: Not really.

MR. HEWITT: Would you like to make a broad observation upon the Queensland education system?

MR. COOPER: I think I am quite satisfied with it.

MISS FIFOOT: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to thank you both very much for appearing before us this afternoon. It has been most interesting, refreshing and different. We appreciate it very much. We would be pleased if you would convey to your fellow students our appreciation of the preparation work that they have done. Tomorrow morning the Committee will be paying a visit to The Gap high school and will resume its sittings here tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock.

The Committee adjourned at 3.52 p.m.

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DAY 12

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE 31 AUG 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M. J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W. D. Hewitt
Mr. C. J. Miller
Mr. L. W. Powell
Mr. E. F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:

Dr. R. D. Goodman
Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P.A.B. Krebs
Mr. K. P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E. S. Newton

BRISBANE, 31 AUGUST 1978

TWELFTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 2 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: We had a very successful morning at The Gap. This meeting is reconvened and I am pleased to welcome three gentlemen who will speak to a submission on Queensland education and the arts. It is coded Jn-77 A & B. The submissions have been studied by members of the Committee. They constitute a joint study of the Schools Commission and the Australia Council, the national report and the Queensland report. Today, we received a copy of a submission which I understand these three gentlemen will speak to. Firstly, I invite them to identify themselves and to indicate their executive positions.

MR. JUSTICE CONNOLLY: I am Connolly, a judge of the Supreme Court these days but I was the convener of the Queensland steering committee which investigated this matter as part of education and the arts which was undertaken by the Schools Commission of the Commonwealth and the Australia Council, as a joint venture. That study resulted in the Queensland report, which is the blue book that you have in front of you and then the national report which is the brown or sepia book that you have in front of you. The other people appearing with me are Mr. K. R. Siddell who would be known to you as the Director of Cultural Activities in this State and a member of the Music Board of the Australia Council and Mr. J. Shaw, who is the acting head of the Division of Creative and Performing Arts at Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education and a member of the Craft Board of the Australia Council. The three of us are here today to represent a continuing Queensland committee on education and the arts which has been set up to monitor progress on the results of the national study. I also formally produce to you what you have already, and that is the blue, unmarked document which is our submission to you. I do not propose to take you through these documents. To do so I would be taking up your time to no purpose. I propose to speak to a few main points and then invite Mr. Siddell and Mr. Shaw to supplement anything I say as they think fit. The first thing that you might ask yourselves is what we are doing here. We understand you to be undertaking a stocktake of the aims and methods of the Queensland education system. I understand that there may perhaps be some uneasiness

about the levels of achievement in the schools and perhaps even the fundamental philosophy that is involved. Our concern is that in an understandable desire to get home the basics of education with which we are very much sympathetic to you, it is just conceivable that the emphasis might shift to a solely utilitarian approach. I am sure you will tell me immediately that I am wasting my time and I can go home because you would not do anything like that. But we thought we should make a presence here to indicate to you our strong resistance to the pendulum swinging too far in such a direction. I point out to you that you will have a community - we have been hearing a great deal of the impact of a technical society on our community - and you will have a community with increasing leisure. To put it at the very lowest level, we do not want the devil finding too much for idle hands to to. We have to have wholly educated people who can use their leisure without making mischief of themselves to other people. My next point is that we do not have to emphasise to a Committee of this nature the importance of the arts to our society, if only because it is generally accepted in the community for a start. You may be interested in a couple of things. In the year ended 30 June 1977, the total expenditure on the arts was no less than $977,000,000 in this country. The wages bill was $450,000,000 - 1.5 per cent of the national wages bill and it was paid to 20,000 full-time practitioners of the arts and 100,000 part-time practitioners. So those are, to put it again at its very lowest, a lot of votes and a lot of money. The other reason that we do not have to emphasise the importance of the arts to you is that this Parliament and this Government are wholly and very heavily committed. As you know, scores of millions of dollars are currently being spent or are about to be spent on the south bank cultural centre and, as I say, we do not have to preach to the converted. It all must begin in the schools. That is why the Australia Council, which disperses $26,000,000 a year to and in support of the arts and the Schools Commission, which is the national body at the head of the education system at its national level, interested themselves in this study. Our own Department of Education is heavily committed to a large artistic content in the school system, right through the primary schooling system and also, we think, to a lesser extent, in the secondary schooling system. We ask ourselves and you: are these funds being well and usefully spent and our answer is : only if the system is a properly professional system. That brings me to our next point. Our group stands for strict professionalism. We totally reject the notion of the arts being seen as a soft option, an easy alternative to somebody who is too stupid to do something else or has not the brains for the academic side. We are therefore opposed to the streaming of children with a good quality of mind away from the arts. We believe strongly in a phrase which we read in the newspapers and which we think has been deployed before you about the accountability of the teachers; in other words we do not believe it is a system for just filling in time on an easy basis. We think there should be stated objects stated at the highest level of the education system, against which achievements can be measured; we believe in the measuring, constant monitoring of measurement of achievement. We believe that that should be done by professional advisers or inspectors to monitor the system, to assist the teacher constantly in his level of achievement; in other words it should not be just a catch as catch can system left to people to do their own thing. There is a little bit too much of that going on these days. In principle, I want to say this: we are not here to ask you for money or to say that the State should be deploying vast amounts of additional money

towards the arts. I do not say that you cannot find ways of spending more money on the arts. You know perfectly well that you can find ways of spending more money on anything. Essentially what we are interested in is emphasis. Is the emphasis going in the right place? We already have teachers. Sure, we could make out a case for more. We have arts teachers. We already have much of the resources that are required,but is it being properly deployed? Is the support coming from the places that it should come from, which is from the top? The community has much in the way of resources, which is available, even out in the country. Plays, opera, concerts , art galleries are available to children. Are they being encouraged to use them? Is their imagination being stirred by the people with whom they are in contact, so that they make the most of all of these things? Here we think it is important to say that the department itself should state positively that it is 100 per cent behind the involvement of all children in the arts, so that the head-teacher who may be more interested in other things knows that it is the policy of the department that he lends his support,not at the expense of the academic or basic subjects, but as a complement to them. Lip-service is a very easy thing to pay at all levels, and I want to come to an end by telling you a little story which, I hasten to say, is perfectly true. The first criminal sittings I had in my life, because I am a new boy at this judging business, was in Cairns this year. I had to sentence a young man of 17. When you are sentencing, the police tell you his background. I was told that he was of a good family background, 17 years of age, above average intelligence, in Grade 11, and he could neither read nor write.

So I asked the indelicate question, "What in the name of God is he doing in Grade 11? What is Grade 11 to him and what is he to Grade 11?" I was told, "Oh, there's quite a lot of that going on." I would ask: who let him get there? Who put him up year by year from Grade 3 to Grade 4 to Grade 5 to Grade 6, up to Grade 11? As I said when using this analogy recently to a group of educators, as a statistic he is a very valuable boy because he goes to swell the successful statistics, the number of boys in Grade 11. He is a splendid sight - yet he could neither read nor write. That is an area in which you are interested, I know, and the same thing applies to the arts. It is very easy to say that our curriculum set-up is such that 30 per cent of the time of children in primary schools is spent in areas that are either involved in or related to the arts. Don't say we are not doing a good job. How well is it being done? Are the class-room teachers given adequate training before they start? They go through C.A.E.s. We don't want more money spent; we just want to make sure that those who are supposed to be teaching these things do get the basic necessities. We want a positive policy at the top, a policy that states its objectives in relation to the arts as it does in relation to the rest of the curriculum content. The national committee recommends something called an Arts Education Advisory Committee. This is not money; this is existing sorts of people, educators and administrators who are presently around the place - a committee through which they can at top level debate the content of the system in relation to the arts, whether it is functioning, and if it is not functioning why it isn't. The national report also recommends regional arts education councils in which the community can be involved. You gentlemen are sitting because the community, as you judge it - we are only guessing - has developed some degree of uneasiness. The best way to deal with members of the community, of course, is to give them voices at key points. We can't listen to everything everybody says, but they can have a voice - a forum in which they can express their views and thrash out their ideas. Finally I emphasise again that we believe in strict professionalism. We do not believe this is airy-fairy business. We do not think it should be left to people who do not know very much about it and who read up the chapter ahead of the children. Of course, they cannot really be blamed for this; they have not had any training in it. Unfortunately there is a bit of that going on. Those are the main points we want to make in outline. The rest of it is in these reports. It may help you if I ask the Director of Cultural Activities, Mr. Siddell, to supplement what I have had to say.

MR. SIDDELL: Mr. Justice Connolly has outlined very well those type of things that concern us. The committee that sat here in the education and the arts inquiry, in coming to its findings, asked a great number of people throughout the State to have a say regarding arts education. Almost invariably the answer came back that there was a lack of understanding on the part of those involved in administration of education places, particularly the schools, as to the importance of arts education within the schools. It is this that we believe has to be given prominence at the moment. It is one thing to say that we need certain things in education; it is another thing to make sure that these things really work within education. I want to quote one aspect of this that at least one member of your Committee, as a principal of a school, would understand. It is not enough to say that there will be art, music, drama and dance within a school and put them in a curriculum if everything is not being done to make sure that those subjects are given a reasonable time to be done in

and that the sequential nature of the particular subjects, such as music and art, is given free rein. I believe there is a misunderstanding on the part of some administrators in education in this regard. One particular regional administrator said that if at year 9 and year 10, after having had a general sort of year at year 8, students could be offered an art or an art/music/drama course of one period a week this would be of value to them. That type of thing is merely playing with words and with children's needs. One of the things that are lacking at the moment is the understanding, the true understanding, of the needs of all children to be touched by the arts. The fact that music and art particularly and the developing interest in dance and drama go together with the need for sequential work in the schools cannot be stressed too much. The other thing I would like to say concerns the development of cultural venues throughout the State. If we are going to put huge cultural venues throughout the State, such as the new south bank complex, and if we do not have audiences there, the Government is going to have additional problems in terms of upkeep. I know that is a very practical sort of look at things, but it is unfortunate that in many areas where the arts ought to be flourishing they are getting out of the reach of the ordinary person. If more people were involved in wanting these things, obviously the costs would not be as great. The people involved in them would be involved for the right reasons. I would agree with all that Mr. Justice Connolly has said and would finally draw your attention to the recommendations of the Queensland Education and the Arts Committee, which are set out on page 4. I shall not read them, nevertheless I would suggest they are most important.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Siddell. Is there anything you would like to say at this stage Mr. Shaw?

MR. J. SHAW: I should like to outline several points largely in relation to 2.2 on page 4 - first, that a policy be adopted of awarding some artistic experience for Grades 8, 9 and 10 in the secondary schools. The first point is that that is the last opportunity most people have in their lives for formal education in the arts, and this makes it a very significant period when considering the 50 years or longer of the balance of their lives. Secondly, it is an area of extreme importance to our cultural heritage, that people understand their own culture. We recognise the value of art education in providing an understanding of our historical traditions and background. Thirdly, the importance of art as a leisure activity during the balance of a person's life after age 13, 14 and 15 is stressed. Fourthly, art provides a tremendous area of normalcy and emotional outlet for many people. Finally, if we look at it in relation to education as such, the arts are an area which, as Dewey said in 1890, children are naturally interested in, particularly those areas upon which society depends - the crafts. He felt the way to a child's interest in education was through the naturally interesting areas to children. I see this as providing a balance and an important key to much education.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Shaw. Gentlemen, I would hate you to get the impression that we were going to be a "hanging jury" as far as the arts are concerned. That would not be an objective assessment.

MR. POWELL: In the blue booklet, paragraph 2.6 on page 3, you talk about students visiting arts exhibitions, drama groups and so on. A couple of questions arise. First, who will meet the cost of going to these things -

the entrance fee and the cost of transport of getting to the venue if there is no suitable venue at the school - which is the case in many instances? Further, we have had a number of submissions from parents complaining about the unsuitability of some visiting groups, the coarseness of their language, the content of some of the material that they present, and so on. How would you answer that criticism and the first question about the cost?

MR. JUSTICE CONNOLLY: As to cost - I suppose that essentially if people go to plays they or their parents pay for it. If it is a question of getting some distance, I suppose you have to work this out in each situation as it arises. If you have a community that is so remote that it does not get visiting groups, we would think it desirable to have a film or something of that nature sent out to it.

This sort of thing is available and can be done within the system. The system has this sort of facility. It is not a question of finding it, it is around at present, but it must be two-way. The principal must be as interested as the people who are trying to feed him. If he says at the beginning of the year, "Well, my people are so remote they are going to need help here, but I want this and that and that", we think that the department can provide it for him. If it is a question of sending people some distance - I suppose if it is a question of chartering buses - essentially we think the parents would not mind paying for it. The reason this sort of thing comes into this report is that we get numerous reports. No names, no pack-drill, but I could name you a place immediately - a well-known place in North Queensland - where the principal and other teachers actively discourage attendance, not because the parents don't like the style of the plays and things that are on but because they do not think they are of any great concern - they are not bread and butter sort of subjects. We are advocating that the department says, "This is respectable and desirable, you want to get behind this sort of thing." So far as the material the parents think undesirable is concerned, again you have to play it by ear. You have to take each situation as it arises. There is perhaps a generation gap involved. It may be that a play is highly unsuitable. I think again you could have your intelligent members of your local community on one of these regional councils saying, "Oh, yes, I quite agree that play is not suitable for kids." But may I also say to you that the indignation that is generated by a play on the boards seems to me to be a little hollow when you consider what is flowing out of that box every night, if I may say so.

MR. MILLER: You raised the practical difficulties of teaching art in schools. Dr. Keeves appeared before us yesterday and said that Queensland led not only the rest of Australia but also New Zealand, Great Britain and America in the basics. But he also stressed the need that as many hours as possible be given to the basics. Now, if we are going to increase the hours for arts something has to suffer. Would you consider extending the school day or would you prefer to see the basics suffer at the expense of the arts?

MR. SIDDELL: I think that is presupposing that the arts do not belong to the basics, and that is the very point of our whole argument. I think the arts are basic.

MR. HEWITT: What recourse is there presently in the schools to the arts? Have they been measured, and how far short of your expectations do they fall?

MR. J. SHAW: We have looked at a number of schools, and in no school can we find that the arts facilities in any way equal any other area of education. There is not one school that is not fairly well equipped in manual arts, home economics, commercial studies or language laboratories, but it is still to be found, the school with adequate art areas in any one particular area of Queensland.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about The Gap? We were out there this morning and were very impressed with their music centre.

MR. J. SHAW: I think many schools are very impressive, and largely it is due to the drive of teachers and perhaps the administration of the particular school, but I feel that at the top levels not enough support is given to the development of the overall facilities.

MR. SIDDELL: I am delighted to hear you say that about

The Gap for a start, because I think if we were looking to what is required in secondary schools throughout Queensland that would be a starting point.

MR. HEWITT: When you make that criticism, are you referring to all branches of the arts which are not catered for in any one school, or would you concede that maybe a branch of the arts is catered for reasonably well in a number of schools?

MR. J. SHAW: Yes, I would concede that point.

MR. HEWITT: So your criticism refers to the overall sweep of all of the arts?

MR. J. SHAW: Yes.

MR. SIDDELL: One more point about the whole business of the attitude to the arts in schools, I believe that one starting point is in the training of teachers in the fact that arts are basic to education. I believe that perhaps greater prominence should be given to the preparation of those who are to educate in terms of the arts as well, and this includes administrators, principals, right across the board.

MR. MILLER: Turning to paragraph 2.9 on page 3 of the bluc book, are you saying one art subject should be compulsory for all students from Grade 8 to Grade 12? Would you think this would be counter-productive, as was the case with foreign languages?

MR. JUSTICE CONNOLLY: Was it counter productive with foreign languages? I don't believe a word of it. I am most concerned - I will speak now out of my professional area - with the ability of today's graduates to handle the English language, and I do not believe the study of foreign languages was counter-productive at all. Nothing teaches you to analyse the English language with more precision than being called to put it into another language. You might not ever learn to be a great scholar in Latin, but, by God, you learn something about English. In the short time between when I left school and started to mark law examination papers I was astounded at the inability of people coming into my profession to express themselves with clarity. Ninety per cent of the lawyer's time is spent with the English tongue. It is not with mysterious principles of law, it is, "What does this alab of English mean?" I really think that there must be a great deal of self-education going on after graduation and long after leaving school if people are ever to practise my own profession adequately. Now, may it not be that it is not because insufficient time is being spent on the basics but because it is not being treated as a discipline? Are the French having the trouble that we are having? They haven't given up Latin and Greek. You are quite right, Mr. Miller, you did not mention them but they do spend longer hours in school. Perhaps the European winter has something to do with it. You have to do something with yourself or get into trouble, so perhaps they keep them in school; I do not know. But do they have the trouble with their own language? It is a hard language, a much harder language than ours, I think, though who is to say? This business of, "You know, you can get my meaning, like, sort of. You can get the drift of it, like", that is the sort of thing we are going to come up with. We want them to come back to a bit of discipline. The hard options are what we want. Sanskrit would do me. I do not care what they study as long as it is hard and as long as they have to apply their minds to it and spend some time on it. Sorry.

MR. HEWITT: Are you suggesting that a compulsory art

subject should be one of the defined board subjects from the Board of Secondary School Studies?

MR. JUSTICE CONNOLLY: Is that what I am suggesting? I am not familiar with this structure.

MR. SIDDELL: I think that certainly has been suggested and I think that the development of the subjects in the general arts area is going on, too, but I feel that that is something to do with entrance to tertiary institutions, and that is another story.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I would like to thank you very much. It is the first time we have had a distinguished Judge of the Supreme Court appearing before us and I would like to thank you very much for that and you, Mr. Siddell and Mr. Shaw, for your co-operation. I can assure you that serious consideration will be given to the matter you have brought before us.

MR. JUSTICE CONNOLLY: Thank you for your patience.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will now ask representatives of the Queensland Economics Teachers' Association to appear before us. They are represented by Mr. Noel Moore, who is the president, Mr. Ted Hook, and Mr. John Swiericzuk. Your submission has been studied by members so it will not be necessary to read it. It is coded Au-131. I might indicate to you that we had a submission from an organisation, I am relying on my memory here, calling itself the Queensland Institute for Economic Education or something like that. They made allegations of a lack of balance and indicated hostility towards private enterprise in the curriculum of economics in the State. Do you know anything about it?

MR. MOORE: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will take the trouble to sort it out and send it to you and you might like to give us some response to it.

MR. MOORE: Was your association involved in the work on comsumer education in SEMP?

MR. MOORE: Our association has not, as an association, been directly involved, but members of our association, yes.

MR. MILLER: As individuals?

MR. MOORE: Yes.

MR. MILLER: What are your views on it?

MR. HOOK: On the section on the consumer in society?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MR. HOOK: The materials that have been presented to different members indicate that it would be of particular value as a teaching resource in Queensland schools, both in the teaching of consumer education and the teaching of economics in Grades 11 and 12. We would see it as no more than a resource.

MR. MILLER: It is said to be out of date. Is that correct?

MR. HOOK: No.

MR. POWELL: Turning to page 3 of your submission you refer to the replacement of emotional judgments by rational objective methods in examining social and economic problems. How do you examine social problems in economics?

Are your aims and objectives too mature for secondary-school students?

MR. MOORE: It is a very difficult question to answer, but we feel that some of the social problems such as the problem of poverty can be quite easily explained to most children. It depends how you define the word "social".

MR. HOOK: I would take issue with your statement. I think our senior students, in particular our 16 to 18-year-old students, are very capable of discussing in a rational manner many of the social problems which are before us.

MR. POWELL: In a mature way?

MR. HOOK: "Maturity" depends on how you define it. Being general, I would say yes. The students I have taught in the last decade in Queensland schools have been very capable of handling problems providing the teacher is prepared to present a balanced point of view and encourage students to look at the issue from all points of view.

MR. POWELL: Is economics taught in the subjunior levels?

MR. MOORE: If you look at recommendation 3.1 you will see that that is not so. We are fairly concerned about that and would like to discuss that issue later on.

MR. POWELL: You believe that it should be taught at the Junior?

MR. MOORE: Yes.

MR. HOOK: Very definitely so, as is shown on page 7. We have outlined the point at the top of page 7 that about one-sixth of all the students in Queensland secondary schools have the opportunity to learn something about the operation of the Australian economy. We feel that this is unfair to the other 83 per cent of the students in our secondary schools. Look at the number of youngsters. They are all consumers. The majority of them are going to be employees. Many of them are going to go on into public life. They are all citizens yet they don't get an opportunity -----

MR. POWELL: Are you equating consumer-type education with economics?

MR. HOOK: No, there is a distinction.

MR. POWELL: You are confusing me. I thought you were.

MR. MILLER: Is economics a science? If so, can economic theory accurately predict the results of political policies and decisions in this area?

MR. HOOK: Shall I call in Mr. Howard?

MR. MILLER: I am calling on you.

MR. MOORE: The economist that ever works that out will make a lot of money. That is about the only answer we could make.

MR. SHAW: On page 6 there is a statement you might like to expand on. It is in paragraph 2.6. You say the association is concerned because very few elements of economic literacy are currently contained in courses of study offered in years 8, 9

and 10. Could you just explain that in a little more depth?

MR. MOORE: Maybe we could refer to the submission from the Australian Project of Economic Literacy.

MR. SWIERICZUK: If one has a look through the existing syllabuses that are available from the Board of Secondary School Studies - I am particularly referring to citizenship education, home economics, business principles, study of society, social studies, and I think there is another one, general commercial studies - most of these have elements of economics built into them. But our concern particularly is that there is a sad lack of coherence at the present time, and that is expressed within our recommendations. We feel that many students are getting through our education system, and, of course, with the majority of students leaving at the year 10 level, our concern is that we are sending out citizens into our community who lack what we call economic literacy. Within our recommendations we have stated the desire for some sort of rationalisation process. We don't have the immediate answer to the problem but we feel there is a need for subject associations and other professional bodies to sit down and examine exactly what the needs of our education system are at the present time. One of the gaps - we consider it to be a very large gap at the present time - is that economic literacy is not being taught within our schools.

MR. SHAW: Do you think that may be an answer to the problem we have with almost every different association, representing the particular discipline, that has come before us - it has suggested that its particular subject should be given more importance?

MR. HOOK: That is only natural to expect. I guess most professional people who are concerned about the welfare of their career would do so. If you look at the operation of the economy and think about your own children - our youngsters learn to be literate; they learn to be numerate. Perhaps I could argue here that I think Australian history and geography should be taught more extensively than it is, but that is just an aside. In Grades 9 and 10 where youngsters are forming opinions and attitudes which are going to be so important in their adult life, they don't get much of an idea of how the economy operates. Yet they are an important part of the economy. They are going to be citizens, voters, decision-makers and so on. I don't think we are being responsible to these youngsters. You might ask, "Surely in the Junior subjects that are being offered enough economics is being given to youngsters." But as Mr. Swiericzuk has indicated, it is on a piecemeal basis. If you ask, "What would you do away with to teach economics in Grades 9 and 10?", there are many alternatives. One is, as Mr. Swiericzuk has outlined, that there are several subjects which are options already. We believe that these could be rationalised or even some of them done away with completely. Another alternative is that we are still thinking that school is from 9 o'clock until 3 o'clock. Why not perhaps introduce concepts of flexitime? Why not introduce concepts of many of our schools, where they duplicate themselves right throughout Brisbane, right throughout our major provincial areas, of having certain schools, particularly with our efficient and up-to-date public transport system, whereby youngsters go to one area for schooling in a particular set of disciplines, to another school for another set, and so on? I think we tend to be constrained too much by things which were 50, 80 years old.

MR. POWELL: I refer you to the second paragraph on page 5. You make the statement -

"If all members of the labour force are to understand

the economic forces that act upon their lives a large-scale public education programme is necessary. Initially, the main thrust of this economic education programme should be carried out in the schools."

Is that really possible? Would it not always be coloured by political and social prejudices as well as perhaps "rational" economic thought?

MR. SWIERICZUK: I am not quite sure whether you are implying that this is going to come from the teachers themselves. Am I to believe that?

MR. POWELL: Which is coming from whom?

MR. SWIERICZUK: The polical colouring or whatever it was you said.

MR. POWELL: It is a vague sort of thing, isn't it?

MR. SWIERICZUK: I don't agree. I would argue that all the economics teachers that I have had any acquaintance with certainly don't exhibit any tendency for displaying their political views or anything of that sort within the class-room.

MR. POWELL: Explain to me what you mean by "all members of the labour force are to understand the economic forces that act upon their lives".

MR. SWIERICZUK: I have a personal belief here that in the last decade or so we have seen an enormous growth - I suppose it is not only confined to the last decade, but it has particularly caught my attention in this period of time - in trade union activity and labour/management disputes. From my own experience I have seen many cases where this has arisen from basic ignorance. I would argue that if there was a greater understanding of economic repercussions from this sort of behaviour there perhaps may be some decline in this sort of behaviour.

MR. MOORE: I would like to quote a reference in "The Australian" in recent days. It appeared on 3 August last. The chief of the Utah Development Company was reported as saying -

> "We have probably the most highly-educated population in the world, but unfortunately with very few understanding the most simple economics relating to productivity, wages and growth."

If we have people such as one of the highly rated businessmen in Australia saying things like that, we are quite happy that it seems to be supporting our own research and experience.

MR. POWELL: Then the criticism that is raised that the standard of economics or the type of economics changes with political bias is relevant?

MR. HOOK: Not necessarily so. In 1973 and 1974 it was my pleasure to act as a leader for the Trades and Labor Council in conducting workshops in economics similar to the type of economics we teach in Grades 11 and 12 in our schools in Brisbane and Townsville. The members of the workshops were job delegates, shop stewards and so on. The economics which was presented to them was basically private enterprise economics and how the Australian economy operates. Many of the

shop stewards and job delegates who came from a very different politically oriented background to the business people, when things were explained to them in a different point of view, they could see how some of their ideas needed clarification, and at the same time their points of view added to the value of the workshop.

MR. POWELL: Perhaps the course you are talking about might be more appropriate at TAFE level?

MR. HOOK: No.

MR. SWIERICZUK: I think we would disagree with that.

MR. HOOK: Not only is it important for members of the labour-force to understand the dynamic nature of the economy, but also all members of the business community, particularly a lot of our people in management controlling businesses who seem to get quite out of touch with things. It comes back to page 5, the second paragraph - a large-scale education programme is necessary, and it begins in the home.

MR. SWIERICZUK: Very briefly, I recall an incident that occurred in 1976, I think, or 1975, when we ran a seminar in May of that year. We were trying to put together a panel - a representative panel - of people from various sectors within the community. One approach was made to the Trades Hall in Brisbane. The response that somewhat stunned us at the time was that they felt they could not supply a speaker of sufficient calibre to speak to our audience of teachers. That has stuck with me since that time. I don't know whether that was the real reason but that was the reason provided for us at the time. We eventually did get hold of a trade unionist, but not through the Trades Hall. To go a little further, I have now been teaching adults at matriculation level for some seven years in evening classes. That is an experience that certainly opened my eyes to the sort of economic ignorance that prevails within our society at the present time. There, of course, we get a very small section of the population who are concerned about their academic standard and so on, who are trying to improve themselves. It is a very gratifying experience to work with such people but we must remember that they represent only a very small proportion of thepopulation.

MR. POWELL: As one who reads what economists say from time to time, how do economic teachers cope with the changing patterns of in-vogue economic thought? You seem to be arguing that there is no such thing - but even among the economists, no two economists seem to agree.

MR. MOORE: That, again, is a difficult one to answer, but there seems to be a body of knowledge which most economists agree on.

MR. SWIERICZUK: In the words of John Maynard Keynes, economics is a method and not a doctrine. That is basically what we are concerned about.

MR. POWELL: It is the core of the subject.

MR. SWIERICZUK: Yes.

MR. POWELL: But there are a few doctrinaire economists.

MR. SWIERICZUK: I disagree.

MR. HOOK: There is a basic core of economics knowledge irrespective of one's political beliefs and the interpretation put on it, in the same way as there is a certain core of historical and geographical knowledge and so on. With that knowledge there has to be a starting point. Fundamentally, we are concerned amongst other things, with encouraging people and youngsters to think rationally, to weigh up alternatives, to look at problems and issues, to look at

all points of view and to come to a conclusion on the basis of the evidence presented.

MR. SHAW: On page 9 you argue in favour of having teachers get some practical experience in the outside field. I think your argument holds good for probably more fields than just economics. One of the things you might like to expand on concerns any ideas on how you think this may be achieved.

MR. HOOK: Not so long ago the Education Department sponsored an excellent scheme during the Christmas vacation in which teachers were able to spend between three and six weeks in various industries or offices to find out something about the work experience. There are many ways to go about this. We are concerned not only about teachers but also about students, hence work experience versus work-observation programmes. We believe that one of the programmes put up by the Schools Commission as an innovations programme, whereby teachers throughout Australia are able to move for a period of time of up to three months interstate to different schools could well be used in Queensland. For example, some of us have worked in industry. We have worked in factories, on building sites and so on. We would see a type of release scheme or secondment, whereby perhaps a teacher of accounting is seconded to an accountant's office for a period to find out what goes on, and perhaps a teacher of economics could go into a factory or onto a building site. For example, most of us take youngsters through various firms like General Motors, Golden Circle and so on. It would be of value to us as teachers to spend some time, perhaps, on the job floor working with people. Another alternative which the association operated four or five years ago was to work with several firms in the evening. A group of teachers, between 20 and 50 in number, would spend up to four hours of an evening thoroughly going through a plant or a factory finding out how it operated and discussing problems and talking to executives. That gave us a much better feel about the relationship between the world of work and the world of school.

MR. MOORE: I do not think we can release all teachers. Obviously that would not work. But if certain representative teachers were chosen, and through an association like ours material were produced, it could be given to teachers and students to work on.

MR. MILLER: Turning to page 16 of the appendix, paragraph 3.2, do you know of any country in the world that sets out to teach economics from the kindergarten through to Grade 12? Are you saying that economics is part of basic education? What training and qualifications should economics teachers have?

MR. HOOK: As chairman of the group which prepared the submission to the Federal Government in 1973 I point out that we did an exhaustive study of what was happening around the world. The answer to your first question about economics being taught from the kindergarten to Grade 12 is "No". There is no country in the world. There are several countries, for example some of the European countries - West Germany is one and Sweden is another one - and Canada is a third, where considerably more of the principles of economics - this core knowledge we were talking about before - is introduced into the primary school. We do it to a certain degree in Queensland in the primary social study courses and, again, the youngsters pick it up very quickly because a lot of it is practical everyday economics. It has been shown that youngsters do understand simply expressed economic terms. The area that we were concerned about particularly in this again comes back to our submission, particularly 3.1, the

first recommendation, that in Australia no school introduces economics as such at the Junior level. That was our major cause of concern. Many people find the Consumer Price Index very difficult to understand, yet in my own school I have had Grade 9 students drawing up price indexes and fully understanding the operation of consumer price indexes. That is particularly important when it is related to their own spending pattern. We would argue that a lot of economics can be presented very simply to students at a young age. Finally, you asked about the training and qualifications. Tertiary institutions are producing a tremendous number of graduates and teachers with a background in the theoretical aspects of economics. We could argue further that, unfortunately, too many of our teachers go to school, spend three or four years in a tertiary institution and go back into the school scene again. We would like to see teacher-training courses involving teacher trainees in industry, in work, before they come back into the school. There is an adequate supply of graduates with a background in theoretical economics.

MR. MOORE: May I now table two things, firstly is the New Zealand course that looks at the introduction of economics right throughout the secondary school and the second is a summary of basic economics as taught throughout Australia.

THE CHAIRMAN: We very much appreciate those documents.

MR. HOOK: To add one point to Mr. Miller's comments, we are very concerned about the lack of knowledge of the operation of the Australian economy with all our school students. The association would be particularly keen to help the Committee in any way possible to further this aim. It is a genuine concern; too many of our youngsters, hence our adults in later life, just do not understand the operation of the everyday world of economics.

MR. MILLER: Is the C.D.C. in Canberra the best organisation to prepare resource materials in economics?

MR. MOORE: It is one organisation that certainly will help, but I think material should be organised on a State basis as well. We hope that this can be done through the Queensland Economics Teachers or some other organisation. On the question of experience, etc., I shall table another document from "Time" magazine of last week, which explains how Ph.Ds are out of work because they do not understand the work-force, and what is being done about it.

MR. HOOK: The other point in answer to your questions, Mr. Miller, is that there is a national body of teacher subject associations; this submission, the appendix, is from the Australasian Commercial Teachers' Association. We would again argue there is a core knowledge of economics relevant throughout the nation. This body has done a lot of work in that area but, at the same time, there are regional differences. Our association, the Commercial Teachers' Society of Queensland would be only too willing to assist you.

THE CHAIRMAN: We thank you very much. The organisation to which I referred at the outset was the Foundation for Economic Education. We have isolated that submission and I am having it copied and will provide it to you for your information. If you would provide us with some response to it it would be appreciated.

MR. MOORE: Would you give us some idea of the time span in which it is required? Obviously you would like an answer fairly soon.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would four weeks be all right?

MR. MOORE: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are a little intrigued by the allegations that were made therein and we would appreciate a response from you.

MR. HOOK: Did you say they were indicating that private enterprise is taught in a biased fashion in our schools?

THE CHAIRMAN: Was not taught. It was a prejudice against private enterprise in the economic syllabus. I invite you to read it, study its content and if you could provide us with a response, that is all that we require. I thank you very much for your consideration and your preparation of the document. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your members. I thank you for taking the trouble to appear before us this afternoon.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, a submission from the Primary Principals Association has been received and studied by members. It will not be necessary for the representatives to read it. For our purposes the submission is coded Au-115. I am very pleased this afternoon to welcome Mr. Lyndsay Barton, Mr. Ashley Brown and Mr. Fred Fowler. I ask them to indicate the executive positions they hold in the association.

MR. BARTON: I am Lyndsay Barton. I am the newly elected president.

MR. BROWN: I am Ashley Brown. I am the immediate past president.

MR. FOWLER: I am Fred Fowler. I have just been elected secretary of the association.

MR. POWELL: In section A on community involvement, do you see regional councils, as have been set up in the North Brisbane regional education section as an intermediate step or do you regard it as non-evolutionary?

MR. BARTON: The statement that we have made here is that the basic tenet of the Queensland principals' approach is a belief that individual schools and so on have different levels of commitment to the principle of community involvement. We do not see that this should be imposed upon them but neither shouldit be evolutionary and possibly, if this organisation, the North Brisbane council-------

MR. POWELL: Are you familiar with the North Brisbane Regional Council?

MR. BARTON: Yes. I am in the North Brisbane region myself but I have not had much to do with it. If this is what the people of that area require, certainly it would be an intermediate step.

MR. POWELL: You do not think it should be imposed upon anybody?

MR. BARTON: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was your association consulted about the introduction of the MACOS programme?

MR. BROWN: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you have liked to be?

MR. BROWN: Yes, very much so.

THE CHAIRMAN: What would your recommendation have been?

MR. BROWN: We would have found it very difficult to make judgments about the MACOS programme itself until we had been given a much greater opportunity to find out what it was and what was in it. MACOS was a programme that was not used in many primary schools. Most of our members of the association were not, and probably are still not, very familiar with what is in MACOS, so we would not have been able to make any considered judgment until we had had an opportunity to have a look at the whole programme.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you had a look at it by now?

MR. BROWN: Most principals, no.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think values clarification exercises should go on in primary schools?

MR. BROWN: One of the things that our present social studies syllabus in primary has , as its objective, is not value clarification but the fact that there are implicit in societies like ours certain values with which the greater majority of people in our society agree. I am thinking of such things as justice, equality, fairness and so forth, and our syllabus does imply that those values are worth while continuing in our society. With respect to any other values, the syllabus makes no pronouncement excepting that it does suggest that teachers might help children, in the very elementary stages, to get their own values by getting them to think about problems. Certainly the syllabus at no stage suggests that the teacher give or clarify any of these values that are in question.

THE CHAIRMAN: What you are saying is that the social studies programme in primary schools is a good and balanced one and does not confuse in relation to values?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: The value decisions are made?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is totally different from MACOS isn't it?

MR. BROWN: To a degree,yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Am I discerning some concern about the underlying strategy of MACOS?

MR. BROWN: I think it would be difficult for us to give any other answer than I gave before. We are not familiar enough with what MACOS is trying to do to make a considered judgment on it. We just are not familiar enough with MACOS.

MR. MILLER: In section A, do you want complete autonomy of the principal and staff of the schools? We have had a lot of submissions suggesting that the community and the p. and c. should be involved. Where do they fit into your scheme?

MR. BROWN: We do not want complete autonomy. What the submission suggests is that in each school there is a certain level of commitment and understanding of preparedness. We are very strongly of the opinion that the community does become involved in every school, but it does so at that particular school's pace and the way that particular school wants it to happen.

MR. BARTON: Also we feel that within schools efforts are being made at varying levels towards community involvement. If you move through the State from school to school you will find varying schools and varying school communities have this attitude towards involving the community.

MR. MILLER: Would you like the decision-making to be at school level or regional level?

MR. BROWN: I think we would have to define which particular decisions we are talking about. Many of the decisions certainly could be made at school level. This is my personal opinion. When it comes to the overall philosophy of primary education, when it comes to curriculum development, I think there should be some lead given by a central authority.

MR. MILLER: By the department?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. MILLER: I was going to ask where the department fits into your scheme.

MR. BROWN: There.

MR. MILLER: In the curriculum - the hard core?

MR. BROWN: The development of curriculum itself. I feel that the department should develop the core curriculum.

MR. POWELL: In the second last paragraph of the section we are discussing, do you think that perhaps parents have some contribution in the say about methods or whether their children should be in open-area class-rooms or that type of thing?

MR. BARTON: Most certainly we would like to see people involved in making contributions towards the policy of the school.

MR. POWELL: There has been a criticism of the type of selection you mention in section B, paragraph 1, that if that occurred we might perhaps get a situation where there is cronyism or old-school-tie sort of thing creeping into the selection system. Do you think that could happen and how would you go about the actual logistic problem of interviewing teacher trainees?

MR. FOWLER: The suggestion is that the proforma was made with that in mind, that the pro forma would help overcome some of the problems you are talking about, to make it fairly standardised. What we are getting at there is that there are other factors than academic ability which would make a successful teacher and these are the things that we are recommending people take into cognisance when selecting teachers.

MR. POWELL: Who do you think should do that? Do you think that just the proforma is enough, or do you think there should be -----

MR. BARTON: There should be consultation with the principals of the secondary school, who would probably formulate some ideas about the work habits and study habits of the prospective students. That would probably help out in deciding who was the more suitable applicant for these student positions.

MR. POWELL: I discern from part B that you are fairly critical of training of young teachers. Is this because of the C.A.E. curriculum, or the degrading of the methodology by lecturers in the C.A.E.s?

MR. BARTON: Generally speaking, colleges seem not to place a great deal of emphasis on methodology. That is what we are getting at.

MR. POWELL: Can you point to a time when this occurred, when the emphasis on methodology was changed or was lost?

MR. FOWLER: I think this is a world-wide phenomenon. It is characteristic of most teacher-training institutions. There is a swing away from teacher training and more emphasis is being placed on teacher education. This is not only here. It is fairly universal.

MR. SHAW: Can you suggest any way in which you think teacher training could be improved?

MR. BROWN: There has to be stress placed on the actual methodology of teaching, on actually how to teach children. There has to be perhaps greater opportunity for our student teachers actually to participate in the real thing, that is, the actual practice of teaching with children. It would also follow that all of this does not finish when the student teacher has completed his third year of training; it carries over into the first and second years in the school in which he ends up as a teacher. The actual knowledge of the syllabuses that they are going to have to teach when they get into primary school is something that is somewhat lacking when they come to us. They should know more about it. We must agree that the schools in which these students practise must take part of the responsibility for their actual training.

MR. MILLER: In section B, paragraph 1, you speak of the finished product of the C.A.E.s and you are critical of the fact that there are some unsatisfactory teachers reaching schools. Have you any evidence of this? Can you make any recommendation as to how you would overcome this problem?

MR. BROWN: The evidence would be mostly from our very personal experience of the fact that each one of us has appointed to his staff at the beginning of each year teachers as they come out. We would stress that by and large they are quite satisfactory and dedicated young people who are trying very hard. But there are some of them who find it extremely difficult in their first year of teaching. Probably part of the solution lies in our recommendations as to what should happen to them during their time at the colleges. Certainly part of the solution lies in number 3 of our recommendations, as to what should happen to beginning teachers in their first year at school. Nothing can take the place of actually being a class teacher in front of children and in

charge of them. It is vital that a school have some type of induction programme to help these people.

MR. MILLER: I was going to ask you about an induction year similar to that in Great Britain? Are you saying that the graduation certificates are misleading?

MR. BARTON: No. There are some people who graduate quite well from the training college but who, because of some personal characteristic, are probably unsuited.

MR. MILLER: They are not competent teachers, are they?

MR. BARTON: They don't turn out to be competent.

MR. MILLER: And the induction year that you are thinking about is similar to that in Great Britain?

MR. BROWN: Yes. It has always been expected of schools that they induct beginning teachers. Perhaps there might be an argument for recommending that there should be quite a well-defined induction programme and that in this induction programme all levels of education, from the central office to the regional office to the school itself, have some responsibility. But it should be a pretty well-defined induction programme, not something that may or may not happen.

MR. MILLER: Would you favour regular inspections of teachers, say, every three years?

MR. BROWN: My own personal answer is yes.

MR. BARTON: Personally, yes.

MR. FOWLER: Personally, yes.

MR. POWELL: It has been suggested to us that the inspector is no longer relevant in today's context, especially where co-operative evaluation is taking place. How would you react to that statement?

MR. BARTON: Co-operative evaluation is not as yet a total thing throughout the State; there are very few schools that have co-operative evaluation. So some evaluation of schools has to take place, and the inspector must do this. He is the only person who can do it.

MR. POWELL: The present situation is that a person applying for a promotional position is inspected once every two years; is that right?

MR. FOWLER: If he is after a promotion he may be inspected each year.

MR. POWELL: Generally speaking the class teacher is inspected during his second year and never again unless he is after a promotion? Is that the story?

MR. BROWN: That is true to a point; but the principal or the director may ask for that teacher to be assessed.

MR. POWELL: Is that very common?

MR. BROWN: Not very common, but it does happen.

MR. SHAW: You said that most of the teachers coming out of the colleges are satisfactory but that some are not.

I won't ask you to try to put a figure on it, but would you say that the situation is serious or that it is something that should be looked at?

MR. BARTON: If you are talking about a totally unsatisfactory teacher, I would say there are very few. However, we feel that teachers coming from the colleges are deficient in some area or other, particularly in the methodology area or the curriculum area. It is very hard to define, because there could be variances between teachers in unsatisfactory levels.

MR. SHAW: You mention the need for a publicity officer. I presume that would be to overcome some of the difficulties we have in the communication gap. Would you like to enlarge on that?

MR. BROWN: Yes. We are certain that there are many, many, many things going on in our primary schools that we can all be very proud of; but it is very difficult to get publicity for them. Even though most schools themselves try very hard, it is very difficult. On top of that there is the normal human feeling that if you start talking about your own school you may be blowing your own trumpet or something to that effect. A publicity officer could overcome that particular problem. There are so many things that are happening that are well worth publicising.

MR. SHAW: You are not suggesting a publicity officer for each school?

MR. BROWN: No. Mr. Barton and I attended the Australian Primary Principals' Conference in Western Australia last week and Western Australian principals have told us that the Education Department in that State has attached to it a publicity officer with five assistants.

MR. SHAW: It is always hard to get coverage for good news.

MR. BROWN: That is right - and easy for bad.

THE CHAIRMAN: Except for this Committee, which has been well publicised!

MR. MILLER: In section C you do not mention compulsory registration of teachers. Would you like to see registration valid, say, for five years and a reassessment at the end of that period?

MR. BARTON: We can only speak personally; we could not reflect the views of our group. I had not thought of that, but it sounds a reasonable assumption.

MR. MILLER: We have been told on numerous occasions that it is very difficult to sack teachers. This may be one method of assessing, at the end of five years, whether a teacher has become lazy or is doing his job.

MR. BROWN: I think we would agree that qualifications gained 20 years ago would hardly remain valid for ever and ever. One warning, though, is that it is extremely difficult to draw that very fine line between what is satisfactory and what is unsatisfactory. There would be some people who fall into that area.

MR. POWELL: In section D you are talking about the

decision-making process. We have the Board of Secondary School Studies; should there be a Board of Primary School Studies? Could that assist in some decision-making roles or help solve the problems that occur?

MR. BROWN: Once again that idea is so new to us that you would have to define ----

MR. POWELL: Could we get your personal reaction. You have some idea of how the Board of Secondary School Studies is set up?

MR. BROWN: Yes, my word.

MR. POWELL: How about a similar thing for primary school studies, how does that affect you?

MR. FOWLER: One of the problems with sectionalising education into pre-school, primary and secondary is that it does tend to become fragmented. Just off the top of my head, I think that is one danger I can see in it, that it may entrench these demarcations between primary and secondary. But apart from that it would possibly be a good idea, personally speaking.

MR. BARTON: Reflecting again on what we heard in Western Australia, the Education Department there has done away with the primary, secondary and pre-school areas and has moved into having a Director of Schools. I cannot remember the names of the other directorships, but they have not fragmented the education system in that way. They have done it in different ways. The Director of Schools would cover the whole gamut of pre-primary right through to secondary.

MR. MILLER: How long ago did that take place?

MR. BARTON: I don't know.

MR. POWELL: Recently.

MR. MILLER: Did they say whether it was operating effectively?

MR. BARTON: We heard no real complaints about it.

MR. POWELL: They are also in the throes of changing their teacher education system, are they not?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. MILLER: In section C you list the many duties of the principal. You did not mention that principals should be able to teach now and again. It has been suggested to us that inspectors and principals can get removed from the class-room situation if they do not teach every now and again. What are your thoughts on the matter?

MR. BROWN: I think that is the very thing we are getting at, that there is such an erosion of the time of the principal today to do what he is best suited for, namely teaching, that he just does not get the time to be a leader in that area.

MR. BARTON: On top of that, those are not our ideas on the role of the principal, those are the categories under which teachers or principals are inspected. That is taken straight from the inspectorial reports.

MR. MILLER: That needs to be changed, doesn't it?

MR. POWELL: The role of the principal as far as the administration is concerned is obviously an onerous one and you argue for an administrator in large primary schools. How do, say, class 4, 5 and 6 primary schools get on?

MR. BROWN: At the moment they have an administrative allowance which allows them to hire hours of work and we feel that by increasing the allowance to them they could increase the number of hours that they can hire, which would help them, too.

MR. POWELL: So they would have a permanent part-time clerk who could do all the administrative things, too?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BARTON: And possibly in the smaller large schools, the class 2 and 3 schools that do not already have clerk-typists, perhaps this could be done for them, a clerk-typist could be appointed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing before us this afternoon. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your association for the preparation of this submission, it has been greatly appreciated. Thank you for coming along to talk to us and for speaking so frankly.

MR. BROWN: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now welcome representatives of the Liberal Party of Queensland. The submission has been received and studied by members so it will be not necessary to read it. It is coded Au-110. We will proceed immediately to questions in clarification of it. We have before us Mrs. Dorothy Trotter, the chairman of the Liberal Education Committee and an infant mistress by profession, Mr. Bert Matthews, a member of the Liberal Party Education Committee and Mr. Kevin Martin, a member of the State Executive and the party's policy committee.

MR. SHAW: Perhaps I should say at the beginning that there are some good things in it. On page 1 you refer to mathematics in the primary school. Could you just explain a little further what you mean by the last paragraph of your recommendations?

MRS. TROTTER: There has been a great emphasis on maths over the last few years in primary school education. A few years ago there was a tremendous swing towards getting all children to do maths of a very high standard. That led into a great deal of abstraction in the idea of maths. What we are saying now is that we ought to look at strands in maths, some of which are purely functional for the children who have problems in maths, and others that are of a higher calibre. We are saying that if the school produces its own core curriculum programmes then these should be tested from time to time.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, it has been brought to my attention that you would like to make a preamble to your submission that might help by way of clarification.

MRS. TROTTER: I would appreciate it very much. I would like to express our thanks to you for giving us the opportunity of coming along and speaking to you on our submission. In our written reports we have focused attention on selected areas of concern rather than on comprehensive submissions in relation to primary and secondary education and decision-making. We do anticipate your comment and questioning. However, we would like to refer to five areas of major concern to the Liberal Party. The first is core curriculum programmes, and in this we believe it is very necessary to develop and provide core curriculum programmes in both primary and secondary school. This core curriculum should be in relation to the intellectual growth of the student, that is, in terms of mathematical concept development and language development; in physical growth, and here we look to physical education and movement; in social growth, and here we look at history, geography, science, human relationships and such things as religious education; and on cultural growth, and here we bring in our arts, craft, music and other such things. Our next point of concern is the assessment procedures which are administered within the primary school. Whilst we accept that it is the responsibility of schools to administer internal assessment procedures, particularly for diagnostic purposes, we nevertheless believe that optional external examinations based on the core curriculum programmes should be available to students at the completion of both primary and secondary school.

We believe there should be teacher accountability. A teacher should be accountable to both his employer and to the community for service. Our system gives teachers almost absolute security of tenure. The system of assessing teachers on completion of their second year of teaching and no further assessment is required unless there is a request for promotion, we feel this needs to be reviewed and that there should be means of establishing a more positive role by the inspectorate in co-operation with the administrative team of the school in assessing teachers.

I turn now to teacher competence. We believe this should be done at regular intervals over a set period of time. In teacher accountability we feel that one of the ways of accomplishing teacher accountability is through the oral reporting assessments that a great number of our schools are participating in now. Here the teacher and parent can come face to face for discussion and for reviewing evidence not only of the children's work but of their progress throughout the semester. This is done in primary schools as well as secondary.

One of our other great concerns is in the teacher education programmes of the State. Our committee proposes submitting a paper on teacher education. We have merely pointed out our concern with the selection of candidates into C.A.E.s. We propose that entry into teacher institutions should not be based solely on an academic qualification, particularly when that academic qualification takes no recognition of the fact that most teachers in primary schools have to be able to teach mathematics from year 1 to year 12, and they do not even have to have a pass in language or in maths. They can get an overall rating in things like drama and music, you know, the arts, and do not need to have a qualification that relates specifically to the subject that they have to teach in the class-room. That worries us to a great extent. In no other enterprise, or very few enterprises I am aware of do people employ people solely on academic qualifications. They look for other selection procedures. We are looking for ways and means of selecting our students at point of entry and also along the line, and we hope to come up with some recommendations in this field.

Last but not least, we are very concerned about primary education, in the apparent concern about teaching just the three Rs. Our committee believes that imary education is without doubt the most important basic and demanding factor in a student's educational life. Psychologically it demands of a student discipline, physical output, acceptance of and ability to exploit knowledge. It is a world of a new environment and should encompass a multiplicity of learning activities with due emphasis on those relating to the three Rs, but not the three Rs alone.

MR. SHAW: Just on that recommendation on mathematics, I think what had us a little bit concerned was just how far you wanted to broaden out primary school maths.

MRS. TROTTER: I do not think we need to broaden it, really. I think we need to do some planning.

MR. MATTHEWS: There was an error in the compilation of this report. This particular paragraph referred originally to secondary education. This happened in the typing. Basically what we are looking at is a core curriculum which all mathematics students do, and in which they are all assessed - and additional work for the better people who are then assessed on that in addition to the assessment on the core group.

MR. MILLER: This is for the secondary level, and not primary? That will allow for the slow beginners?

MRS. TROTTER: This applies to primary as well.

MR. MILLER: How do you get on with the slow beginners if you are going to have the solid curriculum core and the advanced? If you start that too early won't that affect the slow beginners?

MRS. TROTTER: I brought along a mathematics programme of consequentially developed ideas, starting from year 1 and going through to year 7. Hopefully it will be carried through to year 12. We set a core curriculum maths programme of the basic expectations of a child, or the average expectation. Most children will acquire that standard of work. Some will be well and truly above it, and therefore we have to extend the knowledge of those children, not upwards but outwards first of all, then work with the slower children to try to bring them up to that basic thing.

THE CHAIRMAN: On this subject please do not divert out of this area.

MR. POWELL: In your comment you argue about the abstract ideas and highly abstract language being removed. What would you remove? Would you remove sets? Would you remove the subject on bases other than 10, and so on? What are you calling abstract and what would you shift?

MRS. TROTTER: Can I go back a few years when we had a re-think about mathematics in the primary school. My first comment was that we were trying to make professors out of year 1 children. We were using terms such as "commutative", "associative", and so on which simply meant addition, subtraction and multiplication. That was the sort of abstract language that we were trying to get children to understand. Thank goodness there has been a swing away from that sort of thing. Also we were trying to introduce types of work that were far beyond the capacity of children to really experience. I will give an example. We were saying that children should be able to work out 11/7ths of 14. Who in the name of heavens wants a Grade 1 child to know what 11/7ths of 14 is? What real life situation could you apply to that? That is what we mean by "abstract". We are cutting out those sorts of ideas in maths.

MR. POWELL: Would you cut out the use of fractions?

MRS. TROTTER: What we have done - what a lot of us have done is not cut out the use of fractions, but instead of expecting the five-year-old to understand equivalent fractions - two-thirds is the same as four-sixths - we say that this is too difficult for these children at this stage of their development and therefore that should be pushed higher up in the school. So equivalent fractions have been cut out of the mathematics programme for years 1 and 2. They are now being brought in at year 3 - around about the eight-year-old. That is the sort of thing that is going on. There has been a great swing back

to try to relate mathematics to the practical application of everyday living, rather than in an abstract form.

THE CHAIRMAN: On the question of examinations you suggest that there should be an optional examination. How do you respond to the suggestion that if it is an optional examination it might soon become a fairly well-accepted thing and that would be very limiting, and determine the curriculum, and it might distort the curriculum?

MR. MATTHEWS: Are we talking about primary or secondary?

THE CHAIRMAN: The examination is secondary, is it?

MRS. TROTTER: We looked at it in terms of secondary education only in the beginning. Many people believe that we ought to suggest that this be done at the end of primary as well at year 7. I can see that it will have limitations on curriculum and content, and that sort of thing. But I think the Liberal Party believes that there needs to be some accountability - for the want of a better word - and that we can get some sort of overall, State-wide standard through an external examination. Perhaps one of the others might have something to say about this. I am not totally convinced that this is the answer.

MR. MATTHEWS: I am prepared to talk about secondary.

THE CHAIRMAN: By way of clarification, in your preamble you say that optional external examinations based on core curriculum programmes should be available to students at the completion of both primary and secondary. I would like members who are putting questions to stick to this question of examinations.

MR. POWELL: With reference to recommendation (c) on page 2, the Board of Secondary School Studies proposes reference tests in various subjects to be given randomly throughout the State to help secondary schools establish criteria to judge their own levels of achievement. Should a similar scheme be introduced at primary level? You may also like to comment on the system that the Board of Secondary School Studies wishes to introduce into secondary schools.

MR. MATTHEWS: This is not in reference to our submission.

MR. POWELL: On page 2 you recommend that an external examination of basic curriculum in a minimum of basic subjects be conducted at the end of primary education. I am drawing your attention to the Board of Secondary School Studies proposal that a reference test be conducted throughout the State. Do you agree with that proposal? Do you think a similar reference test would be relevant to the primary schools as well as secondary?

THE CHAIRMAN: Would that be enough?

MR. MILLER: You are seeking a sort of examination to carry on to secondary?

MR. MARTIN: Perhaps I could come in here. What the party's idea is is that at the end of the primary education and also at the end of the secondary education period parents and students be given the right to have an external examination to test their abilities and what they have learnt over that period of time. We have found in the party that within the community broadly there is a very great degree of dissatisfaction with the Radford system of assessment within the schools.

Whether or not this is due to the inherent failures of the Radford scheme or whether or not it is due to the inability of the community to understand what Radford is about, you cannot say unless you did a complete statistical examination of the community. Nevertheless there is this worry there. Therefore we are putting forward this suggestion of the reintroduction of these external examinations as a mechanism to allow parents to be able to say that their children should be tested on this external examination basis, removing from this testing process the subjective element which is one of the major problems of concern with Radford at the moment - the role which teachers as individuals play in Radford. The suggestion which Mr. Powell has brought forward would not to my mind answer this criticism that the party is reflecting here. The Board of Secondary School Studies, as I understand it, is suggesting that we have this random examination in order to better set a guide or a standard to be applied within the Radford system itself when it comes to making an assessment. Frankly, as an individual view - the party has not considered it - I don't believe it would answer the criticism that parents continually express, that what they want is an examination which is open to all, which is as objective as it can possibly be, and whereby they can see whether their children have gained anything from education.

THE CHAIRMAN: One at the end of primary and one at the end of secondary?

MR. MARTIN: Yes.

MR. POWELL: A written examination or a multi-choice?

MR. MARTIN: Again we have not specified that. My personal view would be a written examination.

MR. MILLER: On a voluntary basis?

MR. MARTIN: An optional choice. Those parents who are going to be quite happy with their children to go through the Radford assessment and go out into the work-force or on to tertiary education on the basis of Radford have that choice. Those parents who want their children to be able to go to an employer and say, "This is my assessment which was done on a State-wide basis, and I have achieved this percentage of marks or this degree of marks", will be in a position to do so, instead of as with Radford at the moment they say, "From this particular school I obtained such-and-such grading", but from other schools where an employer is faced with a choice a pupil might come in with a different -----

MR. POWELL: When there was an external examination there was a tremendous amount of criticism because of the subjectivity that crept in because of the difference of examiners. How are you going to overcome that?

MR. MATTHEWS: We are into the secondary level now. Let us get perhaps a little bit more basic. We are concerned that there should not be a swing back to an absolutely set course. We want to see flexibility. We want to see the flexibility that has been brought in by Radford retained. At the same time we want to have some sort of yardstick that is recognisable to a great part of the community.

I think that the main problem exists in board subjects, which are the competitive subjects. We know that a lot of parents opt for those subjects even when they should not; even when they are too difficult for the children. But it is their right to do so and usually there is no impediment to their doing so. But this is the competitive area, and it is the area, I think, in which there is public concern. It is in the area of the board subjects which lead onto higher education that we see the chief need for the option of an external examination. There has always been an external examination available to some people. It has not been made available to people who are in full-time education at the secondary school.

MR. MILLER: Remoteness and sickness are the two areas I can think of.

MR. MATTHEWS: There are certain institutions which prepare children for the external examinations.

MR. POWELL: How relevant is that external examination?

MR. MATTHEWS: It is completely relevant to people who are competing for places in universities and other tertiary institutions and also for people competing in the work-force. We do not want to sweep Radford completely away. It is fairly evident that in some schools - the stable schools - the Radford scheme is working pretty well. It may well be that some schools will have no parents opting for external examinations and it may be that some schools will have a lot of parents opting for external assessment. I would like to deal with subjectivity. For the life of me I cannot think that subjectivity could come into a properly prepared external examination, or even approach the subjectivity that comes into internal assessment.

MR. POWELL: Do you say that the students who presently undergo an external Senior examination have a more relevant and more effective Senior certificate?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, I do not. For a start I say that they have the choice of selecting particular subjects, the same as people within schools have the choice of selecting particular subjects which they must see as relevant or else they would not select them. Sometimes we think they make the wrong choice. If you are asking me do I think that the external examination is more accurate than the inside, in general, no, because you will see in our submission that we say in the vast majority of cases the teacher assessment is valid. But we do not believe that it has come across to the community generally as valid.

MR. POWELL: Is it a matter of public relations?

MR. MATTHEWS: If there is one way of finding out what the community consensus is, it is to allow the community a choice.

MR. SHAW: You say that you want to retain the flexibility of Radford?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes.

MR. SHAW: And you want tobring back the external examination. It has been put to us many times in the past that school subjects are not accepted by parents and students because they lack recognition and credibility, or they feel that that is so. Would not thissame feeling mean that all students who are going on or who are looking for employment

would be obliged to opt for the external examination and, in fact, you would not be having the flexible system, but would have almost entirely an external examination situation.

MR. MATTHEWS: I think that if this were to be the outcome I'd say that that would be the choice of the community and therefore a democratic outcome. But at the same time I do not think it need necessarily be that. I know that there is a difficulty in getting people to opt for non-board subjects. I find it constantly. You can say that they do not see them as generally acceptable. I put it another way. I say that parents are usually always hoping for the final miracle. They hope that eventually some success will appear. I try my best in my own situation - I am a principal of a secondary school - to dissuade people from doing the wrong thing but if they want to do it, all right.

MR. SHAW: what you are suggesting would be very expensive. Would it be at the cost of the people who opt for external examinations, or would it be all-inclusive?

MR. MATTHEWS: We have not discussed this, but that is what it was before, so presumably so.

MR. MILLER: I move to SEMP on page 3. In your comments section you say that unless material is manifestly objectionable it should not be banned from the class-room; that the critical issue is how the material is used. Who should decide whether or not the material is manifestly objectionable.

MRS. TROTTER: The parents let you know pretty soon.

MR. MILLER: They don't really.

MRS. TROTTER: In many cases if parents are concerned about material that is being used in school you very quickly get a telephone call and you look into it very quickly. Of course, you have other constraints. If you are lucky enough to have a library with a librarian he has guide-lines and he suggests sorts of material that should come into the school. If he is worried he brings it to the notice of the principal and the administrative staff, and we look at it very carefully. You know, a lot of censuring goes on before some books get into the school library. I am talking about primary education.

MR. MILLER: This is under the heading of SEMP.

MRS. TROTTER: You could relate that to any objectionable material whether it is produced by SEMP or whether it is a book to be read by children.

MR. MILLER: What are your personal views on MACOS?

MRS. TROTTER: I am totally committed to MACOS.

MR. MILLER: You like MACOS?

MRS. TROTTER: I like the concept of MACOS. There may be some areas of concern, but by and large -------

MR. MILLER: Yet we have been told that only 1 per cent of the schools in America are using it and that is where it was introduced.

MRS. TROTTER: I think a great deal more than 1 per cent are using it, but I could not give you an exact figure. I have not the figures, but there is a great number of schools.

MR. POWELL: If you have the figures, you can give them to the Committee.

MRS. TROTTER: That is not the Liberal Party's philosophy. That is my own personal view.

THE CHAIRMAN: Has the Liberal Party got a philosophy on it?

MRS.TROTTER: We don't have a philosophy but we believe that materials which have been well researched and proven to be of acceptable standards - there is no reason why they should not be used.

MR. MILLER: what if a teacher decides to present objectionable material to his students: who can challenge his professional decision?

MR. MATTHEWS: I believe I can for a start, as principal.

MRS. TROTTER: The principal can. As part of the administrative team - and I am talking about a big primary school - no teacher is really responsible for introducing material into the class-room without prior consultation with the administration of that school. If they do it, they do it under the hat, and this is where you have to be very much on the ball to make sure that the sort of material that is being used in your school is of a high standard.

MR. POWELL: Are you saying that every teacher would show his preparation and resource material to the principal or an administrative person in the school before using it in the class-room?

MRS. TROTTER: I am saying that it would be the ideal situation but it does not happen in reality. I agree with you there. But by the same token, depending on the policy of the school, all teachers - in the school I am at they all have to provide me in my area of responsibility with their programmes of work; with the materials that they are going to use in the class-room.

MR. POWELL: Including all resource materials that they will use?

MRS. TROTTER: I think it would be rather pedantic to say that I would see every piece of resource material, but I would see most of the sort of material. It depends, again, on the responsibility of the administrator in that school as to whether he or she does that sort of work.

MR. MILLER: On page 6 you propose a committee or board to control education, responsible to the people through Parliament. Firstly, is this board responsible to the Minister?

MRS. TROTTER: Yes.

MR. MILLER: Secondly, is it advisory or autonomous?

MR. MATTHEWS: Advisory.

MR. MILLER: Is it appointed or elected?

MRS. TROTTER: It could be appointed and elected.

MR. MATTHEWS: In our discussions on that we saw it as something very similar to the composition of the Board

of Secondary School Studies - not in its function, but in its composition.

MR. POWELL: On page 4, it gets back to the assessment procedure and on that page a statement is made as a community observation, underneath (c), where it is said that the Radford scheme has perpetuated a rating system which concerns itself almost entirely with rank order and not with achievement of goals. It is my understanding from some of the submissions we have received that the idea of the Radford system was the achievement of goals and not the rank order system.

MR. MATTHEWS: This refers to assessment. What we are saying is that the actual assessment figure, if you like - the assessment number given for any particular subject - does not in some cases tell a person trying to interpret it, such as an employer, the extent of the achievement of goals, whereas the new system that you have heard outlined under the Scott report sets out goals and then assesses on the level of achievement.

MR. POWELL: You are talking about a competency basis of assessment?

MR. MATTHEWS: True. Let me illustrate from Maths II. If the 7 to 1 curve means what it says it means in Maths II then a person getting a 4 may have a very much higher level of achievement than it would appear to the uninitiated that he is getting and, to a great extent, that is not coming across to the community.

MR.MILLER: On teacher education, you stress the need for motivation and aptitude in the selection of entrants to teaching. Would you also consider personal and moral qualities?

MRS. TROTTER: Yes, most certainly. We are in the process of writing a submission. We are saying that we need to establish selection procedures together with an academic qualification and we need to initiate these selection procedures at the point of entry into teachers' college at the conclusion of the first year of college and on graduation. We think that the student grows during that period of training. Therefore we have to look at the development of their personality, their motivation and things like that.

MR. MILLER: What are your thoughts on homosexuals and humanists?

MR. MATTHEWS: This is a personal one. We have not discussed homosexuals in the Liberal Party education committee.

MR. MILLER: Can you see it as a problem?

MR.MATTHEWS: I can see it as a problem if the person puts his homosexuality on show. Probably there have been homosexual teachers over the centuries and they have kept it under. When they begin to parade it I would say we do not want any part of it.

MR. MILLER: How about humanists?

MR. MATTHEWS: Another matter.

MR. MARTIN: The question is whether the teacher is going to try to impose his own moral and ethical standards upon the pupils who are within his care. I do not believe any person in the community would say any teacher, whether he be a member of the recognised Christian denominations or not has the right, when he comes into a class-room and is teaching children from all sectors of the community, to impose his own moral standards upon them. That must always be the key test. Undoubtedly we have teachers within our ranks in Queensland who are members of the Communist Party which is not an illegal party within this State. Provided they do not try to impose their standards upon the students underneath them, we do not seek to ban them. This has been the policy.

MR. MILLER: Your beliefs would have an influence on your approach?

MR. MARTIN: Beliefs do have an influence. Every person's beliefs have an influence and teachers above all, have a special duty to ensure that when they teach impressionable children in their care they maintain a professional standard and do not let their personal beliefs influence. Not every teacher does that, but that is human nature. I think our education system should be directed in that regard.

MRS. TROTTER: That is why we are saying that we should look at the growth of the teacher during his apprenticeship or training so that we can look at the commitment of the teacher and the ethical expectations of teachers at college. That is when we should be looking at those sorts of things. If we had a code of ethics I believe that the majority of teachers would follow the code of ethics.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing before us this afternoon. I would be pleased if you would convey the thanks of the Committee to the Liberal Party and its education committee for the preparation of this submission.

The Committee adjourned at 4.4 p.m.

FRYER
Mss
81/12

DAY 13

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE 1 SEP 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M. J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W. D. Hewitt
Mr. C. J. Miller
Mr. L. W. Powell
Mr. E. F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:

Dr. R. D. Goodman
Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P.A.B. Krebs
Mr. K. P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E. S. Newton

BRISBANE, 1 SEPTEMBER 1978

THIRTEENTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 10 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: This morning I welcome representatives of the Uniting Church in Queensland and would ask if they would please identify themselves and the positions they hold in the Uniting Church.

MRS. MAVOR: I am Mrs. Lola Mavor and I am Director of the Division of Women's Services within the Department of Parish Services in the Uniting Church.

REV. WOODLEY: I am Rev. John Woodley, Director of Discipleship within the Department of Parish Services.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. First, can you tell us to what extent the Uniting Church in Queensland is involved in running schools?

REV. WOODLEY: I could not give you the number, but we have a number of church schools in Brisbane and on the Downs at Warwick and Toowoomba. Also, in Charters Towers and the surrounding district we have a number of colleges - for example, the Woodley College at Herberton.

THE CHAIRMAN: Both primary and secondary?

REV. WOODLEY: Most have primary sections, but essentially they are secondary schools.

MR. HEWITT: I should like to compliment you in the first instance on a very balanced and responsible submission. I am impressed with it. That opinion is in no way coloured by virtue of the fact that I am one of your denomination! I have a number of questions that I would like to ask you. Coming to your recommendations on page 5 and the things that you feel should be included in a human relationships course - a gentleman who has apparently recently moved into Queensland from Victoria is putting forward a proposal that the subject of thanatology - death - be included in courses in our schools. He cited the case in Victoria, where children were taken to a funeral parlour and had an interview with the undertaker. They were told all about the impact of death, how the body was processed, how the bereaved were placated and handled, the costs and everything else associated with

death. I am not supposed to express an opinion, but I would express my own reaction as one of some repugnance. Nevertheless I invite your observation as to whether the study of a subject such as that should also be included in the human relationships course that you refer to.

MRS. MAVOR: Death is a part of life and I believe that education should fit us for life, be able to help us deal with that. I would see something perhaps not in the same way as that gentleman proposed, but certainly some looking at death as a process of life and how one deals with it. It is a stage of life. Erickson in "Stages of Development of Children and Adults" does not imply that growing up stops at becoming an adult but goes on right through to the maturity level and where you come to grips with death. Particularly with the things that Dr. Kubler-Ross has brought to us on aspects of death, and more recently with Adult Education looking at that, I think it is something that should be raised in some way within our school system, and probably within a course like this would be an excellent place to raise it.

MR. HEWITT: Raised, yes - but with as much emphasis as that experienced in Victoria?

MRS. MAVOR: I find it hard to deal with something from another situation.

MR. HEWITT: All right; I won't press you. I am pleased that you have not avoided reference to sex education and that in fact you have dealt with it very closely indeed. I wonder if you would elaborate a little bit further on your views on sex education in schools as part of an overall human relationships course. How would you see it being handled? Have you any thoughts on who should be responsible for handling it in a class situation?

MRS. MAVOR: Firstly, as you said and as our submission reflects, it is part of a total process of human relationships and personal development. However, as we have mentioned in recommendation No. 5, it should be dealt with in a very factual way, a non-judgmental and non-prejudicial way. It should be part of the total process of human development. I forgot the second part of your question - how I felt it should be dealt with, was it?

MR. HEWITT: Yes.

MRS. MAVOR: First of all, in looking at this we would like to make sure that people who are taking this are very well trained in it and carefully selected after having gone through some course before they become teachers.

REV. WOODLEY: If I could come in here - one of the things we have recommended is that any course in human relationships ought to be developed in conjunction with the religious education curriculum branch. We believe that would give the kind of cover or the kind of back-up needed from the moral point of view and would bring in some of the values that we would want to emphasise and underline in human sexuality.

MRS. MAVOR: A point I was going to make is that ignorance is the problem in our education and that knowledge can only lead to wise choices. If people have knowledge they are able to handle the problems.

MR. HEWITT: Recognising the strong and responsible attitude of some parents that this is essentially their area

and that schools should not intrude into it, you would reserve the right of parents to have their children opt out of this course, I take it?

MRS. MAVOR: Yes, we certainly would. We firmly believe that sex education of children is the role of parents. But we also feel that the school itself can play a complementary role. You and I know the reality of the situation, that all children are not taught by their parents in this area, that they are not receiving that sort of training. I also support the Family Life Movement and the courses it runs presently in schools.

MR. MILLER: Apparently, though, you do not think that is sufficient?

MRS. MAVOR: It may be when you look at it.

MR. MILLER: Have you looked at it?

MRS. MAVOR: Yes, we have. We have taken part in it.

MR. MILLER: What decision did you come to?

MRS. MAVOR: At this stage the courses are not available in every school, and they cannot possibly cope with the total thing. If it is part of the school system it will happen all over the place, whereas if it is just left to a group to come in - what I am saying is that the school may be able to make use of people such as that in taking the course into account.

MR. MILLER: Would you restrict sex education to that type of person?

MRS. MAVOR: No, I wouldn't. I would want it to be much broader than that, and really looked into.

MR. MILLER: You are dealing with a very simple man when you are dealing with me, and I would like you to explain to me exactly what you mean by these words -

> "Physical and emotional development and details of sexual functioning which should be 'comprehensive, factual, frank, non-judgmental and sensitive to the age'....."

Will you please explain to me what you mean by all those words?

MRS. MAVOR: Yes. Comprehensive in that it should take into account the total development of the child. Comprehensive sex education is something that involves the total person, that it is a part of the total person. Factual, that it is a factual element, that sex education should be something that deals with the facts of sex. Frank and non-judgmental is sort of saying that there are no emotional overtones in it and that people who are teaching this are not bringing in their own attitudes to particular, say, deviances, but it is taught in a very factual way as a physiological thing, and sensitive, certainly, to the age and social and moral climate.

MR. POWELL: Should there be no moral values taught?

MRS. MAVOR: Definitely moral values taught, yes. I think our whole submission is talking about moral values being involved.

MR. MILLER: The Catholic church and other churches involved in education are not concerned about the SEMP material because they can control the type of teachers they employ. In fact, through the process of employment they can ensure that the right type of person is teaching in their schools. Can you assure me that the same would be the case in a State school situation?

MRS. MAVOR: This is why we want it linked to things like the religious education development team, because in conjunction with them they can then have that overriding look at the material, and it should be presented in line with that because that covers the religions, it is not just one religion.

MR. MILLER: If you want them linked with religion, do you believe the humanists should have the opportunity of practising their form of religion in State schools?

REV. WOODLEY: In the same way as any of the religions are able to bring to their own constituency their own point of view, to the same extent the humanists should be allowed to declare their children to be humanists. If there was a humanist teacher surely it would be suitable for that teacher in an RE period to teach those particular children who are nominated in that fashion? The Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses and these people teach their children in State schools.

MR. MILLER: But they do not separate them now into groups.

REV. WOODLEY: They sure do. The Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses do separate their children.

MR. POWELL: Going back to recommendation 1 on pages 2 and 3 of your submission, the whole section there seems to indicate that the education system is in the wrong direction, and in the second last paragraph on page 3 you said, "The working group felt.....relationships with other humans." Are the things you emphasise there mutually exclusive? For example, cannot a person be a productive member of the society and also a sincere caring person? It has been suggested that this section of yours is a reaction against the Protestant work ethic. Is that a fair sort of criticism?

REV. WOODLEY: You would have to tell me what you mean by the Protestant work ethic, I think.

MR. POWELL: Oh, fair crack of the whip.

REV. WOODLEY: Let me answer the first question first. No, I do not think there is any problem with a person belonging to a technological society and also being a human person and holding human values. I think this clause is a reaction to the reference in the terms of reference about technical and further education to meet today's industry's needs. While we accept that that is a necessary criterion in education we wouldn't want it to be the basic criterion, and it was a reaction against any suggestion that that should be the basic criterion for we believe in education for life being a more primary criterion to education to simply produce people for a work-force.

MR. POWELL: Are you aware that a large number of people within the community, and this has been expressed by people writing into this committee, are very concerned that the school system today is not preparing children for jobs and they are pleading with us to make sure that it does?

REV. WOODLEY: I accept that, and it is a valid belief. It is also a valid comment to make: where are the jobs for those young people who you are training?

MR. POWELL: What do you mean by that?

REV. WOODLEY: I mean,I wouldn't want to quote a percentage here, there is a large percentage of young people who are unemployed. We have to train those young people also to cope with life. It is not just enough to say we have to train them in order to -----

MR. POWELL: Where should the emphasis be, in your view? Should the emphasis be on children to be employed in the work-force as an economic unit or should it be to educate them for unemployment?

REV. WOODLEY: No, I don't think those are the two alternatives. What I am saying is that I believe education for life is more basic than education for employment. I would hope we could hold the two together, but I think I reacted correctly when I hear what you are saying, that we very properly put in that clause because I think you are expressing exactly the kind of problem that I see, and that is that if we concentrate simply on education for employment we must add on a whole area of education that we would want to emphasise.

MR. MILLER: While we are on the bottom of page 3, you say -

"As an alternative to the consumer-oriented society to which we belong the example was given of communities

where a much simpler life style has been adopted. How can we take note of some of the advantages of such a life style? Such advantages as:-

* sharing of and simpler construction of housing,
* greater simplicity in dress,
* less pressure to acquire possessions."

Is this a reason for education for life rather than education for work?

REV. WOODLEY: I think that that was an illustration rather than a reason, an illustration of some of the areas that need to be explored. I would not say we have arrived at a final conclusion there, but I am aware of large communities of young people - for instance, the Aboriginal community on Cribb Island which was given by a Roman Catholic sister as an example - where people have adopted a different life-style. I am not saying what we need to do is simply make a switch, but what we need to do is find some alternatives because obviously many of the people, even within our affluent society, are not going to be able to share in the kind of life-style that you and I enjoy.

MR. POWELL: You use the word "ethnic" a number of times throughout the submission. Can you give me your definition of the word "ethnic"?

REV. WOODLEY: I am not sure in what part of the submission it was, but that is O.K. We were thinking of migrant communities that are identifiable, which have made a great contribution to the Australian way of life, but which still wish to retain something of their own culture and have done so, and also by doing so have enriched the Australian way of life by the contribution they have made. They are identifiable cultural groups who have seen themselves as being able to make a contribution - including Aboriginal.

MR. POWELL: The purist meaning of the word "ethnic" lumps Greeks, Italians and all the European people into one ethnic group, the Caucasian group, does it not?

REV. WOODLEY: We were not thinking of it in those terms at all.

MR. POWELL: You are not thinking so much about ethnic in the purist sense but by country of origin?

REV. WOODLEY: Yes.

MR. POWELL: In recommendation (vii) on page 5 you say -

"Where strong differences of opinion exist on what is right and wrong behaviour, there should be objective, informed and dignified discussion of both sides of the issue."

Is this a form of values clarification that you are arguing for here?

MRS. MAVOR: Yes, it could be, because we believe back to what I said before: knowledge of things helps us to make wise choices. If we have alternative points of view then you can make a wise choice as you are led through discussion on particular issues.

MR. POWELL: What age group would you consider that this type of values clarification - for want of a better term - be used?

MRS. MAVOR: Values clarification - our children learn values right from a very young age. They are making choices very young in their life within the home and within the environment in which they live.

MR. MILLER: Is that the best place to make it?

MRS. MAVOR: Yes, it is the best place to make it, but the home can't provide all the information necessary for children to make decisions through life.

MR. MILLER: What is really wrong with our society today when you make a statement like that? That is where it has been made up to this point of time,hasn't it?

MRS. MAVOR: No, it hasn't only been made in the home because some homes don't help children to make choices.

MR. POWELL: Would that be a minority of homes or a majority of homes, do you think?

MRS. MAVOR: I couldn't answer that in terms of numbers. I can only speak from experiences that I have had as a teacher in that respect. I found even parents coming up to me and asking questions. When I taught a Grade 7 class I was asked, "Should my daughter wear lipstick?" It really wasn't my decision to say whether that child should wear lipstick, but the parent wasn't able to do that, or didn't want to put herself into the situation where she might make a decision on that. Looking at values and looking at situations in life can keep children, particularly in the high school if you want to ask where I think it is best - I think high schoolchildren from Grade 8 onwards should be looking at things that are important in life, and how they are going to make choices in life, even to things like what work they are going to do. That is a choice they have to make - whether they value earning a lot of money or whether they value some sort of work that is going to be interesting and fulfilling. Those are choices. I know values clarification has been branded as a very detrimental thing. I would like to say it is not a detrimental thing but that it really helps people work through situations and make decisions.

MR. POWELL: Can you see where it worries the very life out of many parents? They are going to have to attempt to bring their children up in a certain way - and you know the problems of bringing up a child in a certain fashion - but when

the children go to school they are going to be faced with a mature person, namely, the teacher who will question the values that those parents have attempted to lead the children towards. It is all very well for the proponent of values clarification to say that if the child has been taught properly and given the right sort of lead in he will be able to withstand that sort of thing, but that in fact is not so.

MRS.MAVOR: That is why we want personal development courses. Really the ball game is back in the parents' court in terms of communication. We have to bring up in our high schools now students who are learning communication skills, who are learning how to communicate with their children when they become parents. They are not going to learn that if they are not going to be faced with situations where they themselves can make decisions as to what is right and wrong. Communication within a family starts at a very young age. These are the concepts we would like to see in education, things that are going to help our students deal with those sorts of situations where they can become communicators themselves, so that the next generation can have that sort of communication where children and parents can talk with each other about situations and problems - an openness. The same thing can be created within the schools where parents, teachers and students - a community is built within the school, where persons are respected and where people can communicate with each other on the school level. So many hours are spent in the school so that the school can play such an important role in the upbringing of children who will be our future parents and husbands and wives.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think we should allow the use of MACOS and SEMP in schools?

MRS. MAVOR: Aspects of it, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Both?

MRS. MAVOR: Yes. I was involved in a review of the MACOS material. I had involved 40 people - 40 parents of 10-year-old children basically, but broadened it in the second time around. We had looked at the materials; we had taken part in some of the activities; we had been to schools where it was taking place. As a former teacher I was excited about the maturity of the children and the maturity of the situations. Right against what I found, a lot of the criticism on MACOS - I really found those children down there- both John and I went to a school where we didn't know but we were asked did we want to ask the children any questions. Just off the bat we asked them questions, and we were really thrilled the way they answered them and the way they were looking at aspects such as caring for older people. They had some really valuable ideas to give about how they should really care for older people. So that the course was not teaching what it was claimed to teach, that it was making people disregard their parents and -----

MR. MILLER: Would you censor the two courses?

MRS. MAVOR: From our investigation into MACOS, for instance, we probably would like to have seen some changes. We would not have had it as a total packet as it was. There were some aspects of the films that we would want erased; there were some aspects that we would want to delve into more deeply.

MR. MILLER: But you would censor it?

MRS. MAVOR: Censor in a sense but not cancel it out altogether. The concept of what it was about, regardless of what it contained - the concepts that it was bringing forward and the way in which it was being handled in the class-room I found very positive. I would certainly include a lot of the material of SEMP. Once again I would censor certain sections of it that I didn't think were necessary to get the point across - some of the films for instance.

MR. MILLER: You mentioned some Christian values you want to affirm.

MRS. MAVOR: Can you tell me what page you are on?

MR. MILLER: Page 7. The Ten Commandments are not spelt out there. In (2)(a) you say, "Some Christian values we want to affirm within our society". I see that the Ten Commandments are missing.

REV. WOODLEY: They would be the ones you would want to put in, no doubt.

MR. MILLER: Aren't they important?

REV. WOODLEY: They sure are. I think they are spelt out in more modern terms in some of those values.

MR. MILLER: Some are missing, aren't they?

REV. WOODLEY: Sure they are. We affirmed the ones we felt were under threat rather than ones which were generally accepted. For instance, "Thou shalt not kill" is generally accepted as a value. We didn't feel it was necessary to affirm that one. We were affirming the ones we felt had some lack.

MR. MILLER: There is practically the same thing as killing in MACOS, isn't there?

REV. WOODLEY: I am sorry, I wouldn't understand MACOS to be prompting people to kill at all - not in what I saw of it, which was 30 hours of investigation into it. Can I just say something about values clarification? In our church we use this method continually;in all of our teaching in our schools and certainly in our own religious education, and within our camping movement and in our religious education we use values clarification all the time. I think what we need to say is that values clarification is a process simply whereby values are clarified. We need to distinguish between the process and the content. The content is for us as Christians - it is something that we bring-once the values and once the need to establish values has been decided upon then we bring the content of the Christian gospel.

But values clarification as a title really refers simply to a process of clarifying values, not with the content of them.

MR. POWELL: Can you see that most people who have contacted us are very happy for that to happen within the church confines and the home confines but not happy for it to happen within the school where there is no control over the sort of thing going on.

MR. WOODLEY: Except that I am a little worried about the kind of inference you are making about our State education system.

MR. POWELL: It is not made by me but by people writing in to us.

MR. WOODLEY: Again, I would say that in the State education system - my understanding and experience is that of all the professions there are more Christians in the teaching profession than in any other profession. That is pretty general.

MR. POWELL: What is the percentage?

MR. WOODLEY: I am sorry, I could not give you a percentage, but my experience is that there are a large number of Christians in every school.

MR. POWELL: Going on to Mr. Miller's question on page 7, 2(b), you make a number of points concerning trends within Queensland/Australian society which devalue the Christian "view of man". Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are statements, without any proof. Where, for example, can you see that a low priority is given to the meaningful family life within our community? Where can you show the exploitation of the environment for the sake of profit without sufficient regard to the stewardship of creation or the long-term effect on humanity?

MR. WOODLEY: Do you want me to give specific examples?

MR. POWELL: Well, the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

MR. WOODLEY: These are all theological statements. I would want to start from a theology of creation as being something given to us by God not only as a resource but as something for which we are responsible.

MR. POWELL: Where in our society do we devalue or give a low priority to meaningful family life?

MR. WOODLEY: I think many pressures, particularly in areas where we have not taken account of - I don't like throwing technical terms around - but the nuclear family, for instance, where we have established places that are composed entirely, or almost, of nuclear families - a husband, a wife and a couple of children. This has developed tremendous social pressures and it is putting great pressure on family life. We are discovering that the extended family does give a buffer to people that they do not have. I was a parish minister in Gladstone for some years and discovered there the tremendous social pressures because a great percentage of the people in Gladstone are one families, without any grandparents, uncles, aunties and so on for support. We discovered there that this was one of the really big social problems. Is that the kind of illustration you are looking for?

MR. POWELL: Well, it does in that one but I would like to go on with all the others.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is controlled by the Chair.

MRS. MAVOR: The whole work ethic there - you know, the pressure of work and the pressure of materialism does not support the family. That sort of tends to divide the family and take the parents away from the children for longer periods.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank you very much for the preparation of your submission which is coded JL-672. It has been very useful. I thank you particularly for addressing yourselves so comprehensively to the questions of sex education and religious education which might not have received the same emphasis as it has. We are very thankful that it has. I thank you very much for coming before us. I greatly appreciate it. I assure you that we will be giving close consideration to your submissions.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite Mr. P.G. Jackman to appear. His submission is coded Au-138. He has been invited to appear before the Committee as a teacher in a technical college. To date we have not had a similar appearance. Mr. Jackman's submission is very brief. We are able to give him only 15 minutes this morning. I invite you, Mr. Jackman, for the first 5 minutes to expand on the matters placed before the Committee.

MR. JACKMAN: I speak as a teacher with 15 or 16 years' experience here and overseas. I am now with the technical education section. I have taught in private and secondary schools mainly as a humanities teacher. English teachers have recently been appointed to sections of tech colleges. I am not in a tech college in the trade sense. I might say that in Brisbane a great deal of the numbers in tech colleges are now coming from girls seeking office training. That is why there has been an expansion in the humanities. I am unaware if you have before you my submissions in the form that I have them. I took my lead from one of your members who, at a public meeting, said, "Let whatever you say be pithy and to the point and easily read." I tried to nut this out briefly under a number of headings in just a number of sentences. To be very practical, I could refer to a section on textbooks. It is my feeling that the Government of Queensland is spending a lot of money on textbooks. Most of what I say is related to secondary education. I have had very little experience of primary education. The Government is spending a lot of money - up to about $5,000,000 this year and $4,500,000 in years past, and when the scheme first came in it was $3,500,000. Within schools we are not seeing the benefit of that mainly because whatever money is spent is either lost in the sense that one year's supply of books does not build up on the next year so that eventually a class-room or a school could have 10,000 or 15,000 books. I think the root of the problem is that at the moment the Act specifies that the money is turned over to the parents rather than to the schools. Many private schools have made a great use of this fund by getting parents to sign the cheques back to the school, hence they are able each year to increase their library of books and their class-room sets. It gives the school a greater control over texts. Later on I want to mention briefly something about discipline. I will tie it in with an experience I had after coming back from Canada where they have great facilities in most of their schools. One class studying Shakespeare informed me they had not bought any books for the last 3 years. This was a Grade 10 that was doing a Shakespearean play. I was astounded to find that three students out of 28 had the text in front of them. I asked, "How is this so?" They said, "Well, we don't buy books." It had become the practice in the lower-stream classes in the school; the more academically inclined are quite keen and like to have the text, but the less academically able present some sort of disciplinary problem to teachers. In fact, I investigated one poor teacher who was always coming back to the staff room crying her eyes out. Eventually, when I tried to get to the bottom of the problem I found that she was trying to handle classes that just had no material. They would leave pens, paper and books - they would just not bring them to the class. In fact the hassle was developing to the stage whereby the authorities were saying, "You must be a bad teacher because you cannot control these children and you cannot teach them properly." She was sort of saying, "They have not even got the equipment for me to teach them with."

It became a tussle in which unfortunately the teacher, instead of getting the support from her superiors, was really being put under a lot of pressure by them. So far as efficiency in education and indeed discipline is concerned, I really think that if we could somehow get that money channelled to schools it would be of great benefit to education. I spoke to the president of the high school principals' association about this - this is going back more than 12 months - and I was astounded by his reply. It was, "We just do not have cupboards to put these things in." This was a classical example of a person who has no emotional drain towards trying to teach less capable students having to face up day in and day out to children who do not want to learn, and one of whose ploys is not to have any place for books. This person was not really interested in the problems of the class-room teacher. Saying that schools do not have facilities to store books leaves me very cold because I feel that the Government is spending money on this sort of facility and it is not really accruing as it should. In fact, I want to make the point that frequently when Parliament, the Minister and others seek information and advice on educational matters, often it comes from the wrong source. I take this as an example. In order to find out if textbooks should stay in schools, if the Education Department went to principals and said, "What do you think about it?", there could quite easily be principals who would say, "No, we don't like the idea at all." They must go back and ask the class-room teacher who is really on the spot trying to do a job and who realises all the wrinkles involved. I think the textbook issue is crucial and this Committee could do a very practical thing by giving its support to somehow getting round the problem of cheques going to parents in April or May. The parents say, "We paid for books in February", so they feel free to use that money to pay the rent or to overcome some other financial difficulties they have. It does not always come back to the school and part of the problem is the fact that it does not get out to parents until school has been going for two or three months.

THE CHAIRMAN: Time is at a premium, so perhaps we could now proceed to questions.

BY MR. MILLER: I like very much your suggestion about textbooks. I am also very interested in the voucher system. Do you know of any country in which it is operating effectively and would the enlargement of private schools, because people would rather send their children to such schools, lower the standard of private schools?-- I do not think that anywhere in the world such a system is being operated in the way we would like to see it operating in Queensland. It has been operated overseas within a State system. Some people have said it is working marvellously and others have said it is not. But that is just within the one State system. If we addressed ourselves to the problem, I think we could probably develop something that was satisfactory for us which would include State and private schools. I do not think it would lower any educational standards at all. I think it could work efficiently. I think it would have to be piloted in certain small areas or the metropolitan area, not necessarily go State-wide first up. If handled with care, I think it could provide a real solution to many problems in education. For example, if we had a voucher system and we had to deal with a group of humanists, who have every right to live side by side with us in society, there could be in a particular area a school noted for its stress on this type of discipline which would make it more satisfying to them. I think this would iron out a lot of the problems that we now have.

BY MR. HEWITT: I refer to your comment that administrators

should be on a five-year contract and should go back to what you call the "coal face". Do you not see the difficulty arising that we would not have enough experienced administrators in the department itself?-- I would not see that arising. I feel the end product would be that we would have some experienced people out in the field and a lot more experience in both fields. There would be a lot of people in schools with experience in how the department runs and there would also be a lot of people in the department who would be very close to what was actually happening out in the field. I would say that probably it would enhance education tremendously. When we are in a situation where there is no teacher shortage, I feel that this could be done. It would not have been able to operate in the '50s or '60s but can come in in the 1970s and 1980s because of changing social conditions. I see it as crucial. I do not know whether you would know more than I whether this would require a change in Public Service regulations or whether it would require that the Education Department be no longer part of the Public Service. Of course, it is a matter of money. People tend to think that they must apply to be headmasters and to get up the ladder because it is financially better that way. We might in the future be able to work something out whereby the person who is actually doing the teaching does not feel that he has to get out of it in order to get promotion. I feel that it would be invaluable for the Education Department if such returns were made frequently. I cannot see any reason why the Director-General of Education should not be appointed for five years with a renewable five, and why he should not go back teaching for five years and apply again for the job if it comes up. Perhaps we would not want to make the top people immediately part of this scheme but certainly it could apply down the line. People go into curriculum development and can stay there for years and years and I think that they lose and we lose.

You referred to corporal punishment. Will you give us your opinion on the real effectiveness of corporal punishment?-- I did bring along the only article that I recall as being truthfully written in a long while on this subject. It is headed, "School yard solicitors put teachers on the spot". The first part of the article instances a number of disciplinary problems that I am speaking about. I do not know if I would have time to read the article but I can leave it with you.

BY MR. POWELL: What is the newspaper?-- It is the "Telegraph" of 22 May 1978. Bill Callinan, headmaster at Miami high, was interviewed and a number of instances were given of what can happen in schools. I shall try to reply firstly to Mr. Hewitt's question and if you then want me to read some instances from this article, I will. Corporal punishment can be effective, I think, in some cases. It is never for failure in lessons and never for a trivial matter. It is profitable that a teacher always has to record just what he has done. I see that no change in the law is required. All that has happened is that a custom has grown up in Government schools that does not apply in private schools. In Government schools, the headmaster and someone deputed by him has the right to give corporal punishment. That person is usually his deputy. I give an example. A Grade 9 lad spits at another in class. The teacher sees it. He can do nothing on the spot. If it happens in a private school the teacher would probably discipline the lad there and then and that would be the end of it. In a Government school the lad would be sent to the headmaster. One teacher gave me this example to put before the Committee. The lad says to the headmaster, after half an hour or an hour has gone by, "I was coughing. I just coughed." The headmaster calls the teacher and says,

"Look, I can't do anything. He says he just coughed." The teacher says, "He didn't cough. Honestly, I saw the whole thing." The headmaster says, "Look, I'm not going to get my fingers burnt with this sort of thing." What happens is that naughty and stupid children start the staff fighting among themselves. The headmaster in that case did not administer corporal punishment when probably a parent would have done so.

I see it effective in situations of extreme manners and violence. Actually the teachers have the right to give some corporal punishment. If the head thinks they shouldn't have it, it should be withdrawn, rather than the way we operate now, whereby it is one teacher and one delegated by him. We should have the delegation general and it could be withdrawn if the head so sees fit. Really I am just proposing something that happens in private schools. I think it would be worth while.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing. Time is our enemy this morning. Your attendance is appreciated and your submissions will be studied by the Committee.

WILLIAM HENRY EVANS, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Your letter has been received. It is coded J1-362. We are plagued seriously by time this morning. Could you make a preliminary statement for approximately 5 minutes so that members can proceed to ask you some questions?-- Yes. I am William Henry Evans junior. I am at present a Brisbane West District relieving teacher, classification 040009, which is two degrees. This is my sixth year of teaching in Queensland. I have had seven years in New South Wales and four in Victoria. My main interest and plea to the Committee concerns the teaching of history in schools. I have been a history subject master in Queensland, a history subject master in New South Wales and a history subject master in Victoria, ~~among other positions as~~ plus subject master ~~as~~. First of all, may I say that many teachers have asked me my ~~decision~~ and analysis of SEMP. At the annual general meeting of the Queensland History Teachers' Association I have been on the executive since 1973 - I abstained, giving the reason that I wanted my name recorded in writing as abstaining because I have never seen SEMP to this day and it would be presumptive of me to make any comment yea or nay on it. I think there are far more serious matters in the teaching of history than the uproar over the Government's banning of SEMP. The first thing that concerns me - and I think should concern the Queensland Teachers' Union and those ~~that~~ are screaming the loudest over the SEMP issue (and again I repeat that I have not seen ~~it~~ SEMP ~~and~~ I have abstained from any comment on it) - is ~~a~~ deplorable situation ~~and~~ I blame fully the Board of Secondary School Studies in general and Mr. Les Winkle in particular. I have tried, since 1974, pleading with Mr. Winkle personally to correct what I consider a shocking, deplorable situation in history. When I was a history subject master in Victoria in 1970 I was asked by a publisher to review and comment on ~~the~~ two ~~books~~. ~~They will leave them on the table and details can be given. They were published by two Queensland history teachers.~~ After about a month going through ~~it~~, I had the shock of my life. I had never seen in ~~my life~~ so many factual errors in history. True we can have different interpretations in history, and one does not worry. We had a few serious omissions in the two books I have placed on the table. I gave ~~it~~ to the publisher, the chief editor of Nelson at that time, Miss Ann Gowden. She claimed about a month later she sent ~~them~~ to one of the authors in Queensland and the ~~author~~ denied ~~it~~. When I came to Queensland in 1973 ~~and went to the first annual history conference~~, I confronted ~~the~~ author on this, and he said to me that he had never received the books with my corrections ~~in~~. I pleaded with the authors - one of ~~the authors~~ is now ~~dead, unfortunately~~ - to give me a ~~correction~~ of their errors. They said, "Name ~~it~~." I said I would name ~~it~~ in any public gathering on TV or otherwise and I wanted their correction at the same time. To me, it is shocking to say the least that students in Queensland schools - and this goes from Grade 8 ~~through~~ Grade 12 - and I am only talking about 8 to 10 history and 11 to 12 modern history; I leave out ancient history because I do not consider myself an expert on ancient history. In modern, I think ~~I do, and the uni does, and most of the history teachers in Queensland would agree to this.~~ This state of affairs has gone on. In addition, as I said before, I approached Mr. Winkle, I have approached the authors - ~~flippancy, blase things~~ - I have mentioned ~~to officials about it and they gave me a look,~~ "Oh, Bill, you don't know what you're talking about." I said, "I'll make it an open challenge any time." And this has continued. I do not know if the Committee has, but I think they would have a copy - I know several members of the Committee would have - I sent Mr. Winkle a letter dated July 10. I think, for the time factor I would like it included fully in the proceedings, but I won't read it in full now, knowing my time of about seven minutes. The essence of it was that Mr. Brian Cahill, the history subject

master at St. Joe's college on the Terrace, told me there were two to four new syllabuses being slipped in quickly for senior modern history. I asked Mr. Winkle in this letter to let me look at them. I apologise to the Committee. I was notified at 9.15. I forgot the old syllabuses. Two previous syllabuses issued by the Board of Secondary School Studies sent to teachers throughout Queensland, students were given false information on the syllabus itself. For instance, one, it took me about three years to correct. This was on the syllabus itself, not on a textbook. There was a 1945 peace settlement. There is no such thing, never was, never has been, yet this was put in by the so-called history experts. Now the other thing I had offered - here again with my expertise that I have put at the service of teachers, other Queensland agencies, everyone else, students, former students - to look at the syllabus. As most of us would say, there is an error. I am sincerely grateful if I have made an error. But I think it is far more shocking - I repeat - than the big SEMP issue, material factual errors in that book, the second book. I offered to proof this book for the author and I consider him like a younger brother, although he had an emotional outburst against me recently and said I was unprofessional by telling students in a class-room the book had factual errors in it. I said, "Well, we can go on TV and decide who is unprofessional for teachers, students and the department. I offered to proof that book. There are just a few at the moment. I thought I might be going on TV with Brian Cahill over the next two days. I have put a lot in red. There is not a fraction of what I can put on factual errors. The books that I am laying down here - that's another one -----

Are these prescribed textbooks?-- As I put in my letter and I will file, they are flogged or promoted by the publishers and authors themselves as ideally fitting the syllabus. To be honest and call it historically, I would say it is being described as semi-official text.

Are they recommened by the Board of Secondary School Studies?-- According to their latest thing they gave me, they didn't show it, so I don't really know at the moment on that. But the promotion things that go around from the publishers and a few other little incidences they seem to be promoted to teachers, new teachers, and teachers not having the expertise, through no fault of the teachers, as semi-official texts. If you have this, you have it made, so to speak.

BY MR. POWELL: Are these books being used in secondary schools today?-- Unfortunately they are; a tremendous amount of them.

Do you know of any schools in which they are being used?-- Toowong High for one, this would be in, I know. These have been in previous schools. I could make a survey. In fact, as most of us know I am doing a Ph.D. in history with Dr. Barclay in the history department and also I am just finishing up a graduate diploma of school administration at Mt. Gravatt.

for full corrections, see typed script attached to J1 362.

I have now decided, with the permission of Dr. Tronc, to make a full dissertation on these and surveys out through the schools. I know from my contacts - I was talking to several teachers over the holidays, and they said, "Thank goodness, Bill, someone is going to challenge." I know it is a sensitive issue and the authors, who are personal friends, I know, won't take the criticism, but they should take it.

BY MR. HEWITT: Could you give us a few brief examples without embellishment of what you consider to be factual inaccuracies?-- There is one map here, in fact there are two of them, showing the U.S.A. and a piece of territory up in the North-west Territory which is claimed to be given to the United States by Britain in 1813 while Britain and the U.S. were at war. Actually it was given to them in 1818. There are some errors in these books, and I will go through them in full------

Would you give us another example, please?-- One of them - I can't remember which - says that the French surrendered at Dien Bien Phu one week ahead of time. Unfortunately there is a tendency in history at the moment - some of these promoters in and out of schools say, "Don't bother me with the facts; I'm too busy developing the concepts." I have had history as a hobby since Grade 4. I won my Naval Academy appointment to Annapolis basically on the history score.

So far you have told me there was an error of five years in the statement of something that happened and secondly that the fall of Dien Bien Phu is out by one week. I am asking for succinct examples of what you call factual errors?-- May I, in view of the time factor that the Committee has -------

Just give me another couple, please?-- I have here a map on page 228, a map of the United States right at the beginning of the Civil War. It has West Virginia listed as a slave State that did not secede in 1861. That is a travesty on history for any student or person in schools to read, when West Virginia was not a State until 1863.

In that example you are not challenging the statement that West Virginia was a slave State you are challenging the statement that it was -------?-- That it was a State in 1981. It was not a State until 1863.

You are challenging the date that is stated? Most of your challenges are on dates, are they?-- Some of them are on dates. Some others - I look at page 229, which talks about the Mexican session. They only list two States, Utah and New Mexico. If anyone looks at the Mexican session - I can name far more States than Utah and New Mexico. I have gone through in a hurry and I will leave the books over the week-end with the Committee with the itemised things and so forth, if the Committee would like to look at them.

Do all of these books deal only with American history?-- Not only American by any means.

What other history?-- European history, Asian and the rest. I have no pleasure, believe me -- and I repeat to the Committee as I repeated to the authors and to the students, in having to correct factual errors or misinterpretations. I don't mean "interpretations"; we have various interpretations, who is right and who is wrong. That is not the point. There are serious omissions from something. I will definitely go through all of those and leave with the Committee --------

BY THE CHAIRMAN: I think we might depute Mr. Hewitt to take these books over the week-end?-- I will go through them all.

In the limited time that is available - do you think the Board of Secondary School Studies should develop a list of recommended texts?-- In one effect, yes, because I think all of us would agree and I have always said that no one textbook is perfect. I had a publisher ask me the other day to write one of these and I said, "Look, there are far better books than these available right now that should be recommended." The thing that disturbs me very much in the same line - I may be wrong, but I don't think I am - I cannot see - I consider it, as I put to Mr. Winkle, a conflict of interest when members get on a syllabus subcommittee and rejuggle and redesign the syllabus so there are no superb textbooks at all readily available that match the syllabus. They cut and paste their own.

BY MR. POWELL: What was Mr. Winkle's response to your letter?--He told me on 24 July when I came in to see him on something else, to see someone else, he said, "Hey, Bill Evans, you're not serious about that letter of 10 July to me, are you? I said, "I will be more serious if I am forced to go on T.V., in the newspaper and everywhere else for the sake of students, teachers andeveryone else." I said, "I think everyone knows me well enough, I'm not stupid enough to make assertions that things are in error when they are not in error." That would be a fatal thing.

Have you received a letter in writing in response to your letter?-- Apparently I would guess some other people have that letter. He sent me a letter I received on Friday the 23rd,and he says, "The implications of your statement concerning the syllabus are that these people are not very competent. This is difficult to reconcile with the established reputations of these people." Based on those, and this one ("Retrospect"), which is Grade 10 of a series, I would fail any student of mine for incompetence if that were their thesis for something - factual incompetence. Cut and paste it basically is. The syllabus, as far as I can see - I have studied it since 1973 - I amshocked because I get the feeling, and I am certain that I am right, that there is too much conflict of interest. Getting on a syllabus committee is ethically wrong - if Bill Evans is on that syllabus committee he should not write books for Queensland schools. That is wrong professionally, ethically, etc. This is where there has been a deplorable standard. History is as important as mathematics and science. I have challenged many mathematicians. I started my career as a mathematics subject master, and I can almost match most maths people with qualifications and experience. History has been downgraded in schools. It is important for interest and the study of society. One thing that does disturb a lot of us is that it is probably one of the areas where the so-called "social engineers" can muck around and put in dubious material. They cannot mess up mathematics, in effect; they cannot mess up physics. As I am on the Board of Secondary School Studies - I think this is one of the most incredible statements - Brian Cahill, unknown to me, at the same time had the same thing repeated to him. When I was subject master at St. Peter's Lutheran College in 1974 I went to the board, with the permission of the school moderator, that I was not satisfied with all of the predetermined quotas. I have looked at this and studied the board's documents. As far as I am concerned, and the evidence shows, the Board of Secondary School Studies makes a curve first and bends the academic standards to fit the curve, instead of mathematically having the

distribution and then making the curve. I was told by - I have his name here somewhere - to his eternal credit - I must admire him - I said, "Who makes the final decision in history in this State as to whether a person gets a 7, a 6 or a 5?" I heard a little waffle from him. Mr. Rob Simpson at that time said, "Bill, I make the final decision in history." To his eternal credit he added, "Although I know nothing at all about history; I am a geographer." That should speak volumes beyond comprehension and shock. It did to me at the time. I admire Mr. Simpson because he was honest, as I know him personally outside his duties on the Board of Secondary School Studies. That is a deplorable situation, to put it mildly. On things I have seen, it worries me. I know, for instance, when I joined the department in 1975, Mr. Wolff appointed me earlier, but I could not take it up - I promised inspector Wolff and one of the finest men I know in the department, Mr. Fred Barrow, that I would never have anyone - I would defer to no-one in my concern for Queensland education in general and Queensland history teaching in particular. This is why I am here. I know I have stepped on a few toes, and they can scream, but those authors, I will take them on on T.V. I have challenged them already. The History Department at uni said, "Thank goodness for your letter, Bill. Maybe now we can clean up history through the high schools and make it more interesting at uni and everywhere else. This thing has gone on too long." Forgive me for rambling, I was thinking of the time factor.

THE CHAIRMAN: The time factor has beaten us. I would like to thank you very much, Mr. Evans, for appearing before us and speaking so frankly. I must now adjourn the hearing until 11.30, when we will welcome representatives of the Women's Action Alliance.

The Committee adjourned at 11.10 a.m.

The Committee resumed at 11.30 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now welcome representatives from the Women's Action Alliance. Submissions have been coming in from various centres and we have been very pleased to receive them. They are coded JN-263, JL-570 and JL-595. I am pleased to welcome Mrs. Jackie Butler, the Central Queensland Regional President, who has travelled all the way from Rockhampton, Mrs. Lesley Bartlett, the State President and Mrs. Ann McInnes the Vice President of the Brisbane Central group. The submission has been studied by members so it will not be necessary to read any of it. In reading the submission as I have read it, in particular the question in relation to sex education, have I summarised the situation well when I say it seems to me that the Women's Action Alliance is saying that in relation to sexism as it relates to education the matter should be dealt with on the basis of equality of opportunity rather than equality of outcome, and what do you disagree with about the campaigns of the various groups who are arguing for equal rights in schools and against sexism in schools? What do you disagree with principally about some of the arguments they are putting forward?

MRS. BUTLER: Firstly, we should realise that a lot of people would debate that there is actual sexism in schools, sexism in the same context as racism, discrimination against a sex. Anything that acknowledges that there is a difference in sex is assumed to be discriminatory and must not be taken notice of. This is a point most people would dispute because they feel that there are very real and important differences and most of us do not want to change those types of things. The Women's Action Alliance, on the other hand, is very concerned about equal opportunity in schools. By that we feel there should be equal access to school facilities and equal opportunities for boys and girls within the schools. That is the intention of this submission we have put forward. We spend quite a part of the submission defining what we feel is equal opportunity and pointing out that although some males and some females might choose to enter professions not traditionally thought to be for them, there are also areas where the bulk of men will choose the one profession and the bulk of women will choose another profession, and this should not be forced to be changed by imposing quotas. The areas where we have taken particular exception to some of the groups that promote anti-sexist education can possibly be demonstrated by some of the material I have brought to the meeting today. You will notice from it that there is a very strong attempt to denigrate the traditional roles of women; the home-maker, the office girl, the nurse, this type of thing, and is something that is not presented in a very good light to girls, and it appears that unless women are competing with men in men's careers this is not acceptable. The anti-sexist material has been coming up with funding provided through the Federal Government starting with the International Women's Year, and posters like this one have been going into all the primary schools, kindergartens and pre-schools throughout Australia. They relate to role reversal and show boys with bunches of flowers, dolls and prams and girls with masculine characteristics holding shovels showing them that girls should and can perform these roles as well. I do not think that does much for equal opportunities. We all know mum can mow the lawn as well as dad, but we do try to encourage dad to do his part there. That kind of thing has gone into the younger schools . There is a kit put out by the Women's Education Children's Collective, I think it is called, containing posters and a booklet. It is entitled, "Role Your Own" and is aimed at encouraging people to study and participate in role reversal, the opposite type of role. There is a lot of sex education in this that is particularly repugnant

to people who have any type of values for families. I might mention, first of all, in the series of posters there is one large poster for the fourth form students and it is a picture of misery. It says, "In education, in marriage, in everything, disappointment is the lot of a woman. It shall be the business of my life to deepen this disappointment in every woman's heart until she bows down to it no longer." This is the philosophy of women's lib, "It is bad to be a woman, it is something we should be ashamed of and unless we can make war on the sexes and take over the power it won't be tolerated." Another one of the posters in this series has a caption reading, "Presenting the baby machine." It is very attractive and glossy showing a woman with a caption beside her saying, "A hen is useful to men. She lays eggs between her legs." Can you imagine the effect on the role of the mother and the home-maker being constantly exposed to this type of publishing. This one here shows the poor oppressed mother in a house with the baby on her hip, curlers in her hair and ragged clothes and a broom and the handsome, suave man going off to work in his smart coat with the big car.

MR. MILLER: Does that mother have a cigarette hanging out of her mouth like they have in SEMP?

MRS. BUTLER: No, she can't afford it because her husband doesn't give her the money. But this is the type of role that is coming across and I do not think people are aware of the number of things like this that are coming out. We have a dishonesty in the whole thing because whenever the role of mother is presented she is presented in a ragged or old-fashioned way. We have a mother here treadling a sewing machine while she feeds her baby. I do not think many women have to do that today. The pictures of men depict them as being doctors or having other really interesting jobs but women's jobs are not significant, are not something girls should seek after. This book here came out with an International Women's Year grant under the aegis of the National Youth Council of Australia titled, "Woman as a Wife, Wife behind the Bars". Everything in the book depicts what is wrong with her, that she is oppressed, down and out and doing all the poor work. I don't know where the mothers on the golf course having a good time are, they are not featured here. There has to be something positive put forward for our students, and I feel that these types of literature are not doing it.

MR. POWELL: Have you seen the family section that is part of the SEMP material?

MRS. BUTLER: I have seen part of it , and I felt that the questions they were putting to children they were not in a position to answer.

MR. POWELL: That is not quite the question I was going to ask you. Do you see a correlation between the caricatures in the family section and that material you are showing us now?

MRS. BUTLER: Yes, I feel this would be so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I allow you to fully develop that argument? Have you completed your argument in relation to posters?

MRS. BUTLER: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was going to intrude and ask you whether you had seen the Combat Sexism kit prepared by the Australian Union of Students.

MRS. BARTLETT: We have a copy of that.

THE CHAIRMAN: What did you think of that?

MRS. BARTLETT: We weren't happy with that at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was looking for an expletive.

MRS. BARTLETT: It is indicative of the philosophy behind the movement - what they are trying to do, which is change the whole value pattern in society by shocking people - I suppose getting them used to this sort of material.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you any other examples there you want to show us?

MRS. BUTLER: Yes. We expect that people who have got positions in education would be responsible, but this Roll Your Own kit which is put out by the Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative assessed in a blue-stocking newsletter by the A.W.E.C. - Australian Women's Education Collectors - talking about Roll Your Own they say that the Roll Your Own kit remains unsurpassed as stimulating, educational and consciousness-raising teaching material for use in courses related to women - sexuality, socialisation, education, work, the media, and self-image. That is their impression of it. The people who were heading the equal opportunities inquiry in Victoria - one of them was one of the editors of this magazine. We feel that it is not only the teachers but the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra. They put out out this Re-educating a Generation Avoiding Sex Bias. Many of the books in here deal with this role socialisation, changing the attitudes and changing the way people think about things. One here at random deals with research into sex role socialisation. It mentions that the incest taboo that was originally enforced because of the need to exchange women to strengthen social links is no longer necessary for this reason, and that it survives only as a deeply ingrained social force recognised by all except young children.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that the Curriculum Development Centre?

MRS. BUTLER: Yes. This type of thing is coming through. There was a lot of things developed through the Schools Commission. They have put a lot of money into resource centres to help distribute these things - to set up displays that can go to schools, and to employ co-ordinators to make sure that all schools get this philosophy, develop it and bring it into the schools. In Queensland there is a move

afoot to bring it into line with other schools, to have in-service courses for teachers. It is mentioned in this kit. It encourages them to do it. Queensland teachers' colleges are being sent this type of thing through the co-ordinator in Queensland. Just to illustrate the type of nebulous concept they have of equal opportunity they say that in things like mathematics girls are disadvantaged. I am quoting from one of the things sent out. It was counted up and it was shown that men have many more active roles in the problem sums. Men are shown to walk further and go by more active means than girls do. They have all the things worked out in percentages. Men walked so many miles, and women only walked so many miles, so girls are disadvantaged and they will not go on and have careers that are going to use mathematics and bring them into line with men. It seems to be that this is going through everything. The typing and English courses are the same. They have counted up all the he's and she's and active roles and non-active roles. They must be rewritten. Ivan Southall's wonderful books are to be banned because they are sexist because they show boys in very active roles. Their argument doesn't hold good because if girls don't do as well in maths because of this discrimination, why is it that the same discrimination in the textbooks is apparently there but girls excel in English and typing? It is something that doesn't hold water when you ask the question. There are a lot of courses coming out and women's studies which promote all these Women's Lib., lesbian, homosexual, abortion type of thing. In the A.C.T. there were some good reasons given why they shouldn't be accredited. I think it should be recorded because it would be relevant here. Some of the reasons were because the course promotes attitudinal change and is not a serious academic study. It doubts about the assessment instruments. It says they are too superficial. It says that the topic should be examined from more than one angle, making it seem that there is a debate that there is more than one angle, and should not act on the assumption that there is sexism in our society. It says that the course is politically oriented. There are lots of Marxist things related to it here. We would like to make some points. We feel in equal opportunity there are areas where girls are disadvantaged and boys are disadvantaged. There is in fact a four to one figure on the boys needing remedial help - four more boys than girls throughout Australia. That has been borne out here, too.

THE CHAIRMAN: To what extent do you think your feeling in relation to this whole matter is shared by Queensland women?

MRS. BUTLER: I think Queensland women on the whole would be terribly concerned if they knew, but I feel most Queenslanders and Australians don't realise that this is going on and this type of thing is being brought into the schools from official teachers and teacher bodies. We would ask three things. We would ask for the anti-sexist theories and material to be assessed for honesty and relevance to the cause of real equal opportunity in schools. We would recommend that Bet Francis's minority report on equal opportunity in schools, which is obtainable from the Premier's Department in Victoria, be studied to obtain a balance of argument advanced by the anti-sexist supporters. We would also recommend that instead of attempting to eliminate all role models as sexist, the models should be improved and the difference between the sexes recognised and appreciated for their value in complementing each other. I think this is terribly important. I think that the status of women in the careers that they traditionally choose must be elevated to be equal with the status of men in

the careers they choose. I think you will find a lot more women happy to stay home and to become involved in this area if the status is returned to their roles.

MR. MILLER: Is there any evidence that boys or girls are deliberately prevented from entering a course purely on the ground of sex?

MRS. BUTLER: I would think not. Home motivation - I think probably there could be something there.

MR. HEWITT: Do girls have access to manual art courses these days?

MRS. BUTLER: Yes.

MRS. BARTLETT: It depends a bit on the school and the availability of resources really. Certainly the trend is there for girls to be able to do manual arts, and also for the boys to be able to do the parenting course or whatever - home economics. Some private schools at this stage through lack of finance are not able to implement these programmes. I think also from the point of view of maths availability for girls, this is something that is very important, and from our information some of the private schools in areas where they have lesser funds and a small number of pupils attending - they could be more inclined to provide in a boys' school a maths teacher for the higher maths subjects than in a girls' school, because there would be less demand for it. It boils down largely to a matter of finance rather than deliberate refusal to provide the opportunity to women. We feel that there is a general recognition that girls should have the same opportunity in the school area as boys. It is undoubtedly also true that the girls don't have the same motivation. I think a lot of this can go back to the families and to the girl's own attitude, and possibly to a lack of student counselling for girls - lack of realisation of the changed role of women in society and the increasing need today for girls to have a career.

This is because of the increased instability of marriage under the new law. I believe this realisation has not filtered through to a lot of girls, to their parents or to the schools. It is important that it should.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Alliance's submission goes into many other areas. Perhaps we should go into those now.

MR. POWELL: In the submission compiled by Ann McInnes reference is made to parent responsibilities and rights. I think you were present this morning when another submission was made about the values clarification argument. We have had many submissions about that. One of the statements you make is that parents bear the responsibility for the socialising of the child and must carry the emotional burden of any failure. Does that mean that you or the organisation is arguing against values clarification within the schools.

MRS. McINNES: No, but I think it must be undertaken with some recognition that there are varying cultures within Australia - not a great variation. The problem lies really in the matter of communication between parents and children. I have emphasised this later and elaborated on it - that with the rather rigid peer grouping that the school takes as administratively convenient it does cause a communications gap between parents and children, especially as schooling has extended further and further into puberty. There is your problem time. If a gap is created by a course within a school then the parents of children who drop out or can no longer communicate or explain or talk to them carry the burden of the children's mistakes. I would not blame any school at all for this but it has to be recognised as a factor in education. As education has increased childhood has extended; we have a long, long childhood now and the communications problem is one that will continue.

MR. POWELL: In the second paragraph on page 1, and again in the second paragraph on page 3, you talk about present assessment procedures in the schools. I wonder if you would like to elaborate on your ideas of the way that the present assessment procedures influence the student's self-esteem more than the past methods where the emphasis was always on a pass/fail situation.

MRS. McINNES: Again, I would point out the extended education; all children now want a high school education or their parents want a high school education for them. The emphasis in the high school is on the abstract. Most children are practical. Therefore, 25 per cent are going to cope very well with their high school education. The rest, no, they don't cope. I want to put another point. In a catechist's class that my mother took, she asked, "Why don't you help each other?" She was told, "Oh, we can't do that. If I help him he might get up above me." Those children know that tool; they know who is on the top bit. I think it has divided the teachers from the children because when I had a high school education we fought the examiner together. I feel that the normality curve is being misused. I have a great deal of affection for my little boys I taught in Grade 1 and also for the little boys I taught in opportunity school. I feel that that curve should be helping us to realise that there are different rates in learning and different ways in which we learn, and different children will learn in a practical situation and enjoy it, while others will enjoy a manipulation of abstracts; they will find great pleasure in it; you do not have to motivate them; they teach themselves; you hand them the books and away they go. Others need to know why. The other point is that I think maturation for boys needs to be

examined. I think too many boys are failing. I, having taught them to read, feel that they were too young; that they should not have started. I have had correspondence with a girl who is in a deprived area in Scotland who keeps her children for 12 months before she lets them undertake any formal education.

MR. HEWITT: You lament the impact of T.V. on our young people, the amount of time they spend looking at it and the influence it wields upon their judgments and actions. Television is a fact of life. We are not going to curtail it or reduce the number of hours that it is available. We probably will not exercise many censorship rights. So we have to come to terms with it. It has been proposed in some schools that there be media appreciation courses so that we develop in the children a greater sense of criticism, a greater sense of appreciation; so that they will develop skills to accept some programmes and reject others, to determine what is quality and what is absolute rubbish. Do you feel this is a worthwhile thrust? Would you support it? Would you encourage it?

MRS. BARTLETT: Yes, I would indeed. I think that children should learn to evaluate T.V. critically; ideally, I guess, at home. But this often does not happen because they are seated for long hours alone in front of the T.V. It would be great if it could be fitted within the school schedule. The only problem is that I am a bit concerned that more and more of the things that ought to be done by families are tending to be off-loaded on to the schools. On the other hand, I see a great deal of value in it, and having done a media course myself, I know that it gives an insight into the way that documentary programmes are made, or magazine-type programmes on radio, where a definite line has to be taken, with the theme set to a particular programme. It gives you an appreciation of the fact that usually these programmes are only one person's viewpoint on a political situation or something like that. If you realise what goes into the making of these programmes it assists you to be more critical. I see the difficulty, though, of the cost factor, if you are going to set up, as some of the schools have, a video machine for the children to use to make their own films. Maybe that is carrying it a little far. I think an appreciation of the power of the media is excellent.

THE CHAIRMAN: May I indicate to you by way of interest that when we appeared in Toowoomba the young students at the Toowoomba State High School recorded our full hearings on their own television programme; they produced it during the course of the discussion.

MR. HEWITT: Have you ever studied the role of the senior mistress in a high school? Is there a necessity to retain it? Does she relate particularly to girls? If so, is her position itself a sexist one? And, could the argument that we heard in North Queensland that it should be abolished be sustained?

MRS. BARTLETT: Do they have a senior mistress as well as a senior master? Is that the idea?

MR. HEWITT: There is a special position in high schools called "Senior mistress".

MRS. McINNES: I can see that it could have a sensible, practical role; there are all sorts of practical details that she may have to undertake.

MRS. BARTLETT: I think the question was was it sexist; I think it would be sexist because it is discriminating.

MR. HEWITT: It was argued in North Queensland that it is

sexist and for that reason it should be abolished.

MRS. BUTLER: I think it is helping women to possibly attain a senior role that they may not get in competition with the men. So, although it could be considered sexist by their interpretation I think it might be advantageous for the women to have a senior position to have some influence.

MR. HEWITT: I do not think it was criticised in that role; it was criticised in that it was a special position created to cater for one sex in a high school.

MRS. BARTLETT: Which a man can't hold; I see.

MRS. BUTLER: But the women would want that; they would not want the other.

MRS. BARTLETT: My personal opinion would be that it should be abolished. I would say that if we are pushing for equal opportunities for the women for promotion within the teaching profession it should be open to all teachers whether they are male or female unless there was some extremely burning reason why you should have a female one - for some particular situation that happened to be there.

I was not even aware that there was a special one.

THE CHAIRMAN: It was not covered in the submission. Perhaps you would like to study it a little more, particularly in relation to the role of the senior mistress and the reasons for that appointment.

MRS. BARTLETT: Yes, it would be interesting to see why it was introduced.

THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps it might be as well if you looked into it and let us know.

MRS. BARTLETT: Yes.

MR. MILLER: On page 7 of your submission JL-570 you suggest that there has been a decline in the quality of entrance to teaching. Are you referring to academic qualifications only or moral standards also?

MRS. BARTLETT: We were thinking there of academic qualifications. We were saying that when there was a shortage of teachers practically anyone who wanted to become a teacher was accepted. Is that the part you are referring to?

MR. MILLER: I have it marked on page 7.

MRS. BARTLETT: I do not think we were considering moral standards.

MR. MILLER: You were talking about teacher education.

MRS. BARTLETT: I think we would be prepared to put forward the suggestion that -----

MR. MILLER: If I may interrupt for a moment, you say in the first paragraph that the availability of attractive jobs has the inevitable result of lowering entrance standards for teacher training. That is in the first paragraph on page 7. It may have started on page 6. You were talking about a lowering of entrance standards. I am wondering if you are referring purely to academic standards or moral standards also.

MRS. BARTLETT: We would have been thinking only along academic lines. Now that this subject has been opened up, I would like to say that we are very aware of the conflicting philosophies that obviously are a problem within society as seen by the setting up of this inquiry. One structure has guide-lines such as a sense of discipline and rules and the other is free-flowing and leaves it to the individuals to set their own values. As an organisation, we are concerned at some of the products of the philosophy that does not have a strong rule base. I refer to the free-flowing one. I would submit on the evidence that we have seen that the philosophy that is influencing a lot of young people coming from teachers' colleges is the free-flowing one - set your own rules and be reluctant to accept authority or set standards. That would concern us.

MR. POWELL: Would you argue that selectees for teacher-training should be selected on academic as well as other criteria, or just on academic criteria?

MRS. BARTLETT: Personally I would think academic must be the main criteria. Probably it is more the atmosphere that prevails in the colleges themselves and the philosophy of education that is coming through from the department.

MRS. BUTLER: Kindergarten teachers are selected on more than just academic criteria and I feel that this should come into the selection of all teachers. They have children for many years under their care and I think their standard of dress, behaviour, manners, even morals should come into it. I think this is so important because they are the role models for the children. I feel these things are just as important for teachers in schools and they should be the same as for kindergarten teachers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing before us and, in particular, thank you for the comprehensive nature of your submissions. They are deeply appreciated. Thank you, Mrs. Butler, for travelling all the way down here through the elements. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your members.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite Professor Jack Campbell to appear before the Committee.

WILLIAM JOHN CAMPBELL, examined:

THE CHAIRMAN: I am pleased to welcome Professor Jack Campbell today. He has been very helpful in providing some background information to us and when I was preparing the programme of hearings - to my horror, this has been left pretty much to me - I noted that we were not, in all probability, to hear from Professor Campbell. I had expected that he would probably be presenting the submission from the Education Department of the university. When it was subsequently found that that was not to be the case, I felt that the Committee would want to have him appear to talk with him about the review of the Radford scheme which he and his colleagues undertook. They are looking at the secondary schools assessment scheme in detail. We will be talking further with the Board of Secondary School Studies about it.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: I thought this might be an opportunity to talk to you, a distinguished professor, about Radford and secondary school assessment generally and I am happy that you have accepted my invitation to appear?-- Thank you.

Did you have an input into the Scott inquiry?-- No, I did not. I read it in its draft form and made a number of comments on it but I made no contribution to it.

Do you mind responding to questions about it?-- Fine.

It is the most contemporary of the assessments that have been made and the one that we will have to look at in detail. How do you feel about the change to competency-based assessment?-- I think that in general it is a good thing and I can understand the starting off with a normative assessment scheme where you relate student to student. When the scheme was introduced I think the teachers were not as sophisticated as they are now on the issue of assessment. I think eventually one would hope to go to a better criterion than simply one's relationship to other children. I think that you yourselves have probably felt this with respect to basic achievements and the like. It is one thing to know that this is the best person out of a group. It's quite another, and more important, I think, thing to know precisely what that person can achieve or master. The competency-based assessment is aimed at that. It is trying to get an outside standard of some kind against which to relate performance rather than simply relating it to others who are taking the test. I think it is a difficult exercise to draw up the criteria. This is where I think educationists would need the help of everyone, including lay people, of course, in the society. They would need help in determining the main achievements we want in our young people.

How are we going to do that without redrawing all our secondary school syllabuses and prescribing them rather heavily?-- I do not think that would be required in it. Even on today's syllabuses, I think it would be possible to relate the achievements of an individual pupil to the other standards. I think the big problem is identifying the standards that we think are appropriate for students of particular age groups to achieve. I think it would be possible to take the present curricula and look at them. I think the society would contribute an input that might lead to different emphases.

To me, it is a more meaningful relationship that is established than simply a relationship with other States or a relationship with the past or a relationship with other students. But what our employers and other people in society want to know is precisely what can the students do, and it is one thing to know that this is the best student out of the whole bunch and gets a rating of 7, but as the employers have found out, this does not tell them a great deal about what that student can in fact do.

Why don't we prescribe a bit more content? We have found an in-put from a number of teachers who say, "For heaven's sake, tell us what you want. We do not feel adequate to develop all of our curriculum materials. We think it is wasteful to be duplicating all of this excellent effort throughout the State. Why shouldn't a certain amount - say 50 per cent - of some subjects such as maths which are fairly basic and well determined be invariable place to place and help a lot of teachers out rather than develop all of that stuff in various schools?"?-- I think the basic problem is that, as a society, there has not been a tremendously strong partnership between the professionals and the other people. I would accept the view that it is the responsibility of society to provide the broad guide-lines on what ought to be achieved and that this ought not to be left to the professionals. It is a fact of life that our society has not been involved in a strong partnership of that kind. Somehow or other we have to marshall the forces and wisdom that exist among a wide range of people and get them thinking very critically about education and that they are involved in it to a very large extent, and not leave it to the professionals. The fact that it has been left to the professionals has meant that the professionals have been faced with a tremendously difficult task, and without a very clear reference point from the society on the direction in which they should be going. In that kind of situation, I suppose it has been tempting to look elsewhere for curricula that have been accepted.

I think perhaps you have been speaking at a higher level than that on which I was seeking a response. At the level of the development of a curriculum design for senior maths, to bring it right down to basics, surely part of it could be prescribed in relation to content that would be uniform throughout the State and save a lot of people a lot of trouble?-- I can understand that. I do not see any conflict there, though. I would not want to maintain, and I do not think many educationists would, that the curricula should be school based. If the cirricula were to be school based, then you would have each school, perhaps, doing its own thing with respect to some subjects in the curriculum, as you have mentioned.

BY MR. MILLER: How about regional based?-- Well, I do not know if that is much advantage. I would really be in favour of a two-tiered structure, one of which is at a State level. I think this would fit in with what the chairman is saying. I would be very happy to see established a widely representative State committee which would determine the broad guide-lines and the broad nature of the content.

Represented by whom?-- To have representatives of all aspects of society, including professionals, but not dominated of course by professionals; all sections of the community, including parliamentarians and others.

Unions, employers?-- Yes; I think as widely representative as possible at this State level. They should determine the guide-lines and should have access to a wide range of views. As parliamentarians, of course, you do. Other people have perhaps a deeper knowledge of particular sections. We need those people putting an in-put at the top level. It would include, of course,

parents as well. If that were done, and if broad guide-lines on the direction that education should be taking and the kind of content that should be taken, I can see that one could go from that to perhaps regional level or perhaps even to school level.

Is it possible for such a complex matter as the Radford scheme to be satisfactorily understood by the community at large?-- I think it is. I do not think it is that complex.

BY MR. HEWITT: Do you think it presently is well understood, or could be?-- I do not think it is. I think it could be. It does not seem to me to be that complex.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: What about the computation of T.E. scores? How would you explain that to a group of parents?-- I can see that as an extremely difficult one. It has controversial elements within it, I think. I am sure this Committee knows some.

BY MR. POWELL: You made an investigation of the Radford system some time ago. If you did it now, do you think the extra experience of schools in handling Radford would have resulted in a different report from the one you gave?-- It is hard to guess on that one. It is true that the teachers have become much more sophisticated. They have developed professionally tremendously over the period of the Radford scheme, and the demand that they do determine their own assessments has led to this development. There has been a tremendous professional development in the teaching force as a consequence of the Radford scheme. Inevitably, with that professional development, some of the places where the shoe was pinching have been looked at. I am not sure what differences one would find with respect to the students. I think most of us would think that this is the critical area. What in fact are the students achieving in a variety of aspects of growth, including attainment. So I would think there would be further professional growth of the teachers and that that growth has brought them to a point where they can move on to even more challenging tasks than the kind in the Scott Report. I think the movement from the simple assessment on a normative basis to the competency criterion assessment is a very difficult task, but I think that the teachers are approaching the stage where they can achieve that. I think also that the movement away from assessment on to accreditation of courses, the growth within the teaching force has brought them to a point when they can face that challenge now.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think that Radford has been in long enough that we should make a detailed assessment of it in terms of perhaps a universal competency reference test to sample it and put it up against the internal assessment results? That is one of the recommendations on page 50 of the Scott Report. It seems to me that it might be useful to have a general look at it and compare it, for the purposes of the community, against results which we have been achieving in secondary internal assessment?-- Yes. I think there is a problem in being able to identify the effects of Radford, per se, as against the broader aspects of secondary education. By now, the Radford scheme is just part of secondary education within Queensland. It would be possible to look at what we were achieving in secondary education. But it would be a very tricky process of trying to relate this to specific aspects of the Radford scheme.

We are quantifying outcomes and in the past the community looked at two things. They looked at exams or Radford. A lot of people are nervous about the outcome of Radford and are suggesting that we ought to go back to the simplicity of exams in their broad assessment. Perhaps it might be a good idea to put the reference test, which is something like a universal exam, against Radford and compare the outcome?--

I do not think the comparison would be a very helpful one. I suppose the problem is that we have not got good pre-Radford data against which to relate the achievements of the Radford scheme. It is a good idea to periodically do a survey of achievements, once we have the competency assessments in. But these competency ones are fairly different from the old public examinations; they are much more specific. Employers, for example, will want their students at Grade 10 to be able to spell at this level of proficiency or something or other. These are very specific criteria.

BY MR. HEWITT: Have you any comments on the problem of transition from primary to secondary school?-- There are very real difficulties here. One of the studies I am involved with is looking precisely at them. Over the past few years the State department has moved towards a number of innovations which are going to be helpful. One is concerned with the year 8 centres, where you get a co-ordinated programme within the school. This is going to help the adjustment of the students from primary school. One of the implications within the school system is that the structure as the youngsters grow tends to tighten, the extent to which youngsters are able to determine their own learning and progress tends to be reduced as they increase in maturity. During the primary school years you have greater freedom in learning than at secondary school. Once they move from their eighth year through to their twelfth year you have this same phenomenon of the structure tending to close in about the students rather than growing with them.

BY MR. MILLER: Should there be reference tests in primary schools in the English and maths areas, tests given at random, as they are in secondary schools?-- I would be in favour of withholding assessment and the like for as long as possible, and I think that to introduce a lot of examinations and tests at primary school level, if introduced in a formal kind of way, could be harmful. There ought to be sensitive and informal evaluation going on all the time and we need very perceptive and sensitive teachers doing this.

Would it give goals to teachers?--I do not think it does. It has a harmful effect upon the students who are up for testing and I think it disdourages them from what I would regard as good teaching, namely, where the evaluation is part of the teaching act and in the course of the pupil learning and in the course of the teacher teaching some evaluation ought to be going on all the time. I would put greater faith in that kind of evaluation than the formal testing.

BY MR. POWELL: We seem to be dwelling a lot on assessment procedures, but they interest us. Can you give us any idea of what the assessment procedures are in other countries?-- They vary considerably. In New Zealand, which is closest to us in many ways, they have a system of accreditation of schools. You are well aware that the Scott report suggests the accreditation of courses with some monitoring. In the New Zealand system they have the accreditation of schools with some monitoring. There are liaison officers between the schools and the employers and between the schools and the tertiary institutions. I would have thought that was a useful addition to the Scott proposals, namely, that for a number of reasons, including monitoring accreditation, there should be liaison officers who work with employers and feed back information

on what the employers think of the students and who work with the tertiary institutions and feed back reports to the schools on those. It would be a monitoring kind of exercise as well as a good public relations exercise. In other countries you get variations between the public examinations which are not as common as some variations on this.

Is there a public examination system in the United Kingdom?--Yes, a number of systems operate there. One is very like the Radford scheme, but they also have their public examination systems.

What about Canada?-- I am not 100 per cent sure of this, but my understanding is that they have public examinations. In the American situation there are great variations from very often standardised tests.

It varies from State to State?--Yes.

BY MR. HEWITT: We are told that in the subject that may be termed the humanities emphasis is placed on interpretation at the expense of fact. Have you noticed this, and would you comment on it?--I have not noticed it, but I would accept the point that it is very difficult to interpret before you have mastered the facts. These two must go hand in hand. I would not like to see humanities stopping simply at the mastery of facts. It is very difficult to undertake an interpretative exercise if you have no real grasp of the facts.

BY MR. POWELL: Again on assessments - do you think it might be worth while having entrance examinations from grade level to grade level in the schools?-- I wouldn't think that this is right. I am very conscious of the harmful effects of examinations upon both achievement and motivation of students. One can motivate students, and ought to be motivating students, in ways other than the imposition of an examination. Many of our teachers are doing just that; they are motivating them in other ways. The presence of an examination from grade to grade interferes with what I would regard as stronger educational motivation.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Going into another area - we have had some criticism of one of the surveys that you undertook and reported on, in relation to teacher attitudes. Do you recall the one I am referring to - teacher attitudes towards education in Queensland?-- Yes. It might be the national study that I have done on morale and satisfaction.

That is the one. The allegations made by a number of teachers in submissions to the Committee are that that suffered from the fact that it was carried out vicariously by people who were not as involved in the system as they should have been and that if it had been carried out by people who were closer to the problem it might have come up with a very different result. Would you like to comment on that?-- In all of these studies I am simply reporting on what the people who are close to the work base are saying. This is true of the Radford one. I am simply a transducer, as it were. In that study we took a very large sample of teachers from each of the six States and they completed a questionnaire indicating their perception of the teaching task and the strains and stresses that they encountered. I then interviewed them around a table in school groups and in each school 10 teachers had been chosen at random. The data presented are the data from the teachers themselves. It is not a question of my going to the schools and writing my impressions of their levels of satisfaction. The criticism would have to be

levelled at how accurately the teachers report on how they feel. My belief is that when teachers around a table, as we are now, talk and check on one another they do report accurately on how they feel and how they experience teaching. I do not think anyone else can do it better than they. If somebody were going to report on how I like my job I would rather do the reporting than have someone give me a test of some kind and make some judgment. So the data come from the teachers themselves.

BY MR. MILLER: Do you think teachers are now using a criteria basis for their norm evaluation? For instance, most teachers say they can tell a four, five, six or seven standard by the quality of the paper rather than try to use the norm evaluation in its strictest sense?-- If that is true then I think they are, and this is linked to what I said before, namely that I think the teachers are becoming professionally very competent in this area and are themselves making this movement. It is sort of an evolutionary movement that is occurring, and as I understand it then, the Scott report is capitalising on this evolutionary movement which is already occurring. I am very impressed by the growth in sophistication, sensitivity and competence of the teachers.

BY MR. HEWITT: What liaison is there between teacher training agencies and employing bodies on the topic of teacher pre-service training?-- I think that this liaison would be minimal and informal. In the case of our own pre-service training programme there would be no formal liaison. The people involved in teacher education are conscious of the need to prepare people who can do and achieve well within the schools, and as a consequence there is a large amount of informal liaison there, that the teacher educators move into the schools and talk with the teachers and the principals and they talk with the State Education Department and the like, and vice versa, that the State Education officials would visit and speak with our students on several occasions during the year, and principals do as well. But it is a very informal liaison.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Is there something you would like to say to us that we have not asked you about? Is there any burning issue you wish to comment on?-- No. Thank you for the opportunity but I do not really have anything.

I would like to thank you very much for responding to my invitation to be here. During our deliberations I have endeavoured to bring about a balance in the information coming before us and I hope that the record will show that the balance is there at the end of our deliberation. I feel that one of the things we are doing as a committee that will be of immense value to people within the education system at the end will be the bank of information that we have compiled both by way of submission and in the official record. So I thank you very much for being with us today?-- Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now welcome Mr. Gilbert Case, the Chairman of the English Advisory Committee of the Board of Secondary School Studies and Mr. Glen Davies, a member of the advisory committee representing the Board of Teacher Education on that committee. The submission has been received and studied by members and is coded Au-149. Am I to recognise the fact that Mr. Case is to take up the position soon to be vacated by our distinguished adviser, Mr. Krebs?

MR. CASE: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have, as I said, received your submissions and perhaps I could indicate to you a general concern that has been expressed to us through the submissions we have received that the good old English is not being taught in the secondary schools today - the Shakespeare, the classics - and is being displaced almost to the totality of the modern plays, literature, and so on. How do you respond to that?

MR. CASE: I certainly do not agree with the allegation, and it is certainly not the impression I have looking at programmes in the schools I know well and in the schools I meet at moderation meetings, for example, the schools in North Brisbane. At the same time, Shakespeare, Keats, Wordsworth and these people continue to be studied but it is obviously true that there has been a much greater input of modern material. I do not think this has been at the expense of any valuable material from what might be regarded as the classics. I think it is the case that students are reading much more widely. I think that eight or nine years ago Senior students would have concentrated on two or three major novels and read six or seven other novels as part of their general reading. Many schools today would find their students were studying in some depth, three, four or five novels a semester. There would be some schools where fewer than that were being studied, but I think the important thing over years 11 and 12 is that most English subject masters seem to keep in mind providing the students with a balance of all the literature which is still easily and reasonably understandable to the modern student, written since about 1550, that will enable him to cope both with the classics and with modern literature.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you aware that in some school situations the balance has so shifted that there are no classics at all being prescribed - none?

MR. CASE: It would not be possible, for example, for a school to present a programme for the Board of Secondary School Studies which ignored Shakespeare completely in years 11 and 12. That simply would not be possible. It would not be possible for a school to present a programme and have it approved that did not include at least one novel, I grant rather loosely described, as a classic. I suppose the definition of "classic" is something that might be debated. But these are still requirements for year 12 students.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that laid down in the syllabus?

MR. CASE: Yes, that is laid down in the syllabus.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the recommended reading list?

MR. CASE: There are no recommended reading lists on behalf of the Board of Secondary School Studies. These are matters for selection by the employing authorities and the people to whom the employing authorities delegate that power, for example, the principals of State schools, the principals,

obviously, in dependent schools, and so on.

THE CHAIRMAN: So the Department of Education does not lay anything down?

MR. CASE: I would not know what the Department of Education lays down. The Board of Secondary School Studies doesn't.

THE CHAIRMAN: Don't you think perhaps they should? What I am getting at is that in North Queensland we had a high school English teacher appearing before us. He gave us his list of recommended reading and there was nothing that had been written more than a fortnight.

MR. DAVIES: I think we can always have individual cases like that occurring and there is, as Mr. Case points out, an infringement of the syllabus if this is occurring at the Grade 12 level. But for those individual cases on that side of the argument one can also present an individual case on the other side of the argument. I was informed that at a North Queensland high school where the population is largely Aboriginal that students were sent to study "Macbeth"and "Vanity Fair". In this particular school, of course,it was virtually impossible with the cultural background that those students had for them to come anywhere near those particular works. I think they are important but I do not really think we ought to divorce the setting of literature to be studied in schools from the social and cultural backgrounds of those students who are to study them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Don't you think that to overcome this community concern, which is reasonably significant, that perhaps some statement of emphasis or goals ought to be laid down by your committee to draw people's attention to this community criticism so that this question will not be left entirely to the discretion of teachers whom they say, "Well, I don't believe in Shakespeare as being relevant at all to this situation. Therefore my recommended reading list will rely on what I think they will read."?

MR. CASE: I think there are several answers to that. Firstly it is stated in the syllabus the kind of guide-line you are asking for requiring students to read a range of material as stated in the syllabus. If you have the document we appended to our submission, on page 17, for example, in the commentary to goals 6, 7 and 8 ----

THE CHAIRMAN: We have not had a lot of time to look at these. Is it page 17 of this one?

MR. DAVIES: There are two booklets. One is an assessment of the syllabus and the other is the syllabus document itself. We are referring to the syllabus document itself. On the left-hand side you will see goals 6, 7 and 8 and on the right a commentary attached to those goals.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you underline the section that would prescribe ----

MR. DAVIES: Goal 8, for example. It is a directive in the syllabus. It is a goal that has to be achieved. It suggests that the student develops understanding of our literary and cultural heritage and gains some acquaintance with other literatures and cultures. If you look at the statement which is attached to goals 6, 7 and 8 you will see that it, too, indicates that there is a necessity for understanding through first-hand experience that kind of literary material which belongs solidly in the Australian literary heritage. One would expect, therefore that teachers in pursuit of this goal would set works such as the ones you have mentioned and, of course, works by people like Henry Lawson, Banjo Paterson and the Australian novelist Sir Henry Handel Richardson.

THE CHAIRMAN: How do you react to the statement that some teachers reading that would say that the wording of it is a little abstruse and would allow them freedom to do whatever they like, and really to make up their own mind? Do you really think that Shakespeare is written there on pages 16 and 17?

MR. CASE: No, it is written on page 15. The specific drama thing is on page 15 in the right-hand column in the middle paragraph. You will see that Shakespeare is specifically mentioned and is to be included. The syllabus is supported by a number of other documents - guide-line statements - most of which we are in the process of reviving. It is important to realise that this is not a decision for the individual teacher. It is a decision which is the responsibility of the principal as the school moderator, advised by the district moderation meeting, with the channel of communication running back to the chief moderators and those who are responsible - although we cannot use the word "accrediting" yet - approving the courses which are being studied in schools. It is not a decision that the individual teacher can make and say, "I am going to ignore that part of the syllabus."

THE CHAIRMAN: I have conveyed to you an area of community concern that has been expressed to us. How do you think you should react to that? Is this something which has been brought to your attention before? Do you think any response is required, or are we doing it all right?

MR. CASE: I think it is always difficult to know just how well the community understands what is going on. I would think that general educational public relations is perhaps something which is undeveloped in all parts of Australia.

At the same time there was an incident which may have been referred to your Committee. At the end of last year a teacher wrote to the Minister in the first instance complaining - I think his example was that Keats was no longer being studied. The immediate reaction of the syllabus committee was surprised that anybody should draw the conclusion from the syllabus that Keats was banned or likely to fall into disuse because of the introduction of the syllabus, and it was surprised secondly that anyone had noticed the fact that such authors were not being studied, because it was the committee's impression that such authors are still being studied in great detail.

THE CHAIRMAN: Were you aware of Judith Wright's recent criticism of the teaching of peotry in schools? Do you think she dealt with the situation objectively? Is it being promoted as an art today or is it being dealt with adequately?

MR. DAVIES: My view is that she is right. Whilst it is possible to take poetry as something that can be dissected and analysed - and has been done by countless thousands of teachers in that way in the past - it is very much more difficult to have children actually write poetry themselves or to appreciate the kind of work that goes into the creation of a poem by a poet whose task is a professional one, and who is devoted to that task. What Judith Wright was really saying is that poetry is an art, and it requires the devotion of an artist to be achieved. Another thing that she is right about is the notion that a poem is not expressable in any other way. You cannot take a poem, extract its meaning, paraphrase that meaning, and think you have the same thing. What you have in fact is a statement about the poem then, but it no longer is the poem. It would seem to me that the syllabus encourages teachers to do the kind of work with children that at their own level encourages them to write their own poetry, appropriate to their own circumstances, using their own experience and working in the ways poets work by playing with words, seeing how they can be shaped, seeing how they can be given a structure that is appropriate to the notion that is being expressed. The syllabus encourages this because it encourages the use of a large variety of language experiences, of which poetry writing is one. What Judith Wright was really commenting on has now, I think, by this syllabus been superceded. We won't see that kind of approach to poetry the only approach in future.

MR. MILLER: Would you turn to the second paragraph on page 4. Is there any evidence that learning spelling lists, grammar, etc., would inhibit language growth?

MR. CASE: The only evidence of which I am aware in a sense of research study was conducted by Graham Little in New South Wales, who rather surveyed the development of student writing over a time. I am afraid I cannot give you the reference. I think it was about four or five years ago now. He found that the spelling and the grammar improved more in students that did not have specific lessons devoted to those topics, but where the spelling and the grammar they learnt arose out of their writing and teacher discussion of their writing with them, those students improved more than the students who had specific lessons and specific lists to learn, and specific rules to learn.

MR. MILLER: You don't think the two concepts would reinforce one another?

MR. CASE: The evidence is that they don't. In one of the appendices we have listed some grammar study. The evidence is

pretty conclusive and pretty universal that that kind of transference does not occur.

MR. MILLER: In the third paragraph on the same page are you suggesting that we should throw out the baby with the bath water? Surely some of the past methods were good. Are you suggesting we throw out all the past methods?

MR. CASE: I think that what we are looking at at the moment is a situation in which a teacher is free to use any method he finds effective to improve. What we are on about is the improving of the student's ability in the skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. We do know - the research evidence backs this up - that some methods work better than others. Factors such as motivation, the student using the schools in real-life situations, are much more important and much more likely to bring quick success than the learning, say, of spelling lists. I don't think there is any danger of our throwing the baby out with the bath water.

MR. HEWITT: What about the use of roots, which I understand has now been abandoned? I only relate to my own experience. I enjoyed learning roots and acquired a great love of words. All through my life I have been able to appreciate words that I might be coming across for the first time because of that basic understanding of roots. I can only say that from personal experience they have been an enormous help to me in the appreciation of words. Why was it found necessary to abandon roots?

MR. CASE: I don't think anyone has abandoned them. There is a list in the primary English syllabus. I do not know it very well because I am a secondary teacher only. There is a list in the primary English syllabus of roots which are thought useful and convenient to teach to students in Grades 6 and 7. I do think to a certain extent some of us who enjoyed that sort of lesson are the sort of people who would have enjoyed any lesson in words because we were interested in that sort of thing. To a large extent I think the student who finds it difficult to cope with vocabulary finds it difficult to cope with roots, too. So it is a sort of added bonus for the good student rather than an integral part of all students' learning of language. It is there in the primary syllabus.

THE CHAIRMAN: How do you feel that controversial materials in schools should be handled? Do you see any role for yourself or the Board of Secondary School Studies in responding to community concern in this area? We have had lots of input from people in this context. A lady sent a play to us which was performed at the Gatton State High School. It was called "Zigger Zagger" and concerned a star football player. I understand that it was performed.

MR. CASE: There is a play called "Zigger Zagger" by Peter Terson.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is part of it -

"She was only a virgin football fan,
It was a blooming shame,
She fell in love with a football man,
No one could her blame.
She was only a virgin football fan,
The ref took the coin and tossed it.
She lay by the side of a football man,
And her maidenhead, she lost it".

Is that sort of thing suitable for use in secondary schools or should we be responding to some parents' concern about their daughters playing in things like this?

MR. CASE: I think the point we have made in the submission is that there are a number of reasons why a text may be unsuitable. It will be unsuitable if it does not further the aims of the syllabus and it will be unsuitable, as we said at the top of page 8 of our submissions, if it does not develop the education of students in the community in which they live. When I taught in New South Wales that particular play was set as compulsory study for the school certificate, but it is not a play I have taught myself. I do not know it in detail.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think it should be set? What happens in New South Wales is not always relevant to Queensland, but do you think it should be set? It goes on and on.

MR. CASE: It all depends on how material is used. I could understand a teacher taking today's "Courier-Mail" and teaching objectionable lessons from it if he had a mind to. Quite sensitive material, properly handled, can in fact be a great educational benefit.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you really think so about this verse -

"The chairman is a puff,
The chairman is a puff,
Ee Aye addio
The chairman is a puff."

Is that really sensitive and necessary when there is so much other material?

MR. CASE: I don't know that play. Mr. Davies khows it a little better than I do.

MR. DAVIES: I was about to comment on an earlier question you asked about who should make the decision and in what circumstances should it be made. I am not speaking for the syllabus committee but for myself. My personal view is that the decision should be made by the school principal and the staff in consultation with the parents of that school, wherever there is a play such as the one you are referring to. And it should

be made after a good deal of discussion of the particular material that is to be chosen. I say that because I think that although you can choose to quote certain isolated passages from a play, those taken out of context are not really valid criticisms of the play. What you have to do, just as we were talking earlier about poetry, is to see the thing within its whole function. The whole function of that play is to explore, sensitively, the experience of a boy who is asked to join in a subculture and who is not at all sure that he wants to. At the end he decides not to. So if by putting in front of children that kind of experience we are able to show children that there are alternative values in society which they may not choose to adopt then maybe we are doing them a service.

THE CHAIRMAN: A sort of aversion therapy, you are talking about?

MR. DAVIES: I would not call it "aversion therapy" at all. I would call it a building on the understanding that the children have of their society as it already exists. Don't forget that children do join football clubs. I don't know if you are familiar with football clubs, but my experience of the kind of sports teams that I used to belong to 20 years ago was that there was a certain kind of language used in those clubs that I would not have used outside them. I think children will inevitably come up against this.

MR. MILLER: They seem to be using that language in the schools nowadays.

MR. DAVIES: I have not heard any evidence to suggest that they are using it.

MR. MILLER: Some of SEMP leaves little to be desired.

MR. DAVIES: I cannot comment on the SEMP material not being familiar with it.

MR. MILLER: The usual justification for some pornographic material is that it has great literary merit. Do you mean to say that we have to have this pornographic material because it is the only matter of literary merit available to us?

MR. DAVIES: I think you should look at the submission in that regard. You will see that we are certainly not saying that.

MR. MILLER: I do not say that you are saying that, but this is what is said usually by people in education.

MR. DAVIES: With due respect, I do not think that it is.

MR. MILLER: Don't you?

MR. DAVIES: Not by those to whom I talk.

MR. MILLER: Well, why do we use it?

MR. DAVIES: I think you will find that most people in education are very concerned - as concerned as the rest of us are-about pornography. Its use in education is indefensible.

MR. HEWITT: I find a conflict in making a judgment on a thing like this. When I think of the problems of a black man in the United States, I think of James Baldwin who, I believe, has enunciated those problems very well indeed but, in the course of enunciating those problems, he has recourse to coarseness and sordid aspects of American society. One has to make a judgment

on just that in getting an insight into the problems of the black man in the United States. But the children also have to deal with the sordid side he deals with at great length, and in detail. I confess to some confusion in making a judgment.

MR. CASE: I think every teacher in recommending material to his principal faces the same sort of dilemma.

MR. HEWITT: Do you know Baldwin's work?

MR. DAVIES: Yes.

MR. CASE: I am afraid I do not, but there are books that I would use, for example, with a particular class that I have got to know that I would not dream of using with a class that is strange to me because I would not be able to predict satisfactorily how they would react to that material and my handling of it.

MR. DAVIES: I would think that James Baldwin's works are probably not very suitable for study at the secondary level, but at the tertiary level they are; it depends on the maturity of the student.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have underlined a point here. I am not trying to be devilish at all; I just want to evoke the guidelines you are using. You say that a text should be regarded as inappropriate for selection only when it detracts from the efficiency of the curriculum offered by the school in achieving the major aims of the syllabus. You made a judgment in relation to Baldwin. I am not familiar with his work. Why did you make that judgment in respect of Baldwin and not in relation to "Zigger Zagger"?

MR. DAVIES: Because the sort of work that Baldwin writes, and the kinds of environment from which children studying Baldwin are likely to come, do not match nearly as well as they do in the case of "Zigger Zagger". So a student in the Australian secondary school would be less capable of appreciating what Baldwin was saying and that would make the syllabus less efficient in its approach.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your response.

MR. MILLER: Would your committee opt for a higher standard in formal language to be used in schools?

MR. CASE: We believe, and I think we have argued in the submission, that the standard of language which students have now is higher than in the past. We admit that we do not see this as cause for complacency, but we believe that the syllabus which is now almost completed in implementation points the way, as the syllabus says, to the development of each student to the limit of his potential. I certainly feel that standards are higher than they were 10 or 20 years ago.

MR. MILLER: Would you condone the language used in SEMP?

MR. CASE: I am sorry, I don't know the SEMP materials at all well

MR. DAVIES: I find that very few English people have come in contact with them. They have been mainly in other areas -in social science areas.

THE CHAIRMAN: If we decided that we wanted to increase the standard of literacy in our community, what would we have to do?

MR. CASE: I think give support to teachers in terms of resources and advisory personnel. I have been very upset for a time that there has been one person in the Education Department - and this again is outside this submission - who has been an advisory teacher in English, and I understand that his appointment is being terminated at the end of the year and he is going back on strength at a school. I look at other States where there are large numbers of advisory teachers free to move around the State and offer advice and help. We have made some recommendations at the end about the fairly large proportion - we are told it is 22 per cent - of students in Queensland schools who do not come from homes where English is the first language. I think we need more programmes developed for them. I think we have suggested that one thing we would not like to see happen would be the re-introduction of an external examination because we believe that would have the opposite effect.

MR. MILLER: How can an English teacher be accountable for his responsibilities as a teacher?

THE CHAIRMAN: Following on the statement you made about examinations, a lot of the public see the examinations as an accountability test on teachers.

MR. CASE: I think so. I think it was said when Professor Campbell was here that it is an easy one because the public would then cease to worry.

They would have someone to blame who would be unidentifiable. I think the English teacher is responsible and accountable through improved performance of the children in his class. If the children in his class are not improving in their performance and the reasons cannot be found elsewhere, the English teacher has a great accountability problem. I do not think we solve anything by removing the accountability question from the day-to-day interaction between the teacher and his pupils. I do not think we ought to measure it day by day but the accountability comes in if after a time the teacher has not helped his pupils to develop their skills. That is where the accountability is, not when someone else tries to measure them against a different base.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think all the abuse of spelling that goes on today on television and in the advertising industry is worrying?

MR. DAVIES: I do not think there is so much of it as to cause particularly large spelling errors among children. Certainly we do see "night" spelt "nite" and so on.

THE CHAIRMAN: "Eggsky and Hutch"!

MR. CASE: Yes. One could become worried. As we came down we came past the driver's licence centre, the State Government centre beside Anzac Square, and I was interested to note that "licence" as a noun was spelt with an "s" on a large Neon sign at the front. Perhaps these things are not as important as some critics make them out to be.

MR. MILLER: Do you think they are?

MR. HEWITT: That is determining the difference between a noun and a verb.

MR. CASE: If we are worried about the student whose abilities are not great, obviously the less confusion he has to cope with the better. If we are talking about the student who learns language easily, he can most likely cope with a bit of confusion because after all English is a fairly confusing language at times.

THE CHAIRMAN: If we let it go we are going to have some rather massive evolution of our language in the next few years. Maybe we have had some already.

MR. DAVIES: We have already. We are having a tremendous expansion of vocabulary in the language at this very moment because of technology. I think we have to expect that language will change and that the teaching of the language will take account of those changes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not all at once, though.

MR. DAVIES: No, certainly not.

MR. CASE: In a period in English in which there was no fixed spelling but a lot of people were literate, say from 1600 to 1800, I do not think the absence of fixed spelling caused half the problems that many people fear the absence of fixed spelling would cause today.

THE CHAIRMAN: But there is, I suggest, a lot of community concern about it in submissions.

MR. DAVIES: That is perfectly understandable because

people have tended to place a very high value on the ability to spell. But really the task of the educated person is really so much greater than merely to spell. To express himself well and to be able to change his language to suit the context in which he is speaking are, I suggest, more important aims than merely the single ability to spell well. I think we have to continue to concentrate on spelling, certainly, but we must not let that be everything.

THE CHAIRMAN: A distinguished judge of the Supreme Court yesterday expressed alarm here about the standard of expression and spelling in his own profession. It has an interaction in other professions. I suggest that that might be something for us to worry about when that sort of evidence comes forward.

MR. CASE: Really there is no evidence that the spelling of the community as a whole is getting any worse. The evidence is that writing skills generally are improving. It may be that there is a wider range of people going into the Supreme Court and the legal profession and there is a wider ability band or something like that. But there is no evidence to suggest that spelling over all is declining.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing before us. I hope we might be able to continue our informal discussion over lunch. If you are able to join us, we would appreciate it. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your committee for the preparation of your case and we thank you for coming forward and presenting it.

The Committee adjourned at 1.6 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 2.15 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the Select Committee is reconvened. We are very pleased to welcome a most important group of people from the education department of the University of Queensland. A submission has been received by members and studied by them. It is coded J1-600.

Gentlemen, it is not necessary for you to go over the ground in the submission. Firstly I ask you to indicate your names and the positions you hold with the department of education?

DR. BOWKER: I am Dr. Eric Bowker. I am currently head of the department of education at the university. On my right is Dr. McCrae Grassie who, until yesterday, was the dean of the faculty of education. His term of office expired yesterday. His main area of interest is administration and in school climates generally. On my immediate left is Professor G. W. Bassett, professor of education in the department of education. He is both a nationally and internationally recognised authority on education. On my far left is Dr. Robert J. Andrews, who is the acting director of the Schonell Educational Research Centre, which is particularly concerned with the problems of special education.

MR. MILLER: Gentlemen, you make a special plea for the universities as against TAFE institutions. As money for education is limited, is it not proper to reallocate funds in different ways as needs change? I am particularly looking at America when I say that.

DR. BOWKER: I would not agree that we make a special case for the universities against the TAFE sector. We believe that they are equally important sectors. We take a longer view as well as a shorter-term view of the contribution which both sectors can make.

MR. MILLER: At the moment, TAFE seems to be the poorer member of the family?

DR. BOWKER: Yes, indeed, and we are by no way in opposition to TAFE. We think it is a very important sector of the tertiary education resources of the country.

MR. MILLER: Do you think there is a limit, out of any moneys available from Treasurers, to the amount of money spent in the field of education?

DR. BOWKER: There must necessarily be a limit always, according to the economic climate.

THE CHAIRMAN: In relation to the TAFE institution, I had marked down in relation to the technological displacement section on page 23 of the submission, in relation to leisure education, that perhaps may be we worry too much that we now have to educate for leisure-time. Everybody is going to be out of work. Perhaps we are over-reacting to this situation really when we had Dr. Botsman's study in relation to community attitudes to education, which indicated that 78 per cent of parents disagreed with the proposition that students are spending too much time on vocational preparation in school; 78 per cent; that is very significant.

DR. BOWKER: Sure.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to respond to that?

DR. BOWKER: Education for leisure is a necessary component but by no means the only component of an educational system. It may well be that we have to redefine what we mean by the working week and leisure time. It has been suggested that increasing technological innovation will mean up to 30 per cent unemployment in the next few years unless certain steps are taken. That is one figure that has been quoted. I believe we should not see a dichotomy between work on the one hand and leisure on the other; they should be more integrated.

THE CHAIRMAN: You can pick up a set of figures from anyone though, whether it be 30, 50 or 70 per cent. Predicting the future is very difficult.

PROF. BASSETT: Yes. The use of leisure in a constructive way is already a problem. It is not a new problem that will arise; it is an extension of an existing one. If you had to make a careful study of the way people spend their time you would become really dispirited, in my opinion, because so many people seem to regard time as something to be filled or used up. Very often they do not have the resources to use time constructively. But that is here now. Any impartial observation of Australian society will reveal that. That problem will increase.

MR. HEWITT: In one fell swoop when we made it easier for our public servants to retire at 60 instead of 65 years we substantially accelerated the problem, didn't we?

PROF. BASSETT: It creates a big problem.

MR. HEWITT: When you say the problem is here, that is undoubtedly true; it has been here for some time; but the immensity of the problem might be growing at a faster rate - if one could describe it as a problem. It is almost an incongruity, isn't it - leisure and a problem?

PROF. BASSETT: No, I do not think it is an incongruity.

MR. HEWITT: It is a problem of society to cater for people who are having more years in retirement. The proposition is this: while it has been with us for a long time, it is accelerating at possibly a faster rate than we imagine.

PROF. BASSETT: I agree with that. The implication is about the scope and spectrum of educational activity, what schools ought to be doing. It is about that all the time now, and it will be about it more in the future.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I follow up on the T.A.F.E. area beforewe move off it. On page 22 of your submission you say that the present concentration on T.A.F.E. will have a fairly short-term benefit to society as a whole. I recognise that you say that among other things. We have had submissions put to us that for every 100 professional people in occupation there are 80 in training and that for every 100 technicians in occupation there are 16 in training. Surely this is a serious problem that is emerging and one that the Committee should take note of, and it is not consistent with your statement.

DR. GRASSIE: I would have thought that for many years provision for technical education has been neglected and that the results of that are now beginning to show. It does seem to me that for some considerable time yet spending authorities will have this burden to catch up with. It did

seem to me many years ago in the Sputnik days and things like that that the calculations were that for every technologist you trained you needed five technicians or partly skilled workers. This was the kind of parameter you dealt with in planning technical education.

THE CHAIRMAN: The point I am trying to get at is your statement that it is of fairly short term to society.

DR. BOWKER: All we are saying, with respect, is that there is a very strong thrust towards T.A.F.E. at the present time, and that we agree with because of previous neglect. But when that has been remedied one needs to take a longer-term perspective on the relationships of the different tertiary centres.

THE CHAIRMAN: Many people have said to us that too much emphasis is placed on higher education today. How do you react to that? I refer to education above the tecnhical level.

PROF. BASSETT: I did not write this, but the thrust of the argument - and it seems to me to be fairly cogent - is that the way technology is changing it is altering the nature and scope of the need for many forms of what ordinarily is done under the name of technical training and trades. It is being transformed by technology in a sort of throw-away society in which we do not repair things but replace them. People who were previously employed as tradesmen now do that themselves. It is this kind of argument. If you put all your money into a kind of static situation that we know about, where all the trades are done as we know them now, we might be left lamenting because technology will overtake this and make it less necessary. I think this is part of the argument there and that we need to keep them going along in balance but not neglecting higher technological training in the process. That is the way I interpret this argument; but, as I say, I did not write it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think you are drawing the long bow on that section around about the middle of page 22? The bloke who fixes my wife's washer tells me it is cheaper and better to fix the old machine than it is to buy a new one today, and I am not sure that he is not right.

DR. BOWKER: It is obviously a difficult area, but I could quote you a counter example of an electric blanket that I took for a check. I was told that if it needed any more than a check it would be much easier and cheaper to buy a new one than have the electric blanket repaired. What that paragraph is saying in a sense is that it is likely that, as technology becomes more sophisticated, we will have less use for high-cost-labour repairs and more use for low-cost replacement.

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THE CHAIRMAN: I was wondering, too, about TAFE, but they are today clothed with the responsibility of educating people for leisure time through adult education, and that is critical. We accept that. But they are saying to us, "You have given us this responsibility now, we have got to have more resources to provide it for the community."

DR. BASSETT: But not exclusively. They are in the business of further education but so are the C.A.E.s, the universities and any education agencies that increase people's resources for filling in their time effectively.

MR. MILLER: On page 89 you list the characteristics of an educated person. Are you suggesting a person should have these qualities at the end of 10 years of schooling or, say, at the age of 16?

DR. BOWKER: No, I suggest these are ideals that some of us may attain towards the end of our lives, but certainly goals towards which we should aspire.

DR. GRASSIE: These are what we should keep in mind when going about the job of teaching.

MR. HEWITT: The effectiveness of an education programme depends to a very great degree on the quality of teacher training. To what extent are beginning teachers taught how to teach?

DR. BASSETT: I should say by way of preamble that I am the chairman of a committee that is trying to answer that question, and in about three weeks time I hope we will have a good answer.

MR. HEWITT: It will save us a lot of work.

DR. BASSETT: Speaking for myself and not for the committee, at present I think there is a sincere effort on the part of the training institutions to do that. They have been given a kind of direction by the Murphy report that was produced in 1971 or 1972 to broaden the training with more general education and more professional education, and I think perhaps in the process that they have tried to meet these demands, and that in the event the people coming out have not been as immediately competent as you might perhaps expect them to be or hope they would be, and so there might be some question of redressing the balance amongst all these elements of the course. But I really think the proper answer lies in terms of thinking of the training of a teacher as being a continuous process of an introduction and a much more systematic induction into the system and then a much more systematic continuation of their training so it is a continuous process. I think the idea of training them and then sort of releasing them on an unsuspecting world and expecting them to be very competent is not a very sound idea. I think it is just an introductory phase and something which goes on and on, and that is what we have to accept. Mind you, in saying that I do think that after three years of training a person ought to be able to teach at a safe level of competence. I think that is true, and I think that is what needs to be emphasised in the future. But I do not subscribe to the view that you can turn out a person in three years in an extraordinarily difficult job of dealing with other human beings fully competent to take on the task. I have been training teachers longer than I can remember, and I do not think you can ever expect that to be the case.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am cognisant of the fact that you are chairing this committee of inquiry. We would be very pleased if we are able to receive the recommendations of your committee as soon as protocol allows you to do that.

DR. BASSETT: Yes, of course.

THE CHAIRMAN: A number of people have criticised the pre-service training of teachers, you will notice that I have come up with all the jargon, not only parents but organisations, teacher groups, particularly the principals' associations, and so on. We have had some serious criticism that teachers are not given enough time to study reading strategies in the class-room and reading methodology in order to overcome remedial problems. Is this true of, say, the Queensland University? Is it valid criticism to make? Is there an adjustment necessary in this area?

DR. BASSETT: In the Queensland University?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Well, anywhere, generally, or would you prefer to reserve a statement on it?

DR. BASSETT: I would certainly prefer to defer a statement on it. It is true that there is criticism. The criticism is of the sort I think you were leading up to and is aimed mainly at primary training of the teaching of reading and other basic skills. The extent to which this is a valid criticism is, I think, arguable. Criticisms can be both true and incomplete. There is some truth in all sorts of scapegoating, and I would not try to answer it by saying that the three-year training programme for primary teachers is completely free of any kind of fault. But as far as the university is concerned, I defer that to the head of the department. We do not teach reading as such, although I really think we should. We certainly should.

DR. BOWKER: We do it at the present time, but in my opinion not enough. It is the problem always of having a short period of time and deciding on priorities. We are aware of this need as far as reading itself is concerned and, as I say, we have introduced it quite recently into our short one-year programme and , indeed, we have plans to expand that. Dr. Andrews may have a point to make on that.

THE CHAIRMAN: While he is getting his thoughts together, I will put it in context by saying that Dr. Keeves, who appeared before us earlier in the week, pointed out that whilst our levels in relation to the rest of Australia are very good, there are still 25 per cent of children who were not mastering the reading skill at the age of 14, which is too high.

DR. BOWKER: It would certainly be true in my view that we - by the way, I mean all of us - have belated realised that remedial work should go on at the secondary level as well as at the primary level. There was at one time an assumption that all remedial work took place during the primary section, and that is just not true.

DR. ANDREWS: I would like to emphasise a couple of points that have been made . My own view of the situation with reading is not so much concerned with the levels achieved by the majority of students but the very important need for

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teachers to be equipped and able to undertake the important remedial work that those students should have, when they have difficulty in learning to read. I think this applies to literacy, numeracy and oracy as well. There is a proportion of students who quite clearly cannot meet standards or reach levels within the normal class-room situation and for an education system to equip itself to ensure that all students get a reasonable opportunity, including extra assistance and help when they need it is a very important thing.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am going to ask the Senate of the University about whether they think they should be doing something at this level in this area, too. Some of the universities do. Or would you like to make a response to that?

DR. BOWKER: I think it would be better to leave it to them.

MR. MILLER: In your recommendation 9 you say that it is claimed that some of our high schools and primary schools are too large. Do you propose breaking them up into units on the same site something like an Army camp? What is the evidence for the desirable size of a school?

DR. GRASSIE: I doubt very much whether there has been definitive research on what is the optimum size of a school, but it seems fairly clear from the kind of research that has been done that a school as an educative, supportive, warm environment in which youngsters have the opportunity to grow - that that kind of climate is more easily established in the smaller school.

One would think in terms of a primary school being no more than 400 - just about that level - and high schools about 800. How one then moves from that and takes into account scale and the economies of scale, I don't know.

MR. MILLER: Did you say there has been no research done in this area?

DR. GRASSIE: No, what I am saying is that on the optimum size of a school itself I do not know of any definitive research. What I do know about is the kind of reaearch that is done into what we call organisational climate - the sort of relationships which exist within a school. It seems that the smaller schools have the better organisational climate.

PROF. BASSETT: I could quote a piece of research by a man called Middleton in Tasmania. I could not give you the exact reference. It is quite startling. If it is right it is fantastic. Of course all the arguments about size in high schools are that you get economies of scale as you get up to large numbers, and also you get more highly specialised staff and highly specialised curricula. So that schools really have to be big. High schools have to be 1000 or something to be really effective. The conclusions from his research are that economies of scale increase until it reaches about 350 students, and then they decrease, that is, it becomes more expensive after 350 students.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just in terms of money?

PROF. BASSETT: Yes. Furthermore, the other so-called advantages of specialised curricula and staff are also adequately met. His conclusion is quite startling to me because I have always been brought up to think that big high schools are a necessary evil. His research is that this is not necessarily so. In Tasmania it could be of the order of 350, and get all the advantages that are claimed for the so-called big high schools. That is the only research I know.

THE CHAIRMAN: How old is that research?

PROF. BASSETT: It was dated 1977 or 1976 - something like that. It was presented to the Tasmanian committee of inquiry on secondary schools. I have a copy of it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am suggesting to our secretary that we should obtain it. If we have difficulty he will be able to contact your office and chase it up.

PROF. BASSETT: We will be pleased to let you have it. I would hope it would be worked out by authorities around Australia, using their own figures and their own assumptions. If they can come up with the same result it will be tremendously important.

PROF. BOWKER: As an example of breaking into mini-schools in Brisbane, there is a good one at Newmarket High School. It is not a large school but they themselves have done some organisation into smaller units within the school, and they have produced some quite interesting results.

DR. GRASSIE: This is an attempt to achieve economies of scale and still get the value of the smaller organisation. It was not Army huts, Mr. Miller. But this was a notion of splitting the school up into smaller mini schools.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is such a big submission that I feel we

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should traverse some other areas. As to recommendations 12 and 13 - I guess it would be fair to say that you are arguing for a fair amount of devolution to the school level in terms of decision-making at the regional level and in terms of decision-making on curriculum and other matters. We have had a fair amount of input from parents principally who are saying to us, "For heaven's sake don't create a hotchpotch in education because the Australian population is very mobile and my job transfers me and the kids from place to place. You are going to make it very hard on children who are moved from school to school if you exacerbate this problem of differences between schools." Are you not going to assist that process or put a fire under that process by what you are suggesting here?

DR. GRASSIE: I wouldn't have thought so. I do not know how mobile the Australian population is or what percentage of youngsters move in any school in any one year. It seems to me that the relationships with the school and with its parents and with the community require to be built up, and that the parents and the community are required to be involved in a lot of the decisions that are made at school level. This means that each school is going to be different. I think that is a good thing. I don't think that they would be so different that great problems would be created for a youngster moving from one school to another.

PROF. BASSETT: I would like to underline that. I think it depends on what people take with them when they move. If they take some piece of factual knowledge that might not be a common element when they move, perhaps that is not so very important, but there are things that they could take with them like an understanding of the environment and a desire to explore it, and all sorts of attitudes that have a widespread currency wherever they move. It would mean that schools would certainly have to conduct their affairs in such a way that such people who move would not be at a disadvantage. If you express the school outcomes in quite specific factual terms people are at a disadvantage. If you express them in broader sort of learning objectives they are not. People can transfer those. They are highly transferable. In fact they have international currency - in the Western world, anyway. They are not just confined to a particular place.

THE CHAIRMAN: Surely the assessment of outcomes is something that is quite important to a young person in the secondary school. It seems to indicate what profession he is able to go into. While the general definition of outcomes in international terms might be very wide, the actual T.E. score, to bring it right down to basics, is critical. If we have a totally different programme going on in Toowoomba from the one in Caloundra, then you are going to create enormous difficulties for those parents. Incidentally, it might be worth while looking at this. I think one of the schools quoted us a figure of 20 per cent turnover in the school. That is significant. Would you like to comment on that?

DR. GRASSIE: I was merely going to come in and add that it is easy to over-emphasise the kinds of differences that might develop between one school and another. I would imagine that these differences would not be of such significance that students' T.E. Scores would be affected. I just don't think teachers are like that. The kinds of differences that might be developed - this would be particularly true if after consultation with parents, employers and the community - the kinds of special school courses, that sort of thing which were recommended before and which really didn't take off.

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But children transferred out of that situation in, say, year 2 going into a situation with a totally different reading strategy in use would be lost at a critical stage. There is a lot of community concern expressed about it that, perhaps, we should take into account.

DR. BOWKER: The point is well taken. It is a problem. My belief is that if you get much more regionalisation the regions would discover that they had a great deal in common in terms of interests and outcomes of the students. They may differ more in approach but less in terms of what they wanted to come out at the end. My belief would be that regionalisation and evolution would mean that the school and the community came together in so important a way that the school was no longer so isolated from the community. It would be a tremendous positive advantage.

DR. ANDREWS: There are three matters that I would like to comment on. On the example you gave of the school at The Gap, I have not been there for some time but I think I probably gave them some input when they were developing the programme. My view is that if it is a sound programme it is teaching skills in reading which are beyond the particular method that they are following. In effect, with the advantages to the students - what they are gaining in reading skills -they would not therefore be seriously hampered by changing schools, because they would have the skills that were transferable and the skill should not be tied, in an adequate method of teaching reading to the particular methodology.

MR. MILLER: How about children going to that particular school?

DR. ANDREWS: I don't think the transfer would necessarily be all that bad or difficult because phonics and some of these things are basic skills. There is simply a variety of approach being taken. I am not exactly sure how the technique stands at the moment. I think that perhaps it is so specific to one school at this stage it is impossible to say that there would be any other equivalent in the country. To transfer a technique widely over all schools would be a very difficult task in any case. I think the children could transfer in, too, if they were getting the adequate skills that they needed from whatever procedures that were being followed in their schools. It is skills that they should be transferring, not particular approaches to teaching. At the moment, I am a member of the Schools Commission. We have some sort of a commitment to diversity in schools. When we talk about some of the problems of transfer we are really putting the emphasis strongly on academic matters, important though they are, and not perhaps looking at the richness of the environment of the school in the wider context. I would amplify that with a third point. Again, when we talk about students transferring from school to school we are talking really about those who are following strictly and highly academic programmes. I think that secondary education has, in fact, failed in the past in so far as those who are less academically oriented in the secondary school - and there are large numbers of them - have suffered in their school experiences because of this sort of emphasis. I would think that the richness of the total environment of the school and what it does for the child as a person and his total education, would be as important as academic skills and particular curriculum that were transferable from school to school, especially for the large number of non-academic students.

MR. MILLER: The system at The Gap really impressed me. I think they call it a transitional class; it is really a remedial class from Grade 1. The reading ability of that class was outstanding.

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DR. ANDREWS: A few years ago I was there in the early stages. I was very impressed but I would not be convinced that it was not a transferable situation. In other words, that the students could not transfer in and out without disadvantage.

THE CHAIRMAN: Probably we were anxious to talk about that but actually the problem for most occurs at secondary level when they get transferred to a new situation and there is just no relativity between total courses offered. That is probably a more serious problem.

DR. ANDREWS: That is a problem. I certainly agree. But I don't think it should take precedence over the other things that secondary education ought to be doing for all students.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you looked at the mobility of population. That is something you should look at before you advocate something like this, given the basis of concern that we have found here, and that information will be available to the public eventually. You can read it.

DR. ANDREWS: Evidence of this is just coming out in this country. I know there has been a Schools Commission report about 20,000 caravan children in Australia but at the same time I think there is no evidence from other countries that I am aware of where the population is traditionally much more highly mobile than ours. This is an important matter.

MR. MILLER: On recommendation 14, should vocational programmes be developed in high schools or in technical colleges, say after Grade 10? We have had a lot of submissions suggesting that a new stream should be developed at Grade 10 level. Will you comment on that?

DR. GRASSIE: If you are talking about strictly vocational programmes - programmes aimed at specific work skills - I would not think that that is the task of the secondary school. That seems to be definitely the task of the technical college.

MR. MILLER: Should a new stream be developed at Grade 10 level?

DR. GRASSIE: I would think yes. This is something that Bob was saying; we have to enrich the kind of provision that we make for youngsters who are not academically inclined or who wish to go on to tertiary education. I do not think that these youngsters have had a fair crack of the whip in Australia until now. We ought to try to develop courses that are important for them. I see the approach of using the interest that these young people have in the work-place to develop their general education. Our focus in the secondary school should be on general education rather than on specifically vocational training. I think that can be done. Starts have been made, as you probably know from evidence you have had about work-experience courses and so on. A great deal more development is required in this area. I would like to see the technical colleges involved in making some provision. I see no reason why youngsters at high school should not go to technical college for some subjects if it is within reasonable travelling distance. I have seen that kind of thing organised in Scotland. It worked very well. Where I came from we developed a work-based course, as we called it. When I went back there in 1973 it had developed to the extent that the educational authority had rented factory accommodation. Young people coming up to school-leaving age could apply for a job in this factory and during an 8-week period they got direct experience of about three vocational skills - bricklaying, painting, plumbing, fitting

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and turning. The girls did industrial machining, clerical work and so on. That factory turned out a whole lot of the equipment that pre-schools and nursery schools used. The stuff was not wasted. It gave them a first-rate induction into the work-place, but at the same time it kept the focus on their general education. It also fitted them out for going into pre-vocational courses at the technical college once they left school.

MR. MILLER: One of the problems we have at our technical colleges is the amount of waste.

DR. GRASSIE: I think that is probably unavoidable otherwise you get the technical colleges going into competition with the local firms, and that would never do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you talk a little further about the core curriculum? Is that something within each subject area - a certain amount of the skills and content being prescribed - or is it something that you are talking about across the whole student's programme?

DR. BOWKER: At primary level there is a core of skills competence to which we think everybody is entitled. Anyone who cannot read properly, express himself orally properly, cannot perform necessary calculations and so on, is totally disadvantaged in the community. We believe that every child has the right to competence in that area. Having said that, that in itself is not content. Those are factional matters. They are activities and they should be related to meaningful activity within a school rather than to learning off by rote certain tables. We suggest that those skills should be learnt through activities that are related to a child's interests and level of experience and competence.

THE CHAIRMAN: It does not relate to any knowledge retained? Surely a certain base amount of knowledge should be retained as well, such as the geography of the spatial arrangement of the States of Australia and so on?

DR. BOWKER: Yes, indeed. The difficulty here I think is the relationship between the amount of content and what you do with that content. Holding content for the sake of content is useless. If you can use it, that is good.

PROFESSOR BASSETT: It probably would result in some common elements of knowledge but I think if you tried to begin by specifying what they were you would unduly restrict the core curriculum. For example, in the physical environment it would be just as meaningful for a kid out in an arid environment to be studying how animals survive in 10 inches of rainfall as it would be for someone to be studying marine life at low tide in a coastal city. They are both ways of exploring the environment and it is the attitude of inquiring into the wonders of the world and the methods of going about it that are important. The same would be true, I think, of the social environment and the cultural environment. There would be some common elements but I think it would be better to try to specify them in terms of learning outcomes and things that kids can do rather than exactly what each should know.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Scott report, with which I am sure you are all familiar, suggests that there be minimum competencies established in each subject area. That will require a fair amount of definition of curriculum?

PROFESSOR BASSETT: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: In relation to content and process?

DR. BOWKER: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that desirable?

PROFESSOR BASSETT: In terms of behaviour objectives.

THE CHAIRMAN: But not the contents side?

PROFESSOR BASSETT: That is right.

THE CHAIRMAN: You would not suggest that it would have to acquire a definition on the contents side?

PROFESSOR BASSETT: Only in broad terms, I think, but not highly specific.

DR. GRASSIE: If we go along with the curriculum core idea that the Scott report developed and which we mentioned here, that is an element of variability that is removed from

the schools. It is the extra bit in which they are enabled to develop their own identities and differences.

THE CHAIRMAN: The university is working on the concept of the core curriculum at the moment, is it not?

DR. GRASSIE: No. There was a fair bit of discussion of the idea of a core curriculum when the university was looking at the effects of the Radford scheme on students coming up. Some concern was expressed that in a class of physics students, for example, you could no longer take certain things for granted. This was expressed by certain members of staff. Therefore they got round to suggesting that there might be a core of knowledge in physics which ought to be taught to youngsters so that that could be taken for granted once they got to the next stage. To that extent it was discussed.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the C.D.C. is looking at the question of core curriculum, too.

DR. ANDREWS: Yes, I understand so but I have no information on it.

MR. MILLER: In recommendation 18 on page 17 you recommend that the responsibilities of the home and school be more clearly defined. Have the schools taken on too much?

DR. BOWKER: Could I rephrase that by saying, "Have the schools had too much thrust upon them?"

MR. MILLER: I am quite happy to put it that way.

DR. BOWKER: It is a question to which I certainly have no definite answer but I would point out, particularly as far as the secondary school is concerned, that it is not yet 20 years since secondary education became compulsory for everybody in Queensland. This was introduced in 1964. That meant that the schools had a very largely different population thrust upon them and they had no experience of how to deal with it. At the same time, I suggest from my own experience that a number of other sectors of the community are saying, "It's up to the school to do this and that." Fifty years ago the school knew fairly well what it was on about. It had a narrowly defined base. It has been discovered, as society has become more complex, some aspects of society do not always undertake their responsibilities. The school has the option of either ignoring important needs and staying easily defined or trying to do something about the situation.

MR. MILLER: Is it necessary to extend the school day?

DR. BOWKER: That again is a debatable question. It would depend on what one did with the rest of the day. Personally I find that we attack the private lives of our secondary students quite remarkably when we consider the amount of homework that they have to do. No member of any business would dare to go through the number of hours a day that secondary students go through. If we extended the school day and released some of the work to be done at home, this would be sensible.

MR. MILLER: What is the answer to the problem?

PROFESSOR BASSETT: The answer is to attack these problems at an adult level, for the most part.

MR. MILLER: Rather than a school level?

PROFESSOR BASSETT: Yes. There is a tendency to think

that all social problems can be solved through schoolchildren. That is a pathetic fallacy. You just cannot do it. We should put as many resources as can be spared into schools, certainly, but at the same time we have to attack the quality of social life at all levels. It is really dangerous to think that certain things can be salvaged by putting them into the schools.

MR. MILLER: I was hoping someone would say that.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was reminded of the study made by Dr. Botsman who found, in dealing with community attitudes, that something like 70 per cent of parents disagreed with the proposition that secondary school students were given too much homework. Trying to quantify these things is interesting. I worry that teachers talk too much about professionalism. We have heard a lot about teacher professionalism. I worry that your own professionalism is something that should emerge. Perhaps it has been under threat. You refer to it on page 11 in relation to the concept of teaching. I am wondering how you respond to the inspectorate. There are many people who have referred to this. The Primary Principals' Association came before us yesterday and said that every teacher in the State should be inspected every three years. How do you respond to that?

DR. BOWKER: It depends on the definition of "inspected".

THE CHAIRMAN: "Assessed", they said, and made no mistake about it.

DR. BOWKER: At some stage in a professional career - I use that word advisedly - there is a certain amount of independence, but in my view that should never be at the expense of a responsibility which can be carried. That can be looked at in lots of ways. Assessment in terms of a quantitative grading is, I think, possibly not a good idea, but one has to remember that the inspectorate in this State has changed quite remarkably over the last few years. There is now, I believe, an emerging body of people who are good educationists, very responsible and aware of the need to protect the community, the need to protect the children and the need to assist teachers. In that way I think the old inspectorial system would not be good but the emerging inspectorial system is very good.

MR. MILLER: In your recommendation 15, you recommend alternative structures for years 11 and 12. Is there one model you think better than the others? Say, for instance, the A.C.T. model of colleges?

DR. BOWKER: I think they all have their advantages and disadvantages. There is certainly something to be said for a concept of a senior college. It has a great many advantages for the students in those years. It has been argued against that you cream off the top of a school population, of the group that can in fact give leadership, and in reply to that, one can see that younger students are given the chance of responsibility at a younger age.

MR. HEWITT: Is what you have in mind akin to the Tasmanian matriculation?

DR. BOWKER: Yes.

MR. HEWITT: You have looked at those?

DR. BOWKER: Yes.

MR. HEWITT: Are you pleased with them?

PROF. BASSETT: Yes. I would balance what I have seen in the A.C.T. and Tasmania. I think it tends to favour some form of secondary college, at least on an experimental basis; I would favour it. I think the changing sort of maturity levels of young people these days requires that children of 16, 17 and 18, and with an increasing number of adults coming back to schools also, you require a different kind of social structure from the ordinary school. I would like to see Queensland experiment with this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I thank you very much for appearing before us. I can assure you that the submission from the education department, University of Queensland, was important to us. I am very pleased, on behalf of the Committee, that you thought us important enough to place such a fully documented submission before us. We are deeply grateful for that. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to the other members of your staff who participated in its preparation.

The Committee adjourned at 3.12 p.m.

FRYER
Mss.
81/12

14th day

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE | 5 SEP 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M. J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W. D. Hewitt
Mr. C. J. Miller
Mr. L. W. Powell
Mr. E. F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:

Dr. R. D. Goodman
Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P. A. B. Krebs
Mr. K. P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E. S. Newton

BRISBANE, 5 SEPTEMBER 1978

FOURTEENTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 10 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the programme circularised to members, this meeting of the Select Committee is now open. I am very pleased to welcome this morning representatives of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools. The submission has been received and studied by members and is coded for record purposes AU-120. It will not be necessary to read any part of it. The assumption is that it has been read by members so we can proceed to questions in relation to the submission. We have with us Mr. Terry Edwards, the president of the association, Mr. Terry Sullivan, the vice president and convenor of the education committee, Mr. Tim Quinn, the assistant secretary, and Bronwyn Gartside, a member of the education committee.

MR. POWELL: On page 6, paragraph 2.08 you say -

> "Q.A.T.I.S., however, is firmly committed to the view that as far as possible the parental right of choice is a right of free choice, and that any financial or other limitation on this choice, which may tend to confine Independent Schools to particular socio-economic groups, is in effect a restriction on the independence of such schools."

Is it a fact that financial considerations actually limit or restrict the independence of any of the schools?

MR. EDWARDS: In fact, we would believe that that is so. Looking through the full gamut of the type of independent schools we find that the bulk of them would have to be considered rather poor schools, and a lot of parents wishing to send their children to such schools find themselves in financial difficulty and hence cannot make that choice. So from that angle people wishing to use the services of these schools are financially out on a limb. Within the school system itself, particularly the systemic type of school but also quite a number of others, lack of finance does limit what they can do or hope to do according to their philosophy.

MR. POWELL: On page 7 in paragraph 2.12 you say -

"Greater local autonomy for all schools would promote better community understanding of, and involvement in, the educational endeavour."

The control of independent schools is vested in a school board of some description, as I understand it, and the board exercises supervision over the operation of the school. If I am wrong, would you correct me on those statements? What sort of authority structure would you envisage to oversee the operation of the State school system?

MR. QUINN: Our area of closest knowledge, of course, is that of non-Governmental schools and it perhaps would not be our place, I don't think, to make recommendations regarding the operation of State schools. However, we believe that local autonomy for all schools would in fact be a very important idea and would promote, could only promote, in fact, the type of community involvement in schools and the type of community say in decision-making in education that I think is a fairly important question at the moment.

MR. POWELL: We have received many submissions that have prayed for a greater involvement by the community within the school system, and I presume from paragraph 2.12 that perhaps that is the way you think it should be done. Can you see any relevance in using the sort of system that is used in the private school sector in the State school sector, say, providing for school boards and that sort of thing?

MR. EDWARDS: I might say a word on this. Again, I have to agree with Tim here, that we cannot really advocate anything for the State system, but what we are looking at in this particular regard, I think, would probably have to take a number of stages to evolve. We are looking for greater parent involvement, and most of us would be parents and understand that. I can see, and would advocate, that this be a gradual thing where parents are introduced and teachers are educated into the idea step by step leading finally, I suppose, away from funding questions but into curricula development, and even parents being involved in the actual school situation as resource people themselves. But I believe, and our association believes, that this is a slow progression and it must be handled as such, but we would still look towards that.

MR. POWELL: Members of your association would, I believe, have taught in the State system?

MR. EDWARDS: Some have, not all.

MR. POWELL: The problem facing us is that we have to look at the system State-wide and see if there is something from the independent system which we can implement in the State system. With the system under which you work, do you have a great deal of parent involvement or is that a problem in your field as well?

MR. EDWARDS: I think we have the opportunity to have tremendous involvement. In practice I do not think you will find many examples of deep involvement. Certainly at the funding level - providing funds for the school - that involvement is very heavy, as you would probably realise at this stage. There would be some schools that are exceptions to that where parents are heavily involved at a curriculum level - the more experimental type school - but in the general systemic type school, the G.P.S. type school, no, the involvement would not be as heavy as ideally could be expected.

MR. POWELL: Can you put your finger on a reason for that?

MR. EDWARDS: I would say it is purely traditional. It has been the accepted thing for many generations that children are handed over to a system, that parents do not see that they have the expertise or anything to offer. I think it is a part of that development that has happened over the years.

MR. POWELL: Do you believe that comment is relevant to the State system as well?

MR. EDWARDS: I'd say it is relevant to education in general.

MR. SULLIVAN: One other factor is the reluctance of schools to open up to the parents as well, and perhaps the fear on both sides needs to be whittled down somewhat. I think a more open attitude of school to parent and parent to school would benefit the students.

MR. MILLER: How does the independent school system go about sacking an unsatisfactory teacher?

MR. EDWARDS: It probably varies from school to school. There is provision for it. One of our larger employing bodies which would control the body of our type schools has recently put forward a policy that such a teacher should be given ample warning throughout the year of whatever the concern is, given a chance to rectify and given a chance to defend and, in the event of no improvement, that particular employing body takes full responsibility.

MR. MILLER: You say throughout the year?

MR. EDWARDS: Throughout the year or over a reasonable period of time. If the situation is grave there is provision within our own award for grave misconduct and so on - summary dismissal is possible.

MR. MILLER: If a teacher was no longer a competent teacher would you give him 12 months to become competent?

MR. EDWARDS: It is not a matter of whether I would; it is generally accepted policy that the school has some responsibility, particularly in terms of younger teachers, to give them a chance to see what may be a deficiency and rectify it.

MR. MILLER: If you grant more autonomy to State schools would the principal or the p. and c. association have the right to hire and fire in that situation?

MR. EDWARDS: You certainly have me there. Again, in regard to the State system, I do not really know that I am in a position to talk about that, from the State point of view.

MR. MILLER: You are recommending greater autonomy?

MR. EDWARDS: Yes.

MR. QUINN: I am sure that within a broad recommendation of greater autonomy for local schools there are no doubt specific situations that would require research and looking into. That may well be one of them. I quite agree that at the moment we are putting forward a broad principle which we think works - has the opportunity to work within the non-governmental system; perhaps those sorts of particular problems you are suggesting would need time and thorough research.

MR. MILLER: Before throwing the baby in the bath water out you would want the answers first?

MR. QUINN: I would think that could quite well be true; that you would need that research. We are not, of course, putting ourselves in the position of coming up with the answers. We may be putting forward a few principles that people may care to look at.

MR. MILLER: Another thing that worries me about more autonomy for schools is that we have had complaints from parents coming from interstate referring to differences in education values and systems. If we are to give complete autonomy to each school, could you not see the situation developing where we have 2,000 different education systems operating within the State.

MR. QUINN: I do not really see that as a major problem, frankly.

MR. MILLER: It is a great problem for parents coming interstate.

MR. QUINN: I can see that at the moment with the different education systems in Australia, but within the one State I imagine with the sort of Government boards to do with education that currently exist they would play an important role - an important co-ordinating and advisory role - and the sort of major differences really would not exist; if the sort of Government boards we are referring to were carrying out that operation.

MR. SULLIVAN: I think Mr. Miller used the words, "complete autonomy". I don't think that we are advocating that; we are not.

MR. MILLER: You are not?

MR. SULLIVAN? No. You did use the words "complete autonomy," didn't you?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MR. SULLIVAN: That is not what is advocated.

MR. HEWITT: The use of a voucher system would make access to private schools available to a far greater number of students. Have you considered the ramifications of a voucher system, and if so, what is the result of your consideration?

MR. EDWARDS: Obviously we have looked at the question. At this stage of the game, again because of our lack of research resources - we recognise that there are many forms of voucher systems, and this is an area which has to be defined we see that there are inherent problems just at first glance in working out what could be the average calculation for the child to be paid and so on - administrative difficulties - but at this stage we would advocate as is written in our submission, that such a system should be thoroughly investigated and the results of the investigation be open to far-reaching debate. At this stage our overall policy would be "go carefully".

MR. HEWITT: I am most interested in your recommendation which says that student profiles be considered by tertiary institutions in selecting applicants. This is a great problem. You might recall that Professor Saint, in particular, has argued against it, saying that the difficulties in looking at profiles contrasted with the simplicity of merely looking at T.E. scores are very great indeed. Nevertheless this strikes a very responsive notes in many areas of the community. I wonder to what extent you have looked at that question and what your recommendations on it would be?

MR. QUINN: We have certainly recognised the type of criticism that perhaps the student profiles have been subjected to. I think the situation would be that we believe that the type of system that apparently exists - in other words, the T.E. score - would continue to be the basis for selection for tertiary education but that that particular system could well be backed up, if you like, by a system of student profiles. Often times there are perhaps things that institutions may want to know about particular aptitudes and interests of individual students which simply cannot be gained from a straight T.E. score. If T.E. scores were backed up by student profiles we think that would be a more ideal situation.

MR. HEWITT: You say that norm-based assessment and the recording of ratings in a 1/7 scale should be retained until the advantage of any change can be clearly demonstrated. I would assume that you wrote that before the Scott report came out and made some comments about competency-based assessments.

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We would/interested in your observations about competency-based assessments.

MR. QUINN: That certainly was written before the Scott report was available. I do not think we would necessarily by any means reject the idea of competency-based assessments. We believe, however, that perhaps one of the major areas of difficulty with the Radford system in general was that perhaps it was introduced with an inadequate consultation first of all with all those people involved in the field of education; and secondly, when the decision was made to introduce it, with an inadequate programme of education of those people involved. I suppose we would believe that any recommendations that would change the system of secondary education at the moment should only come after the widest possible consultation with all concerned, particularly, we suggest, with practising teachers. Secondly, if a decision was made to introduce those sort of changes that there needs to be a programme of education, not only with schools, but certainly with the community generally.

MR. HEWITT: You were questioned previously about parent involvement and participation in the schools. Do you share the opinion that parent involvement in the forming of social education courses could allay a good deal of fear presently entertained by parents about these courses?

MR. QUINN: Yes. Firstly we would start off with the point that social education is extremely important in schools but that decisions about the types of courses to be offered should involve a wide consultation in the school community, which would incoude, obviously, the school administrators, the teaching staff and parents. Often times, too, students would also have worthwhile suggestions to offer about the types of courses that they think would meet their needs as they see them. We would certainly support that sort of wide consultation with the school community.

MR. POWELL: Is that sort of consultation available within your schools?

MR. EDWARDS: In some of the schools it is, by policy of their governing body; in other schools it is not so.

MR. SHAW: On the question of assessment and moderation, the view was put to us at one of our previous meetings that the present system had special difficulties for independent schools. Have you detected any special problems or perhaps antagonism at moderation meetings, or anything like that?

MR. SULLIVAN: I think that one of the greatest problem areas were the smaller country schools and indeed some of the smaller close-to-city schools which may have had fewer than 20 in a senior class. They are the major concerns I have heard expressed specific to the independent system. I have heard a lot of comments from teachers within both the State and independent systems about other failings in moderation, but I think your question was more specific to the independent system.

THE CHAIRMAN: I should like to ask a question relating to pages 26 and 27 of your submission. You suggest that syllabuses need to be broad and encourage diverse teacher implementation according to particular needs. Do you not think that there is a danger that we may have gone, or could still go, too far in this direction and that there could be a hotch-potch of syllabuses all over the State? Could this not be a serious problem where there is much mobility among the population? Do you not think that perhaps this has been brought in in the interests of teacher professionalism, and a lot of teachers really do not like it and do not want it? Many have said to us, "We would like to see a fair bit more prescription in the syllabus so that we know what you want." How do you react to that general statement?

MS. GARTSIDE: This is why we think the setting up of a board of primary school studies could be looked into. We have found similar comments being made especially by primary school teachers who are members of our association. They feel that they need more guidance. Our recommendation about the need to look into the setting up of a board of primary school studies is on page 30. We recommend that the development of syllabuses and curricular guide-lines based on the format suggested earlier be undertaken by such a board. There would then be not exactly control but co-ordination and advice. That is the way we see this board being set up. We would hope that that would overcome that problem.

MR. EDWARDS: All the way through we, and our teachers, stress the need for core material that would give that effect across the board. Outside that there would be room to move according to local needs.

THE CHAIRMAN: How much would be in the core - 10, 20, 30, 50 per cent?

MR. EDWARDS: Again we are not prepared at this stage to get down to those details, but we suggest that such a board, by means of various investigations and tapping various sources in the community, could arrive at that very specific detail. Again we are putting forward a principle that we would hope would overcome that kind of criticism or that kind of fear that is felt not only in the community but amongst teachers, too.

THE CHAIRMAN: In a subject such as mathematics, could we not say that half of it should be universal throughout the State in terms of a core?

MS. GARTSIDE: We are not prepared to make a statement like that at this stage.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are very conservative.

MR. SULLIVAN: Perhaps it is caution. We have only limited facilities available to our small organisation. In fact we see the need for a great teacher involvement and for research in a great number of areas, whether it be pre-school,

primary school syllabuses, Grade 7 to 8 changeover, moderation and so on. There is a tremendous amount of work needed and we do not have research facilities available to us to do it.

MR. MILLER: On page 30 you mentioned a board of primary school studies. I am wondering if you would like to develop that theory of yours. You only just touched on it and I should like to hear more about it.

MR.QUINN: Once again I think it is a question of looking at what appears to be a problem area in education and putting forward hopefully a helpful suggestion and principle. Some of our members perhaps feel there is a need for greater co-ordination and more advisory services in the area of syllabuses and curricular guide-lines in the primary school area. That certainly would be one function of a board of primary school studies. I should perhaps mention that we were influenced by what we see to have been the very valuable and helpful role played by the Board of Secondary School Studies in Queensland in recent years, particularly in a period of enormous change. Perhaps that is one of the levels at which we think such a board could play a valuable role in co-ordination and advice. Another area of difficulty, it appears to us, is precisely the transition from primary to secondary school. We think that that area needs quite a bit of co-ordination. At an overall level there would perhaps be co-ordination between the two boards.

MR. MILLER: what is the best year for transition from primary to secondary school? Do you think Grade 7 is the best year or would you like it to be Grade 8?

MS. GARTSIDE: We are happy with transition at Grade 7.

MR. POWELL: The primary school is happy with it at Grade 7 but the secondary school is not.

MS. GARTSIDE: I cannot speak for secondary schools.

MR. EDWARDS: We have no evidence from any feed-back from our members that they are not happy with transition at Grade 7. Nobody is suggesting that it should be Grade 8.

THE CHAIRMAN: In paragraph 4.14 on page 29 you say -

> " The results of the standardised tests undertaken by all students in Year 7 provide valuable information for secondary schools. The results of these tests should therefore as a matter of course be made available to the secondary school chosen by the student."

Is this not done anywhere at the moment?

MR. SULLIVAN: Some schools, especially secondary schools that do not have a primary school attached to them, are not aware that these results are available. I know of one person on our education committee at QATIS who asked for particular information and it was not made available to him.

MR. POWELL: They asked the primary school from which the student had come?

MR. SULLIVAN: Yes. Our suggestion is that if it were made a matter of course that this information be passed on, especially in the early part of a student's

secondary career, teachers would have some idea of his ability, background and things like that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Generally they do get them?

MR. SULLIVAN: Generally, I would say yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there some particular problem in relation to the independent schools?

MR. QUINN: There appears to be some evidence that there is not a flow on of that sort of information from perhaps the group of primary schools that feed a particular secondary school. What we are suggesting is that that information be sent on as a matter of course to the school where the primary student goes. That might be within the one system of schools or it might be across the system.

MR. MILLER: I refer now to paragraph 5.07 on page 35. Does the board or the school determine how often testing is done? Are you sort of drifting back towards the old Senior-level examination? Is that what you are suggesting?

MR. QUINN: No, not really. We just think that one of the problems that has been associated with the Radford scheme, if you wish, in Queensland has been on numerous occasions an over-emphasis on testing for assessment purposes - for rating purposes, if you wish. There is a variety of purposes for which testing can take place. Certainly testing for ratings is an important purpose, but we think on occasions that that has become the overriding purpose. We think that that suggestion that ratings be issued less frequently than at present would de-emphasise some of the testing for rating purposes. There could, for example, be more testing simply to let students know how they are progressing with the course, and to give teachers a clearer idea of how they are progressing.

MR. SULLIVAN: In the changeover from Grade 10 to the Grades 11 and 12 system there have been many problems with late maturing students or students who find a tremendous gap in what is required of them from Grade 10 to Grades 11 and 12. In fact, instead of having the nervous breakdown at the Senior examination as in former years, a lot of students are now in the same situation at semester 1 of Grade 11, because they find that that is going to sort of stamp them for the next two years.

MR. MILLER: Do you find in independent schools that there is need for another stream in Grade 10? It has been suggested to us on a number of occasions that there should be another stream going off to TAFE institutions rather than carrying on with Grades 11 and 12. Would you have that same problem in independent schools or would you have a higher quality of students going to your schools?

MR. EDWARDS: One way of answering that question is that I think the majority of independent secondary schools are academically geared. They are geared for tertiary education, even though perhaps, in some schools, a quarter or even more may not have any intention or even any aptitude for tertiary education, but they are stuck with this system. It comes back to funding. I think a lot of schools are aware of this but they have no funding to diversify the type of education they can offer We have all seen a great number of boys and girls going on where they normally would not have who would benefit from, say, a tec course or a domestic course away from the academic. A lot of the independent schools are not in a financial position to come at that. There is provision for school subjects but there is also community suspicion of those.

MR. MILLER: You see the need in your schools, just the same?

MR. EDWARDS: The need is there, for sure, but it is one that schools can fix themselves if they have funds.

MR. POWELL: In your association you have schools where the student can start at Grade 1 and go right through to Grade 12?

MR. EDWARDS: No, not normally.

MR. POWELL: I misunderstood what you were saying before when you spoke about children going from primary to secondary.

MR. EDWARDS: We have schools that start at primary Grade 5 and go through to 12.

MR. HEWITT: Church of England Grammar would be an example?

MR. EDWARDS: Yes, and a lot of the religious-owned.

MR. POWELL: Have you any evidence that will indicate whether the students are better off in that situation or doesn't it make any difference?

MR. EDWARDS: We have no evidence one way or the other. Personal opinion would be that it makes no difference, but we have no evidence.

MR. QUINN: Perhaps it may make the change over from 7 to 8 slightly easier.

MS. GARTSIDE: They still have a separate primary school.

MR. POWELL: A separate primary section?

MS. GARTSIDE: A separate section, but obviously there would be greater contact between the teachers.

MR. SULLIVAN: Also there are some disadvantages if you try to implement the same school rules and have the same behaviour expected of the fifth graders and the senior students, and especially if, by the number of streams you have in the school, you bring the numbers up to 900, 1,000 or 1,200, you lose a lot of the better quality, so there is a balance and some pros and cons.

MR. HEWITT: Do most independent schools conduct entrance exams?

MR. EDWARDS: I would think not. I know of a number who do.

MR. HEWITT: The majority don't?

MR. EDWARDS: I do not think we have sufficient evidence to say categorically, but the indication would be not most.

MR. QUINN: Entrance procedures are involved but entrance examination, perhaps not.

MR. EDWARDS: I can give you one example. I know of a school that has an exam but it is not to sort people out, but simply help stream the child. He is still accepted whether he does well or not.

MR. HEWITT: I could not find any reference to your attitude to an education commission. Do you have a policy on the establishment of an education commission?

MR. SULLIVAN: We do not, formally. I believe that the Board of Secondary School Studies and the Board of Primary School Studies, if it were established, could take over a lot of the role that a school commission could take. What we would need to do would be to see the sorts of things the commission would do and how it would operate. It could in fact be a great boon to the education system but if it were another rung in the ladder just to send memos, it would not be good. I think we would be very open to whatever is suggested.

THE CHAIRMAN: Time is running out. Would you like to respond to my perhaps uncharitable notation on your submission that I am worried that you might have been trying to be too careful not to upset the Queensland Teachers' Union in your submission. Is that fair criticism?

MR. QUINN: No, I do not think that we -----

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have a good relationship with the Q.T.U.?

MR. QUINN: I do not think that would be a fair criticism. We do in fact have a very good relationship with the Queensland Teachers' Union. Naturally, you would appreciate that there are many things to do with teaching as a profession that we share in common with our colleagues in the State system.

MR. MILLER: I refer to paragraph 5.21 on page 38, in which you have mentioned a lot of areas, but you do not mention sex. Do you feel that this subject should be dealt with in the home or in the school?

MR. QUINN: I think we would have included the type of suggestion you are making under "personal development".

MR. MILLER: You are aware that the evidence shows that drug education courses in the U.S.A. are considered to be counter-productive?

MR. EDWARDS: Again, one of our major employing authorities has, traditionally throughout Australia, conducted its own course according to its own religious beliefs in this area for some time. Again, I doubt if it is counter-productive, and, in fact, the same type of employing body at the moment is in fact engaging in drawing up such a programme.

MR. SULLIVAN: In very close consultation with parents. I have been involved in such courses with Grade 8 students and the parental involvement has been extremely pleasing. In fact I have been approached by parents. To answer your original question, we believe that the main source for education of this type is the home, but if the home asks the school for help - and many of

them have - I think the school should have something prepared to help them.

MS. GARTSIDE: In some of our primary schools also there is such a programme in operation, with full co-operation and support from parents.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing and for the presentation of such a comprehensive document. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your members. I can assure you that close consideration will be given to your representations.

MR. QUINN: Thank you very much, on behalf of our association, for the opportunity we have had today.

THE CHAIRMAN: The presentation of the Australian Labor Party's submission was a little delayed. We are grateful to have it because we have received representations and submissions from other parties. It has now been received and will be coded Se-9.

ARCHIBALD RONALD BEVIS, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Would you please state your name and the executive position you hold with the party?-- My name is Arch Bevis and I am a member of the education committee of the Australian Labor Party.

It might be appropriate if you gave us a brief summary of the major recommendations of your committee?-- At the outset, I should like to thank this Committee for its indulgence in allowing the late presentation of the report, for which I apologise. We hoped that we could present it much earlier so that you could peruse it. Unfortunately, circumstances did not allow that. If I can go through a couple of points that are made in the submission - I draw your attention to the last paragraph of the preface dealing with the actual committee and the view that the A.L.P. has as to where we think things should go from here. The preamble is fairly straightforward. It touches on a couple of matters related to an education commission and recommends that we look at the situation in New South Wales where there are fairly advanced talks on the formation of an education commission. If I can skip over to staffing - I point out that of course at this time this is a very crucial and topical issue and that the Australian Labor Party feels it is a most important one. I have listed there a few points which are considered to be needed; reasons why the staffing situation needs to be improved.

Country education is one that I might draw your attention to. It is not one that has received a great deal of publicity in the Press at this stage. It is the view of the Australian Labor Party that the facilities available in country areas need to be improved. There are some suggestions set out as to how the improvement might be undertaken, stemming from increasing facilities at the correspondence schools which operate in Queensland. I am not sure which schools the Committee has had an opportunity to visit - I realise you are hard pressed for time - but I can well recommend that a trip to the Primary Correspondence School, which is not far away, would demonstrate some fairly difficult conditions under which the school is forced to operate. The submission also refers to secondary departments and their replacement and extension, and also very briefly to the system of transfers and the need for some incentive transfer scheme to operate so that the staffing of schools in country areas can be carried out on a more long-term basis. Social education is mentioned in broad terms. Technical and Further Education is also mentioned, and this again is an area that we feel has been badly neglected and is one that requires immediate attention and quite concerted effort by the Government to overcome the problems that exist at present. You will find we are submitting that a committee be formed comprising people involved in the field of Technical and Further Education, virtually to look at all of the aspects of the Capital Works Programme and the needs of Technical and Further Education. It is our view that it has been poorly treated and requires fairly concerted action to overcome the difficulties it is facing. Aboriginal education is listed at the bottom of page 6 and over on to page 7. That, too, is considered to be a most important area. Obviously it is a complex and difficult question. You will notice that in the first two sentences we recognise that the school, while not being the sole agent available to assist Aboriginal and Islander people, does have an important role to play in improving their educational opportunities. The submission suggests that certain co-operative development programmes be taken. I think that the suggestions as to the programmes that could be undertaken have definite value and should be followed through. That very quickly is an outline of the submission.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Could I begin the discussion and refer particularly to the suggestion as to an Education Commission. I suppose that the rationale behind the proponents of an Education Commission is that it will lift decision-making above the party-political level. Could I suggest to you that if an Education Commission were appointed by this Government it would probably have to be restructured by a following Labor Party Government and that this would be undesirable?-- I think that would depend entirely upon the way in which this Government chose to form an Education Commission.

Suppose we did it according to the way that you suggest, that is, to have certain appointees from various associations. Having in mind the realities, I suggest it would still probably reflect some of the attitudes of this Government?-- That is quite possible, and I do not suggest - neither does the A.L.P. - that an Education Commission is the panacea to the problems that schools are facing. But it does seem to be a vehicle that would minimise a number of undesirable effects that are currently being put into the education system.

What are you referring to - SEMP and MACOS?-- No, I am not referring to SEMP and MACOS - although they could well be a couple of cases involved. I am thinking of cases where there may have been more direct political interference, such as,

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and I do not want to get into a fight - the incidents surrounding Bill Wood's appointment and later dismissal. I suggest they had political overtones that were unsavoury for the entire concept of education. I would suggest that there was information submitted publicly before the last State election which indicated the removal of funds from one area to another and that that also had an adverse effect on education. It seems to me that an Education Commission may help overcome those problems.

BY MR. MILLER: It would be just as political, though?-- As I said at the outset, it is not a panacea; but the New South Wales situation provides us with an opportunity to look at and examine how that is developing. We suggest that a committee comprising a unions' representative or the unions and the parents and citizens and other interested groups could well have a close look at the situation in New South Wales. I believe Queensland would find advantage in adopting a similar system.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: But an Education Commission would be just as political?----

BY MR. MILLER: Just as political. Why wouldn't it be?-- I do not think that need be so.

Tell me why it wouldn't be?-- If we look at the Australian Schools Commission, for example, we see that that is a commission which provides advice to the Government and of late it has been providing advice that the Government has seen fit not to follow. The very fact that they have been at difference would indicate, I suggest, that it is not an arm of the political structure.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Someone sees the Schools Commission as a political organisation?-- That is true; some will see any structure as a political organisation. I am not quite sure where your questions are directed. If you are suggesting that the Schools Commission will divorce education entirely from the political arena, obviously it will not.

BY MR. HEWITT: We have had a very substantial argument put to us as to why an Education Commission should not be established. The basic proposition is that you can't remove education from political administration, nor should you attempt to do so, because although Governments may make mistakes from time to time and do unwise things - maybe that has happened - Governments nevertheless are answerable to the people every three years and they are more susceptible to the influence, the point of view and the pressure of the parents whose children are being educated. It says that there is a great risk that, if you establish such a commission, you are removing education too far away from the influence of the people and from the influence of the persons who are answerable to the people. I would have thought that that argument would find some empathy with the representative of a political party even though it does not find empathy with representatives of teachers' professional organisations. In your capacity as a representative of a political party can you see any argument in favour of that point of view?-- Of course, that is the other end of the continuum from the one we were just talking about, isn't it? We have gone from saying that the Schools Commission is still politically dominated to the other end by saying that it is totally divorced from politics and in that way the politicians, who are answerable to the people, have no control. So we have both ends of the spectrum,

and I would suggest to you that somewhere in the middle you could have a working structure sensibly framed that gets benefits from both ends. For this reason the A.L.P. committee has suggested that the New South Wales experience is very valuable and that we should look at it very closely. It may be that they will run into errors that we can learn from; but the continuum that you have just outlined indicates that it is somewhere along that line that we can operate under. I accept the proposition you are putting forward, that circumstances such as that could arise, in the same way as I accept the proposition that Mr. Miller put forward. But I believe that on the continuum there is a basis that the commission could operate under quite fruitfully for education in Queensland.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we can now move into another area.

BY MR. POWELL: Towards the bottom of page 2 of your submission you say -

> "This target cannot be fully met until personnel such as social workers and community liaison staff are employed, and an interpreter service is provided."

Will you explain why social workers and community liaison staff should be appointed to schools to implement the programme you are talking about?-- What has been referred to in that paragraph - "community involvement" is a term that will mean something different to everyone seated here.

Would you qualify what you mean by "community involvement"?-- In that paragraph it refers to no more or less than what is occurring in the current system, where the parents are involved in different sorts of programmes that operate in schools. I am trying to think of an example, and probably the best I can give is Kelvin Grove High School, where they have a lot of parental involvement in community activities. At a school such as that I would think there is a fair amount of migrant population. It is reasonable to expect that those parents do not have a strong command of the English language and feel reticent about coming along to the school to discuss matters with the principal, teachers and so on about very basic things such as their children's performance at school, the course they should take in Grade 11 and so on. By providing some interpreter service - I am not suggesting that schools have an interpreter - I see no reason why regional offices of the department could not have an interpreter who could assist in that area and also assist when certain forms are being sent home.

In an area of high migrant population, a book list, course outline or prospectus could become very confusing to a parent who does not have a strong command of the English language. By some organ of the department having an interpreter service - and I am only suggesting the regional office as one means - that problem could be overcome. In the same way, a child from a broken family with certain difficulties at home could find the use of a social worker to be to his advantage. This is already operating in some schools. "Community liaison officer" is a broad term. There are some cases now of schools using teachers who might be listed as relieving staff for purposes that would best be described as community liaison - arranging the use of facilities in a co-operative manner with groups in the community. In the very basic sense - in other words, the way in which community development operates now - those measures seem important to involve all the community and not just the normal two-parent, middle-income, English-speaking family that is interested in the children.

On page 3 under "Staffing" you have what looks to me to be six points that you wish to raise. The first is "greater in-service training". Could you tell me when you think teachers should undergo in-service training? Should it be during school-time or during vacation time?-- The Australian Labor Party as such does not have a policy on that, but I could possibly convey my personal views, which I think would be the views of the Australian Labor Party; that is, that training should be conducted during school-time, with relieving staff used to take the place of those teachers who undertake courses. That operates a lot now. I am aware that vacation courses also operate. I am also aware that, because of the staffing cuts at present, money from the State Development Committee which has been set aside for teacher development has either been not used or had its purpose altered because insufficient staff are available to take the place of teachers who would normally go on those courses. That is to the detriment of education. It seems a quite proper thing that upgrading, if you like, or further in-service training and further education should be provided during the employer's time.

BY MR. MILLER: Why during the employer's time? What other profession that you know of has the amount of leave that the teaching profession enjoys?-- You are referring to two weeks in May, two weeks in August and six weeks at Christmas?

That is right?-- I understand that recently in South Australia - this is not directly in answer to your question, but I preface my answer with it - the Australian Workers' Union had inserted in their award five days' leave a year for every member of the union to take trade union training, which does not seem totally unlike in-service training. If anything, this will benefit the employer more than trade union training. So it is becoming an accepted practice in other fields. The argument of two weeks' leave in May, two weeks' leave in August and six weeks' leave at Christmas has been mentioned a number of times. Teachers who are heavily engaged in education could suggest a few good reasons why those holidays exist. A considerable amount of preparation needs to be done. I know that you could say, "Well, I saw so-and-so at Noosa Heads."

At the beach?-- I pre-empted that. I thought that was the way your mind was running, Mr. Miller. I was at Noosa Heads in August and I saw some people whom I know who are teachers up there. I also know that they had books with them that they were using at night. You might doubt that, but I actually stayed with a friend who is presently teaching. I know what he took up there. I know what he did. I don't think he is an abnormal

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teacher. I think he is a normal, concerned, active teacher. I am not suggesting that they spend their entire two weeks doing that.

Next time I see all the teachers up at the beach I will ask them where their books are?-- It might well prove to give you information that you obviously do not have at present. I suggest that that would be a wise course.

You have not answered my question. Could I pursue this? You did not answer the question?-- I had not finished answering it. The other point is-----

What other professions do you know that have-----?-- Without going into other professions, let me explain the situation in teaching, because there is more to it than just relativity with the guy who is driving a truck or working as an electrician.

I was not aware that they were professions?-- Most people engaged in what you would interpret as professions are self-employed and take holidays when they see fit. The point I wanted to make is that studies that have been done overseas - I could not categorically say that they have been done in Australia - into life expectancies, nervous disorders and heart attacks demonstrate that teachers are well above the average. In fact, even the State Government Superannuation Fund predicts that a teacher who continues until 65 has a life expectancy of 2½ years after retirement, whereas the teacher who leaves at 60 has a life expectancy of 12½ years. The cause of death is primarily heart attacks. It would seem that the stresses and problems involved in the day-to-day running of the school are greater than the normal tasks involved in what you might call other professional jobs. I think there is a very strong medical argument to indicate that teachers should have non-pupil-contact time. I would put it to you that most teachers look upon a substantial part of their leave in that way.

If they went back into the school environment themselves, surely that is non-pupil-contact time. Why can't they do this study over the August vacation, the May vacation or part of the Christmas vacation? Why can't it be carried out in those times? Why do you say that we have to spend more money on education just to allow teachers to be relieved to go to school? Why do you say that?-- I am not sure what your opposition is, Mr. Miller.

Never mind about my opposition. Why do we have to spend more money in teacher-training instead of expending more money to put more teachers in the field to reduce class sizes? Your argument is that we should relieve teachers to go into a school situation, while we are trying to reduce school classes?-- My argument is that we should do both. You are not doubting the benefits involved in in-service training, I take it?

Not at all. I want to see more of it - outside school-time, though.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Are you happy to let the argument rest?-- I think I have answered it.

BY MR. HEWITT: I am interested in your comment about teachers, administrators and parents being involved with new constructions. I assume that you mean that, when a school is planned in a district, consultation should be conducted to see if there is any community need that should be taken into account. It is an interesting concept and I would like you to expand upon it?-- I guess that that is an extension of what we might call community involvement, which I touched on a moment

ago. There are schools where this has occurred already. I think Currimundi school on the north coast had a p. and c. operating before the school was established.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: And Kawana, which is under construction. They are both in my electorate, so you have chosen wisely?-- There are schools where this has occurred. All of the feed-back from p. and c. representatives, teachers and departmental officers is that it has been excellent. From my knowledge, it has been wisely operated in those schools and seems to have benefited everybody. They have felt that they had a participatory role in what was going on. They might only have changed a bit of landscaping - what was a 2-feet hill now becomes a 5-feet hill, or whatever - or the design of a building or the way the administration block should be situated. Those inputs have had very good results in those two communities. I notice that it has been extended somewhat and that Hilder Road State School, which is a new school being constructed out at The Gap, either now has or is about to have a preliminary p. and c. formed to do work there. Unfortunately there are some problems related to getting teachers involved, because it is not always possible to know who will be the teachers at that school in the following year. However, I believe it would be possible to know who the principal would be in the following year. An involvement of the principal and any staff who would be known would be advantageous. That is a very difficult situation. Certainly, from the example at the north coast, it has been a very worthwhile innovation.

At Kawana there were very significant changes made to the original draft plan effected after consultation with local authority members, the p. and c., shire engineers and so on. We were not able to involve teachers because, frankly, at that stage back in May there was no principal appointed, nor was there one foreshadowed.

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BY MR. HEWITT: We have had a number of indications that the overall teaching load of teachers should be reduced, but you are the first one to quantify it to the extent of saying that there should be a reduced teacher loading for first-year teachers. Can you tell us why you particularly identify first-year teachers?-- I did not mean to infer in that that other teachers should not have a reduced load.

That inference is not being taken. I am just interested in your emphasis?-- It is generally accepted by most educational authorities, I believe, that first-year teachers should have some provision of more pupil-free time in order that they can consult with more senior members of the staff and with the deputy principals and principals to acquire a lot of information that they may not otherwise acquire in that period. You have to remember that a person who comes from, say, college has had maybe 13 weeks actually in a school and then find themselves totally in charge of, say, 33 pupils for five days a week throughout the entire year. Often that creates burdens and they run into different problems and have the odd difficulty. If they were provided with a little bit more free time they might be able to do just that little bit more research into the subject matter which a first-year teacher has to be concerned with, and they would also be able to consult other teachers, which is probably a more important aspect, who are more experienced in the field to find out more about techniques and more about the children involved. If you are teaching Grade 5 and there is another teacher on the staff who has had a particular pupil you have got, for the last three years, and you are not too sure about how to handle a problem that child may have, a good talk to that teacher will provide you with a better insight, and for that reason first-year teachers are considered to have some extra consideration. Actually, there are some schools now that try to do that. It is my experience that principals endeavour to give first-year teachers either a reduced timetable in secondary schools or a reduced class size in primary schools.

BY MR. MILLER: You believe they should go through an induction year similar to the medical profession?-- No.

You do not think they should?-- If you want to explain more fully what you mean by an induction year - but at present they are on probation.

They would be under the control of a qualified teacher?-- It would be very difficult to formalise that into some structure without creating a lot of problems. At present they are members of the staff and are looked on as members of the staff.

But I question whether they should be?-- If that is the pretence with which you are phrasing the question, I would have to answer, no, I wouldn't agree with it.

Could I ask you in what area you would reduce spending on education?-- The Government has reduced the percentage allocated in the Budget for the last three years, I understand, for education. I wouldn't propose that the education expenditure should be reduced. I think that there may well be ways in which the expenditure of money could be better used or streamlined.

In what areas are you thinking of?-- I could get very cynical and say that principals' conferences at Surfair could well be done away with, but you are looking at a very small amount of money. I think probably the major area where -----

That is your major criticism of the Government's spending on education, is it?-- I thought you realised the humour in my

answer, but obviously you didn't. The major area of expenditure that I think can be improved is in buildings. Often I think that money is being saved - cents, if you like, are being saved, and dollars are being lost. Small things - when you see a new school being built and because enough money had not been allocated you end up with no cement skirting around the building and you end up then with carpets totally destroyed within the space of six months. With the expenditure of a little more money there could have been a lot of benefit gained. So I think it is poor allocation of the money that is there at present which is the cause of a lot of the criticism.

Being a political person, what percentage of the Budget would you allocate to education?-- I don't feel competent at this stage to answer that. I think it would be wrong of me to attempt to.

BY MR. POWELL: To move into another area, on page 5 you talk about the difficulty of staffing country schools, and that is a subject very close to my heart and certainly close to the hearts of lots of people who have written in to us. You talk about incentive schemes. Have you thought an incentive scheme through, and can you give the Committee some ideas about what your party believes should be used as an incentive?-- Again I would have to say that the details have not been worked out at an A.L.P. committee meeting, but I am sure in Parliament there would be some discussion on it. I could outline, I think, some of the accepted methods by which teachers could be provided with incentives. There is currently a scheme operating where certain places are classified as remote. These remote areas are places like Kowanyama, Mornington Island, Thursday Island and those sorts of places. In fact, up until last year Mornington Island was not remote, but it is now a remote area. Those places are given extra concessions for vacation leave. A teacher there is given a return trip to Brisbane or some other city in Queensland once a year. Those sorts of concessions could be extended in the same way that, as you know, there are discussions that have been held between teachers and the department concerning a pay loading, which is a benefit. The other area, and I think this is probably a prime area, is in teacher housing which has been somewhat diminished,of course, by the tax that has been mooted. But certainly teacher housing is an area that requires improvement, and has been improved to some extent of recent years.

Would the A.L.P. be in favour of a free housing scheme for teachers in remote areas? You may be aware that in days gone by part of a principal's emolument was a house, especially in the remote areas but it also worked in the city areas. Would the A.L.P. be in favour of free housing accommodation for teachers in areas that are regarded as, climatically anyhow, not advantageous?-- I think the situation is such a complex one it would be wrong for me now to try to suggest categorically, "Yes, that would be a good idea", or, "No, it would not." However, I would say that if it were feasible, and it would have to be studied because obviously it has got a lot of ramifications, it has benefits and certainly teachers would be more willing to go to places like Mornington Island if they knew that even though they did not have any radio and mail only every eight or nine days they did have a house which was comfortable and for which they paid no rent. Those sorts of things are certainly considerations, but I couldn't say categorically "Yes" or "No".

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing. I would be pleased if you would convey to the A.L.P. our thanks for their submission, which was appreciated, and I can assure you we will be giving close consideration to the matters raised.

The Committee adjourned at 11.8 a.m.

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(Australian Labour Party)

The Committee resumed at 11.31 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the hearing of the Select Committee on Education is reconvened. At the outset I welcome pupils from the Newmarket State School who are sitting in with us this morning. I thank them very much for being with us. I remind them that it is on their behalf that we have been discussing many of these issues over a period.

I am very pleased now to welcome Dr. Angel Rendle-Short, who has been in frequent correspondence with me as chairman of the Select Committee of Inquiry. I am very pleased to welcome her today. We have received evidence submitted by the doctor and, for record purposes, it is coded MA-67 and MY-34. Her evidence has been received and studied by members so we can now proceed to questions on it.

DR. ANGEL RENDLE-SHORT, examined:

BY MR. MILLER: You have been very critical of some of the English texts studied in our schools?-- Yes.

What procedure should be introduced to ensure that parents have a say on what is taught in our schools?-- I feel my view is best summed up by the introductory remarks on the submission I made concerning this matter - not the introductory remarks, but the second from last paragraph where I said -

> "It is clear that in our high schools where pupils come from a wide range of differing cultural backgrounds there will be among the parents a considerable divergence of view regarding the suitability or otherwise of modern literature selected for inclusion in the syallabus for in-depth class-room study."

I think this is an inevitable ground from which one must make decisions. One has to accept that there is a wide divergence of view regarding suitability. But my real plea - and this is my main reason for coming this morning - is summed up in the last paragraph which expresses the fact that when parents do make objection - and over the last eight years these are parents who hold to the Judaeo-Christian ethic - when they do make objections the children are discriminated against. There have been several cases - certainly in regard to my own family and other families - where those individual children have been separated from the class and given alternative literature to study and be examined on, and the school and the main class continues in its path. This, to my mind -----

BY MR. HEWITT: Could that be because you are the only parent who has complained?-- I might in a particular school have been the only parent who felt strongly enough or --------

BY MR. MILLER: Or interested enough?-- Well, sufficiently - what shall I say -----

Motivated?-- Motivated - who sees the danger involved. I think at a scholastic level it is discriminating and I think the psychological trauma involved for those children, which may at the time be hidden, is very considerable. I think that later you get the fruit of that in their lives and it is a real trauma at a time in their life when they are at a school in an education set-up when they should not have this trauma. I think it is scholastically, educationally wrong.

Have you any views on MACOS and SEMP material?-- I cannot honestly say that I have studied them in detail because, as you know - I just have not got time; there are books, and books and books. This is one of my main criticisms of it: if the children are taker through, for example, MACOS what time have they got for really worthwhile education? To my mind MACOS is not really education. I just weep to think that our children are being deprived of all the marvellous heritage of literature - Australian, English and American literature and history. They are taken up with this type of education which is essentially based on the behavioural sciences. I think it is swallowing up all their time and is making them even less educated. That is my own view.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: In respect of the prefect system in schools, you suggest that it has been abandoned in many situations. Are you suggesting that the Government should prescribe that a prefect system in high schools should be retained?-- That was just a comment. It was our experience to have children in schools where it was set on one side. We felt it was a great pity and militated against the good of the children.

BY MR. HEWITT: Are there any social education courses that you would condone under any circumstance?-- I do not really know what you mean without definition.

One of the areas of controversy with education these days concerns the social courses dealing with contemporary society. I suppose that is a simple way of putting it. Therefore, are there any courses coming under that broad umbrella that you would approve?-- I think the great mistake is -..we are giving such courses which are very important for the young people to know what is facing them in society. But I feel our mistake is that it is against such an empty background that, in order to evaluate what is happening today we have to know history in much greater depth. We have to teach our children; they have got to have a basis before they can, at a proper age, evaluate what is happening in our own society, because there is no doubt that our society is at great crisis.

Recognising the availability of literature and television, and the more open attitude of children these days with their greater opportunity to become conversant with all aspects of contemporary society, do you think we may be guilty of trying to wrap them in cotton wool whereas, in fact, we should accept that they are pretty conversant with the things that are happening in the world, and we should converse with them at a greater level of equality assuming that they understand things, and explain those things in a wholesome method rather than assume that they are totally unacquainted with them.

Have you something specific in mind? Do you mean the area of sexuality?

Yes?-- Or other areas?

Let us talk about sexuality, certainly?-- In terms wider than just one single question, here again I think we need to take children back to a knowledge of history. They need to be taught that. That is a real function of the schools. I think they are getting a lot of information concerning our contemporary society at home through television and one thing and another, and these tremendous questions, including sexuality, are being raised on television, in the Press and so on. But above all, it is the opportunity of the school to take those children back and teach them the history of our western countries. I know this from personal experience. My husband had sabbatical leave and we took our two secondary school children to England for a year. We spent the whole year teaching them history and English literature right from early days, from Roman times. This was in England. It was absolutely incredible what a new vision they got of what is happening today in the 20th Century. I believe this is necessary.

BY MR. POWELL: I refer to one of your documents marked No. 2. If I read the section to which I want to refer it may be of help to you. You say, "It is often argued that sex education in schools offers an answer to these social ills." You had spoken previously about social ills. You then say, "We submit that the teaching of sexuality or human relations in a class-room situation within a context divorced from ethical and Christian moral principles so far from being a cure is in fact a serious contributing factor to present-day licentiousness amongst youth and the resulting spread of sexually transmitted diseases." Can you give us any evidence that that is so?-- This is the second reason why I wanted to come today. Of course, this is only verbatim evidence. I do not have figures - these days it is always demanded that one have figures. I have gone back to general practice and have been practising in a hospital situation now for the last two years and in general practice. All I can say is that I am absolutely aghast at what is happening to our young women . I say "our young women" because young men do not very often come to me . I could count on the fingers of one hand the number of young men who come. But I have seen scores and scores of young women from 14 years of age to , let us say, 25 and I am absolutely appalled at what I have found.

The proponents of sex education in schools say, of course, that that is a very good reason why there should be sex education in schools?-- Yes. I have given a lot of thought to this during the last two years when I have been seeing these young people. I have come to the firm conclusion that so far from being a preventive, it is actually teaching them.

Are you familiar with the book by Gloria Lenz, "Raping our Children", which gives documentary evidence of the experience with sex education in the States and England?-- No.

That bears out what you have just said?-- Perhaps I may say just one further little word about that. I am appalled because I see it in contrast with what it was 20 years ago, let us say, when I was in practice before. One thing is the disease. Our young women are rotten with disease. I am absolutely appalled at what I have found. That is one thing. The second thing is that I can think of only three, not more, young women who have a view of marriage by which they say , "No, this is for marriage. I am going to abstain from sexuality

until I am married." Apart from that, with the others marriage has gone out of the window. It is impossible to get through to these young people. In every case I make a point of it and I take time to try to get through to them and to try to get to their level.

BY MR. MILLER: Is this the fault of our society or of the teaching profession?-- I have asked myself that. I think there are a lot of factors going to make it up. The children that I am seeing now - 20 years of age now - have gone through secondary schooling in the last eight years. I have no doubt whatever that one of the factors has been the type of literature that has been promoted in the schools.

Promoted by whom?-- The teachers. I say that without fear of contradiction.

Would you favour sex education in out-of-school hours, attended by parents as well as the students, and given by a medical practitioner?-- Yes. I think myself that the first step needs to be educating the parents that this is their job. I think where there is any instruction for children as suggested here, the teachers need to be really carefully screened because inevitably in a subject like this, whether the teachers are, let us say, following the Christian ethic or are right at the other end of the scale, it is a loaded subject. It is a subject in which a lot of ethical contributing factors are fed into their teaching. They therefore need to be screened.

BY MR. POWELL: In one of your unmarked submissions dealing with "Value Changing", you refer to family breakdown and disease among teenage girls. You mention also three things - sensitivity training, group dynamics and transactional analysis?-- Yes.

I think I have some idea of what group dynamics and sensitivity training are. Can you tell me what transactional analysis is?-- It is very popular and they are using it in certain sections of the medical fraternity. I personally think it is a lot of rubbish.

What is it? What happens?-- "I'm O.K. You're O.K." There is a book on it; I could give you the reference. There is a book by an American and he puts it all in that. That is the sort of material - "I'm O.K. You're O.K." Certain deductions are arrived at from that.

In a group dynamic situation?-- I do not think he majors on that so much. It is more an understanding of the way the mind works and psychology works.

Would you offer some explanation of sensitivity training?-- Only to say that if you look up psychiatric references on sensitivity training, there is very strong condemnation of it from a very good body of psychiatric opinion. I do not have the reference here but I could give it to you.

BY MR. MILLER: Dealing with the same subject: there has been criticism of some psychological techniques used by teachers, such as group therapy, sensitivity of training, value classification, role playing and simulation games. As a medical practitioner, have you any views on these? I am thinking in particular of simulation games and role playing?-- I do not really feel competent to comment.

My field is in general practice. I would not use them myself because I believe in the direct approach. I do not believe - I think that non-directive counselling has been much too strongly emphasised. I think there is a place for non-directive counselling but I am an advocate of directive counselling.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: You very kindly sent to me this document from the Australian Union of Students called, "School Days, School Days, Good Old Sexist School Days." Would you like to tell us a little more about it and what you think of it?-- I think that this was a document that certain groups in our society were trying to spread in the schools, teaching the children at an early age the doctrines of feminism. When this was found to be given out in the schools, one only had to thumb through it to see that the basic philosophy was very detrimental and damaging and it fits in with all of the other literature that is available from the feminist group. The feminists were very active and have been all along but they were particularly active in a university meeting about two or three years ago, and they had all their literature on a stall and it is all the same as this. It is a world-wide movement and they are trying to capture the children. There is no doubt about that whatsoever, because, of course, if young people can be won over to a certain ideology, then they have been captured.

Do you think it should be banned by the Literature Board?-- I do not know whether it should be banned by the Literature Board, but I certainly do not think it should be allowed in the schools.

BY MR. MILLER: Would you like to see more time spent on basic education? Is there any area of education on which you would like to see less time spent or even done away with completely?-- Again I do not really feel competent to make a comment there, except that I do think that there is more emphasis on the maths-science side than on the humanities. I think that teaching of maths and the sciences is absolutely marvellous. I think the children are being turned out with an expertise far, far beyond what we had 20, 30 or 40 years ago. But I think in the humanities they are really deficient and, more than that, they are critical. For example, I tried to interest my children in Shakespeare, in Milton - some of the really, really great men in the past - and they have already abandoned them; they are not interested.

BY MR. HEWITT: Who have abandoned these?-- The young people coming up out of the schools and I think that is a real cause of worry, because to my mind they are not educated. I say this of my own children. I hope nobody is listening or is going to take this down in writing, but a family which has a lot of privileges - they have a room to study in, they have peace and quiet in the evening, they have everything, and parents who are interested, quite a big library of books - but in my view, coming out at the other end, they are uneducated at 17 or 18.

BY MR. MILLER: Who would you blame for this - the Education Department?-- I think that there are so many factors going into it. Of course, I suppose, ultimately it is the teacher, the individual teacher at the time and, of course, there is a big difference in the teachers. I notice, for example, that when a young person gets a good teacher who is really sort of rapt in their subject, they forge ahead, so I suppose the teachers. I think the Education Department is too far removed. It is really the individual teacher. So I suppose one has to ask the question, "Where is their teaching coming from?"

BY MR. POWELL: In view of those statements, would you like to see a greater involvement of parent decision-making in what is going on in individual schools?-- I think that is very dangerous, actually, in a way. I think there will be so much controversy

and from an administrative point of view it is almost impossible. Besides which, I think the teachers are professionals, which indicates that things must indeed have come to a very pretty pass when, over the eight years, parents really rose up and criticised the teachers. Until eight years ago - about 1972 - I had completely committed the teaching of my children to the teachers and to the Education Department. I trusted them. I was prepared to really give them their heads on that. I do not trust them now. That is an awful thing to say. I think some individual teachers are wonderful, but somewhere along the line I do not trust my children in that situation.

BY MR. HEWITT: Don't you think that you should be able to establish a set of values in your own children, that they can discriminate against what is good and what is bad? I hesitate to relate in personal terms, but I have salacious books on my own book shelves that I have read to find out what they are about. Never for a moment have I thought about hiding those books away. The kids will sometimes say, "What's that book like?" I say, "Oh, it's scrappy. I wouldn't waste my time, and I think you should take my advice." If they want to read it, I am not over-fussed, because I think that I establish their values. Surely this is a challenge that no parent can abrogate to other teachers or to anyone. It is a challenge to us all?-- I follow - we follow - the same practices you do, exactly the same, but what you do in your own home is different from what is done in an establishment that sets out to be an educational establishment. I think that the first-year university literature students are old enough to understand what is happening to literature in the 20th century, but the presumption there is that they already know the literature coming up through the centuries and they have a scholastic basis, a yardstick, with which to measure. In the school situation, give a 13-year-old, "Catcher in the Rye" and I think he is a goner, because he has nothing against which to measure it scholastically.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much doctor. I appreciate the assistance that you have given to the members of the Committee. I should like to retain a little of the pamphlets that you sent to me until later. Then I shall be happy to return them to you. Again, on behalf of the Committee, thank you very much for appearing.

We are now pleased to welcome Mr. Raymond Sadler of the Australian Institute of Management (Queensland Division). The submission is coded Au-147.

RAYMOND SADLER, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps I could begin the questioning by talking about an interest that is common between us. If I could refer to page 3, item 9 - you talk about career guidance and counselling being carried out sometimes by amateurs. You detail a role for service clubs. One in particular would be of close interest to you and to me. I would ask you what goes on in that regard at the moment and what do you think is the wider field for the future?-- What goes on within the Rotary International movement, in which I am involved, is that a Rotary club or a group of Rotary clubs in a district is asked to organise a careers guidance night at which as many representatives of professions and trades have their stall, if you like, and the students from schools are invited to ask the professions and trades people questions about those trades and professions, the basic requirements for training, career opportunities and so on. Our argument is that too often it is left to these willing amateurs - I want to make it quite clear that I am talking about amateurs in the role of counselling and guidance; there is no question about their technical knowledge, technical skills or professional abilities - we see that guidance and counselling is a skilled task that requires people to have a good understanding about how to answer questions and how to use language. By and large trades people and professional people do not necessarily have these skills.

How would you suggest this role could be widened? How could the Government widen it in the future?-- I think the need is to provide for more professionally trained counsellors to attend schools during their course of school activity and also to attend these activities organised by service clubs who provide the professional input. We know this happens to a certain extent; the Department of Employment provides counselling officers to go to some counselling nights. The number of counsellors available in relation to the number of counselling and careers guidance evenings held usually means that some are conducted without this professional guidance. The further one is away from the capital city, the fewer are the chances of having professional assistance.

BY MR. HEWITT: In your submission you make the very honest statement that there is insufficient co-ordination and co-operation between employers, trade unions and the education system. That is a lament that we have heard very frequently during our hearings. We are yet to hear a really positive suggestion as to how it can be put right. Are you going to be the first person to give us a positive suggestion?-- I don't know. I can tell you, I think, speaking now on behalf of managers generally, that they would be more than willing to be involved in discussions about co-ordination. If I could use the one example I can recall - when the State Government first decided to set up its committee on work experience programmes in schools, I do not think there was any shortage of people from the business and commercial side to participate in those discussions. I myself was a member of the original committee and I found that to be a very interesting experience, one in which I found that the educators and the people from industry and commerce worked very well in looking at the problems associated with work experience in schools. I have the opinion - I think it is in the submission - that by and large it has been the educators

who have stood aside or stood off and that educators ought to be more prepared to take businessmen and professional men into discussions especially about bridging the gap between education and work.

You could make positive suggestions on how the requirements of management could be better met by the education system, could you?-- Well, I think I have mentioned in the submission the structure within the college of advanced education and board of advanced education system whereby advisory committees and assessment committees as far as the board of advanced education is concerned are drawn from businesses and professionals, who are the employing agencies of the products of the schools. I serve at both of those levels as a representative of management and I find that they work extremely well. I would believe that encouraging various levels of education to invite representatives of businesses and professions, the Public Service and indeed all those engaged in management to contribute to future plans about course design and the general operations of education would be met positively.

BY MR. MILLER: How do you define preparation for work? Are you referring to literacy and numeracy, or are you talking about shorthand, typing, woodwork and so on?-- I am not being as specific as to refer to shorthand and woodwork; I am talking about literacy and numeracy, because I believe those matters are fundamental to any person who has to earn a living, as they are fundamental to any person who has to go on to tertiary education. The institute is talking also about general attitudes to work, perception about what work is, a better understanding of the various factors in our economic life which contribute to the well-being of the community. It is my impression that most school-leavers and indeed most graduates, are too ill-informed about the general processes in industry and commerce and government as well as life generally to be able to make a useful contribution early enough in their business careers.

On page 3 in paragraph 10 you refer to attitudes to blue-collar work. You say that attitudes are affected by parents and teachers. Are you suggesting that parents or teachers have a negative attitude to blue-collar work?-- Yes, I am. I think there is a feeling in the community that for a person who is nearing completion of secondary school - the ideal picture that is seen is for him to go on to university or a college of advanced education.

BY MR. HEWITT: You are quite right?-- If he cannot do that, the second rung in the ladder is perhaps a white-collar job or the Public Service or a bank or something like that, and the third rung in the ladder is blue-collar work.

BY MR. MILLER: This attitude has changed in America, hasn't it? And we are told that we usually follow America a few years after?-- I don't know that we usually follow America. I think the reward for achievement system in the United States is an improvement on ours. This really is all part of this attitude to work. I have visited the United States on two occasions and as I interpret it the Americans seem to appreciate the need to work hard in order to reap the benefits.

How can the schools counter this? Do you feel there is a general community atmosphere among students and teachers?-- I think schools can help to counter this by inviting people

from business and commerce into the schools to talk about what goes on in business and commerce, to create an impression of the world out there, the real world of work.

BY MR. POWELL: You were talking before about the lack of knowledge of graduates, and probably of teachers, too, about what is happening in the world of industry and commerce. Do you feel that as part of the teacher preparation courses at the C.A.E.s there should be a unit where student teachers go to industry and participate in industry to find out how the decision-making process works?-- That would be a very good idea. In the submission I have said that, whereas there has been some emphasis on work experience for students, there is a great need to have some work experience, or work observation at least, for teachers, especially those teachers who are teaching Grades 11 and 12 at secondary school and are counselling students about their career opportunities.

On page 1, number 2, you talk about the negative attitude of some school-leavers and graduates to life and work You have just referred to Grades 11 and 12. Do you see relevance for all teachers from Grade 5 up to have some knowledge of industry and commerce so that just as a general topic of discussion within the schools this is brought in all the time?-- Yes, I do, so that the students' understanding of the real world is built up gradually, rather than something just dropping in at Grades 11 and 12 - appreciating the problems of the total curriculum.

R. Sadler
(Australian Institute of Management (Queensland Division))

BY THE CHAIRMAN: On that point, could I probe you a little further by asking you why you think that negative attitude of some school-leavers exists?-- Yes. I think it is due to what we have really been talking about and that is the lack of perception of what to expect out of the work-place. If the child does not have a perception of what work is all about, how can he or she see how to fit himself or herself into that work situation?

BY MR. POWELL: Do you see that the school is not demanding enough from children?-- I don't know that I understand the question.

I will try to explain it a little more simply. Do you think that, because of the continuous assessment that is used in schools today, children are not being challenged enough and, when not succeeding the challenge, being encouraged to succeed more? You talk about the peer pressure group in another part of your submission and how you feel that that is not advantageous for students; yet, when they get into the work-force there is distinct peer pressure, isn't there?-- Yes.

Is this adding to the negative attitude of students, do you feel?-- It may be. I think it adds to uncertainty in the student's mind. The move towards less rigid types of teaching in, say, Grade 12, which may or may not be to prepare them for tertiary teaching, which is even less rigid, leads to many students lacking the direction which they perhaps should have, and they would be better students - more motivated students - if they had more direction and were left less to themselves to work out their own destiny.

BY MR. MILLER: Would you explain more to the Committee more about the work-experience committee that is referred to in paragraph 5 on page 6 and would you also like to see more emphasis on trade unions in our schools, perhaps with a set course on trade unionism?-- If I may answer the second question first, I would not want to see more emphasis than I understand there has been on trade unionism without seeing an equal emphasis on the management side - in fact, the total industry/commerce picture. There have been reports of a lack of balance in some of the presentations made both at secondary and tertiary levels about these different segments of industrial life. There needs to be more of it, but there needs to be a balanced picture put forward. I am sorry, but I have forgotten the first part of the question.

The work-experience committee, in paragraph 5?-- Yes. Let me give you an example of a student in business communications at the Institute of Technology. He or she would be required to spend four or five weeks in one of the vacation periods working within an organisation - say, within a public relations department - actually doing work for that organisation. I am saying there that that five weeks of actual experience in an organisation would add considerable value to that person as a graduate; that, in the selection process, if you have two graduates with exactly the same educational achievements, one of whom had four or five weeks actually in the work-place and the other did not, you would be inclined as an employer to lean towards the one who had had some experience.

BY MR. HEWITT: A work-experience programme suffers from problems of time and also hazards of particular industries, so that it is not as easy to implement as one would imagine. There is another concept - work inspection. Have you explored this one at all, where youngsters have a hazy idea of what a job might entail? A mere inspection of the work face might reinforce that impression or help them to decide that that is not

for them. Maybe additionally to talking about work experience we should be talking about work inspection?-- Yes. Work inspection or work observation is a very poor second to work experience. The more hands-on experience we can give students, the more chance they have of making an assessment about that industry or that career. Obviously in some industries it is not possible to give them hands-on experience because of safety requirements and production requirements. However, in many careers I think it would be possible to give more of them some work experience, even if it is one day a week for, say, six weeks.

BY MR. MILLER: You are very critical of teachers' lack of work experience, aren't you?-- When you say "critical" - I am not being critical in the sense that I do not think for a minute that they do not want to participate in that. I do not think the system has provided for it. I think it is something that should be done.

BY MR. HEWITT: When you recognise the need for more Australianised material in preference to overseas material, would you support a greater study of the Australian Constitution, the workings of our Parliaments, the working of our legal processes, the working of law enforcement and the different tribunals and appeals that are at the disposal of citizens so that in every sense of the word they know their rights as well as their responsibilities as citizens, and would that help them in the management field?-- Yes. I think they should have as much of that sort of thing as they can, within the constraints of the time available.

Emphasising particularly an understanding of the Australian Constitution, we get a distinct impression that that is a great void in the Queensland education system?-- In adults; not only in students.

Adults were once children. If they were introduced to it at a younger age, there would not be that void. Would you agree that greater emphasis should be placed on an understanding of that document?-- Yes, along with all the other things that surround it. The reference that I made to Australianised material was particularly with regard to the importing of American and English material and its use in the education institution without adapting it in some way.

I am interested not only in management but also in industry and commerce, relating to local schools. It seems to me that when any organisation in a particular locality proposes to enlarge its younger staff it should relate first of all to the local school, indicating what vacancies are available and asking whether young people would be leaving that school with that particular training. It seems to me that that lends itself to solving other social problems. If a person gets local employment, he has fewer problems of transport and therefore less time is lost each day in getting to work and getting home from work. From a public administration point of view, that leads to fewer demands on public transport - and we are all involved in that. Would you agree with this concept that industry, manufacturers and commerce - everyone - should be relating more to local schools - and, obviously, the converse, that local schools should be relating more to the community?-- I would accept that notion, yes.

BY MR. MILLER: Should there be more courses or streams in the years 11 and 12, or should there be an opportunity for students to leave, say at Grade 10 and go on to a technical college, which is the introduction of a new stream completely?--

I think we have to be careful here that we do not provide a system whereby if they leave too early they get shut out of the steps through the education system. I have said in the submission that there is a tendency for us to identify too many terminal points as it is and that, if a person sees he has failed to reach a certain level at a certain age, he seems to think that he is disadvantaged. The problem with suggesting that people leave school too early is that it may be too much for them to catch up if they choose to catch up later, to lock themselves into the education system; but I certainly think that, if we can come to a system whereby, as I suggested in the submission, the parent, the teacher and a counsellor can perhaps at Grade 10 or 11 help the student to work out some personal objective in terms of career, it may well be at that stage that a TAFE college is the ideal place for that person to go at Grade 11 rather than to stay in secondary school.

R. Sadler
(Australian Institute of Management (Queensland Division))

Do you believe they are leaving school when they go to a TAFE college?-- Do I believe they are leaving school?

You said they should not be encouraged to leave school early?-- No, what I am saying is that they should not be encouraged to leave the education system too early.

Again, are they leaving the education system if they go to a TAFE college?-- I wouldn't have thought so, no. It is a specialised version of school, I would have thought.

BY MR. HEWITT: You made a statement that hangs on the air a little and begs further definition when you said, "The new class-room methods are not as effective as the old, not in the short term, anyway." What do you mean, please?-- There has been a lot of debate and a lot of reports written about the effectiveness of the product, if you like, of the new open class-room technique as against the previously well-established technique where the teacher has much more direction over what the class does. The reports that I have read, and I have not got any references to give to you, indicate that in the short term it seems to be more difficult for the children out of the newer type of class-room to adjust to the next level of education.

BY MR. POWELL: Your institute conducts extremely good management course seminars. Would you believe there would be a place in these seminars for teachers to learn more about management techniques so they can use them in their everyday work?-- That is an interesting question. We did, at the request of the Department of Secondary Education, conduct a series of management courses for high school principals when it was realised that high school principals are, by and large, administrators rather than teachers, and I believe one of you gentlemen is one of our graduates, if you like to use that word. I believe those activities were very successful, and most of the principals who went through those courses said that if they could have had that sort of instruction 20 years ago they felt they would have made better school principals. I think the same would apply to teachers. Teachers, after all, are in a supervisory position, and some of the basics of supervision that we use in commerce and industry would be just as applicable to teachers in their supervisory role as they are to supervisors in industry and commerce.

I have a question about the final results of the assessment procedure as you as an employer see it. You make some comment about this on page 2. Perhaps my question is unfair, but are you aware of the Scott report?-- Yes, I am. I haven't read it but I have read excerpts from it.

The Scott report advocates a criteria-based assessment. Do you think that will be any more use to you as an employer than the present 1 to 7 scale, or are they equally nebulous?-- I think the criteria-based assessment will be better. I think I can say the consensus in industry and commerce is that for many careers it is necessary under the present system for the employer to devise his own system of assessment to supplement what the department provides.

There is a strong feeling that I have gained from submissions that that is not a bad thing, that industry should be creating their own assessment procedures or their own selection procedures and not relying on the school. What is your reaction to that?-- That is all right, perhaps, for the large organisations and the well-informed organisations that have the capacity to do that, but I would say they are in the minority and that what is really required here is that we come

back to this question of greater co-ordination between educators and employers to make sure that these things are integrated and that the sort of assessment that is adequate for an employer is something which the education system can provide.

BY MR. MILLER: In paragraph 4 on page 1 you say, "The lack of fit between training received at tertiary level and jobs available ....." Are you suggesting there should be more manpower planning there?-- That is exactly what I am suggesting.

It was not very popular during the war period, was it?-- I think we are probably under a different climate, but there is no doubt to my mind, and to the institute's mind, that both nationally and in terms of the State and in terms of a region of the State there needs to be manpower planning in order that we can get a better fit between graduates and job opportunities and, of course, that means that under proper manpower planning that we have a good idea that there will be jobs available for those graduates before they start their course, not at the end of their course. We perhaps will be able to eliminate such things as where colleges of advanced education have to introduce courses to give vocational skills to graduates because the tertiary course has not provided them with any vocational skills.

In paragraph 2 on the same page you refer to the negative attitude of some school-leavers. Do you think unemployment benefits are too high and perhaps are seen as an alternative to work?-- They may be. I don't know that I have got a strong opinion about that.

You refer to the negative attitude of some school-leavers and graduate school life?-- I am concerned there with the fact, and we mentioned this before, that I think that is very largely to do with the lack of perception of what work is all about and the need we should all have to make a contribution to the community.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to thank you very much for appearing and I would be pleased if you would convey to the institute our sincere thanks for their thought in the preparation of the submission. I now invite Mr. Colin Lamont, the president of the Queensland Division of the Australian Council for Educational Standards and Mr. Don Gaffney, a member of the executive, to appear before us. The submission from the Australian Council for Educational Standards, Queensland Branch, has been received and studied by members. It will not be necessary for it to be re-read.

Once again, I thank Mr. Sadler for his attendance.

MR. SADLER: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Your submission is coded AU-166 and I would ask you to turn to page 1 of it where you say, "There can be no question that the philosophy of equality of output has actually been promoted at a high level in the hierarchy of decision-making." What evidence have you got to substantiate that claim?

MR. LAMONT: I would maintain that reports that came from the Australian Schools Commission during the mid 1970s, for example, paid tribute to that particular philosophy of equality per se or equality of output.

THE CHAIRMAN: So you are referring to the Schools Commission?

MR. LAMONT: The Australian Schools Commission reports, and I would argue that the sort of things that we hear from committees such as the Scott committee, where we have a competency-based assessment system where students compete not against each other but compete against their own previous performances and where their mastery of the subject is judged by comparison with the achievement of others is all part of this concept of equality. I think it is a false approach and I do not think you can ever achieve this sort of equality. Indeed, as I think I have said in one part of this submission, people who follow this line may do so from very, very praiseworthy motives, for example the elimination of the branding of a child as a failure, but nevertheless the concepts of success and failure are two sides of the one coin and if you do away with one concept you manage to do away with the other, unfortunately, and I would hate to do away with the concept of success. I think that people who subscribe to this sort of philosophy are confusing equality as a sense of justice and a principle of justice with inequality as a matter of genetics. I do not think it was ever intended that we were all equal, and again, as I think I have set out somewhere in this submission, I am sure we can all remember instances of the academic student who excels in the academic field who has some envy of the student who is a good sportsman or a good pianist or whatever, who excels in another field, and there is always going to be this, people will excel in different ways.

THE CHAIRMAN: On page 5 of your submissions, gentlemen, you talk about a recommendation - that a list of recommended novels and plays should be drawn up. How long do you think the list would be?

MR. LAMONT: This would no doubt depend on what sort of assessment system were adopted at the time. When I was studying my matriculation English, and even at university, there were set novels and plays, but there was not a wide choice. Everyone in a particular year covered the same work. It may be that that system is returned to but I see absolutely no reason why a choice should not be there. A novelist such as Conrad who might appeal more to male students than to female students, or the person who likes adventure as opposed to the person who likes some other style of literature, should not be foisted on everybody. Certainly there should be an area of choice. I see no affront to professional judgment and academic freedom in having some sort of a list. I don't think it matters how long it is so long as all the books on it are generally acceptable to the community from which the children are drawn.

MR. MILLER: How wide would you describe basic education, and what should it include?

MR. LAMONT: What our newspapers tend to call the basics in my judgment certainly means competence with the English language and preferably an understanding of its literature, or some appreciation of its literature; a command of basic mathematical techniques, an understanding of some science - at least a general science knowledge and some understanding of the history of western civilisation. I say "western" because, after all, we ought to know what it is in our history that brought us to the present point. And I include some knowledge of world geography.

MR. MILLER: Is there Australia-wide support for your organisation?

MR. LAMONT: There is considerable support for my organisation in all States. The sponsors of the Australian Council for Educational Standards are almost to a man - with the exception of the former chairman of the Independent Schools Association - professors of such subjects as English, philosophy, mathematics and engineering throughout universities of Australia.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you expand on that a little and state how long you have been operating in Queensland and what measure of support there is within the State?

MR. LAMONT: The Australian Council for Educational Standards has existed for a number of years. The first national president was Professor Leonie Cramer who is the Professor of Australian Literature in the Department of English at the University of Sydney. She is also the head of the Department of English. The organisation puts out a bi-monthly journal. I have been a member of it for a number of years; it has quite a large membership throughout Queensland. A number of us who have been members of the national body felt that it was time that we formed a Queensland chapter in order to bring together the views of Queensland members for this particular Committee of inquiry. It was your initiative that, in fact, prompted our initiative to form a Queensland chapter

MR. MILLER: You are critical of progressive education as a philosophy. What are your objections to it?

MR. LAMONT: Let us not use the tag. As I said in the first preamble to this report I would like to think that I am progressive. I don't necessarily, however, equate change with

progress; you can change in a number of different directions. I think there is at work in our education system a group of people who subscribe to the idea that change is necessarily progress. I think that if they find some factor in the system that they disapprove of they are prepared to throw it out and try something new without necessarily determining first that the something new is going to achieve better results. I, on the other hand, would like to see any new changes successfully trialled before being implemented. In fact, there is sufficient evidence around to say that in this State we seem to have adopted a practice of introducing a large number of so-called reforms that have been used in other countries, roughly at the time that the other countries are in fact discovering that they have not worked and are rejecting them - open-area class-rooms, the abolition of examinations and the move away from clearly defined subject areas and a common core of content in a syllabus are all things that have been tried in other areas - implemented - and just as we are starting to implement them they are being rejected in those other areas. For example, I instance a very recent statement by the Minister for Education in Canada who announced that the reforms, so called, that he introduced a few years ago himself, which concerned the abolition of examinations, the opting for internal assessment and the moving away from a common core of content in the basic subjects, he is now rejecting and reintroducing major elements of the former system that he himself, had determined to be replaced.

THE CHAIRMAN: On that point, are they reintroducing exams in Canada?

MR. LAMONT: Yes. Well, as close as New South Wales there is a very strong move to reintroduce some external examinations, at least as an option or at least as 50 per cent of an assessment. The most recent example I have of external exams being reintroduced is Canada. There is a very strong move for this sort of thing in England.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has happened in Canada?

MR. LAMONT: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not just a strong move?

MR. LAMONT: No, it has been announced.

MR. POWELL: In your submission you are extremely critical of the 1/7 system of assessment. You are also extremely critical of the competency-based assessment system as proposed by the Scott report.

MR. LAMONT: Yes.

MR. POWELL: What then would you do to assess students?

MR. LAMONT: As the gentleman preceding me, Mr. Sadler, said, he thought that there would be - and I agree with him - some value in having a criteria-based assessment, particularly for employers. When I heard him say that I realised that there was perhaps a concession I should make here and that is that a competency-based or a criteria-based assessment -that is to say, a verbal report of the mastery the student has obtained over a subject would certainly be very useful as a supplement to some other external assessment procedure and reporting which, in particular, shows comparative achievements. That could be very useful. But to have a criteria-based assessment on its own, without any other reporting on a comparative basis would be disastrous, I think, because each school would then become its own standard bearer. What can a tertiary institution do then

other than, as I have said in the report, I think, either throw the gates open to everyone who wants to come along or let people in by ballot, or set up its own examination system. I see you laugh when I say, "Let people in by ballot," but the students' union/Victoria is already demanding that.

MR. POWELL: I am interested to know how you and your organisation would introduce an external system of assessment into our schools?

MR. LAMONT: I think that every parent, every student and every teacher for that matter must have the option of opting for an external examination at the end of primary and at the end of secondary.

MR. POWELL: How would you organise it?

MR. LAMONT: On the same basis that it was organised prior to the introduction of the Radford system.

MR. POWELL: Who would direct it?

MR. LAMONT: I certainly would not expect the university to control it. That was one of the main failings of the old system; the entire external examination was there simply to serve university needs and, of course, it served only the needs of a small percentage of students.

MR. POWELL: Could you visualise an examination system that was set, perhaps, by a chief moderator and corrected within the school by the teachers involved?

MR. LAMONT: I hesitate to say that I am afraid I have little confidence in the devolution of that kind of responsibility mainly because of the way I have seen what I believe to be the ideals of the Radford system corrupted in practice.

MR. POWELL: Who would correct it?

MR. LAMONT: I see no reason why people in subject areas from universities could not correct it. Perhaps I could let Don answer that because he made the point to me over the phone only yesterday. It is not a new point but if I were to state it, perhaps he could make the point. There are two levels in teaching: one is the mastery of the subject and the other is a mastery of techniques. When it comes to drawing up the syllabus you certainly want the ideas of the people who are masters of the subject. For example, the professors at the university are the masters of the subject.

Then you want people who are trained in syllabus preparation and examination techniques to take over that educational responsibility by drawing up a syllabus and discovering how best to test it. The input of both these sorts of people is required. At the moment that is not happening.

MR. GAFFNEY: This is at the heart of the discussion of the professional responsibilities of teachers as such. A teacher, by the very nature of his training and the immediacy and interest of his job, is not qualified to judge on what goes in. We need the top men in the subject. We need the top people in the discipline to put what goes into the subjects. On the matter of techniques - how they are taught and at what stage - here is the scope for professional freedom. Outside that, it is a responsibility that does not belong to teachers and should not be foisted on them. It complicates the whole debate on what is a teacher's professional standing.

MR. LAMONT: To add to that just briefly - I think it goes a little into the area of teacher training and selection. Nevertheless, teachers are not trained to be syllabus developers. Under the present system of internal assessment and the amount of academic and professional freedom that exists, teachers are being required to be syllabus developers, with only broad guidelines being given. Teachers are then required to devise their own methods of testing and they are not trained to do that. Teachers are then being asked to become moderators of those results, and I do not recall anybody who is now a moderator actually having attended an in-service training course in moderation. I do not believe that teachers are in fact being adequately trained as teachers any more. I think the colleges of advanced education are just acting as quasi universities. But that is another issue.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are moving into another area. I should like to settle first the question of secondary school assessment. Have you thought through the mechanics of this optional exam suggestion? At what stage would a parent opt for an external examination - at the end of Grade 10?

MR. LAMONT: Yes, I think so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would the semester assessment be opted out of by that student?

MR. LAMONT: The Chairman of the Board of Secondary Studies made an interesting statement when, quite coincidentally, I happened to be here at the time. He made one interesting statement. He said that one of the advantages of the internal assessment system was that students could get a real indication as they went along of how well they were progressing, as opposed to the old system under which some people got quite a shock at the end of two years of Senior education. If we take that a little further, who is to give students in this internal assessment system an idea of how they are progressing? The obvious answer is the very same teachers who should be able to do the same thing under any system of assessment. If a teacher is sufficiently professional to be able to judge a student as he goes along and to give the ultimate answer as to how much he has achieved, why is not the same person competent to give students a real guide as to how well they are going as against a syllabus on which they will have to sit for an external examination?

THE CHAIRMAN: On pages 7 and 8 you talk about the present assessment scheme. You say at the bottom of page 7,

".....the case of a metropolitan high school...." I take it it is a State school you are talking about?

MR. LAMONT: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: "....where it was commonly known that the tenth grade commercial class always typed the exams for the senior school as part of their typing assignments." On page 8 you say, "Reports from both pupils and teachers confirm that it is possible in some schools in this State for students to avoid three-quarters of the set syllabus and maintain a seven rating." Is the system really that sloppy?

MR. LAMONT: The system varies. In some schools no doubt things are being done precisely as they were intended to be done, but it is possible for the system to be completely corrupted in this way. I do not want to tie those two statements together but I did mention that one example because it is an example that was brought to my attention by a person who has now left that school. I checked it out with one or two other people, one from the staff, and I was told that it is common knowledge that those commercial students have access to those exam papers. So there is obviously not much security there. With respect to the means by which a student can avoid up to three-quarters of a syllabus, let me give you an example. If we take the subject that I taught, which is history, it is generally accepted that in one semester you would endeavour to cover about 13 completely different topics. But at the beginning of the semester let us say that a teacher says, "I am going to put you into tutorials for some of the time, perhaps one period a week, and each of you is going to prepare a paper for the tutorial. I will assess that. You will also do an assignment of 1500 or 2000 words on a given topic within the 13 that we are supposed to cover and I will assess that. That will take up 50 or 60 per cent of your assessment for the semester. Then I will give you a set exam at the end." When the time comes for that set exam - I have seen this in practice and have had it reported to me by teachers who are members of our association - it is quite common for a subject master or mistress then to say, "This final test will not cover the whole semester's work. Your assignment was on the first half of the semester. Therefore we will only be covering the second half of the semester. Name the five topics in general that will be on the paper." The students can then study one topic and be prepared to answer any questions on that one topic. In that way the student has got through the entire semester with a tutorial topic, a semester topic, and one question out of an exam paper which was if not previewed at least outlined for the students. As I understand it, that is quite common practice. In that way you can get through a semester covering three topics out of 13.

MR. MILLER: Would your organisation advocate a core curriculum for all primary and secondary students?

MR. LAMONT: Yes.

MR. MILLER: You are very cautious about educational experimentation which may have unforeseen results with some children. Are you in favour of MACOS?

MR. LAMONT: No, I am not in favour of MACOS. The teachers who favoured MACOS amazed me with their inconsistency. They are the people who talk most about academic freedom. MACOS was an entirely packaged course in which you teach one point and test it, and only when you

arrive at the answers that are already pre-ordained do you move on to the next. The amount of academic freedom, professional judgment and flexibility available in MACOS was nil. I was opposed to MACOS for a number of other reasons, mainly the basic philosophy underlying the course which is, as I think Mr. Powell has already said during one discussion at this inquiry, could be summed up by saying that there was an assumption that we are all nasty people because we have a killer instinct. We are divided into nation States which are always at war or prepared to go to war, and therefore ought to conclude that we should not be taking our present society and its elders as our mentors because they have in fact made a bit of a botch of the world. We ought therefore to find exemplars that can be followed. The philosophy underlying the MACOS course seems to conclude that the only human beings, apart from the hippie generation, the "flower people" which they call youth international in the MACOS course, are some hill tribe in New Guinea and the Netsilik Eskimoes. Beyond that, we go to baboon troops and herring gulls and start to study them because they are peaceful. The baboon troop , of course, in the animal kingdom does not have a killer instinct. And so it goes on. Apart from the fact that it is based on rather poor anthropology, I understand that Dr. Danks on "Monday Conference" recently pointed out that the baboon troop has a higher murder rate than the city of Los Angeles. Apart from the fact that it is based on poor anthropology, I think it is unwise to be teaching our children at the age of 10 that they ought to disregard the world of their parents because we have made a botch of it; that we ought not to be living in nation States and we should not indeed revere nationalism because it can lead to war; that we ought to grow up with a concept of world government. All of that is the sort of thing that you might teach a Senior student in high school after he has in fact studied a course in nationalism and internationalism in history and understands why in fact other attempts at world peace have failed. In other words, we must give students a context of fact before we start giving them opinion.

MR. POWELL: On page 15,dealing with the primary school, you say in paragraph (b) -

> "There should be clearly established syllabuses in the basic subjects. In particular the Language Arts syllabus (English) should be set out in such a way that inexperienced teachers have some guide to what amount of work they should aim to cover in any given period of time."

I invite your comment on two issues: firstly, should not the C.A.E.s have already trained the teacher in methodology so that that value judgment is a professional one by the teacher involved and, secondly, would you comment on the possibility of teachers within a larger school, where perhaps the younger teacher should be sent anyway, getting together on a professional basis and deciding what should be taught week by week, month by month, etc.?

MR. LAMONT: Let me say to start with that there has been a development in the teaching of language arts - I do not really quarrel with all of these new terms, although I still call it English; I hope we have not stopped teaching English - but there is a development in the language arts syllabus whereby teachers, whether they were first year out of college or teachers of many years' experience, were receiving the syllabus, which was not divided into what ought to be covered in Grade 1, Grade 2 etc. This meant that the teachers covered the amount of work that they felt they could get through reasonably with the class in a given period of time. Of course, it meant that children were being promoted to Grade 2 without really covering all the work that might be considered to be coverable, if that is a word, in Grade 1 and so on. We then reach Grade 7 and students have reached all sorts of different levels and different classes have covered greater or lesser amounts of the syllabus. It is a trend which prompted a large number of competent head-masters to divide the course up for their own teachers on their staff and say, "This is what you are going to cover in Grade 1 and this is what I want you to cover in Grade 2, and so forth." But these traditional head-masters were flying in the face of the progressive trends. Nevertheless, it did happen. I think, having said that, in so far as it is nearly 15 years since I taught in a primary school, I should like to hand over to someone who is a practitioner in that particular area.

MR. GAFFNEY: That example just given in fact happened in my school. The staff asked the boss to do precisely that, and he did. What that approach that is being used at the moment under the name of language arts does is, to put it politely, baffle with science. The act of teaching reading is sliced into microslices of highly theoretical concepts and constructs of each part of the act of teaching reading and that, either as a stack or as a pot-pourri is given to the teacher and he is told, "There you are. There are your outlines. There are the points you should aim at. Now go and teach reading." For a person studying linguistics and the art of communication at a university level - a Ph.D. level I would say - this is marvellous. It is exactly what is required. But in the real world, where you have a teacher who must teach the child to read, it is worse than useless. It is counter-productive and it has that counter-productive effect on many teachers.

MR. POWELL: You have not commented on the C.A.E.s teaching more methodology.

MR. LAMONT: We do not have any firm evidence of what is being done in this area. We have a lot of opinions. There is a survey being done I think by a professor at Melbourne university and also a gentleman at Sydney university and we are anxiously waiting on the results of those investigations - I should not say "survey"; "investigation" was the word I was searching for - and what they are looking at is the amount of teaching that goes on at the colleges of advanced education with respect to teaching people to teach as opposed to advanced education. Then they are attempting to put together their own decision as to what ought to be done. While it may be wonderful for teachers in training at colleges to read Plato's "Republic" and see what the great Greek philosopher had to say about education, I wonder whether that really is necessary in assisting them to learn them how to

teach an eight-year-old in a disadvantaged school in an inner city suburb to read.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to ask you if Hector Crawford is supplanting Bernard Shaw?

MR. LAMONT: Only in one case that I have come across. You were speaking only last week to the gentleman who made that choice. I quoted that example for one reason and that is that it seems to me, while it may be very much easier and more enjoyable in an English class to select these sorts of works and to talk about society generally rather than have to study English literature, it certainly raises the question why do we study English literature. Do we study it to get a concept of what is best in the language and in the literature of the language that we use or in fact are we trying to get more idea of what was in the mind of the author? I think we certainly try to get both out of literature. For that reason I put Conrad and Cronin and Hemingway well ahead of Hector Crawford, in spite of my passion for Australiana. May I perhaps make one or two brief points. One is that, although we have not discussed it, I cannot stress enough the comments I made about the ASAT test and aptitude testing. To have an aptitude test as an ingredient, a component, in the tertiary entrance score, to me, is completely contradictive. It ought to be rejected. A tertiary institution, a university, is a place of knowledge, as I have said in the report, and aptitude ought really to have nothing to do with the assessment of that student with respect to the degree to which he has achieved an understanding of knowledge in that subject. Certainly, it might be nice to know, in addition to the mark of the knowledge test, what sort of aptitude is there under the surface, but to have that as an aside and not an integral part of the mark.

THE CHAIRMAN: Given internal assessment, what is the answer? What is better than ASAT?

MR. LAMONT: There is no aptitude test that we know of that is better than ASAT I quarrel with the idea of an aptitude score moderating a knowledge test. The example I gave of a football referee who measures the thigh muscles, the biceps and the neck muscles as well as the height and weight of each footballer and then says, "Although Souths won 20-nil, I am moderating this because the aptitude of Easts was better. Therefore it is a 5-all draw." That is basically what the aptitude test does. Could I say also that I believe, if I may make a recommendation as to the nature of your conclusions, that your conclusions should be quite specific. I believe that if your conclusions or recommendations to the Government are not specific, educationists will interpret them fairly freely and your intentions will not be carried out, because it is my firm belief that the trends that I am critical of are firmly entrenched in the bureauracy. I secondly believe that there ought to be a committee similar perhaps to the committee that has been appointed to advise you, which ought not to be so much a watchdog but a community organisation that not only looks at what is happening in education and to ensure that your recommendations are carried out, but can make further recommendations to the Minister from time to time. I think that is also a very important thing.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that time has beaten us. I thank you very much for the written submission and for the way you have presented it and have entered into a frank discussion. At this stage, I recognise the presence during the past half hour of Professor Scott. We thank him for being with us.

The Committee adjourned at 1 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 2.10 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very pleased this afternoon to welcome before the Committee two students from the Brisbane Grammar School. Their submissions have been received and studied by the Committee and are coded for our record purposes AU-8. I would ask each of the gentlemen to state his name, age and class in which he is situated at Brisbane Grammar School.

MR. BIGGS: My name is Andrew John Grainge Biggs, my age is almost 17 years and I am in Form 6G at Brisbane Grammar School.

THE CHAIRMAN: Which grade is that?

MR. BIGGS: That is Grade 12.

MR. BUETTEL: My name is Rohan Nigel Buettel, I am 16 years of age, and I am in form 6H.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is Grade 12, too, is it?

MR. BUETTEL: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Andrew, I invite you now to make a brief introductory statement to the Committee.

MR. BIGGS: The first thing we have to say now that we are here before you is that we need to clarify what we have set out in our written submission. The first point is that this was written extremely hurriedly, and when we sat down and had plenty of time to consider it and in fact re-read it we saw that the impression that comes across is certainly not one that we want to convey. In fact we are quite concerned that what comes across is that there are major problems. Maybe it was because we did it so hurriedly, we put down all the nasty things you hear, your friends talking to you about, and that is one of the major problems. We don't see evidence of this sort of thing, but when you talk to people going home on the bus, other students from other schools, they carry on. In the very short time in which we put down these comments we only put down that sort of comment, and the impression that comes out is that these are major problems. As we see it as students at Brisbane Grammar School there are certainly no major problems. We are very satisfied with the education we have had. We don't see any major problems with the system of internal assessment. We do not wish external assessment to be reintroduced along these lines. Because in our written submission it would appear there are major problems, we would like to make an addendum to our submission, if that is possible.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. It might be best if you read it into the record.

MR. BIGGS: The addendum to our submission reads -

" Our written submission was prepared very hurriedly with the result that what is said is overstated.

Since writing it, we have been able to think far more deeply about the issues involved. The impression we gain upon re-reading our submission is not the one that we wish to convey.

From what we have written, it would appear that there are major problems in the present secondary education system. This is not the case as we see it. These problems are mostly minor and are exaggerated in our submission.

We are pleased with the education we have experienced. The system of internal assessment is seen by us as highly satisfactory and the aim of our comments was to highlight some problems of detail - as seen by students from secondary schools."

MR. MILLER: Can I ask why that addendum has been necessary?

MR. BIGGS: Because, as I said before, we did the submission very hurriedly and when we sat down ourselves in the school holidays, last week, and went through it, the impression that obviously comes out is that there are major problems, and these are not, in our eyes.

MR. MILLER: But you must have given an awful lot of thought to the submission before you presented it?

MR. BIGGS: Unfortunately we did not. We were not very pleased when we handed it in. We certainly aren't now.

THE CHAIRMAN: Nobody leaned on you, did they?

MR. BIGGS: No.

MR. MILLER: That is the impression it gives, unfortunately.

MR. BIGGS: No, no-one.

MR. MILLER: Are you satisfied with what the school system has done for you over the past 12 years?

MR. BIGGS: Yes, basically we are.

MR. MILLER: If you had your time over again what changes would you like to see made?

MR. BIGGS: No major changes that we would like to see made. If one takes one of the bigger issues that are talked about these days, internal assessment - we certainly don't want to see that changed.

MR. MILLER: Could I ask you why?

MR. BIGGS: Because we feel obviously we have not experienced the external system -----

MR. MILLER: You have not tried it, have you?

MR. BIGGS: No, so we can't say necessarily that that will be better or worse; but we can say we are satisfied with the system we have at the moment. Testing pressure is in some cases there, but pressure is something which after all does make the student work, so in that case we don't want to see that changed.

MR. MILLER: You say pressure makes the student work?

MR. BIGGS: A degree of pressure, certainly.

MR. MILLER: What is wrong with the external examination?

MR. BIGGS: You lose the advantage of being in your school where you are in a permanent environment, where you are not - maybe it is just the impression we get, but everybody works up to the external exam, and what we do in the last half of the final year is prepare for that. We certainly aren't doing that at the minute with the internal examination. We are continuing on. We have come back into third term today and we have got straight back into work. We are working on. We are not all that worried about the ASAT test that will come up in two weeks today, for instance.

MR. MILLER: If you really learn as you go through the year, what opposition do you have to an external examination at the end of the year? Are you frightened that you can't retain what you have learned earlier in the year? Why are you opposed to an external examination at the end of the year?

MR. BUETTEL: There will be a lot of pressure on us right at the end of the year, and we can have an off day -----

MR. MILLER: What - to revise?

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to finish what you were saying?

MR. BUETTEL: We might have an off day on which we get sick, and the whole five years' work is down the drain as a result.

MR. POWELL: Under the old external examination system it was basically the student and the teacher who were regarded as being in cohorts against that unseen examiner, whereas it has been expressed to us that with the continuous assessment it is the student versus the teacher.

MR. BIGGS: No.

MR. POWELL: You don't feel that this occurs?

MR. BIGGS: It could occur, but in our situation it doesn't. We are certainly as interested in our education as the teachers are, and indeed under the present system, for instance, moderation, they have more freedom as to what courses they choose. They are happy and they feel they are not working, as it were, to some set thing at the end of the year in collaboration with the students. The students and the teachers are more in a situation for education not for aiming towards that big thing at the end of the year.

MR. POWELL: Dealing with your submission specifically - in paragraph 1 on page 2 you say that English is needed for successful communication in a society in which it is a vital necessity, yet there seems to be little relevancy in the secondary English course. What part of the secondary English course have you found irrelevant?

MR. BIGGS: We haven't found, but other people have. The whole English course at present is undergoing change, we feel for the better.

MR. POWELL: Would you like to tell us where?

MR. BIGGS: Our school has certainly changed, but other schools use - they would study selected things like the old Shakespeare, as it were, the old Shakespeare syndrome, if I might call it that; but now you have new things in the course. You

have electives. You can choose things like modern 20th Century films. That is not Shakespeare, is it?

MR. POWELL: Do you find the study of Shakespeare and classicial English as irrelevant?

MR. BIGGS: No, but if it is all that there is it becomes, you know - what we need is a good balance.

MR. HEWITT: Notwithstanding your addendum, we can only question you on the original paper you have submitted, because that is the one we have studied. Therefore, that is the one I must refer to. You referred to teachers presently choosing books with an obvious bias. Is that bias of a personal nature or bias towards a particular theme? Secondly, you say there should be more co-operation between teachers and students on the choice of works to be covered. With no disrespect to students, are they really competent to say what works should be selected when they probably haven't seen those books?

MR. BIGGS: This is what we have said: the alternative of complete student choice is equally unsatisfactory. We do not feel that students should. Some people say that the students are the only people who can do anything because they are the ones who are affected. That is not true.

THE CHAIRMAN: You do not accept that?

MR. BIGGS: We do not accept that at all. As to bias - it is hard to describe. Some people say that teachers in their schools and in their situations only choose books which they are interested in. I suppose anybody is going to feel happier teaching books which he is interested in. If I just think of the books that we are studying this semester, we were certainly consulted. Obviously, as students, we do not have much idea and that is why it is unsatisfactory for students to have the decision. It has worked with us, but other people complain that the teacher is there and the teacher says, "This is it.", and they do not have any say.

MR. HEWITT: Let us ask you about things that are not in the submission but things that you should know about, such as social education and the consideration of contemporary problems in society. To what extent should students be involved in a consideration of these?

MR. BIGGS: Do you mean as a specific topic or just in general?

MR. HEWITT: Alternative life-styles, social values and things such as that.

MR. BUETTEL: I think it is important for students to consider these problems. It is not so much a matter of whether they should or not, but as to when. I disagree with that sort of thing being taught in primary school. In primary school our values are at the first. They are being created within us. But by the time we have reached a more mature age - around Grade 11 and 12 - I think we can consider these problems from a standpoint that is not coupled with bias that has been taught to us by our teachers; rather we can actually consider them for ourselves.

MR. POWELL: How would you handle a teacher questioning values that you have?

MR. BUETTEL: We would argue with them.

MR. HEWITT: And defend, if necessary?

MR. BUETTEL: Yes, definitely.

MR. POWELL: Would every one of your peer group be happy to do that, or would some of them go into their shell, perhaps?

MR. BIGGS: I think it is inevitable that some of them are going to go into their shells. At our school, most people as far as we can observe have their own ideas and they are prepared to stand up for them. My view is that children's values are formed in all sorts of ways. One of the most important is parental values. In the school - particularly at primary school, as Rowan mentioned - we could be affected by influence at the schools, and no teacher can be unbiased or neutral. That is quite obvious. Everyone has his opinion. Each one of us here today has his opinion. By the time students have reached the upper levels of secondary school, they should have sorted out many of their values. If they are confronted with new things, their whole set of values can be applied to those.

MR. HEWITT: Let me make a simple statement to you: students should constantly be confronted with dilemmas. How would you react to that?

MR. BUETTEL: I would say that it depends on the age of the student. For example, in the primary school, definitely not, because at that stage their parents are working on them, the school is working on them and they are creating their values.

MR. MILLER: "Working on them"? What do you mean "working on them"?

MR. BUETTEL: Just influencing them as they grow.

MR. HEWITT: Are you constantly confronted with dilemmas by your teachers?

MR. BUETTEL: No.

MR. BIGGS: Not necessarily. They don't say, "Here is a dilemma." They have problems which emerge. Some students have no difficulty in overcoming something that is thrown in front of them. Others who might not have formulated opinions on the problems might have difficulties.

MR. POWELL: On page 9 of your submission, paragraph 11, you say, "The grade system of 1-7 is good and certainly better than the primary system of A-E. Most students want a system based on commendable performances. Simple words and comments mean nothing to the students." I find this very interesting. I do not know whether you are aware of it or not, but a report has just been given to the Board of Secondary School Studies which is about to recommend the abandonment of the 1-7 rating and the replacement of it with a competency-based assessment, where a student would be competent, not competent and so on. Would you like to comment on that, in view of what you have said in your submission?

MR. BIGGS: I think you are referring to the Scott Committee report, aren't you?

MR. POWELL: Yes.

MR. BIGGS: I do not know how comprehensive these "commendable" performances are; but what will probably emerge will again be a series of 1-7, 6 or 5.

MR. POWELL: Five.

MR. BIGGS: I do not think 5 is detailed enough. It is generalising too much.

MR. POWELL: It is not definitive enough?

MR. BIGGS: Certainly not, no.

MR. BUETTEL: All we have to do is look at what the student does when he gets his report. The first thing he does is to look at his rating. Certainly a comment can help, but if it is just a simple comment that is not aimed to help in any way - it merely tells the student that he has done a commendable performance or not - that is a system where the student is told little. A system under which he is told his actual results is better.

MR. POWELL: Would you be happier to receive the percentage you had gained in that subject, plus the class average, to measure your ability with that of your peers?

MR. BUETTEL: I would want my ability compared with my peers. The percentage would be good as well. Just a comparison with the average is not detailed enough.

MR. MILLER: On page 2, paragraph 8, you say that a poor reader could get a 7 in English. Does this point to a weakness in the internal assessment and how would you overcome it?

MR. BIGGS: This is one of those cases where someone has mentioned this. In a hurry we have put down cases such as these when obviously we should not have. If someone from the Swahili High School says that this goes on, we regret having put that down.

MR. MILLER: Can I say that you are not alone in this thinking, so don't be embarrassed by what you put initially.

MR. BIGGS: This gets back to a point we made in the addendum. Really what we have said here we do not have the proof of - certainly not at our school. These all come from our conversations with people in the last few years.

THE CHAIRMAN: There would not be any cheating at the Brisbane Grammar, but are you aware from discussions that anywhere else there is cheating in respect of ASAT?

MR. BIGGS: We haven't really spoken to anyone about the ASAT test in relation to that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you like the ASAT test?

MR. BIGGS: We haven't done it yet.

MR. BUETTEL: I like it because I feel there is no pressure on me about it at all. It doesn't affect me individually. It affects the group and it is not worrying me. I think that is very good.

MR. MILLER: What pressure is there on you with an external examination?

MR. BIGGS: We don't really know. We haven't experienced it, have we?

MR. MILLER: That is right, so how can you be critical of it?

MR. BIGGS: We haven't been critical of it in that respect, or we don't mean to be. We have experienced the internal exam, as it were, and we see that as perfectly satisfactory.

MR. BUETTEL: Just from talking to other students, we find that they feel happy with the system as it is.

MR. MILLER: What students are you talking about? The same students as you at the present time, or previous students?

MR. BUETTEL: The same students in the same year as us. They find they are happy. They don't really want a return.

MR. MILLER: They do not know any more than you, really.

MR. BUETTEL: That is true.

MR. MILLER: Can we turn to page 4, geography? Are you saying that there should be more emphasis on capes and bays geography rather than on methods, skills and processes?

MR. BUETTEL: No.

MR. MILLER: Well, what are you saying?

MR. BUETTEL: This was another of those cases Andrew mentioned where we were trying to put some points down about geography. In fact, when I think about the geography course I have done, I have been very happy with it because we have really dealt with a large variety of areas and we have learnt quite a lot. As for capes and bays; no, I think we still need the method - the skills are very important.

MR. MILLER: In paragraph 4 on page 6 you say that there is tremendous bias on the part of the history teacher. Is the bias Left Wing or Right Wing, and how can you detect such bias?

MR. BIGGS: Of course, a comment like that is sort of a very emotional comment. Bias is inevitable. Bias only comes out to students when they compare it with other alternative views which they come across. Some students complain and again, of course, those students have little gripes that, "I found this fantastic new theory but the teacher won't take any notice of it, he rejects it." Now, how true that is we can't tell. At our school we have the opportunities and certainly do discuss different areas and all points of view because, really, that is the only way you can do it. Admittedly, you miss out some points of view, but in the time covered it is the best way to study something.

MR. BUETTEL: I think one of the interesting things about some teachers is that once or twice I have come across a teacher who will actually take a position to deliberately make us start thinking about the issues involved and this gets us arguing with the teacher and putting up points that we feel are valid.

MR. HEWITT: What is your feeling about material for school assignments? In the main do you find enough source material in the school library or do you find it necessary to resort to outside sources - public libraries, for example?

MR. BIGGS: In some areas in our school library there are perfect facilities and they have all the resources. However, in a school for five years with an awful lot of topics being covered no school can expect to have all the material, particularly if you go out and specialise.

MR. BUETTEL: We do have to go outside the school library, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think we as a committee should be worried about some material in your library or a State high school library that is not suitable, that some people might find offensive or even pornographic? Do you think we should worry about that? A lot of people worry for you.

MR. BIGGS: Worry about?

THE CHAIRMAN: Unsuitable books in school libraries from a pornographic viewpoint.

MR. HEWITT: Salacious.

MR. BUETTEL: We haven't come across any.

MR. BIGGS: Obviously there is a place for a nude woman in an art book, and if you are a serious student of art that is fair enough, isn't it?

MR. MILLER: How about literature?

MR. BIGGS: In modern English, certainly most of the stuff written these days, I suppose you could say falls into that category. As students these days we have to have these to comment upon and hopefully, I think anyway, that will turn us away from these sorts of things. That is my view.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, on behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you very much for appearing before us. We have not previously had students from independent schools before us and we are grateful that you gave the thought to presenting a submission to us. It has been a very useful exercise as far as we are concerned and we hope you have enjoyed the appearance before us also.

MR. BIGGS: We thank you for the opportunity.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite representatives of SPELD to appear before the Committee. This afternoon we welcome Mrs. Patricia Savage, the honorary secretary of SPELD and Dr. John Elkins, the president, who have presented us with a thoughtful submission which we have coded AU-89.

MR. MILLER: Do you believe that a teacher graduating from college is adequately prepared to diagnose and help with learning difficulties, because this seems to be the basis of the whole problem?

MRS. SAVAGE: I don't believe so.

DR. ELKINS: I think that has certainly been true in the past. There are certainly some changes, and at least one of the colleges of advanced education in Queensland has, I think, gone a very great distance towards helping with this.

MR. MILLER: Can I ask you which one?

DR. ELKINS: I am aware that the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education has done a good deal. It may be that others have - I do not say they haven't - but I know that Kelvin Grove has taken some steps in recent years.

MR. POWELL: In paragraph 11 on page 3 you basically define specific learning difficulties. Have any of the causes of the problem been revealed?

DR. ELKINS: Well, there is probably still a great deal of disagreement about whether or not the causes have been established. I suppose there have been 40 or 50 different causes suggested, and the most reasonable attitude I can determine is that almost any of these can be the cause, and mostly for any given child it is usually a mixture of these things which add up to give the problem.

MR. POWELL: You refer in paragraph 12 then to the Australian House of Representatives report on specific learning difficulties. I understand that they say that five out of six people with specific learning difficulties are boys. Is there any reason for this?

DR. ELKINS: I do not know that we know what the reason is. That far more boys appear to have these difficulties is certainly true, and it has been suggested that it is partly that boys are slower to mature and have more difficulties when they go to school. It may also be that there is something in the schooling that suits the girls better. It is somewhat unpopular today to suggest that girls do conform more than boys, but that has been suggested as a reason. I do not believe that I would subscribe to any particular view, only that we do face it with boys far more often.

MR. HEWITT: Is the disparity so obvious that the medical profession has been invited to investigate it?

MR. ELKINS: Well, certainly lots of medical people have investigated it around the world, and here in Australia. But there does not seem to be any obvious medical thing, such as one might get a sex-link inheritance. People have looked into this and some suggest that there is a family tendency towards the problem, but there are others who produce evidence that is not very convincing. It is one of the mysteries, as I see it, of the field.

MR. MILLER: Turning to page 3, paragraph 8, you say that too many intelligent children slip through the net and fail to reach adequate standards of literacy. Is this because of large classes, poor teaching or open-area systems? What are your thoughts on the matter?

MRS. SAVAGE: Some of these children whom we see would be children with a real learning disability. These problems have not been recognised until just a few years ago so these children probably missed the opportunity to have their problems remediated. There are some youngsters who have been coming to SPELD who are really surprising. It would seem that perhaps they were sick when the rest of the class was being taught, or something like that. They have missed out on the basic things and have never caught up, and maybe they gave up hope. I do not know. Those of us in SPELD Who see them are mostly volunteer helpers and we would not be in a position to judge why. We just see the end result.

MR. MILLER: With the introduction of pre-school - and we have been told earlier that learning difficulties are being picked up at pre-school level these days - do you notice that that is really a fact of life? Is there any difference in 1978 to what happened when you first started?

MRS. SAVAGE: There is a difference in the inquiries that SPELD receives. Once upon a time most of the calls came from parents of children in Grade 3 where the problem seemed to start to show. Now we have a number of calls from parents of children in pre-school.

MR. MILLER; That is good.

MRS. SAVAGE: Obviously it has made a big difference to the awareness of the problem.

MR. ELKINS: That is where I would put the change that has occurred. There is far more awareness among parents and teachers that children can experience difficulties. People who have a suspicion about a child today are far more prone to try to find some help for the child.

MR. MILLER: By picking it up three or four years earlier, does that help the child very much? What is the advantage to the child?

MR. ELKINS: I do not know that we have good, hard evidence. I think we believe and hope that it does help. It ought to because the child ought to have fewer years of failure. I am sure the parents agree, and the professionals also, that one of the biggest problems relates to the years of failure that cause the child to eventually drop his bundle. That ought to be overcome if we intervene early. I do not know, though, of a good study, particularly a local one, which has attempted to see whether helping the children in kindergarten, now that we have State pre-schools in Queensland. I think it is a good

idea but I cannot pull out the hard evidence to prove it.

MR. MILLER: It would be very interesting to see.

MR. ELKINS: It would be a very worthwhile study to make. That is my point of view.

MR. HEWITT: I would like to utter a word of encouragement to you. The quite impressive newsletters that you send out quite frequently are received and read. I often think that you must send out hundreds of them and wonder when you get silence as a response. I assure you that they are put together very impressively. I read them with great interest. You are to be commended on the way you compile them.

MR. ELKINS: Thank you very much.

MR. HEWITT: Having said that, I refer to your submission to the Select Committee on specific learning difficulties. In one of your recommendations you say that teacher-training institutions should include early recognition of learning disabilities. This would appear to be an area that should be probed; that teachers should be instructed to identify certain signs. Therefore, what discourse have you had with the teacher-training institutions, what response has there been, and are you satisfied that teacher-training is taking this aspect of the child's problems into account?

MR. ELKINS: We certainly have had some reaction through Mrs. Savage's approach to the Board of Advanced Education. We have had meetings at teachers' colleges and the university; the Board of Advanced Education has met and discussed this sort of thing. I think there is a lot more awareness. I am not sure whether we have the facts at the moment. It is something that takes time. Even if our best hopes are achieved in that respect there is the enormous backlog which concerns us - the need for in-service education. I think we do see some improvements. Whether they are as much as we hoped for is another matter.

MR. HEWITT: Awareness is one thing but action is another. We have received a great number of submissions asking for greater provision of remedial teachers. One submission even suggested that up to 25 per cent of pupil population is in need of remedial teaching. If it is so high it seems to us that instead of asking for more remedial teachers - teachers with specialised training - we should be looking at the overall training of all teachers.

MR. ELKINS: We agree. We do not believe that we should abandon the notion of remedial teaching. They have a role. But we believe that there is need for a major thrust in the general teacher-education programme and in the in-service education programme. I think that is certainly true. For example, I think we have identified that there can be a problem in linking the work of the remedial teacher back to the regular class-room unless the regular class-room teacher knows a good deal about this area.

MR. HEWITT: It certainly gets back to basic teacher-training.

MR. ELKINS: It does.

MR. MILLER: The report by Dr. Keeves was very critical of the fact that C.A.E.s have not implemented the recommendations of the Cadman report with respect to the training of teachers in this field. Would you agree?

MR. ELKINS: Well, it seems to be changing daily. I do see signs of progress but, nevertheless, I am disappointed at the pace at which this has gone on. I believe that in 1975 we had a clear picture of lacks in this area - in the teacher-education programmes. While there are some commendable examples around Australia and in Queensland there are others which are not so commendable. We ought to have more action there.

MR. MILLER: Dr. Keeves might be overcritical?

MR. ELKINS: I am not sure. At the time he wrote it it was probably true. I would not wish to be too critical in the sense of damning people who are already making some progress.

MRS.SAVAGE: I was disappointed with the group of students who came to the SPELD office this year for a week to find out about the children we are concerned with. They did not really know what we were all about or very much about the children. They were high school teacher trainees. I had hoped that they might have been better informed.

MR. MILLER: You are critical of the long wait some parents have experienced in having their children assessed by the Special Education Branch. What is the reason for this? Is it lack of staff?

MRS. SAVAGE: Apparently it is lack of staff. The guidance officers go to the school now. Apparently some children are not assessed because the teacher does not think they are bad enough. There are all kinds of reasons. I think that sometimes if parents tried a little harder the children would be attended to quicker. Parents have to initiate some action. I do not think they can just wait for the good will of the teacher to have the child assessed. People we spoke to recently in Caboolture reported that they got far better attention than they expected when they took their children to be tested. So perhaps the wait is not as long as would appear.

MR. MILLER: Very good.

MRS. SAVAGE: But it still is not good enough.

MR. MILLER: Is enough research being done into the cause of many specific learning disabilities, for instance, dyslexia?

MR. ELKINS: For someone who is interested in research I think that probably at this time it is not the right place to put most of our effort.

I think we need still to do much more on how we can organise the education system to provide assistance to the children. This is in itself quite a major research problem. Should we do it by remedial teachers and resource teachers? What are the payoffs for improving the scope of teacher education and so on? These are all research questions that we could look into, and I would rather see us for some years ahead concentrate on that rather than attempt to do what we have done for 25 years - solve the puzzle of learning disabilities without, I think, very much payoff.

MR. MILLER: There is now an advisory council on special education. What is its function?

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you a member of it?

DR. ELKINS: Neither of us is a member of it, but SPELD has made a submission to it.

THE CHAIRMAN: They have made a submission to our inquiry and if you feel that we should perhaps be referred to the submission, that might be tidier.

DR. ELKINS: I am not sure that I should like to speak on their behalf in that. We have received a hearing from them.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have made a submission to them?

DR. ELKINS: Yes.

MR. MILLER: What are your thoughts on it?

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think an advisory council is a good concept?

DR. ELKINS: I personally do. I guess it has not had enough time yet to have had major impact. I believe it has made recommendations that we would support, such as all teachers in training should know something about handicapped children in general, including learning disabilities. We feel that that is an important thing.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think there has been too much mainstreaming in the past? Do you think the modern trend of treating problems in the mainstream is a good way to go about it?

MRS. SAVAGE: As the mother of a child with a severe learning disability, I find it difficult to believe that a child like that could cope in the mainstream of an ordinary school. Yet I am convinced by people whose opinion I value in the Education Department that if the staff is well trained and if classes are not too big, these children will cope in an ordinary school. I think it all gets back to the training of the personnel and having the resources to call upon. I do think it must be a tremendous thing for children who have severe handicaps of any kind to compete with children who are not handicapped. I feel that human nature would have to change considerably for everyone of them to feel comfortable.

MR. MILLER: You recommend a multi-diagnostic clinic. Would you mind explaining that to me?

DR. ELKINS: A multi-diagnostic clinic is a service for analysing the problems of a particular child which are likely to go beyond the competence of, say, a school guidance officer to provide and which may require a medical or psychiatric investigation or perhaps the skills of a physiotherapist or occupational therapist.

MR. MILLER: A school guidance officer could run such a clinic, could he?

DR. ELKINS: It could be administered by a number of different departments but probably, whilst the majority of children do not require this, there is a need in the community for some more specialised service that cuts across a number of disciplines.

MR. MILLER: I am interested to know who would run a multi-diagnostic clinic.

MRS. SAVAGE: As a parent who did the rounds many years ago, I think it would be wonderful if there were one place to which one could take a small child whom one was worried about and where one could see a doctor, a pediatrician, somebody who was an authority on speech or whatever the child's problem might be. I have in mind a place where parents could see experts in various areas without waiting months to get to another place. It would be especially good for country people. So many parents are literally worn out by the time they find that their child has a problem and help has been delayed for so long.

MR. MILLER: All these specialists would be in the one clinic?

MRS. SAVAGE: Yes. We hear people from overseas talking about these clinics. It is a team approach and at the end the child's problem is discussed by a group of people and parents are included in the discussion. They work out a programme that is right for that child, involving whatever agencies are necessary to help him.

THE CHAIRMAN: I should like to thank you very much for appearing today. I want to assure you of the sympathy of the members of Parliament towards your case. I am quite certain that most of us are very appreciative of the work that the SPELD organisation undertakes in the community. I am sure that that view is widely held. I thank you very much for your submission and I can assure you that we will give it very sympathetic consideration.

MRS. SAVAGE: May I just say that even though I am very sorry that I have had to cope with a child with a learning disability, when I have spoken to SPELD people in other States I am glad that I have had to cope with him in Queensland.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is very good.

MRS. SAVAGE: Even though there was not nearly enough help, I think we got very sympathetic help. The Education Department here was really very helpful, and I was very grateful that it was right here that we had to do our worrying.

MR. MULLER: In other words, it was the best of a bad bunch?

MRS. SAVAGE: That is right.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very honoured this afternoon to welcome representatives of the senate of the University of Queensland, and I mean that. We are very pleased that the senate has prepared a submission for this parliamentary inquiry. I am grateful for it. On behalf of the Committee, I would be pleased, gentlemen, if you would convey our thoughts to the senate. This afternoon I welcome three distinguished gentlemen who are here to present and discuss the senate's submission, which is coded Au-5. I welcome Professor Lipton, who is president of the Professorial Board, Professor Leopold, who is professor German at the university and Dr. Rayner, who is the registrar. Firstly, could you describe how this latest document fits into the submission that you provided previously?

PROF. LIPTON: It is a short, supplementary submission which concerns some of our recommendations that are in the report. They arose subsequent to the submission of that document to you, following the report of the Scott Committee. We hope that you will accept this supplementary submission and allow us to speak to it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you summarise it for us and tell us what it is about? We have made a detailed study of your first document but we do not know what this one is about. Does it qualify the first one?

PROF. LIPTON: In the Scott Report, which is the recent report that the Board of Secondary School Studies released, there is a large number of recommendations. The new university body has had time to go through the whole report as a body. Within the report there are two recommendations in particular that are contrary to the recommendations that our senate has made in the document Au-5. In addition to those two recommendations contrary to our recommendations, we believe that there is a rather serious statistical error in the report, which affects the arguments of the Scott Report relevant to our own two recommendations. On page 2 of our document, you will see that the Scott Committee says that in 1976, only 50 per cent of Grade 12 students in Queensland's secondary schools were applicants for entrance to tertiary institutions. In fact, that statement is erroneous. The Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre, which considers admissions for all universities and colleges, has quite precise statistics. You will see in the paragraph on page 2 that the number of students who applied through Q.T.A.C. was 9,543. There were 12,000-odd students awarded a T.E. score, so the proportion is 79 per cent. If you take the proportion of the number of students who were in Grade 12 on 1 August, you arrive at 75 per cent. That is rather different from 50 per cent. The reason that we have emphasised this particular point is that the Scott Report, in the paragraph following the one that is quoted, goes on to talk about the curriculum and about reference to pressures to make studies such as driver education, consumerism and so on, obliged studies. The implication is that if one is only dealing with 50 per cent of the body of Grade 12, one will presumably make special provision for the other 50 per cent somewhere or other. If in fact it is 75 per cent who are seeking tertiary admission, it makes a big difference, so we think that should be pointed out. My further point is that it is not just the people at Grade 12 who go immediately to the university; it is the proportion who go on in due course, They might wait a year, two years or three years before going to the university. Our own investigations have shown that that figure is at least two-thirds and probably three-quarters of those who complete Grade 12 and go on eventually to tertiary study. This should be taken into account when considering the curriculum for Grades 11 and 12. On page 3 of our own senate recommendation and on page 27 of "The Effects of the Radford Scheme", what we are saying is that a subject should not be counted in the

T.E. score unless it has been approved for that purpose by the universities or by the tertiary education institutions in general. At the moment, the Board of Secondary School Studies can approve subjects and once they are approved they can be counted into the T.E. score, regardless of the opinions of the university and the tertiary institutions. Towards the bottom of page 3, we say that the aim of entry procedures is to select those students most likely to succeed in the tertiary course. It does not seem appropriate that two semester units of school subjects should be used in calculating a tertiary education score. We were objecting to board-approved subjects being counted in the score. It is now proposed in the Scott Report that there should be school-approved, not board-approved, subjects and they should be counted into the tertiary entrance score. That is, as I say, directly opposite to or to the contrary of our senate's recommendation No. 3 and we think that it is therefore wrong to give greater weight to school subjects of marginal value or as irrelevant to the tertiary course, which will weaken the predictive value of the T.E. score.

After all the T.E. score is the tertiary entrance score, and we strongly urge that the Board of Secondary School Studies not determine the subjects that should be included in the calculation of the T.E. score. We do not think that the group that has little or no interest in tertiary studies should be the reference point for determining the subjects which go into the T.E. score. Therefore, our supplementary submission is concerned directly with the recommendations of our senate plus the recommendation that is contrary to the one that appears here and, we understand, has been accepted by the Board of Secondary School Studies. On page 4 there is the second of the recommendations of the Scott committee to which we object. This concerns the prerequisite subjects for entry to the tertiary institute. In addition to obtaining a high enough tertiary entrance score in order to enter many courses within the universities and the colleges, it is necessary to have obtained a sufficiently high standard in certain subjects at the high school, particularly in English, which is in fact compulsory to obtain a certain minimum standard for all courses at the University of Queensland, but also mathematics, chemistry, physics and so on. Certain minimum standards are required. These are the prerequisite standards. We need to know how the students have reached these minimum standards in order to prevent a marginal student from beginning a course which, with inadequate preparation, will result in failure. As I have mentioned, in these courses that have prerequisites we do assume a certain basic knowledge. At the moment the schools in each of the four semesters where a subject is taken grade those subjects from 1 to 3 up to 7, 1 being the lowest grade and 7 being the highest grade. The minimum score for entry purposes is the total number of points obtained over the four semesters. If a student has a grade of 4 in each of the four semesters he has 16 points. The minimum scores for entry in the prerequisite subjects vary from somewhere around 12 to something like 16. The Scott report proposes that the present system of numerical grades be replaced by a set of grades that appears on page 4 - no longer numerical but "very limited competence", "limited competence" and so on up to "highest level of competence". Under the present system of numerical gradings there is apparently uniform grading over the State, so that there is a uniform meaning of Grades 1, 2, 3 and so on. Like the university itself, there is an expectation in a large group of students undertaking a particular subject of the proportions that one can expect to turn up in each group. We have a very strong belief that we will find nearly all students being graded "competent" or "highly competent" or "highest level of competence", but in particular "competent"; that the grading "competent" will be used to encompass what at the moment are Grades 2, 3 and 4. This will have a serious effect on the university's entrance prerequisite standards. In fact it will be so serious that I believe the university will have to do something about it to obtain some additional information. The last paragraph of page 4 talks about using the scaled exit assessment. For each subject the university will have available scaled exit assessments. The term is used in this report. I do not think it is a common term, but it is in fact the marks which the teacher sends forward, scaled marks between 0 and 99, which the schools send forward on individual subjects to the Board of Secondary School Studies, from which the T.E. score is calculated. If we have those available we will work with them. We feel there is a great danger that we will find that nearly all the students coming forward will be graded "competent", which just is not sufficient for our purpose. It will not give the guide that is required for choosing those students who satisfy the minimum requirements.

There are, however, disadvantages if we do switch to exit assessments. In particular, the students themselves just would not know what their exit assessment was and they could find themselves graded "competent" by the schools in some way yet nevertheless refused entry to a tertiary institution without knowing why. We have always maintained that the student ought to be in a position to be able to check as far as possible the various decisions that are made regarding entrance to university. I have spoken to our supplementary submission, the three points: 75 per cent, not 50 per cent; the introduction of school subjects and the question of new gradings that are proposed. These relate directly to our submission. I do hope you feel able to accept this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, yes, we are very pleased to have it. I think we should move as quickly as possible to elucidating some of the arguments in your submission. We have all read the original document. I would like to ask a question at this stage. The threshold question in relation to external examinations is that if the universities and the tertiary institutions do not want them, there does not appear to be much point in introducing them. Could I ask you about this? Just looking at your submission across the board and, as all good Chinamen do, starting at the back and reading towards the front, I was interested to read the recommendation of the Mathematics Department, which says that to remedy the problems of that department a number of staff members advocate the institution of an entrance examination in mathematics. Wouldn't it be fair to say that that would be so of the majority of members of the Mathematics Department?

PROF. LIPTON: I think that is true.

THE CHAIRMAN: There are other departments that recommend it, but I am wondering whether the Department of Education might not have snowed the others.

PROF. LIPTON: I don't think that is a fair comment. I do think, though, that one has to bear in mind that this report was written, or a large portion of the material had been collected, before Parliament set up the Committee. In the report there are comments on the possibility of introducing external examinations. There is a comment to the effect.

There is a comment about the difficulty of introducing an external examination if in fact there is great opposition to an external examination from, say, the Education Department and the schools. Without their co-operation it would be very difficult for the university on its own to mount an external examination.

THE CHAIRMAN: In the schedule you have provided us with they are the norm throughout the rest of Australia, aren't they?

PROFESSOR LIPTON: Yes. We are the only State that has switched entirely to non-external examinations.

THE CHAIRMAN: The A.N.U. has an internal assessment.

PROFESSOR LIPTON: That is so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we stick to this area, to get some order into the discussion? Let us stay with the entrance examination topic. Lots of people have said to us by way of submission that, if an examination is required for tertiary entrance, the universities would be quite free to implement it if they wanted to. Are you saying that that is not really a serious option at the moment? Would you clarify that? Say for argument's sake the mathematics people, who have cited some concern in your document and before us, said that it was a serious problem. Wouldn't it be possible for them to say, "We are going to set an examination for entrance to the university."? That would be completely possible, surely?

PROFESSOR LIPTON: But the examination has to be set somewhere or other. There are students all over the State. One would require, presumably, the co-operation of the schools for organising them; otherwise you would have to bring all the students to the university.

THE CHAIRMAN: Surely it would not be a big problem to hold it in the schools?

PROFESSOR LIPTON: Not if the schools were willing to hold it.

THE CHAIRMAN: It does not seem to me to be a big problem. Has the Education Department exhibited a lot of hostility towards this proposition in the past?

PROFESSOR LIPTON: They have certainly supported the Radford Scheme pretty strongly.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do they feel that any sort of examination would be too restrictive on the syllabus? Is that their base argument?

PROFESSOR LIPTON: That would certainly be one of the attitudes. Also one notices in the Scott Report that there is criticism at present of the restrictive nature of the university's prerequisites.

DR. RAYNER: It is perhaps useful to distinguish between the Education Department and the Board of Secondary School Studies, which under the State legislation has certain functions. It is probably true to say that over the past 5 years a number of people in this State concerned with such matters have looked more to the attitude of the Board of Secondary School Studies than to the Education Department. I do not know that the Education Department has ever been approached by the university in this period, or has expressed any view to us, about the holding of additional

use student profiles; that these might provide a better reliability in terms of aptitude for a particular tertiary course of study. Are you aware of what I am talking about? I think this is covered in the Scott report.

So I think one shouldn't generalise too far from a group of subjects that do not require prior preparation.

MR. MILLER: It has been put to the Committee this morning that the basis of the T.E. score is the scaling of school results using an aptitude test as the scaling instrument. Do you agree with the fundamental concept of this process, or what other better process can you recommend?

PROF. LEOPOLD: This is one that has been considered quite a lot in various quarters. We found, as this report indicates, I think, that the T.E. score at the moment works reasonably well. It certainly is not a better predicter of university success than the Senior was. On the other hand, it is not significantly worse. Our objection to it mainly, and I think this is brought out in our report very strongly, is to the ASAT component. All the correlation studies that we did in the course of preparing this report, and they were quite extensive, indicated that ASAT was a very bad predicter of university success. It is supposed, of course, to be a scholastic aptitude test and yet it just does not seem to measure scholastic aptitude if we understand scholastic aptitude to be university success. So we would be very happy to see ASAT removed and replaced by some other scaling device, some other method of achieving comparability. What that ought to be at the moment nobody can say. One suggestion we have thought about occurs in the Scott report, and that is, I think, the question of comparability tests that are mooted there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Reference tests?

PROF. LEOPOLD: Yes, reference tests. There may be some way, indeed, of making use of these reference tests for this purpose. Clearly it is something that would have to be investigated a lot further, but primarily I think it is the ASAT component we are unhappy with.

MR. SHAW: Are you saying that a greater number of students who have entered university with a T.E. score failed to graduate than those who entered from an external examination?

PROF. LEOPOLD: No, I do not think that is the case, and I think also the figures that we give here indicate that, that in fact the external examination and the T.E. score seem to be roughly equal as predicters - the Senior a little better.

MR. SHAW: That is what I thought you said in the first place. What did you mean by saying that the T.E. score had a greater failure rate? Sorry, that the ASAT is not successful.

PROF. LEOPOLD: If you simply extract ASAT from the rest of it - all the children do sit for ASAT every September - and you simply take their results of ASAT alone without looking at the rest of the components of the T.E. score the correlation of ASAT with their university performance is very low indeed. Of course, in fact the board is not using it for that purpose, it is only using it as a scaling device to establish the T.E. score, but we feel that as ASAT is such a dubious instrument it would be much better if it were not even used as a scaling device and some other method adopted there.

THE CHAIRMAN: The primary problem you have in trying to determine a likely success at university is that academic results are only one component. There is industry, background and other things that are so difficult to measure, and you have a difficulty in that if you start to give weight to these you get accused of patronage in terms of quotas.

PROF. LEOPOLD: Quite.

PROF. LIPTON: I think it is worth mentioning that with the particular method used - the correlation analysis - you do run into problems. You simply cannot get high correlations due to difficulties with the data itself - there are truncation problems. It is only a component of the courses that are operating there.

MR. MILLER: Are all university departments satisfied with the standard and quality of the Radford students from secondary schools?

PROF. LEOPOLD: I think it is certainly true to say no. That is indicated in Appendix C to this report where quite a few departments, mainly those that are concerned with subjects that are taught in schools as well as universities, express their views. On the other hand, one would have to admit, I think, that if you go back through the reports of the chief examiners in the Senior examination - back to 1946 - there is nothing in those usually to suggest that the chief examiners were terribly happy either. But on page 31 we have isolated from the discussions we had with members of staff and heads of departments one or two areas in particular; firstly, the fact that you do now as you did not under the Senior get wide variations in the previous knowledge, skills and experience of students from different schools. This is inevitable, I think. In the second one, which is linked with progressive assessment, the semester system, too, the fact that they tend to work in bits of subjects rather than seeing the subject as a whole in a final examination, things like this certainly do occur and most heads of departments, I think, would say the same there. On the other hand, we didn't feel in the committee that this in itself ought to be a reason for pushing for an entrance examination or something of that sort, that it might well be possible by discussions between the universities and schools - by the university making clear to schools what it seeks in particular in its first-year courses - to overcome some of these problems.

THE CHAIRMAN: That begs the question which I was going to ask. Do you believe that there is sufficient machinery for consultation between the tertiary institutions and the Department of Education as a whole?

PROF. LEOPOLD: Offhand I would be inclined to say probably not, that there would be advantages if there could be some more regular consultation. Certainly the university, through its members on the Board of Secondary School Studies, obviously has contact there. On the other hand, with the Education Department itself directly we have no sort of regular formal arrangement.

DR. RAYNER: One device which has been developing in the past two years is that the Minister has set up the joint advisory committee consisting of the vice chancellors of the three universities, the chairman of the Board of Advanced Education and the Director-General of Education. This group meets approximately every three months and they tend to discuss matters of common concern. They are also starting to assume responsibility for having an oversight over matters of common interest, for example, this joint admission centre that was originally started by the Vice Chancellors of Griffith and the University of Queensland, but the joint advisory committee of the Minister is now assuming responsibility for general oversight of that, and also for the preparation of the annual book on tertiary courses and are taking steps in other fields such as employment counselling. This was one of their more recent steps to set up joint committees. At one stage another

joint committee was looking at engineering courses in all tertiary institutions.

MR. MILLER: Is it only since Radford has been introduced that you have heard, "I have done that", meaning, "That has been studied, tested, passed, is finished, is irrelevant and can be forgotten."?

PROF. LEOPOLD: Largely, I think, yes. I think it is part of the semesterisation progressive assessment system. One of the problems, I think, that has arisen under Radford has been the development at the same time of progressive assessment on a large scale. After all, there is no necessary link between the two. The same sort of thing has happened at the university under semesterisation, that we, too, have moved more and more towards progressive assessment. It is just unfortunate, perhaps, that the two things have grown up side by side. But I think certainly that sort of statement that you have done part of a course and you can now forget it certainly occurs much more commonly now than it did in the past.

MR. SHAW: On page 3 of the supplementary submission you come out very strongly against the Scott report suggestion that school subjects should be allowed. Would not what you are suggesting tend to force students to make a very early decision on their career? Do you see any problems with that? It has been put to us previously that we should be providing greater opportunities for people to come back when they are ready for it. Do you reject that?

PROF. LIPTON: In any scheme there has to be some sort of compromise between the various advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages of introducing board studies as free school studies - as subjects which the university does not like - does not affect at all the problem of their having to choose early whether they do physics or English. Here we are conerned with subjects that the tertiary institutions would not think are reliable predicators for success at university. I do not really think the problem you mention is relevant. Maybe I have misunderstood.

MR. SHAW: Maybe I am not sure.

DR. RAYNER: In recent years the practice has been for most students of mediocre ability to do six subjects over Grades 11 and 12. This means 24 units under the Radford semester plan. A significant number of students do seven subjects with a possibility of 28 units. The university is not arguing whether or not units 21 to 24 or 21 to 28 should be board or school subjects. The only point meant to be brought out by this document is that any such school subjects or any other lesser subjects should not be taken into account for the purpose of calculating tertiary entrance score. There is still plenty of scope for even the ablest students to do school subjects of particular interest to them.

MR. MILLER: Would the university consider setting their own entrance examination?

PROF. LIPTON: I think the answer would certainly be yes; it would consider it. Recommendation 1 finishes at the present time; that is the recommendation about reintroduction of external exams at the present time.

MR. SHAW: We have been talking about entrance to university. This morning someone from the management field said that many graduates are too ill-informed to make a worth-while contribution in their early years of employment. Would you care to comment on that?

PROF. LIPTON: I can comment personally on that. I am not at all clear what was meant by "too ill-informed". Constantly universities had been told that their graduates in a particular technical area on leaving university take a year or so for their employer or firm to get them really productive for the firm. That is because the university has to turn out persons who have to go into a wide variety of firms. They need training to deal with all of this. They don't know what particular branch of industry they are going into. It has been common ever since universities were founded for comments of this kind to be made. If the university was to turn out a graduate specifically for one particular field, and nothing else, it probably would not be doing its job.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is probably appropriate that throughout the inquiry brickbats have been thrown at the secondary education system, but we record the fact that some people have disapproved of some things done at the university, too.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen,we are very pleased to welcome representatives to present submissions on behalf of the Brisbane Education Centre. The submission is encoded JL-641. I would ask firstly the gentleman presenting the submission to identify themselves and the positions they hold in the organisation.

MR. QUINLAN: My name is John Quinlan and I am the director of the centre.

MR. GARRATTY: My name is Michael Garratty. I am the chairman of the centre and normally science co-ordinator of St. Paul's school, Bald Hills.

THE CHAIRMAN: Your submission has been received and studied by Committee members. I preface the discussion by saying that we have visited the education centre in Toowoomba. You are arguing for a rationalisation of resource centres in this area, and you are arguing that Federal and State groups should get together to work out a rationalisation of the industry to see that these centres are put on a firm basis and that they become used increasingly as centres for more resources. Have I summarised the situation adequately?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. Would you like me to add a few words to that?

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is necessary to speak to that. I think we can proceed immediately with questions.

MR. MILLER: May I ask the difference between an education centre and a teacher centre?

MR. QUINLAN: At the moment there is no clear distinction between the two inasmuch as initially the education centres were those established by the Schools Commission. When I say established, I mean funded by the Schools Commission. As distinct from those, the Education Department, through its regional directorates, also established centres which tended to be called teacher centres.

MR. MILLER: So there is no lapping of the two Governments?

MR. QUINLAN: No. The tendency, because of the confusion that has been mentioned - at a conference of education centres some two years ago it was decided that regardless of the source of the support for the centres we would adopt the broader term of education centres rather than just teacher centres, for obvious reasons, inasmuch as with the looking after of the in-service needs of teachers we also have a wider community orientation.

We felt that "Education Centre" was a more appropriate term.

MR. POWELL: On page 2 of your submission you list your objectives. You say -

" To improve the professional competence of teachers;
To provide for their professional needs;
To involve parents and community in education; and
To promote the improvement of education."

You say that they are accomplished by several things. How successful do you feel you are in achieving your aims?

MR. GARRATTY: I think in one sense the Brisbane Education Centre particularly has achieved some success in this area due to its involvement with the subject associations. As well as providing a convenient and comfortable venue for these associations to function,we also provide considerable secretarial support. Until the education centres came into being, many of the subject associations were forced to rely upon enthusiasts, often working from their homes. There is no doubt that the Brisbane Education Centre has provided a great deal of assistance in this regard. In addition to that,of course, there is the day-to-day involvement of teachers outside the formal subject associations who use the education centre's facilities for seminars, etc. Other teachers come into the centre individually to use the audio-visual equipment, etc.

MR. MILLER: What has been your major achievement since your establishment?

MR. GARRATTY: This is a personal view here. I think the major achievement of the centre has been its support of the subject associations. It really got a lot of them up and going. Mr. Quinlan would like to say something about that because he is concerned with the centre's day-to-day running.

MR. QUINLAN: Our 1977 annual report recorded some 18,000 teacher visits for in-service activities, casual visits by teachers to use the library and audio-visual equipment to make aids for use in the class-room. In addition, we printed 1,750,000 pages of newsletters and notes for teachers. Perhaps putting some numbers to the words may help to give some idea of the involvement.

MR. MILLER: What does it cost to run your centre?

MR.QUINLAN: For 1978 the Schools Commission in its wisdom has seen fit to give us $51,000. In addition to that, the centre will have to generate some $15,000 income in its own right just to meet costs.

MR. HEWITT: How?

MR.QUINLAN: We do this largely by adding a small amount for the printing of association newsletters and for room rental by outside groups within the centre. With the current cutback in every sphere of education it is becoming increasingly difficult for us inasmuch as we are spending more and more time looking at ways of meeting our costs rather than concentrating on the things that we were put there to do in the first place, to help teachers with their in-service needs and to assist community interests in education.

MR. MILLER: You do not feel that teachers' colleges are doing enough in the in-service area?

MR. QUINLAN: No. We have a slightly different orientation. They tend to concentrate more on organised

courses, upgrading teachers and so on. We are more specific in our application. For instance, if there is a new semester unit in geography introduced by the Board of Secondary Studies, the role of the education centre, through the Geography Teachers' Association, would be to call the geography teachers together and, by mutual help, explain the aims, objectives, content and methodology of the new unit.

MR. MILLER: Some people, looking for ways and means of reducing Government expenditure, would ask why the two could not be amalgamated.

MR. GARRATTY: In answering that, perhaps I could refer you to the bottom of the third page. When talking about in-service programmes we say that changesbased on the deliberations of the people who will implement them are likely to be the most successful. There is no doubt that practical in-service education and theoretical studies have indicated that the people who benefit from in-service education will receive greater benefit if they are involved in in-service education programmes themselves. I think it may be true to say that at the moment programmes organised through the colleges of advanced education, for example, are in many cases upgrading programmes or continuing programmes based on formal qualifications.

MR. MILLER: The point you make is very valid, but why cannot the C.A.E.'s do exactly what you are saying?

MR. GARRATTY: I am not a member of a C.A.E. and I am afraid I cannot answer that.

MR. MILLER: But it is possible, isn't it? We have critics saying to us, "We have to reduce Government expenditure. Here we have a teachers' department and an Education Department."

MR. QUINLAN: The main emphasis in teachers' colleges is on the pre-service training of teachers. Once they have become practising teachers, their in-service training is left very much up to themselves. The formation of education centres resulted from the initiative taken by teachers to be involved with their own in-service education as distinct from having outsiders, if I may so call people involved in the pre-service sphere, telling them what they should be doing.

MR. POWELL: It might help the Committee if you could describe how in a typical day the centre functions to help teachers.

MR. QUINLAN: It varies enormously but perhaps I could cover some common ground. During the day, when the majority of teachers are in the class-room, the education centre would cater for casual visitors who manage, for whatever reason, to get there.

MR. MILLER: Taking a sickie?

MR. QUINLAN: No. That is not to say that people who were on sickies would not come into the education centre but you will have to ask them about that. On a casual basis people who would like to use the library or the aduio-visual equipment come to the centre. While that is going on in any week the centre would perhaps be likely to be printing several newsletters for various teachers' associations, the newsletters being predominantly material that will help those teachers in the class-room. After school our work really begins. The influx of teachers from 3 o'clock onwards, for the purposes that I mentioned before, is considerable.

MR. MILLER: To what time at night? What time does the

centre close?

MR. QUINLAN: 9.30 p.m. The 18,000 people whom I mentioned before would for the most part come between the hours of 3 p.m. and 9.30 p.m.

MR. HEWITT: Very early in your submission you used the words "casual contact". I assume that all teacher contact with the centre is of a totally voluntary nature?

MR. QUINLAN: That is correct.

MR. GARRATTY: There might be a few exceptions to that. For example, a school may decide to hold a staff meeting or some staff activity at the centre, in which case the teachers come as a group from that particular school.

MR. HEWITT: Can you give me an example of the sort of activity that that might be?

MR. GARRATTY: Mr. Quinlan could perhaps explain that.

MR. QUINLAN: I think an illustration of the co-operation between the Department of Education and the centre might be appropriate. If a section of the Education Department, perhaps the in-service branch, decides that there is a need for an in-service course for their teachers in a particular sphere, they would organise a course and invite those teachers to attend that programme. The venue for that programme may well be the education centre, or an education centre. To that degree it is still very much a voluntary effort. No-one is compelled to attend. None of the 18,000 were forced to attend the education centre.

THE CHAIRMAN: On page 4 of your submission you recommend that the Department of Education be encouraged to avoid duplication of facilities. Is this happening?

MR. QUINLAN: Earlier in the year there was a plan to establish what the department calls regional resource centres and it was felt that these would impinge to a fairly large degree on the role of education centres. The department's plans as they were understood at that time were not to incorporate the regional resource centres in the existing education centres' network but to establish additional centres. The education centre organisation felt that this was not the most appropriate method. However, I do understand that since then, with departmental cutbacks in funding, there are no immediate plans to proceed with the idea of regional resource centres.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is this all a big Federal and State argument?

MR. GARRATTY: To a large degree, there is considerable co-operation between the Commonwealth and the State in this regard. I would be less than honest if I said that there are not problems in that area, if only on the grounds that the Education Department is unwilling to put equipment into centres that are owned, if you like, by the Federal Government.

MR. MILLER: Do you see education as the responsibility of the State?

MR. GARRATTY: That is such a wide question. Could you be more specific?

MR. MILLER: We have a State Government and we have a Commonwealth Government. Up till quite recently - in fact I think Mr. Whitlam's time - it has always been the responsibility of the State Government to look after the education system within Queensland. Every other State Government looked after education in its State. Since then, money has been poured into the education system by the Commonwealth Government. Do you think the education system now belongs to the State department or do you believe the Commonwealth Government should be looking after education?

MR. GARRATTY: My own personal belief is that the involvement of the Federal Government in education, particularly through education centres, has been to the benefit of education in general.

MR. MILLER: Why?

MR. GARRATTY: For the reasons we talked about before - that the teachers have gained through usage of education centres, not only the Brisbane Education Centre, and these education centres, the scope of which exist now, were only made available through Commonwealth initiative and Commonwealth funding and in that sense it has benefited education. If such a system was to continue at its present rate or at an increased rate and it was funded by money coming directly from the State rather from Canberra, we would still achieve the same objectives. Personally I think it is rather good that there are two levels of funding. One thing we enjoy in the Commonwealth-funded education centres is a degree of independence from perhaps Education Department policies, if I can put it that way.

MR. MILLER: C.A.E.s have independence too.

MR. GARRATTY: That is right.

MR. MILLER: So that is no argument is it?

MR. GARRATTY: No, but that is the argument I am putting forward.

MR. MILLER: It is not a valid one because C.A.E.s are not tied to the State department.

MR. GARRATTY: No, well, if the Brisbane Education Centre was to remain a body corporate with its funds coming directly from the State, certainly we would be just as independent.

MR. MILLER: I fail to see why we have to have two buildings and two departments doing the same job when one building and one department could do it. I agree it is the amount of money that is poured into it by the Commonwealth that is important.

MR. GARRATTY: I agree there are two buildings, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, thank you very much. We invited you here because we have had representations from various teacher and education centres throughout Queensland. We had the opportunity of visiting the Toowoomba centre, which is a very good one. We felt we would not be covering the ground adequately if we did not invite representatives of the Brisbane Education Centre to the Brisbane hearing to have the argument that was very coherently given to us in Toowoomba brought to the notice of the people down here. We wish you well. I can assure you that serious consideration will be given to the matters raised in your submission.

MR. QUINLAN: Thank you and the members of your Committee for inviting us to be present.

THE CHAIRMAN: Tomorrow we will visit the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education, the Queensland Institute of Technology and the Mt. Gravatt College of Advanced Education.

The Committee adjourned at 4.4 p.m.

FRYER
Mss.
81/12

15th day

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE 7 SEP 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M. J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W. D. Hewitt
Mr. C. J. Miller
Mr. L. W. Powell
Mr. E. F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:
Dr. R.D. Goodman
Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P. A. B. Krebs
Mr. K. P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E. S. Newton

BRISBANE, 7 SEPTEMBER 1978

FIFTEENTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 10 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, we will now proceed with the evidence presented by the Science Teachers' Association of Queensland. Before doing so, I welcome pupils from the Currimundi State School who are lucky to live in the best electorate in the State. They are very welcome this morning. The submission by the Science Teachers' Association is encoded JN-250. I now ask Mr. Burr to state his name and the executive position that he holds with the association.

MR. BURR: My name is Cecil John Burr and I am president of the association.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will now proceed to questions.

CECIL JOHN BURR, examined:

BY MR. MILLER: You emphasise the ability of teachers to develop their own courses - this is on page 2 - yet in recent years a number of imported, pre-packaged courses have been popular. Are any of these used in chemistry or physics?-- In senior school those pre-packaged courses were introduced to the State before the freedom of course development was granted. Course-development freedom came really with the 1973 syllabus change.

Are they still used?-- In the senior school, yes - in the chem. study, The Web of Life and the P.S.S.C. However disenchantment is increasing with the physics. More people are not using P.S.S.C. but opting still for pre-packaged programmes. Various semester courses are being written that are not and one of these has been produced for the Science Teachers' Association.

BY MR. HEWITT: As one unversed in your discipline, I am fascinated by the summary statement on page 3, where you say that the science content that is taught to students should not exclude controversial issues that have a significant science component and should be presented in such a way as to provide students with an opportunity to explore their values. I should like to know what comes under the umbrella of "controversial issues" and in what way should students have the opportunity to explore them?-- At the top of page 3, there are three points:

The applications of scientific advances, medical weapons and energy technology; things, if you like, such as the uranium debate, genetic engineering, ageing, and you have the human physiology and then the origin and nature of man. That is the type of content area. We believe that teachers should be able to raise these points in the class-room and present a balanced point of view and allow students to clarify their own thoughts in terms of that. On that very point, the S.T.A.Q. has produced one booklet on the uranium debate. There will be another one on another issue produced in the near future.

Would that be a presentation of both arguments?-- Yes, it was the transcript of a meeting at which there were 200 people. Many were high-school students. It was a debate between Dr. Low from the Griffith University and Mr. McGilvray of the radiography section of the Q.I.T. Those two presented their cases and there was a question time and discussion with the audience.

Would evolution and Darwin's theories be encompassed in science courses?-- Most definitely.

They would be included in what you referred to as controversial issues?-- In fact a meeting is planned in the near future for a discussion between the creationist and the evolutionist theories because there is a fair amount of science people who are backing the creationist theory. The S.T.A.Q. council believes that that is one area that should be brought out. In the near future a similar type of meeting will be arranged and, hopefully, a similar brief publication will come from it.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: On that point will a balance be presented in future programmes?-- Most definitely. We would not consider it any other way.

In the past, in relation to evolution, has there always been that?-- I am sorry, I was referring to the Science Teachers' Association as it is now. Are you referring to the textbooks of the past?

Yes, the curriculum?-- Probably not.

BY MR. HEWITT: Would this also lead to discussion and values clarification?-- I think that is an area that needs to be aired and discussed in schools generally.

While on values clarification, it has been said that the essence of science is its objectivity. You propose to move into the area of values clarification which is highly subjective and emotional. Is this the area for scientists?-- Society itself is built on science. It is built on the results of science in technology. This is affecting everybody in a large number of ways. The council believes that these areas should be discussed. If you take genetic engineering, and you want to put it in the isolation of a laboratory, that is purely a laboratory experiment. Should it be allowed to continue, and what are the moral issues involved? The moral issues are surely the area of everybody and not just the scientist. The population should be scientifically literate enough to be able to partake in a sensible discussion on issues such as that.

On page 2, in a summary, you are talking about professional flexibility. Don't you think that there might be too much flexibility at the moment which could lead to a hotch potch of outcomes at, say, university level. That was put to us in evidence from the senate of the Queensland University. It was said that in the area of science children have had a good

grounding in some subjects but it is often very different from child to child. In that context we have the problem of the community being very mobile today, with children moving from school to school. That worries a lot of teachers who, in submissions to us, have asked for a fair amount of prescription in syllabus.

They say they are not competent to handle all this flexibility; they do not really see the need for all of it. They need a certain amount, but perhaps we have gone too far?-- We can come to that from both ends of the school. If we take the university first, it is only a small percentage of students who go to tertiary education, and only a small percentage goes on to tertiary science education. You can argue whether that body - the university, C.A.E. or what-have-you - should control the science that is taught for everybody.

In evidence before us during the week the university senate said that two-thirds of the secondary school population in Grades 11 and 12 were aiming for higher education. They said that it may even be three-quarters?-- But that is not science education.

No, but university generally?-- I thought we were discussing flexibility in science courses.

Yes?-- I think at the present time only about 30 per cent are doing science subjects. I might be wrong in that figure. I think of that number only a smaller percentage goes to straight sciences. I do not have the figures but I am fairly certain I have that basis from my recollection of schools where I have been.

What about the mobility question?-- I should like to finish the previous point. I said that there were two arguments One was whether or not the tertiary institution should impose on schools the type of science taught. The other thing is that if you accept that you do not make allowance for the fact that there are differences in students and differences in areas. Can you really accept that the same science course should be taught at Goondiwindi as is taught in Brisbane or Mackay? I am not saying that it should be totally different. The basics will be the same but in the manner of presentation teachers should be allowed to give courses that are suitable for students in their area. You can still do biology at Goondiwindi and Mackay but you might do it with a slightly different bias. So far as flexibility is concerned, I believe this is a problem. I do not have any solution to the problem of overcoming it. I think you would probably find that students are more adaptable than most people make them out to be.

BY MR. MILLER: Can we turn for a moment to page 3, the second paragraph? You refer to some hypothetical omnipotent body set up to over-view science education. Are you referring to the Board of Secondary School Studies or the syllabus committee? To whom are you referring?-- Well, you have said it. It is actually not a hypothetical body. In the case of most schools in Queensland, it could be the Education Department. There is in fact one case in point; I do not think I would be out of order in mentioning it. A Curriculum Branch officer produced a class-room kit on uranium for which he gathered information from both the uranium producers' forum and C.A.N.P. He produced what was regarded by most people who saw it as a well-balanced class-room kit. That was squashed after it was completed. It never got to the class-room. That might be what was being referred to.

BY MR. HEWITT: You said it was squashed?-- It was never released.

BY MR. POWELL: Dare we ask who squashed it?-- I do not know.

BY MR. HEWITT: Can you hazard a guess?-- I am not prepared to.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe it was -----?-- The gentleman concerned in the Curriculum Branch who prepared it is a friend of mine and a member of the association. He told me it would not be available.

BY MR. POWELL: Presumably that was prepared as resource material?-- Yes.

In your summary on page 3 you say that the science content taught to students should not exclude controversial issues. Are science teachers happy to enter into a controversial field, or would they prefer to remain in a black-and-white field?-- You have to allow for individual differences in teachers. There are some who would enter into it and others who would prefer to stay out of it completely. I think that holds for anybody in any argument.

As you see it, what percentage of science teaching (a) in the primary school, (b) in the lower secondary school, and (c) in the upper secondary school should be environmental science?-- I am not prepared to put a percentage on it. It should be an important section of the course because it is an area in which all branches of science can be applied. But I have not given a great deal of thought to what percentage it should be and I cannot give a percentage off the top of my head.

Would you say that perhaps the field in which science could be most easily adapted in the primary school is environmental science?-- Yes, it could play a very important part in primary schools. In fact, some States have introduced environmental education as a primary school subject.

No doubt you have heard the criticism often levelled by secondary teachers that the primary school does all the interesting experiments, the ones with spectacular results, and leaves the dull and uninteresting ones to secondary teachers. Have you heard that criticism and, if so, would you care to comment on it?-- Only on minor points. I would say that it would not bother me. Any science teacher who takes that point of view is probably a little jealous. He should have enough background to be able to build on that.

We have had very strong representations from some science teachers in another area when we were travelling in the country. Because of the more spectacular nature of the experiments conducted in the primary school compared with those conducted in the secondary school, as they had already been done in the primary school, some secondary teachers were claiming that primary teachers were coming to wrong conclusions in science experiments and secondary teachers were having to un-teach some of the things that had been taught to primary students. Have you had that criticism at your association?-- No, but that is quite likely because primary teachers as a group do not have the same background. They could therefore be drawing wrong conclusions. That criticsm has held with teaching for as many years as I can remember. There is always someone who taught the kids before you who did not teach them well enough.

Would you then argue for a lesser emphasis on science in primary schools?-- Definitely not. If I have the chance to make a comment later I should like to expand on that statement.

MR. POWELL: May he do that now, Mr. Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

WITNESS: I should like to see more time for science in primary schools rather than less. I know you may have the same submission from all subject associations. In keeping with this, I think there should be more time for science in the pre-service courses. At the present time the amount of science in pre-service courses is directly related to the amount of science taught in primary schools. The smaller the number of hours in the primary school, the smaller the number of hours given to science in pre-service courses. I stress this because a number of students who go into C.A.E.s for primary teaching are non-science type students. If they are going out to teach science they probably need a little more. This refers back to my previous comment about a scientifically literate society. I think we need to start building from the base there. There should be more time for science and more time for it in pre-service courses. There should be more time for in-service courses and more time for in-service courses for primary teachers to upgrade them in the area of science to give an appreciation predominantly of how science can be used as an integrating subject for other areas. I am biased, and I accept that. Science is an intrinsically interesting subject and it interests primary kids exceedingly. It generates a fair amount of interest. I have seen schools with programmes that use science as motivational starting material for their other subjects.

The other thing is to upgrade their knowledge in areas of the vast amount of the curriculum materials that are available and how they can be used. The final point on that would be to upgrade their content area knowledge. That is the lowest of the priorities.

BY MR. POWELL:

Do you have any knowledge of the environmental science programme that has been promoted by the Agricultural Project Club Section of the Education Department?---I know of it, yes.

What do you think of it?--I think the project club is doing a very good job.

BY MR. HEWITT: In one of your summaries you say, "Adequate provision should be made for the ongoing professional development of science teaching ." Is there any implied criticism there of the existing training arrangements for science teachers?-- No, it is not the training that is mentioned there; it is their continuing in-service. It is not a criticism of what is being available. It is merely saying that there should be more available. I believe that the amount of money available to the State Development Committee for in-service work generally next year is decreased compared with the amount this year. I also know that the advisory teacher service is being phased out. In science, in secondary science, there have only ever been two, anyway, one in the Far North Region and one in the Brisbane South Region. The work that these two gentlemen have done - and I have travelled with one of them for a fortnight - is quite remarkable. I suggest that with this professional development, more ways be explored of how the science teachers can be continually upgraded and also that the advisory teaching service not only continues but be expanded and be upgraded. For example, in South Australia, they are referred to as science consultants. This is a promotional position beyond the position of subject master, whereas in Queensland, they are stated as being advisory teachers and it is just a secondment for a short time.

BY MR. MILLER: Do you want parents to be involved in school decision-making?-- Yes.

Very few parents have come before the Committee seeking this privilege. Do you think it will be beneficial to have perhaps just a few dedicated and perhaps politically motivated people making decisions at school level?-- I think that if you can get parents involved, it will be a tremendous advantage.

You cannot see any danger in just having a few dedicated or perhaps politically motivated people?-- Most of the p. and c.s at the present moment are run by dedicated people.

Five per cent of the school population, do you think?-- It would be less, much less. The p. and c. that I am involved with - they are lucky if they get 12 people out of a parent population of 300 but they are the ones who are really interested in their children's education. If they are allowed to be involved, it can only be beneficial for the student, the parent, and the school.

Have you seen any great demand by numbers of parents for this to take place?--No great demands overtly, but being involved with the p. and c., there are parents who talk about wanting to get something done, but somewhere or other, there is a feeling of helplessness, that they cannot break into the system to get it done and also, if suggestions are made, they are squashed to some extent.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: There has been a flight from some subjects

at secondary school level. Languages generally is losing favour. Are you making ground or losing ground?-- The hard sciences, chemistry and physics, I think are losing ground. The biological sciences have shown a tremendous increase since 1973.

Softer options?-- No, more interesting. Even though I prefer chemistry, biology is a much more interesting subject. It is an easier subject to learn. Chemistry and physics are difficult, and that is all there is to it. If I can expand on that, the main reason for your flight away from sciences is that to learn science you have to have a basis before you can go anywhere. It does not matter what level it is. You have to have a basis before you can talk about anything. If you take history and art, you can talk from very little knowledge. I will probably get shot down here. Take an extreme example. A first-year university student going into a history class can discuss with his professor the work that the professor might be working on, but a first-year university student going into a chemistry class has no chance at all of discussing the research work being done by the professor, and I think you can extrapolate that down to some extent.

BY MR. POWELL: To me, both of your summaries on page 4 are linked. One talks about adequate provision for ongoing professional development. When do you think that that sort of in-service training, to use another word, should take place - during the school year or outside the school year?-- It will be both, because it depends on the type of in-service work you are looking at. If you take things like national conferences for even State conferences for the Science Teachers' Association, they have been accepted generally that they are in vacation-time. There have been courses of three hours a night over a number of weeks. There have been day-release type things. I think they are all types that are necessary. It depends on the course.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: You indicated at the outset that there were one or two areas you would like to expand. Time is running out, so I suggest you do that at this stage?-- I think I have managed most of them.

BY MR. POWELL: On the bottom of page 4, you are talking about greater effort being made to decrease class sizes in biology courses. Have you any ideal size for a laboratory class?-- Varying with the age of the students. Probably 20. This is the point I was going to make. The laboratory is potentially a very hazardous place. I think it is a feather in the cap of the science teachers of Queensland generally that there are not more accidents. There are very few accidents. Any one school during any one year, if you check through the accidents, you will probably find cut fingers and burnt fingers, but when you have 30 or 34 students in a laboratory handling chemicals, it is explosive. I taught at a school at the beginning of the year where the class size went up to 34 with a group due to a transfer, so it was a case that two of us would go in. There was the teacher and myself. We would be in the laboratory together when they were doing any chemical prac. work.

Has the association any evidence of what the average size is in Queensland today and how many are above the 20?-- No. We have a small subcommittee working on lab. attendance but not on lab. sizes at the present moment. I believe, however, that the Queensland Teachers' Union has gone into class sizes.

BY MR. MILLER: In paragraph 6 on page 4 you argue that students should experience science rather than learn by rote. Surely some learning is essential?-- Yes. I am not

saying that we are eliminating learning if they are going to experience it. Experience also is learning. I do not think anybody would accept the argument that you merely fiddle around and do nothing. Students still have to learn. I think every teacher realises that he has a moral obligation to make certain that the kids learn something, but there is a difference between learning science when you sit down and chant off Boyle's law or rates of chemical reaction or whatever it might be, and doing something about it with experiment, either by observation or demonstration or by the students doing it themselves.

You don't think they need to learn the names of gases, minerals or things like that?-- That has to come; that comes. Learning does take place. This is the point that was made by the Chairman before. Some of it is difficult and has to be learned, and that is all that there is to it.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your submission. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your association for their thoughts?-- May I make one final point, relating to the last paragraph?

Yes?-- It is with respect to laboratory attendants. If some thought could be given to upgrading the qualifications of laboratory attendants, it would be desirable.

Within the schools?-- Yes, because at the present moment there are no minimum qualifications, so science masters find themselves with youngpeople who have no science background handling scientific apparatus, preparing solutions and handling animals and plants and so forth.

Thank you very much for appearing before us?-- Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite representatives of the Headmasters' Conference in Queensland to appear before the Committee.

C. J. Burr
(Science Teachers' Association of Queensland)

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very pleased to welcome before the Committee this morning representatives of the Headmasters' Conference of Australia, Queensland Branch. The submission has been received by the Committee and studied by members, so it will not be necessary to speak to it. It is coded for our record purposes J1-676. I am pleased to welcome Mr. Howell and Mr. Day and would ask each of them to indicate the position he holds in the conference.

MR. HOWELL: My name is Maxwell Arthur Howell, and I am chairman of the Queensland Branch. I have with me Mr. John Henry Day, who is secretary of the Queensland Branch.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We will commence the questioning.

MR. POWELL: How many members do you have in the Queensland Branch of the Headmasters' Conference and do you liaise frequently with the New South Wales Branch?

MR. HOWELL: There are approximately 100 members in Australia. The standing committee meets three times a year and there are representatives from every State on the standing committee. The Headmasters' Conference meets twice every two years.

MR. POWELL: How many members are there in Queensland?

MR. HOWELL: There are 19.

MR. MILLER: You say that the old public examinations were not reliable predictors of success in university studies. We have also had evidence, from the university, that the Radford Scheme is no more reliable.

MR. HOWELL: If you are talking about absolute reliability, that is probably right. Professor Schonell's study of performance showed a 0.46 correlation in 1950 on success in first year related to Senior results, and that is about the same correlation that occurs now. In other words, if you are looking for an absolute correlation, that is, that every student who qualifies to enter university passes first year, you are looking for something that you are not going to get. We have the same sort of figures at Griffith University, which I saw last night. Even though these are only small numbers, the correlation there in one faculty was 0.77; but this question of correlation between success in first year and matriculation has always been a problem. I have read the university's report, and I do not think that the figures there are very different from those in Schonell's report.

MR. MILLER: You are strongly opposed to any external examinations. Yet isn't the ASAT test an external examination?

MR. HOWELL: No, it is not an external examination. It doesn't examine the individual student. It is a moderating instrument that is used for the group. If the actual performance of the individual student was used in assessing his T.E. score, it might be termed an external examination. But when we use the term "external examination" we are referring to an examination set by those external, those other than the teachers who teach the courses and who prescribe the syllabus - in other words, as it used to be set by university people and marked by university people in the main, assisted by teachers. But certainly ASAT is not an external examination in that sense; it is not syllabus-based anyway.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it a good moderating device? It is a measure of scholastic aptitude, not a measure of industry or individual teacher success in the class-room, which might be very relevant to success in the particular subject area and which is negated by the ASAT test?

MR. HOWELL: What you say is true, but the moderating device attempts to put all the students over the same course on the same day, or give them the same assessment experience on the same day. The factors you mentioned - motivation, determination, ability to conceptualise and so forth - are all accounted for by the school assessment. It has to be remembered that when you place students in an order of merit, the school places them in an order of merit in each subject. The ASAT test does not change that order, so your best, most responsible and capable students are still, after they take the ASAT test,the best,and the worst are still the worst.

THE CHAIRMAN: But instead of having 6s they probably have 5s:

MR. HOWELL: No, they haven't. Instead of having 6s they may well have had 7s. You don't change the actual rating; you simply use the order of merit to produce a State-wide order of merit. You use the ASAT test to moderate so that you put them in a State-wide order of merit. Some students in this group might well be moved up by comparison with other students in the State. This concept that the ASAT test measures the particular student's ability and decides whether he goes to university is quite incorrect.

THE CHAIRMAN: Universities do not like them.

MR. HOWELL: I would not agree with that entirely. The Queensland University's submission said that it was prepared to accept the tertiary entrance score as a measure but suggested that we ought to look further at finding a better moderating instrument. That is what the Board of Secondary School Studies is doing. I do not think that is quite the same as saying they don't like it. I am certain it has proved to be a better measuring instrument than the old No. 96 , when you added up your ratings in four semesters.

MR.HEWITT: They are a little bit less than ecstatic about it; could we put it that way?

MR. HOWELL: I would agree with that assessment.

MR. POWELL: Near the end of page 1 of the submission you seem to indicate - correct me if I am wrong - that the external examination, the old Junior and Senior, showed little relevance to the sort of results that could be expected at university level. Is the Radford system proving a better indicator of university performance, and should university performance anyhow be an indicator of whether a scheme is good or bad?

MR. HOWELL: Actually I answered that question while you were out.

MR. POWELL: While I was where?

MR. HOWELL: I thought I answered that question when the first question came up, but I will say it again. The question of any test being a 100 per cent reliable predictor is one that we are hoping is pie in the sky. I don't believe that in any system you can provide an

examination that will be absolutely 100 per cent certain that every student who passes that examination or secures entry to the university or other tertiary institutions will succeed at the end of the first year.

Apart from anything else, there are so many other variables - the attitudes of students, their social development, their age when they go to the university and all the other problems they face as young adolescents. So the evidence is, as far as I am aware, that there are no more reliable predictors than you could produce with about a 0.46 to 0.47 correlation. The external examinations produced that. The Radford scheme - internal school-based assessments - produces that also.

MR. POWELL: The last part of the question was: should university performance be an indicator anyhow?

MR. HOWELL: I don't think it should, because of the points I made earlier. There are so many other factors - the attitudes of students, the adjustments of students, their motivations, the distractions they have at university, the new-found freedom they have as students and so on.

MR. HEWITT: I am sure you would be very disappointed if we did not ask you questions about your suggested Grade 13. Would Grade 13 merely spread the work-load of Grade 12 over two years? Would you envisage further courses or merely an elaboration of existing courses? Would you like to give us any further information on that proposal which you would like to supply?

MR. HOWELL: Let me just say that this suggestion is put forward as a positive proposal to try to remove some of the problems that we have in tertiary entrance. We all know that this is one of the most difficult problems in the whole secondary scene. This is the one that has caused most of the hassles with school-based assessments. It caused most of the hassles in the days of the old external examinations, too. We believe that there are many problems at the moment - that there is too much pressure on Grade 12 students to conform to the requirements of tertiary institutions. My experience is - and I am sure it would be Mr. Day's too - that the students in their final year are very much under pressure because of this concern of whether they will get into a tertiary institution or not. Many of them have to restrict their courses so that they can take the pre-requisites required by tertiary institutions. This concept, of course, is not a new one. It is a fairly common one in the United States, where there is the idea of a junior college. What we are saying is to let the secondary schools have their own aims and objectives, which are to develop the students, develop their interests, broaden their education and develop them socially, intellectually, morally and spiritually. Those are the aims of secondary education. I am not saying that those are the exclusive aims, but they are some of them. A Grade 13, or first-year college, would then serve to provide for students the sorts of prerequisites they may need. For instance, if a student does not want to study Maths II at school, though it is a prerequisite for engineering, there should be no reason why he should not be able in one year to acquire enough knowledge of Maths II to enter engineering at the university. If he needs biology for medicine or if he needs a foreign language - there are certain prerequisites required for entering various faculties at the university - these could be taken in the Grade 13 year. The other advantage I see it having is that it enables students to develop a little more maturity. They could get more knowledge of the sorts of techniques in the large lecture situation at universities, as well as the absence of supervision. One of the greatest problems of students entering universities, as I see it, is that they are removed from the more or less paternalistic atmosphere of a school and placed into the totally free atmosphere of the university, where nobody really is going to ask them whether they have their assignments done - their homework done. Nobody forces them to go to lectures. Many kids at the age

of 17 can't take that sort of pressure. Let's face it: many students in Queensland are going to universities at not much more than 17 years old. In my opinion that is far too young.

MR. HEWITT: Would this be a compulsory course or would you keep your options open at the end of Grade 12 to go on to a tertiary institution or to do a Grade 13?

MR. HOWELL: I would see it as being simply an alternative. Either it becomes a terminal course for those students who just wish to continue their education for another year or two after Grade 12, or it is a two-year course or a one-year course as a preparation for entry to a graduate school. By "graduate school" I mean where they start their undergraduate courses at tertiary institutions.

MR. MILLER: Have you costed the proposal in terms of teachers, buildings and equipment?

MR. HOWELL: No. This is a philosophical proposal in a sense. I do not doubt for one minute that the cost would be very considerable, but I think inevitably we are going to have to look at the rationalising of the tertiary institutions that are available at the moment, because it seems to me that one of the problems we are facing is that tertiary institutions in particular - advanced colleges - are turning out an enormous number of graduates who may not be employed. Teachers are one group. Are we able to go on enrolling, teaching and graduating all these people from the 17 tertiary institutions in Queensland profitably? It may mean rationalising this. It may mean that one or two of the colleges of advanced education could be turned over to this junior college concept.

MR. MILLER: It has been put to us on a number of occasions that there perhaps should be a new stream developed after Grade 10 to a TAFE institution rather than continuing with Grades 11 and 12. This is completely contrary to your suggestion of Grade 13. What do you think about some young people leaving at Grade 10 and going to a TAFE institution?

MR. HOWELL: It is not entirely contrary to the concept of Grade 13, but my view on that would be that you would have to be very, very careful indeed. If you are going to do that, you would have to build into the system the possibility of a student getting back into the academic stream. It would be most unfortunate and quite wrong of us to be making decisions about 14-year-old students and virtually committing them to a particular line of education when in fact by the age of 15 they may not want to be committed to that. In other words, if you put them onto the apprentice TAFE line, you have to make sure that they can get back again. The decisions by which we decide whether students do a manual training or non-academic course are often based on insufficient evidence. Some kids don't mature till late. They are late developers. Very often we say, "He is not much good at maths and science. Let's stick him into the carpentry section."

MR. MILLER: Is it hard for him to get back into the normal education stream if he wants to, even now?

MR. HOWELL: It is hard, yes. It should be made easier, in our opinion.

THE CHAIRMAN: The submission you have made about Grade 13 is a very important one and has not come from anywhere else, to my knowledge. Are you aware that the universities have disputed the Scott report's percentage of Grade 11 and 12 students who are desirous of entering tertiary education generally? This was made by way of a supplementary submission to our inquiry, in which

they said that the Scott report had proposed that something like only 50 per cent of children at Grade 11 and 12 levels were desirous of pursuing tertiary education. They felt that it was more like 75 per cent. So the reaction of your submission and many others involved in departmental administration that the universities and the tertiary institutions ought not to be dictating to the schools what we teach is not so relevant in the light of that suggestion. If 75 per cent of children are desirous of going on to tertiary education, we ought to recognise that within the Grades 11 and 12 system of secondary education in the State.

That was the major thrust of their submission. It is quite different to what you are saying here, which is that up to Grade 12 we ought to just give a general education and Grade 13 will be the pre-tertiary one.

MR. HOWELL: I am not quite saying that, but let me deal with the first point first. I can't remember where in the Scott report we make this statement about 50 per cent, but if that was the figure it would not have been statistically compiled, I think it was probably an intelligent guess. I would be inclined, and I do not want to labour this point, to dispute the figure of 75 per cent - 75 per cent of what? 75 per cent of those students who started Grade 8 or 75 per cent of those in Grade 12?

THE CHAIRMAN: Of Grade 11 and 12 students.

MR. HOWELL: Grade 11? I would strongly dispute the 75 per cent of Grade 11.

THE CHAIRMAN: Grade 11 and 12.

MR. HOWELL: But it has to be 75 per cent of a number. The Grade 11 figures differ greatly. In our figures from the Board of Secondary School Studies there is a very considerable drop-out - well, not very considerable, but a drop-out of students from Grades 11 and 12.

THE CHAIRMAN: You might look at the submission.

MR. HOWELL: Yes, but I do not think the figures themselves are necessarily important. I think Professor Scott is on next and perhaps you ought to take that question of the 50 per cent and 75 per cent up with him as chairman of the committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: It relates to your concept of the whole rationale behind Grade 13.

MR. HOWELL: No, not quite. We are not saying that the Grade 11 and 12 would be a totally general course with, if you like, Mickey Mouse subjects and courses which have no relevance and no academic basis. We are not saying that at all. What I would be saying would be that one of the problems of our Grade 12 year is the problem of tertiary entrance. That is the pressure, and I believe the pressure can be removed from the schools themselves and placed into the situation where it properly belongs, and that is a college at tertiary level where you can then do your selection process. One of the problems, as we have indicated in this report, is this very business of: how do you select students to go from Grade 12 to university or tertiary institutions? If you have got 12 months or two years in a Grade 13 or 14 college you have got the students there and you have the capacity to use whatever criteria you like to select them. Let me give you one example. There would be plenty of people around in the medical profession who would argue very strongly that the method of selecting students to go into a first-year medical course at the university is extremely bad because all you are selecting out is students on the basis of academic ability, and there have to be other criteria.

MR. HEWITT: Profiles.

MR. HOWELL: Yes. I have talked with Professor Saint, Professor Doherty and several other members of the university faculty on this question of selection and they still can't come up with a satisfactory way. I believe if you are going to do that

your Grade 13 would solve that problem. You can use whatever profiles you like. You can use interview techniques, you can decide what the criteria are for being a good doctor and that would make it a much fairer method of selection.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is hard to determine your quotas and so on from the point of view of patronage. How do you determine that without heing criticised for picking Johnny, who has a score of 980 and neglecting someone who has a score of 990 on the basis of aptitude? Someone will say, "Well, that's because he went to Grammar and not to State High."

MR. HOWELL: No, we are talking about a Grade 13 college now. Whether he went to Grammar or State High or wherever else is irrelevant once you get to a Grade 13 college. The Grade 13 people are then going to make the decisions, and if the faculty of medicine or dentistry or any other faculty at universities or tertiary institutions want to set their own tests then they can. It would seem to me that it would not be impossible for the medical faculty to prepare a test which will discover the sort of criteria they need for good doctors and not just academic ability. Academic ability is very important, I admit, but I do not accept the fact that no student in Queensland who gets a T.E. score below 985 should ever be admitted to the practice of medicine or dentistry. I think that is a highly restricted entry but I can understand why it happens. After all, the dean of the faculty has got to cover himself.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I refer you to page 7 of the submission because there is an important point there. Right at the start you say -

> "In our view it is not the responsibility of the Board of Secondary School Studies nor individual schools to provide ready-made measures which can be used by employing authorities to select employees."

We do it for the tertiary entrance people, we provide them with a T.E. score, and the employers are saying to this inquiry, "We need more information." You are saying, "Well, we don't see it as our job."

MR. HOWELL: No, I am not saying we do not need more information, we are saying it is not our job to use ready-made measures, and by "ready-made measures" I am referring to the tertiary entrance score. What I am referring to there is the growing tendency amongst employing authorities, including the Public Service, to use the tertiary entrance score as a selecting device.

THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe it is perfectly understandable when there is nothing much else available.

MR. HOWELL: But there are other things. What we are saying is that surely if this particular employing authority sat down and decided what particular criteria they required, what particular qualities they required in their own employees, and to use that to select them. There are all sorts of other measures apart from a Junior certificate, a Senior certificate and a tertiary entrance score that students have. What about the reports from schools? I am sure Mr. O'Connor would agree with me here that reports from principals of schools can be much more revealing and give us a great deal more about the student than any Junior certificate, Senior certificate, or tertiary entrance score. The tertiary entrance score is a

measure of intelligence and a measure of ability to cope with the academic course, but if one of the requirements of employment in an organisation is tenacity, as you were talking about, or determination, the T.E. score does not easure that. But the headmaster of the school can tell you whether he is or not, if that is the quality you are looking for. This is what I am saying. I am not for a minute saying that we stand out of this thing and let the employers look after themselves.

MR. POWELL: Can I be the Devil's Advocate and put forward the point of view that has been put to us on a number of occasions by employers? You touched upon it in page 2 of your submission where you said -

> "Some hundreds of individual assessors were required to mark the public examination papers and these, despite the directions of the chief examiners, were quite often unable to approach the papers for which they were responsible wholly free from their own prejudices and their own preconceived notions of what is required in a good answer."

What the employer is saying is that when the grade level appears to be dropping in the school, so therefore there is a great argument going on between the school moderators or the school assessment procedures to make the examination therefore slightly easier so that the marks come up and therefore the employer is given a false impression of what is going on.

MR. HOWELL: That is what they are saying, is it? Where is their evidence?

MR. POWELL: The evidence is that they claim the people they are receiving in the work-force are not as good as they used to be. I know you are going to go on and talk about the numbers they are getting now anyhow, but what I am saying is this: the impartiality of the old system was perhaps doubtful in some cases but the impartiality of the present system is far more suspect.

MR. HOWELL: I do question your last statement. I think the impartiality of the external examinations is no more or less than the impartiality of the present system, the reason being, of course, that it is organised and run by human beings and human beings are fallible. There seems to be no way, unless you start getting computers to mark examination papers and teach children, that you are ever going to get rid of the human element. Let me make the other point. I do not really believe, even if your argument were true ----

MR. POWELL: Their argument.

MR. HOWELL: I beg your pardon. Even if the employers' argument were true, and I have my doubts about it, it would still seem to me no reason for going back to a system which we believe has so many disadvantages, to throw aside - what we have got to do is to talk with employers.

I believe that this is absolutely essential. When I say "we", I mean the Board of Secondary School Studies, and so on. I think we have not done enough of this in the past and we must do this more, and the Scott report does indicate that we should do this.

MR. POWELL: Should we have employers on the Board of Secondary School Studies?

MR. HOWELL: Yes, I believe we should. I certainly believe we should. In fact there is a proposal before Parliament that the Act is to be - we have put a submission, my memory is.

THE CHAIRMAN: It must be before the Minister. It is one of the questions that I propose to direct to the Board of Secondary School Studies this morning.

MR. HOWELL: There is a proposal from the board for the restructuring of the board, and that would include representatives of industry, representatives of parent bodies, and other community representatives. That seems to me to be a very important move forward.

THE CHAIRMAN: My attention has now been drawn to the direct quote that I was referring to in the paper that was presented, and it relates to your proposal for Grade 13, I think. The senate said -

> "Our studies in the past two years suggest that at least two-thirds and probably three-quarters or more of those who completed Year 12 in recent years will enter a University or a College and our conclusion is that account should be taken of their needs in planning the secondary curriculum, especially in Years 11 and 12."

MR. HOWELL: That is three-quarters of those in Grade 12?

THE CHAIRMAN: Or more.

MR. HOWELL: Well, that is a pretty rough figure, but we will accept the three-quarters or more. Fair enough. Of course, Grade 12 does in fact do that. Our Grade 13 proposal is in no way to suggest that we should relax the academic basis of this. We would certainly be catering for that group of students. But remember that, if there are 30,000 students, as there are in Queensland, sitting for Grade 12, three-quarters of those is what? 7,000 are not going to tertiary institutions, and we have to cater for them. They are just as important as the students who are going on to tertiary institutions, and maybe more in some respects. So even if the university has an argument, or the senate has an argument, that we ought to be looking at the three-quarters of the Grade 12 cohorts, sure; and we ought to be looking at the other one-quarter who are not potentially. With respect to your question, I do not think that the answer is TAFE streaming at Grade 10 necessarily, because I think it commits the student at too early an age to a particular line of study. You know, I am not sure. Mr. Chairman, I would like to emphasise the point that we have not thought through this Grade 13 proposal in detail. It is a proposition that is put very briefly in the middle of another submission. It is one of the thoughts we have. We still believe that it has value and there will be a great deal of discussion, and this could be the subject of an entirely single submission as to where we stand on this issue.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I thank you very much for appearing before us today. It has been greatly appreciated. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to the

Headmasters' Conference for the preparation of their submission and their thoughts in presenting it to us.

MR. HOWELL: Would you object if we remained in the background? We have a particular interest in the report of the Board of Secondary School Studies, as well as in the Scott report.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are very welcome.

MR. HOWELL: Thank you very much.

The Committee adjourned at 11.5 a.m.

The Committee resumed at 11.30 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I am very pleased to welcome before the Committee the Board of Secondary School Studies and Professor Scott. Some time ago, prior to the public release of the document called "A Review of School-based Assessment in Queensland Secondary Schools", which, for our purposes is coded JL-602, the Minister for Education in the State provided the Committee with individual copies of it so that we could give as much time as possible to detailed consideration of it. I am grateful for his consideration. The Board of Secondary School Studies members are appearing before us today for the second time to discuss this particular document and to talk generally about matters that have been expressed to us by way of representations in submissions. I take this opportunity of recognising the fact that the Board of Secondary School Studies has been enormously helpful and open to the Committee. That has been valued by us. They are not only appearing before us again; they have appeared in support of various subject committees and have been very prompt in replying to correspondence I have directed to them on behalf of the Committee. We are grateful for all the assistance we have received. We welcome Professor Ted Scott. It might be best if we just referred to the Scott report, as it has been known for the sake of brevity. It is this area that we will be traversing primarily today.

It might be a good point to begin with the Senate of the Queensland University if that is convenient. Its members appeared before us on Tuesday and presented us with a supplement to its initial submission. One of its submissions criticised the statistical basis for some of the conclusions reached in the Scott committee report. At the bottom of page 2 of the supplementary addendum the point is made that, "Our studies in the past two years suggest that at least two-thirds and probably three-quarters or more of those who completed year 12 in recent years will enter a university or college, and our conclusion is that account should be taken of their needs in planning the secondary curriculum, especially in years 11 and 12." That, I think, is at substantial variance with the recommendations in the Scott report and the general thrust of the Scott report. I would ask whether any of you gentlemen would care to comment. I am pleased to recognise Mr. Ray Roberts, the chairman, Mr. Les Winkle, the executive officer, and Professor Scott, appearing before us.

MR. ROBERTS: I think Professor Scott will answer most of the points that have been raised. Mr. Winkle probably wants to say something about a particular item, but he can do that later.

PROF. SCOTT: We have had the advantage of reading the submission. The university very kindly provided us with a copy of it. I would like to comment on your statement and to state initially that, in fact, there is an error of wording in the statistics in our own document which was not picked up editorially. Indeed, the University of Queensland's supplementary submission recognised the probable real meaning of our term. We used, as shown on page 2 of their supplementary submission, in the document itself, the words "were applicants for entrance". In fact, that ought to have read, "were entrants to tertiary institutes". That figure of approximately 50 per cent is correct. In fact, the real figures are somewhere in the vicinity of about 43 per cent upwards, and it varies. The source of those figures happens to be the QTAC document itself. I have an extract from it here which I can make available to you subsequently, which shows the destination of year 12

school-leavers in the 1976 cohort and the similar figures can be found for 1977 when the report becomes available. In fact, our statement remains that approximately 50 per cent of year 12 students went on to tertiary institutions. We have no quarrel at all with an argument that secondary education must provide opportunities for students to proceed to tertiary institutions. Indeed, the report recommends that we continue to recognise that; that is a dominant recognition given at the moment, but we should also recognise other students who are not going on to tertiary institutions. In fact, I put it to the Committee that it would not matter if 80 per cent of year 12 students went on to tertiary institutions; there are still 20 per cent of our students who need an education geared to whatever vocational avenue they choose. Our recommendation, which seems to have been overlooked by the University of Queensland Senate submission, was that there should be elective tracks in addition to the core, and those elective tracks would obviously provide for students who were tertiary oriented and for students who were not.

THE CHAIRMAN: To clarify the position on who is right and who is wrong in this argument, it should surely be possible to obtain the actual figure on students at the end of Grade 12 who actually go into tertiary institutions. Is that figure 47 per cent, or 75 per cent as the senate has said?

PROF. SCOTT: We have a document here taken from the QTAC first annual report printed on 30 June 1977 which refers to the 1976 figures, which shows that there were 12,675 year 12 students who would have received T.E. scores - completed year 12, I am told by Mr. Winkle. Of that number, 5,374 went on to either the three Queensland universities or the 10 colleges of advanced education. You can add to that another 69 that went to other colleges of advanced education - either the McCawley Training College or C.A.Es outside Queensland - and 48 went on to universities in other States. That gives a total - out of 12,600 approximately, 5,490 went on to tertiary institutions.

THE CHAIRMAN: So they can't add up.

PROF. SCOTT: They are factual; they are their own figures.

THE CHAIRMAN: Having settled that particular question which is important - I am not quibbling about it because it is the basis of a lot of the rationale for school-based decision-making and many of the changes that you have recommended. Having settled that point, I think we would like you to provide us with that QTAC document. Other members of the Committee may now care to ask questions.

MR. MILLER: Have you considered the number of teachers involved in this new procedure, the number of days and hours teachers will be absent from teaching and how many teachers will be necessary to replace them during this period.

MR. ROBERTS: Are we leaving the university document now? Are you going on to something else?

THE CHAIRMAN: There was only one point I highlighted in the university document. Is there something you wanted to say?

MR. ROBERTS: There were several mis-statements of fact.

PROF. SCOTT: Could we refer to them briefly?

THE CHAIRMAN: We will stay with the university document to get it out of the road. If there are any other errors in it we would like to know about them.

PROF. SCOTT: Very briefly I shall refer to some of the statements there that undoubtedly would influence the thinking of the Committee. On page 3 there is comment on the recommendation in the report that school subjects should be taken into account in calculating T.E. scores.

The argument advanced in the supplementary submission proceeds as though one is talking about school subjects as they are presently known. This has overlooked the inclusion in the document of "certificated" school subjects - in other words, school subjects that had been subjected to the board's curriculum processes and had been approved by the board for inclusion in the tertiary education score. It also does not pick up that in the recommendation relating to this the committee recommended, and the board subsequently adopted, that this should not be proceeded with without prior discussion with the tertiary institutions themselves. To suggest that a fait accompli had been presented is therefore an error. I now move to one or two other points. Further down the comment is made that the tertiary entrance score is set out on pages 51 and 52 of the report and there is a challenge to the accuracy of the report's statement that the tertiary entrance score was developed by the Board of Secondary School Studies. I think it is rather trite to argue about it, but Mr. Winkle could give the genesis of that score with ease if you would like him to do so. That would support our contention that it was a Board of Secondary School Studies derived score. If you think it worth while, we can do that. My point is that that is an inaccurate statement.

THE CHAIRMAN: Which one is that?

PROF. SCOTT: Point (a) in paragraph 4, it looks like. We are just quibbling over something that is so minor that it is not worth worrying about. The next point, however, does have a bearing on what we are trying to do in secondary education. They take up a comment in the report that we made that the T.E. score - 910, for example - is a number which in and of itself means very little, and the supplementary submission answers, "But as a centile rank based on the number of 17-year-olds it provides the best available means of comparing the results from different States and countries." We would not deny that but that is a very limited utility for an omnibus kind of score. It tells people nothing about the individual subjects they were studying, what their performance happened to be in the subjects and it provides no information whatsoever as to the meaning of achievement in those particular areas. We contend that our statement, that being a number in and of itself it has very little meaning to offer John Citizen, is sound.

MR. POWELL: Why then use a T.E. score?

PROFESSOR SCOTT: I think the answer to that is to go back to the original summation of ratings by tertiary institutions, particularly the University of Queensland, which followed the introduction of the Radford proposals, and then the subsequent desire to get an order of merit out of it, it being rather difficult to get an order of merit out of the other. It was resolved at that time to standardise ratings and their effect back to a base across the entire State the moderating instrument ASAT would be used. As a result, an overall number of order of merit was produced. Hopefully, of course, the university also takes the rating into account in admitting students, but the T.E. score is the first thing looked at.

MR. POWELL: It is the only thing looked at by many employers.

PROF. SCOTT: We reference that also and it is a source of great concern to us.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should stick to the university document. Are you going to deal with page 4?

PROF SCOTT: Yes. I should like to go on for just a moment to answer the question raised in point (c). This relates to our comment that the accusations that many members of the public have made that schools can in fact cheat their T.E. scores by having certain students absent themselves from the ASAT test are not well founded. We had our research officer conduct a programme of studies using actual student numbers and actual student figures to determine what in fact happened if you deleted all the lower scorers in a particular subject area and so on. We also conducted a study in which students were deleted at random. The submission questions whether by "random" we meant statistically at random. We did. Our research officer used a statistical table of random numbers to delete students. The result was that the majority of students in schools where students had been dropped at random in fact got lower T.E. scores. I just wanted to answer that question for the record.

THE CHAIRMAN: They would not run them at random if they were setting out to defraud the ASAT test.

PROF. SCOTT: That is true, but we in fact tried all ways. We dropped the poorer performers and so on, but whichever way we went the majority of students had their scores lowered rather than improved by dropping students out.

MR. WINKLE: I think that is the real point of the issue. Nobody would drop themselves out at random and therefore there is no possibility of an advantage being gained. The only way in which an advantage could be gained is a way that is not acceptable to the total population.

PROF. SCOTT: I suggest that the answer to that is provided by a reading, if you find the time, of the appendix report of that research. The next paragraph down, of course, relates to the suggestion that the inclusion of school subject scores or performances in the tertiary entrance score would be inappropriate because of their not being a very good measure for students who intend to go on to university or college. It says that it would weaken the predicted value of the T.E. score. I must confess that I believe it is almost unbelievable arrogance to suggest that one cannot develop intellectually by studying other subjects and not necessarily those that the university may prescribe for entrance. I merely use this example as an illustration: if one student were to gain under the present system a 7 in mathematics, a 7 in physics, a 7 in chemistry and a 6, let us say, in English, and then had offered two other units of certificated subjects, would anyone seriously suggest that that student would not succeed at the university? I do not think, frankly, that that particular issue has been very well thought through by the critics in terms of what we meant. Turning to page 4, the section in italics, reads, "Tertiary institutions continue to require evidence that entrants have met prescribed standards in certain subjects and would prefer that the evidence on the standard achieved be known to the student." The recommendation that we have made will ensure that that actually occurs. In the last paragraph reference is made to the scaled exit assessment we have recommended and the submission equates this with the special assessment that is made. These are not meant to be synonymus. We have recommended for the tertiary entrance score that in fact the scaled assessments are refined more carefully into an order of ranking. The exit assessment is the score or competency level that will be reported on the certificate and known to the student, and the meaning of the competency certificate will appear on the certificate. There is a misunderstanding there. This document has made us even more aware of public education in terms of its interpretation.

THE CHAIRMAN: You would not approve, then, of the university's using the teachers' grading on the 100 points scale for determining tertiary entrance? That was the point that was argued before us.

PROF. SCOTT: We have not rejected that initially. It depends on how much detail you want me to go into here. We have basically recommended a continuation of a similar method of getting that tertiary entrance score because that score does have wide acceptance in the community today. To develop a new strategy, which we think might well be done, would take some considerable time. But you cannot just use the old system with the new because they have different bases. Simply, what we have recommended is that if you have our five categories of the highest order of competency to very limited competence, within those one can in fact recognise that it is a band and there are students who could be seen as being slightly more competent than others. In fact, if you take a ranking system and say we have 100 ranks, we could allocate students within those 100 ranks. This is different from saying that he has 70 per cent or 80 per cent. It is a rank.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think that the time is coming when the university should set its own entrance examination?

PROF. SCOTT: That is an area that we discussed very briefly but did not really buy into, a wish that the secondary school system did not have to be responsible for virtually nominating, by way of the achievement level it gives students at the end of courses , who would go on to secondary schools. But I am aware of the fact that the University of Queensland would not like to accept that responsibility now, and I am sure that my own university would not like to accept it.

MR. ROBERTS: I would like to point out that in some countries, notably in Germany, it is not the university which decides whether students are capable of university education; it is the school. Education authorities in Germany, when I was there, were surprised to think that we operate under a system where the university virtually decides who will go to that university. They say, "Surely the school that has known the child for five years is in a position to indicate whether that child is capable of undertaking university education."

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you talking about quotas?

MR. ROBERTS: They have every right, I suppose, to indicate quotas.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it so today that universities are actually determining the entrance requirements; if not the T.E. score, then something that is the product of the Board of Secondary School Studies in the school system?

PROF. SCOTT: Yes. If you accept that, then the universities determine what the cut-off point for T.E. scores will be for entrance to a particular faculty.

MR. ROBERTS: Also, the university recognises certain subjects which would be approved for this, whereas they might not recognise other subjects.

MR. POWELL: Isn't that their right?

MR. ROBERTS: That is what they argue, but I want to make the point that this is not a universally accepted thing.

MR. POWELL: Where is it not accepted?

MR. ROBERTS: In Germany.

MR. POWELL: Other than Germany?

THE CHAIRMAN: I take up that point, because in every other State of Australia there is an entrance examination into university.

PROF. SCOTT: One of the disadvantages of that - I respect the rights of universities, if they wish to, to determine their entrance requirements - but the problem associated with it is that before long schools generate their own curriculum that they think is then best related to whatever the entrance exams are that tertiary institutions set. Before long that becomes the curriculum that virtually all students are following. I think that is the dangerous thing. It gets away from our spirit of trying to maximise the potential of every student by having a variety of opportunities.

MR. POWELL: The arguments that parents are giving us are

exactly those, that the student has to be aimed at something. I know that traditionally it has been university qualifications and employers have taken their selection procedures from the sort of criteria given to the universities. What is wrong with that?

PROF. SCOTT: There is nothing wrong with students who want to go on to universities.

MR. POWELL: What is wrong with an employer who is selecting employees as a shop assistant, a mechanic or a carpenter using the same basis?

PROF. SCOTT: I think one of the problems is that if you think of students who are following a particular syllabus and if - I qualify it with the word "if" - they are less competent in a particular subject and they are working on the same syllabus, they are going to drop off in terms of their comprehension well before the other students and, in fact, a great deal of their school-time is going to be sheer boredom and drudgery when in fact they may well be better off pursuing studies that are of interest to them. I think that commerce could be required to state quite clearly what they are expecting in students. This is one of the ways in which the school will be helped to design the curricula that it is going to follow. One of the things at the moment is that we do not seem to be able to get a unified voice and a clear voice from the non-university sector on what they expect the schools to be doing.

MR. POWELL: Could that be because they have traditionally based their selection procedures on similar criteria that the university sets?

PROF. SCOTT: I think that may be true. Again it points to the fact that we need some employer education. Are you going to ask a person who has, say, the competence to be a reasonable lift attendant and who will get reasonable satisfaction out of being a lift attendant to go and study Senior mathematics, Senior physics and Senior chemistry? There has to be some reality about it all. This is why I think dialogue about what people are doing is important and we must not lose sight of the fact that the state of our economy is such and is likely to be in employment opportunities that many youngsters will continue on with their education until something comes up. We also have this multi-cultural mix, a very heavy immigrant population in Australia today, and one has to look at their destiny and the kind of curriculum best suited to them. That is why the committee recommended to the board that we should in fact have a flexible curriculum.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not want to trammel the Committee at all but we have a big area to cover. At this stage I think we should proceed to obtain some explanation about the Scott committee's proposals in general. I think that Mr. Miller had started into this area.

MR. MILLER: Yes. I raised the costing aspect and I had asked about teacher hours that will be involved; the number of days that teachers will be away from teaching. I am wondering if it has been costed and how much extra money will be involved.

PROF. SCOTT: I would like to answer that first. Assuming that the total recommendations were implemented then the cost would not be as great as people might recognise.

For example, the teachers' meetings which are proposed would be held at a time at the end of the semester when in fact the school is out of session and when in fact those not attending meetings would be attending to other planning problems within the school and there would be no staff replacement. The major costs that mightbe involved would be in the three-year phasing-in period, when consultants or advisers , of whom we nominate seven initially, would be released on a full-time basis for a half year to be trained in the techniques of designing syllabuses and work programmes and of interacting with schools and helping them in their problems. Once the programme starts, these people would move into schools and interact with schools. Essentially, the release problem is much less than is presently the practice with the board.

MR. MILLER: Are there any full-time new positions created?

PROF. SCOTT: We have recommended that public liaison officers should be appointed in various parts of the State to make the board's policy known and to answer inquiries from the public about what is actually happening. But the details of the way in which this would operate have yet to be determined.

MR. MILLER: Have you any numbers, for instance?

PROF. SCOTT: No. I would say that has yet to be determined, what would happen there. Let me say at the moment that we have embarked upon the programme of getting both professional and public feed-back to the proposals and also, as part of this, particularly from the profession, the snags or problems that they foresee. Some of these may well be related to issues you raise. That is the next phase of the operation; what is that?

MR. MILLER: Would the chairmen of these panels be full time?

PROF. SCOTT: The chairman of the total review panel system - the panel co-ordinator - would be a full-time appointment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask you as to the structure of the fabric of the new decision-making process and whether you have trialled it and looked at the time restraints that will be imposed? There is a reporting from schools to school consortia , to district teachers' meetings, to district subject review panels, to State subject-review panels, to board accreditation and certification committee, to the Board of Secondary School Studies. Is this all going to be possible within a limited time span?

PROF. SCOTT: I wonder how you interpret "limited time spans", or whether we are thinking on the same level. Are you talking about the phasing in or thinking in terms of operation?

THE CHAIRMAN: Operation.

PROF. SCOTT: In the course of a year?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

PROF. SCOTT: At the present time, very soon after the school year begins there are moderation-type meetings to which work programmes are taken and discussed. One of the anomalies is that you are discussing a programme that has already been implemented. Our recommendations are that those work programmes should be approved midway through the previous semester, so that schools are geared to start the next year on day one without having to worry about the hassle of whether their work programmes have been approved or not. At the moment we do have subject moderators in schools and we have district moderators for subjects in the districts. What we are recommending is that district moderation panels - we have called them subject review panels; we are dropping the word "moderation""- constituting seven members would be established and that they would have work to do midway through the second semester of the school year; they would have work to do in the first semester of the year. We believe that the time scale is possible if you pick up the point at which we start, which is midway through the second semester, and where the schools are given planning time for this particular operation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let us look at the question of the implementation phase. You are going to have a look at it in practice in some trial situations anyway, are you?

PROF. SCOTT: That is correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: How will it be implemented?

PROF. SCOTT: If I can refer you later to the last section of the report - it deals with a kind of flow chart of the sequence in which (a) teachers would be educated into the system that they were to operate under and (b) the way in which schools would come on line. We have planned as from the date the decision is taken to implement the recommendations that a three-year phase-in period would be followed, with initial schools being tutored, in a sense, with these subject consultants and then observers coming from other schools to their meetings to see how it is operating. Just like dropping a pebble into a pool, the ripples would go out until in the third year all schools would be on line.

THE CHAIRMAN: On the implementation of the report - under the relevant statute, the Education Act, section 37D, the board has the power to determine procedures for the assessment of students for the award of Junior certificates and Senior certificates; so that if the board decided to implement it it is implemented, isn't it? There is no reference to a Minister detailed in the statute. What is going to be the modus operandi of implementation?

PROF. SCOTT: In a moment I will ask Mr. Roberts to add to that, but I would like to make the comment first that the committee recommended to the board that no major change should ever again be introduced without prior public awareness and information of what is happening. That is the phase we now see ourselves in. When we get feedback from that a decision needs to be taken about when in fact this might actually occur. I think Mr. Roberts might like to comment here.

MR. ROBERTS: There are three things I would like to say. One is that I would like to correct any impression that this is a complete replacement of what is known as the Radford scheme. During the last five or six years many changes have been made in procedures, the way things have been done. There have been some reports on the operation of the scheme. We are mindful of the complimentary things that were said, but we are also mindful of the criticism that was voiced. Because we were concerned about these areas which were evoking criticism, we decided deliberately to set up a committee and not bustle it but give it time to consider all of these points raised and other matters raised by various people and then come up with a document making recommendations. The board has accepted that, and that is this document. We decided that before we proceeded any further we should let the Minister know that we had accepted the recommendations of this special committee, and the Minister felt that he would like your Committee to have a look at the document, too. As you are aware, this is not a submission, but the media might not be aware of the fact that this is not a submission from the board to you but a document given to you by the Minister for your information and that you are seeking clarification.

THE CHAIRMAN: I made that clear at the start.

MR. ROBERTS: As soon as there has been an opportunity to assess your reaction and the general public's reaction - this is a way of bringing the proposed changes to the view of the public - we propose to go ahead. I will be talking to the Minister about that in the very near future. We think we should start on the first phase.

MR. WINKLE: I would like to make the point that some of these changes involve change in regulation and to that extent it may be a little bit beyond the board's power.

MR. ROBERTS: An Order in Council would be necessary.

MR. MILLER: Why weren't there any outsiders on this committee?

MR. ROBERTS: That was a committee of the board and it was considered that, just as we set up at various times special committees to do certain jobs, this was a committee that required certain expertise. There has been consideration given to the composition of the board itself and I think that board members would feel that possibly the community should have greater representation on the board. This was a committee with a special task, to have a look at the criticisms that had been made. I do not think a person involved in community matters would be so helpful here. I think the committee represented a body of expertise that was appropriate for the task given to it and it has come up with these representations. The board itself is quite amenable to the suggestion that the community should probably have more representation on the board. But at the same time we don't want a board so large as to become cumbersome.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will get to that in a minute. I would like to follow up that particular point and ask whether the Scott inquiry approached employers. We have had employer groups come before us and say they are not happy with Radford, and I said to them that there had been a committee of review and asked whether they were asked for their opinions. They replied in the negative. Do you think that where the outcome of your assessment programmes are of interest to employers you should refer to them? Don't you think you should have asked them?

PROF. SCOTT: The answer to that is that we did place an advertisement in the media calling for submissions from people.

Anyone who replied is listed in the appendix to the report. We did not have the resources available to us to go and do it that way, as in fact a Commonwealth committee that is on at the moment does have, but we did call in the media for submissions. We received submissions, but they did not come from that source. Certainly in this phase we have talked about the opportunity will be taken to talk to employers about it. There was a parallel group whose report was subsequently assessed and taken into account in this one, which was the group looking at the Junior certificate. It did in fact consult with representatives of employers. We are aware of their reactions, and those comments were taken into account when we combined the Junior and the Senior recommendations.

THE CHAIRMAN: As Mr. Roberts has referred to it, it might be a good time if I asked you a question about the reconstruction of the Board of Secondary School Studies. I am trying to maintain some order in the discussion so that we do not leap-frog. Might I ask whether you think that is desirable and how it might be approached?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Winkle might give you a summary of what has happened to date.

MR. WINKLE: I have with me the proposed amendments to the Act which we have forwarded to the Minister. That was done on 10 February this year. But this is not really the document that was our initial submission. Unfortunately the office did not send me quite the submission that I wished to get. It goes back to a committee of the board that was set up to look at the operation of the board, its constitution, functions and powers. It met over a period of 12 months and in 1975 presented a report to the board. The board adopted those recommendations and forwarded to the Minister its proposals for a reconstitution of the board early in 1976.

As a result of that movement I understand that that proposal went to Cabinet and was rejected on the ground that the board had become too large. It was possible for the board to consist of 31 members. It was suggested that we should consider a board no larger than the present board, which is 23 in number. This committee then reviewed its previous recommendations and presented a different set of proposals, mainly concerned with the constitution of the board, the powers and functions of the board and the responsibility of people who work for the board through various committees. This again was submitted to the Minister as advice from the board. I am not sure what stage it has reached since then. I do not know that I should go on to talk about the constitution of the board.

MR. ROBERTS: I think it is in abeyance because of the setting up of your committee to have a look at the whole matter. I think it was anticipated that probably this was something that would come up for some discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I may put it in perspective for you, it is a matter about which constant representations have been made to us by a number of parties. What I would like to have is the benefit of the board's advice as to how that should be tackled. It could perhaps be tackled in two phases: firstly, how you would do it if there was no ceiling on the size of the board and, secondly, how it might operate if it was not to be bigger than it is at present. I might invite you then to write to us on that matter, if that is more convenient to you and allows you to check your records or raise something with the board or consult with the Minister. Let us have that information because it is something we would have to consider. We would like the board's advice on it.

MR. ROBERTS: The proposal that was put to the Minister came from the special committee set up. The board accepted the recommendations, with some slight modification. In the proposal that was put up there was provision for two persons representative of community interests. At the moment all members of the board are directly associated with schools or educational institutions, tertiary, secondary or primary, or in administration of actual teaching areas. We have no person who is really representative of community interests. I should not use the term "representative", because it has been pointed out often that members of the board are not representatives of the people who nominated them but are selected because they are considered to be people who could make the greatest contribution. There could be people in the community, either employers or employees, who could make a contribution - particularly at this stage, because we have gone through the difficult stage of getting the board to operate.

MR. WINKLE: I would like to add that we also proposed that the Minister could nominate two people, one of whom would be the chairman, as happens now, and another one of his choosing from whatever area of the community he chose. So there is provision there for three people outside direct educational institutions.

MR. ROBERTS: In our discussions I think the point was raised that it would be a good thing indeed if we could have a member of Parliament available as a member of the board because that would make for better communication.

THE CHAIRMAN: It becomes a practical problem, unless you invite two members of Parliament. If you would like to write to

me about that further, subject to our talk, I would be happy to have it. We have had some criticism about the Scott report that it might be creating a bigger paper war than we have now. How do you react to that?

PROF. SCOTT: Very mildly. We had discussions with the Teachers' Union over this. That is the group most likely to be concerned, I think, about a paper war. This was one of the points that the teachers raised. I would say that in the first year of the operation of the system there may in fact be a paper war for any school. There would be a very much lighter load administratively in subsequent operations of the system. We are recommending that subjects be accredited within schools from one to three years. In fact, instead of submitting a work programme in every subject every year, schools according to the duration of their accreditation would in fact submit work programmes in only a limited number of subjects each year. Indeed, if they were fortunate, they may not even submit work programmes in the majority of their subjects for three years. There is no longer the major hassle of being required to take along huge bundles of scripts which represented five, seven, six, four, three and so on to moderation meetings. People will of course take samples of work for discussion about standards, but there will be no requirement to take the bundles that they take now. They will not be required to submit semester ratings to the board in the way they are now. I just don't think that accusation can be substantiated. In fact, once teachers are under way they should raise their hats and shout three cheers.

THE CHAIRMAN: So it is an honest attempt to diminish the paper war?

PROF. SCOTT: That was one thing we were very mindful of.

MR. ROBERTS: It was mainly directed to answering the criticism that had been voiced by such reports as the Campbell report, the Schools Under Radford report and others and some of the statements made by employers and parents who said that the certificates were not as meaningful as they felt they should be. These are the things that we have given greatest attention to. I don't think there will be any increase in the paper business.

THE CHAIRMAN: I ask you to go to the five-point scale that is to replace the seven-point scale. I ask you about the community criticism that the seven-point scale is just gaining acceptance and now it is being changed to five, in which everybody will be a four or a three and the groups will be bigger. People will be generally less happy about it. On what overseas experience did you draw in compiling that five-point scale?

PROF. SCOTT: To answer the latter part of the question first, there was a major report available on the Swedish experience when the education system in Sweden at the secondary level went to a five-point scale and did it quite successfully. This was the document which finally convinced us that we were not being as way out as people recommended. On the first point, you are quite right. You may recall that in 1976 the board adopted in principle the recommendation of a five-point scale or a five-category scale. That was published in the Press and led to people making the comments that you have just made. We looked at this very seriously indeed. In fact, we had many a hassle with subject associations or committees about transferring from something they had just become accustomed to.

The arguments for moving have been stated in the report, but very summarily they are these. The first thing we wanted to avoid was any possible confusion between the system we were leaving and the system we were moving to. In other words, under the system we are advocating it would not be possible to summate any numbers of any kind. If we take competency as our accountability criterion to the public - and that means to the student as well - one has to look at how to meaningfully differentiate between levels of competence on a competency scale. The more categories you have, the more difficult those discriminations become. Indeed, maybe we have not found the answer and somebody else will, but we certainly spent quite some time trying to find adjectives that would be meaningful - that would be understood by the public - and allow us if we went to a larger number of categories to have the public able to make the distinctions that we want them to make. We believe that each of these terms that we have recommended can in fact be described. They can be described in terms of what they mean for a particular syllabus that a student is following. I think that is the basic justification: the meaning that we can give to this system. This is obviously one of the areas where we are going to get considerable feed-back over the next few months as we talk to people and get reactions.

Our task is to try to justify what we have recommended. If we can't then we have to look seriously at what the public suggests or what they in fact want to see.

MR. MILLER: I would like to ask a question on curriculum. You say on page 8 -

> "Bearing in mind that young people are being educated in and for life in a pluralistic society....."

What do you mean by a pluralistic society, and how does this affect secondary education?

PROF. SCOTT: Very simply, it is a fact that our students today are being educated, first of all, in a cultural mix and, secondly, within an ideological mix within our community.

MR. MILLER: Is it any different now to what it has always been?

PROF. SCOTT: I think people are more vocal about their ideologies today than they were, say, two decades ago - much more vocal. Indeed, one of the areas one has to face up to - I am not saying in relation to this document - but we as citizens have to face up to is the large number of minority groups that now become very vocal.

MR. MILLER: What, the homosexuals?

PROF. SCOTT: I am not specifying groups, I simply say groups, but a large number of groups are becoming vocal and are, indeed, having an influence on young people because of being vocal, and our feeling about this whole situation is: what set of criteria have young people today to evaluate the arguments that are being advanced for them joining causes of different kinds and making decisions? What we have argued subsequently is that we see that our society does have a set of traditional values and a commitment to democracy, and that this kind of background should form a framework to help young people to gain criteria against which they can make decisions. I think this is what is wrong today, that we do not have that kind of emphasis and as a result you get minority groups quickly becoming dominant groups.

MR. MILLER: Would you mind explaining to me, "The student's ability to relate effectively to others and to find self-realisation and self-expression through such relationships."? Being a very simple man, would you mind explaining that to me?

PROF. SCOTT: Yes. I think that few people really are destined in life to be hermits. You can be a hermit in many ways; you can be one through choice in that you do not want to interrelate with other people, and there can also be a hermit kind of existence, a very lonely one, because a person is unable to relate to other people. He feels intimidated, he cannot understand their lines of thinking and he just cannot relate socially or intellectually to others. What we would argue is that a person, through the way in which he is in fact taught in schools ought to be able to develop his own self-confidence, his own commitments, be able to justify the arguments that he advances and be able to listen effectively to the arguments of other people and to make judgments in relation to them and to enjoy the normal kinds of human relationships and intellectual relationships with other people, and this inevitably will lead to a healthier self-concept, a more fulfilling kind of personality.

MR. MILLER: Would parents understand that sentiment?

PROF. SCOTT: We are quite willing to translate into the language of the man in the street, and I can assure you that when we do talk from public platforms we do endeavour to communicate with the man in the street.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would dispute the fact that Mr. Miller is a simple man. We are going to get into some interesting areas but I think we should still restrict ourselves to the general thrust of what these recommendations are. There is a critical area we haven't touched on yet.

MR. POWELL: Do you regard core subjects as a basic thing?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think they probably are. The sorts of things that we should be talking about are central to the recommendations, frankly. I think core subjects probably are, so I will let you go on that one.

MR. POWELL: Paragraph 4.10 on page 19 talks about core curriculum and what you mean by it. .. Does the board see fundamentals such as mathematics, tables and so on, grammar, spelling, reading and English as central to the core?

PROF. SCOTT: I think you must allow me to answer that question in terms of our report. I do not mind answering that question then as an individual. But in terms of the report, you must allow me to do that because that is what we have presented.

MR. POWELL: That is the basis upon which I asked the question.

PROF. SCOTT: Fire. Then the point is that we have recommended that the Committee did not presume to determine what the content of that curriculum should be, because one of the spirits of this report is that there has to be greater dialogue between educators and the community and that the community rightfully has a voice in saying what it wants the youth of our community to study and to be literate in, and we have recommended that that subsequent body should in fact determine what this is.

MR. POWELL: So in fact you are not at all saying that the core should consist of A, B and C?

PROF. SCOTT: No. We have made no recommendations but we believe that should be determined.

MR. POWELL: By?

PROF. SCOTT: We have recommended a committee and that committee, you will note, has probably many more non-professional people on it than professional people.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is the task force you are referring to?

PROF. SCOTT: Yes.

MR. POWELL: Do you have any suggestions to offer on what percentage of the course should be core?.

PROF. SCOTT: Yes. We believe that in the junior school the greater proportion, I suppose one can think of something like 80 per cent, of the course of studies would be core and this would be reduced as one went through into the secondary school, and in the secondary school it would be the elective programme or tracts which would take over.

MR. POWELL: Perhaps it is my lack of understanding, but

in paragraph 4.10 there appears to be more emphasis on a social core rather than on a core base in mathematics and English.

PROF. SCOTT: That is probably a fair criticism in that we may have spelt that out a little more in terms of what we really meant. In actual fact, that is not what we are emphasising at all. In fact, we go on later to argue some of the fallacies of pursuing that. What we are talking about, though, is that if you do include maths and you include literature and so on these should be studied in terms of their social relevance as well as their technological relevance, and that is what we are really arguing for here, that whatever happens to a student at school has to be seen in relation to life that the student is living and to the problems that he has to solve about society in the future.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I take you to page 49 and competency reference testing and suggest to you that the reference testing is going to assume rather great importance in what used to be described in general as moderation procedures. That was the way it seemed to me, anyway. Are these not going to loom large as exams, and who is going to get the results of these, and will not teachers be teaching to these and isn't it going to lead to a great amount of prescription of syllabus in terms of content that teachers are saying to us we ought not to do?

PROF. SCOTT: If that were to happen I think I would take off on the fastest jet that would go somewhere else and hope it would never get back to earth. But really without spelling out all the details that wouldn't naturally follow in the way in which you operationalise this, the answer to your question is no. What we have to bear in mind is that the competency reference tests are intended for periodic administration, that not necessarily each subject would be reference tested in the same year and not necessarily the entire State in any given subject. The reason for using competency reference tests is to determine whether in given subjects the same standards or criteria for determining competency are being applied across the State. We never intend that results for individual students are recorded on their records but that the results are used to show individual schools, "Well, look, if we test the youngsters in your school on an independent reference test in which the criteria are determined and applied to everyone you obviously have been using different standards because the results fall out in a different way." If we discovered this was happening the board then would be relating to the school in an endeavour to look at what was going wrong and, in a consultative situation, try to improve it. Because we are not recording the results of individual students it is futile for a school to try to teach to that particular competency reference test.

THE CHAIRMAN: This was one of the original Radford proposals, was it not? Was it ever dumped?

PROF. SCOTT: Mr. Winkle will know.

MR. WINKLE: In 1973, in the first year 12 of school-based assessment, we applied what were called comparability tests; but they were used as a moderation instrument. In 1977 the board approved that we do have a true reference test of this nature in English. Because of the circumstances of the person who was to set the test, it did not occur; but the plans are going ahead for it to occur again this year, in October, for year 10 and year 11, to get some measure of standards. However, it is a sampling exercise; it is not a total-State operation.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are suggesting that this one might go across the State, universally, at times?

MR. WINKLE: This is only one use we are making of it.

PROF. SCOTT: The answer to that is "Yes".

THE CHAIRMAN: There is one other question. If you are going to prescribe competencies and test them with a reference test, you are going to have to re-write a lot of syllabuses; is that right?

PROF. SCOTT: We accept that many of the present syllabuses will need to be re-written in competency terms and the criteria specified. Several syllabuses are under review now, and these subject advisory committees have in fact begun to cast their revisions in these kind of terms. In fact, one syllabus, the English syllabus, while it is not yet precisely in competency terms, has moved very much in that direction and it would not be a major task to complete it in that way. But we accept that the syllabuses need to be re-cast.

THE CHAIRMAN: I assure my colleagues that I am going to stop my personal questions in a minute.

MR. POWELL: Good!

THE CHAIRMAN: Competency in respect of content, cognitive-process-effective?

PROF. SCOTT: Yes; this is not difficult to do. In a syllabus, one specifies those intellectual operations that the subject requires and in what particular stage of the syllabus they ought to be introduced. Obviously, you cannot intellectualise about nothing; there has to be content. Indeed, there is content in order that you fulfil prerequisites, and so on, and add to knowledge. So content will be prescribed and any skills that are necessary for it. For instance, in the subject of physics one has to conduct experiments and be able to read weights and measures, and so on, in association with them, so the requirements of these would in fact be specified.

THE CHAIRMAN: Effective?

PROF. SCOTT: Yes; but we accept that you cannot determine this in competency terms, that the measurement of attitudes and values is relatively subjective. I would not like to see the day when we went round our schools each year, maybe twice a year, applying ACER-type personality or attitude inventories. I think this would be disastrous. I think, however, this is one of the areas where a teacher or a group of teachers who are familiar with students can in fact make judgments that are made available

to parents on the development of attitudes as they see them in their students.

MR. POWELL: The competency reference tests are not to be done to every school every year, I take it?

PROF. SCOTT: That is correct.

MR. POWELL: Is this not perhaps leaving an important aspect of maintaining comparability of standards across the State to chance?

PROF. SCOTT: No, I would not argue that way, because all results come back to the board's accreditation and certification committee, and the board, by looking at these - just common sense would dictate that if you get what looks like a ridiculous distribution of competency levels - that is, everybody in the highest category, or nearly everybody - you would wonder what on earth was going on, and that would indicate to the board that it is time we got out and saw what standards are being applied. Let us use a competency reference test and demonstrate to the schools themselves that they have probably lost their touch a bit and need to go into consultation about what in fact is happening.

MR. POWELL: The danger that has been suggested to me about this is that the student passes that way but once, and if you are going to leave it to the schools and the situation that you have just mentioned occurs, then the group of students that that has occurred to are then lost in that subject.

PROF. SCOTT: Well, I respect that argument. I do not necessarily accept that, because of this, one has to in fact apply a competency reference test at least once in the senior schooling of a given student. People may argue that you do, and one has to be open-minded. If one is genuinely auditing what is happening, that might be demonstrated by the results that are coming out; but I would prefer to trust - contrary to a gentleman I heard the other day - the integrity of professional people in applying criteria which have been publicly determined and are publicly acknowledged and known to students before they even embark upon a course.

MR. WINKLE: There is other machinery to look after this very problem, isn't there? There are review panels and teachers' meetings, which will be operating, concerned with this very issue.

MR. POWELL: Will they have the same power as the board?

MR. WINKLE: They will be the board.

PROF. SCOTT: Not the teachers.

MR. WINKLE: Not the teachers' meetings, but the accreditation and certification panels reporting to the accreditation and certification committees.

MR. MILLER: Can we turn to page 18, gentlemen? I am still on curriculum. You say here, "If any quality has clearly emerged it would seem to be a tolerance of deviation from our traditional moral values and from our democratic orientation." Are you saying that people are accepting alternate lifestyles, group marriages, homosexuals? I would have thought that there was still an intolerance in the community towards alternatives.

PROF. SCOTT: I could not agree more; there is still an

intolerance of it. What degree of intolerance there is and, equally, what degree of acceptance there is I do not think anybody has ever completely determined. We were making an observation on society as it is today, and certainly there is, I am sure, a much more widespread acceptance, even if it is only apathy in terms that people do not openly revolt against the acceptance of alternative styles.

MR. MILLER: We see it actually in the form of revolt now in America, do we not?

PROF. SCOTT: Yes.

MR. MILLER: It could be apathy.

PROF. SCOTT: Yes, you may be correct.

MR. POWELL: Earlier we were talking about the core subjects and you suggested that the community should have some contribution to make.

PROF. SCOTT: Yes.

MR. POWELL: The community does not have that contribution to make in universities and colleges of advanced education. Why should it have that contribution in secondary schools?

PROF. SCOTT: Well, I do not want to argue for universities and C.A.E.s in this court, but I will argue the case as to why they should have a say here. We are here to service the community. Schools reflect the community. If ever anything reflects the community, the school does. And I believe that the community should determine what it is that they want to cherish and what it is that they want passed on as part of their heritage to all youth in society; what qualities of literacy and numeracy, for example, are required. Do not forget that professionals are also members of the community, they are also parents, and they have an input here, too. When one talks about the community, you use it in the widest sense. So that if professional engineers say, "To pursue our profession with integrity, the person needs this kind of background and content", this is something that is legitimate content and legitimate input to be considered. Hence our statement that we view "community" in the broader perspective and not just a little isolated school here and the 10 or 15 families that might be around it. They have the same say in what they would like for their youth, but it also has to be seen in terms of the mobility and the total wider community in which people are going to operate.

MR. POWELL: Do you believe, then, that the universities and C.A.E.s should take more notice of what the community is saying in regard to course content?

PROF. SCOTT: Yes, I do, if you are prepared to interpret "community" in the wider sense that I have so that you do not leave out what is obviously necessary in the professional field. For example, if you go to the area of medicine, to neglect the whole research body that has been built up in understanding medicine would be absurd. But in terms of other areas of inquiry, other studies that might be included, I think universities could listen to the community. They foot the bill in the long run.

MR. MILLER: On page 11, you list five categories for reporting assessment in each subject. Would schools fill out their bald labels with more detail? I am thinking about typing and shorthand; would speed be mentioned or would reference be made only to, "entirely competent" or "competent", and so on?

PROF. SCOTT: Beside the term for the subject, on the report slip would be what that meant. Speed, obviously, in typing, people would take into account. It would state, "Is capable of typing so many words a minute", or whatever it happens to be.

MR. MILLER: It would go into more detail.

PROF. SCOTT: Yes.

MR. ROBERTS: That would be one of the criteria.

THE CHAIRMAN: In the initial stages, anyway, are teacher assessments in the schools going to be more norm based than competency based, because that is the way they have been doing it? Students, particularly a large group of students, tend towards the norm, don't they?

PROF. SCOTT: If you are saying that the largest group of students is pretty comparable in achievement, I suppose that is correct. One would say that about 42 per cent of students have this level of competence.

THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps I should clarify this: maybe some people and some teachers will see it as names instead of numbers; it is the same party.

PROF. SCOTT: They may. In fact, the criteria to determine whether a person is competent or not will be determined by consensus. There needs to be an input from many people to establish what the minimal competence criteria are in a subject, and what criteria are to be used for the higher levels of competence. Obviously when people come to make those decisions they will use their present understanding of what represents competence. It may well be that they have in mind that this is what is reflected in X per cent of the population. Provided there is agreement that this represents the highest level, this represents the next level and so on, and there are levels of competence, we are not initially worried about the numbers game. We would argue, I think, that in the course of time - and it may even be in year 1 - that you would find that surprisingly they fell out pretty close to a normal curve of distribution. There is one point we would argue in not applying normal curves to this; no-one would be constrained by the fact that a teacher is going to push me in or push me out because only 6 per cent or 5 per cent of the population can ever be in this category. The system says that whoever gets it will in fact be placed in it. I say with every confidence that you won't find necessarily a dramatic shift in the proposition, but you will get rid of the distrust that exists in the community today. You will have greater confidence from people in the way in which they relate to their mentors and how they relate to their own efforts.

MR. ROBERTS: It is quite likely that the youngster who gets a 7 now will get the highest level of competency, but he will get it knowing that he met certain criteria that had been defined instead of knowing that he was in the top 5 per cent of the people taking the subject.

THE CHAIRMAN: We had the headmasters conference here this morning. I acknowledge that the gentleman is still present with us.

worry was expressed about the relevance of secondary education as a precursor to tertiary education, and the emphasis that that places on secondary education. You have expressed worry in your report. They suggested a year 13 was the answer to this, with it being the precursor, or the preparatory year to tertiary education. Have you looked at this?

PROF. SCOTT: The committee did not consider that. We should make clear that our terms of reference were not to review the whole of secondary education. Initially we began looking at two research reports and other briefs were put on our plate. Because we did not have this wide charter we did not look at that as an alternative.

MR. ROBERTS: There are other economic arguments that must be considered and also the experience in Canada where they have a Grade 13. The alternative would be to put a preliminary year in the university so that those going to do tertiary study had an extra year before embarking on the course they selected.

MR. HEWITT: I am glad that you mentioned Canada. Probably this matter is a little extraneous to the report in front of us but a statement was made this week by another witness that external examinations are being reintroduced in Canada. I should like to know if you have any evidence on whether that is true or not.

MR. ROBERTS: I was in Canada a month ago but I have no evidence.

MR. WINKLE: That is certainly not so to my knowledge. It is two years since I was in Toronto, Ontario, and talking about Canada is a little like talking about Australia. It is a little hard to know. Ontario abolished external examinations in 1967 and had a reappraisal in 1975. The result was that they were beginning to impose the kind of things that we are talking about here now - that there should be review committees; there was certainly no suggestion of returning to external examinations at that time and I have not received any information since that it was to occur.

MR. ROBERTS: It was in Montreal that they had the Grade 13. I heard that they had abandoned it.

PROF. SCOTT: One thing amazes me: if you look around our nation the emphasis is on decreasing reliance on external examination. In almost every State there is a desire to do some school-based assessment. That is not to say that they are throwing away any kind of external exams but there is no longer total reliance on external exams. Let us not hide our heads in the sand. Queensland has been looked up to by the States in terms of what is happening. We have had visitors; already our committee has been invited to go to other States to talk about our proposals and so on. I don't necessarily think that everything good comes from overseas, even should that witness be correct.

MR. HEWITT: I just wanted to test the veracity of the statement.

MR. MILLER: In a few words, what are the advantages to students, teachers and the community of this new process?

PROF. SCOTT: That is a good question; it will really test me. I would say that the first thing is the genuine attempt to recognise that students are individuals with different potentials, and to provide opportunity through the curriculum for them to

pursue studies best related to their ability and potential, and at the same time to give them a core of studies. Secondly, I would advocate accountability to the community and a greater emphasis on dialogue between the profession and the community. Thirdly, I would say recognising the professional competence of teachers in allowing them to make determinations in a professional manner. Finally, a recognition of the need for the maintenance of standards and acoountability to the community and to Parliament in the end. That is what has activated the model that we have established.

MR. ROBERTS: Probably it has been said, but the assessment to the student will be more meaningful. It will be more meaningful to the parent and to employers. Unfortunately the system we have been operating under has not been meaningful to employers, and some parents are concerned.

MR. WINKLE: I think the whole thrust of the Radford system which is being continued and built on is the opportunity to have curricula reform appropriate to the body of students now entering. Much of the discussion about the value of this form of grading or assessment is based on the notion that we are out to select students. What we are trying to do is to establish their qualifications and not establish selection instruments. To go back to an earlier point, the T.E. score was pushed on us by people so as to give them a selection instrument.

PROF. SCOTT: I would like to correct the record. I am worried by something that happened very early in the piece. I slipped and used a term the wrong way very early. When we were talking about the University of Queensland's submission and random deletion from the T.E. score I think I might have said accidentally that it is only the random way that leads to people getting a lower T.E. score; It is only the random way that results in improvement; if you have systematic deletion you tend to get a drop in T.E. scores. I wanted to get the record straight.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will be providing you with a copy of the transcript. We will be pleased to have your comments if there are any adjustments to be made.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will be providing you with a copy of the transcript and we will be pleased to have your comments if there are any alterations to be made. We have traversed the Scott report and associated matters for an hour and 20 minutes . I feel it has been somewhat of a marathon but worth while. I should like to thank you very much for appearing before us today and for talking so frankly with us. As I see it, it is a critical part of our assignment not to make a determination on the Scott report but certainly to consider it. We each have a role - the Scott committee, the Board of Secondary School Studies, this Committee and, through us, the Parliament. We have given it a very good airing today and talked about it very frankly and I thank you gentlemen for that. I thank you, Professor Scott, Mr. Winkle and Mr. Roberts, for your comments this morning and for your continuing assistance to us.

The Committee adjourned at 12.52 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 2 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very pleased to welcome this afternoon representatives of the World Education Fellowship, Queensland Council, which has made a submission to our inquiry. For record purposes, it is coded J1-594. The submission has been received and read by members, so it will not be necessary for you to read it again. We can proceed immediately to questions in clarification of the submission. First of all, I will ask you to indicate your names and the executive positions that you hold in your organisation.

MRS. HENRY: My name is Mrs. Margaret Henry and I am vice-president of World Education Fellowship in Queensland.

MRS. RIGGS: I am Mrs. Jennifer Riggs and I am a committee member.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Mr. Miller may care to start the questions.

MR. MILLER: On page 1 you refer to Professor Campbell's study. Can you give us more information about that study?

MRS. RIGGS: I believe it is not yet published. It was referred to in some advance information that was given at one of our meetings and it was written up subsequently in "The Courier Mail".

MRS. HENRY: I can amplify that a little. The study that we have referred to here was a pilot study for a larger study that is to be a national study on which Professor Campbell is engaged at present. This was a pilot study that he conducted in Queensland only last year. He surveyed members of political parties, unions, employer bodies, and other representative groups in the community. He requested views on a number of matters concerned with education from committee members of those organisations. He wanted to get a cross-section of the community in so far as the people he asked were people with some decision-making power - the sort of people who have some impact on education in general. What we have referred to are some of the main findings of that cross-section of influential people in Queensland.

MR. MILLER: At about the middle of page 1 you say that the community is in some way diminished when education becomes subject to polarisation of opinion and when informed voices are either disregarded or stifled. Did you have any particular occasion in mind when you wrote that?

MRS. RIGGS: We wrote it fairly shortly after the controversy regarding MACOS and SEMP which are examples of that sort of thing but not the only ones. This is happening all the time, and whichever side of the fence you are on it is happening on the other side.

MRS. HENRY: The view of W.E.F. would be that we do not hold a brief as an organisation for any particular viewpoint, but we are very concerned that points of view from all interested people in the community should be aired on important matters in education. That is what we mean.

MR. MILLER: Do you think MACOS and SEMP are important educational matters?

MRS. HENRY: Yes, among many others.

MR. MILLER: Do you like MACOS and SEMP? Are you satisfied with them in full?

MRS. HENRY: It is not our brief to hold a view about a particular curricular matter. We personally may well have views one way or another, but as an organisation we are concerned simply to suggest that in all important educational matters as many inputs should be received by decision-makers as possible. So we would not be able to give you an answer to that.

MR. MILLER: I know some homosexuals who think that it is very important that homosexuality should be taught in schools. On your argument, they should be allowed in. Is that right?

MRS. RIGGS: No.

MR. MILLER: Why not? That is what you are saying about MACOS and SEMP.

MRS. RIGGS: No. I do not think anything that we have said should be construed to mean that. What we have said is that we would like to see informed discussion in the community on these matters as they become raised.

THE CHAIRMAN: How big is the World Education Fellowship, Queensland Division?

MRS. HENRY: We would have a membership of some couple of hundred people and our meetings would attract audiences and participants in things such as seminars and so on in numbers varying, I suppose, between 50 and 100. Sometimes the attendance is considerably more than that when we have had seminars on issues that are thought to be pertinent and topical. You ask how big is the organisation. We are not concerned so much to be sizeable as to be representative. The organisation does have members from all groups who are interested in education. This is what we feel is important about it - it is not just for professionals, lay people, parents or students, but for all those type of people.

MRS. RIGGS: One thing that is characteristic of our meetings is that there are always many people who come to them who may not necessarily be members or who may join at that meeting. It is the sort of organisation that, because we cover a wide variety of subjects, seems to attract people who are interested in that particular topic.

MR. POWELL: On page 2, under the heading, "Recommendation", you have a two-level process for decision-making. In it, you mention parliamentarians, along with others such as educationists, employers, parents, etc. Do you feel that, in a parliamentary democracy, the role of Parliament and therefore parliamentarians should be more influential in policy decisions than others, bearing in mind that a member of Parliament has to face an election every three years?

MRS. RIGGS: I was thinking equally. It is a bit hard to say more and it will only be a personal opinion, anyway. I think, as a group, we would feel that all interested members of the community should be given the chance to hear, understand and discuss.

MR. POWELL: What about the large number of people - and I am thinking probably of parents, generally speaking - who feel inadequate in a large meeting and inadequate in a participatory role towards a decision-making process and prefer to leave it to their elected representatives?

MRS. HENRY: I think we would feel probably quite strongly. I think this would be a point on which the organisation might well think, and we could probably speak for it, that there are many such parents, people in general in the community, who do tend to leave such matters to their elected representatives and that one of the functions of a body such as ours is to encourage such parents to feel more confident and more competent about making contributions to the educational process. In fact, that is what we do in a number of workshops, week-end seminars and so on, where we are always surprised ourselves to find what a cross-section of people we do attract. One of the activities, as you would see from the attached list, perhaps, of activities that W.E.F. has undertaken has been an ongoing parent education interest. We think that this has contributed to enabling some parents to feel more confident about contributing to matters about education.

MR. POWELL: It has been suggested that the problem with this sort of decision-making process is that a minority group can very easily stack a meeting and get some sort of extremist view passed by the meeting and, therefore, the decision is not relevant to the community.

MRS. RIGGS: This is why we feel there should be plenty of opportunities for discussion and for information in the community, not necessarily always in a decision-making context; simply in an information-seeking complex.

MR. POWELL: How long do you take this decision-making process along? How long will it take for a decision to be made?

MRS. HENRY: I do not think we have to make a decision about that today, any more than you do.

MR. POWELL: But you are putting up this proposition.

MRS. HENRY: We certainly are. We are putting up the proposition that important decisions should have considerable community discussion before binding decisions are made, but we have not as yet - and neither have most bodies in the community - laid down guide-lines about how long such processes should last.

MR. POWELL: That is why you have a Parliament.

MRS. HENRY: Certainly. Indeed. We are suggesting that part of the decision-making process should be a community one. We certainly would not want to detract from the role of Parliament. We want to be able to add to it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask for your response to this? On page 2 you say that decision-making should be a two-level process. There are those who have suggested to us that there should be three, that the first level should be the State or regional level (as you have suggested), that the second is the school and the third is the class-room. Do you see that there is a distinction between the last two?

MRS. RIGGS: I would personally see the school as the community. Whether most of our members would agree, I should think they probably would. I would imagine that this would be understood here, that the school as a community would be availing itself of the advice or experienced views of students, as it sees fit, as most schools do in fact, but I do not imagine that you would think - I would not, and I really do not think the view of W.E.F. would be - that there would be a third tier which would be the school. I would myself prefer to see the school as a community represented by -----

THE CHAIRMAN: What they are saying is that a lot of decision-making, particularly in the controversial area, can be left with the class-room teacher.

MRS. RIGGS: I see; in other words, not as a committee level, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think so?

MRS. HENRY: I would think that, as an organisation, we cannot put forward a view about this. Our position, as it stands, is the one that we have put forward. If we were going to make additions to it we would need to canvass the membership and continue the discussion process, if we were going to go into further detail. What we have been trying to suggest is that we do see an important role for a State or a regional body and we do see an important community role making an input into education decisions. As far as subdividing that community role or school role still further, I would think we are not in a position today to say that this has been discussed by World Education Fellowship.

MR. MILLER: You say you are a forum for discussing education. Have you had any direct input by way of survey, research or deputation to Parliament?

MRS. HENRY: The only direct former input we had is the earlier submission we made to the Demack committee. We have not had any other official input of the kind you are talking about, have we?

MRS. RIGGS: No, not that I know of.

MR. MILLER: What do you mean by a pluralist society? I would like to have your interpretation of that.

MRS. RIGGS: I think this is probably very basic to what World Education Fellowship is. As our name suggests, we are a World Education Fellowship. I suppose that our philosophy embraces the fact that there are many views in our community and many stands in the world community and in our own smaller communities. I think this is probably what we mean by "pluralist."

MR. MILLER: Would you like to enlarge on the stands? Most people want to hedge away from it after referring to it. I find it difficult to get people to define what they mean by a pluralist society.

MRS. RIGGS: Many viewpoints - many religious viewpoints, economic viewpoints, social viewpoints, intellectual viewpoints ----

MR. MILLER: Sexual viewpoints?

MRS. RIGGS: Yes. I imagine that females and males would have their own points of view on most matters. I do not think that is normally included in the definition of a pluralist society.

MR. MILLER: Do you include it in your definition?

MRS. RIGGS: No. Every society would be a pluralist society. If one regarded male and female as part of a pluralist society, a totalitarian society would also be called a pluralist society, which I think it isn't. I do not have a dictionary with me, but I think it is used in contradistinction to totalitarianism.

MR. MILLER: Can I ask how you think our society has changed over the past 20 years? What changes have you seen take place? Would you have referred to our society 20 years ago as a pluralist society and, if not, why not? What changes have taken place?

MRS. RIGGS: Yes, it would have been, I suppose; but that is merely a personal opinion.

MRS. HENRY: Probably there is a greater recognition today than perhaps at some other times that there are many viewpoints in a society and unless one is in a totalitarian society there are degrees of freedom to put those points of view. The point we are trying to make is that it has been the experience of a number of seminar meetings that we have conducted that when groups of people with very diverse views do meet to discuss a common problem and meet with the wish to find a meeting point - we have been very interested in a number of seminars, for instance, on community participation in education, to find that very often a consensus has occurred or that people have moved much closer because of the discussion process.

MR. MILLER: How would you like community involvement in education to take place?

MRS. HENRY: There are so many ways it can take place. But I do not think it is our function to lay down hard and fast ways in which community development must take place.

MR. MILLER: But you must have some idea of what sort of development you would like to see the community take.

MRS. HENRY: I do not think it is necessary for us to hold such views. The whole brief of W.E.F. is to suggest that expressing ideas in a co-operative spirit, different and sometimes opposing viewpoints, and the expression of these, can lead to people finding common meeting points. So we would not feel it was any part of our function to lay down in advance what directions those common meeting points might take.

MR. MILLER: Let me put it this way: if I said to you that the community is already involved, what would you say?

MRS. HENRY: We would say yes, it is involved to a degree.

MR. MILLER: Well, how much more of a degree do you want it involved? You are apparently dissatisfied with the degree of involvement at this stage. How much involvement do you really want? If you are dissatisfied, you must have some idea.

MRS. RIGGS: I think we would probably agree with what has been suggested already about people being unable to participate in very large groups. Most of us haven't got the information or the courage or the education ourselves to take part in very much decision-making. What I think all members of World Education Fellowship would like to see is more opportunity for people to meet together in small groups and to listen to people whose information and viewpoints range on the sort of interests that we have, in this instance, in education and to give them a chance to find out and make up their minds and discuss together, and to have the benefit of other people's experiences outside their normal range of conversational information.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are deeply appreciative of the submission and realise that it is something that has had to be canvassed by your organisation.

MRS. HENRY: That is right. As I was saying, in a way the policy of W.E.F. is not to have a policy but to invite discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very grateful for the fact that you have made an input into our inquiry. Our information would have been incomplete without some effort on the part of such an important organisation in education in Queensland. We are very happy that it is there. I thank you for appearing and would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your organisation. I now invite representatives of the National Party of Australia - Queensland to appear.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very pleased to welcome representatives of the National Party of Australia - Queensland before the Committee. We are grateful for the comprehensive nature of the submission, which is coded for our purposes AU-167. It has been received and studied by members, so it will not be necessary to read it. In the first instance could I be totally objective and thank the committee for the very sensible comments that it has made. Could I ask if the representatives could give their names and indicate the executive positions they hold in the organisation?

MRS. PAGE: I am Mrs. Helen Page and I am Chairman of the Education Committee of the National Party of Australia.

MRS. BRIMBLECOMBE: I am Mrs. Elsie Brimblecombe and I am Secretary of the Education Committee of the National Party.

MR. BRENNAN: I am James Brennan, Deputy Chairman of the Education Committee.

MR. WREN: My name is Ian Douglas Kaye Wren, a member of the committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Could I ask you to turn to the recommendations of the committee in respect of the advisory council. You are recommending a very interesting model here. It is a most interesting one in that you are suggesting that it should be responsible to Parliament. I was wondering whether you might indicate for us if you had studied some models of the advisory council, or is this something that has been presented specifically for the occasion? Have you seen it in operation somewhere else?

MR. WREN: I had no specific model in mind when I suggested this particular model. It is drawn from a number of models that exist in colleges and in Government departments both in Australia and in many other countries. The main reason for the separation of the functions of advice and administration is to make sure that there is a clear channel where public opinion can be heard without any fear of distortion of the signal as it is coming, departmental ideas being superimposed, and it provides a clear track to the Legislature so that it is aware of the grass-roots feeling in the community.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the appointment of members? Why is it necessary that the Parliament appoint them? I have never seen that done anywhere else before.

MR. WREN: I think there I was looking at the fact that the Minister, acting on the advice of his Cabinet colleagues or his advisers,makes the recommendation. If you are to have a committee that is accepted by all walks of life in the community as being completely objective, the Legislature being the supreme body in the community is the one that should make the appointment. I am very mindful of the processes that are used in the Congress of the United States of America. There any appointment suggested by the President can be challenged. The person is subjected to public scrutiny before the appointment is made. Once it is made there is an expectation of performance and that that performance be satisfactory to all concerned.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will restrict questions to the topic of the advisory council.

MR. MILLER: Can I ask what the difference is between this council and an education commission?

MR. WREN: An education commission in fact is given statutory authority. If you are thinking in terms of the education commission in Canberra, it is given statutory authority to make decisions. Having made its decisions, it submits them to the Minister. In most cases these are then translated into the States Grants Acts that flow from it. The problem is that it also becomes an administrative body that oversights everything that is going on, lays down very stringent rules and is responsible for very considerable confusion in the educational process in Australia at the moment. I think on that point that I can suggest that the advisory body suggested here has to table its findings in the House.

MR. MILLER: And would be responsible to the Minister?

MR. WREN: Responsible to the Minister, yes. The Minister then has the opportunity, if he is not satisfied with what has happened, to seek advice from his departmental officers. Two sets of information are tabled in the House. Under the Canberra model at the moment one set of information is tabled which is not always what is recommended by the educator, the educational administrator, industry or the student who is caught up in the system.

MR. MILLER: It makes a lot of sense.

MR. SHAW: What do you envisage the machinery would be for the input of the view of the department?

MR. WREN: It could happen at two levels. When the Minister received a report, he would be in a position to ask the Director-General to have the appropriate officers of his department prepare a submission. The timing I have suggested would be sufficient, because the hearings conducted by the advisory committee are intended - and I did mention this - to give any member of the department an opportunity as an individual or as a member of the department to make a submission at that time.

MR. SHAW: I will congratulate you, because you have done what a lot of people have not done and defined fairly thoroughly what you mean by an education advisory council. I think some people would have called that a commission. You have said in the beginning that it should not be a body which implements its own decisions. You spell out in fairly strong detail a process and

say that if no action is forthcoming from the Parliament the decisions of the council will be implemented. Doesn't that really give it authority to act?

MR. WREN: No, because it is the department that has to implement the decision. In other words, the document is tabled and, if I can return to the parliamentary practice in Canberra, for example, is treated in the same way as a regulation. In Canberra a set of regulations can be prepared and laid on the table of the House for 14 days. If at the end of the 14 days there is no objection, the regulations then have the force of law. What I am suggesting is that that mechanism be taken and applied so that, if there is no objection from the floor of the House, that is handed to the department as the blueprint from which to operate. If there is an objection, until the Parliament actually accepts the legislation - gives effect to it - then that virtually lies on the table.

MR. POWELL: Similar to the way regulations are dealt with?

MR. WREN: Identical, yes.

MR. SHAW: Is there any reason why you exclude the union? I think it is a double-edged sword. While people generally ask for union involvement on the basis that the unions have something to contribute, some unions are frightened of being involved in these things because they feel they are bound by the decisions. With that in mind, I ask why you exclude the union and also departmental officers.

MR. WREN: Firstly because I was very much aware of the union feeling in this matter, having studied worker participation in Sweden and West Germany. The person put into that position suddenly finds himself wearing two hats. He has a responsibility to the body he is with and a responsibility to the body that elects him. This is a situation of conflict. If you are to exclude the union, which after all comprises the teacher, the lecturer and the person delivering the product, then it is only right to exclude the employer as well so that the neutrality of the committee is assured.

MR. HEWITT: I suspect that my friend Mr. Miller digressed me a little. I did not quite attend to that answer as well as I should have. I wanted to ask whether the person representing the school system was necessarily drawn from the teaching profession. I suspect that you might have just dealt with that.

MR. WREN: That covers a very wide field. What I would hope is that the person representing the school system is not one who would be actually wearing two hats. I am looking more at the semi-retired person with years of experience behind him who has stepped down. These days people at a relatively young age are doing that. I think in the community you would find that people with those qualifications could be obtained with very little trouble.

THE CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions on the council, we will move to a new topic.

MR. POWELL: At the top of page 16 you deal with social education. The claim is made that schools must prepare students for life and that therefore secondary social science courses should allow students to experience situations they will have to face later on. If the syllabi become "mandatory with subject content in detail" would this have a restricting effect on teaching and cause a loss of the more adaptable approach to studies that teachers are now enjoying?

MRS. PAGE: We feel that not only in social science areas but in the whole field of primary and secondary education we have made the point that there should be a basic core of material that should be covered by all students. This is one of the chief concerns right throughout our submission. There are many implications of this, as you can imagine, and we won't go into the details because they are in the submission - not only for reducing public concern about standards and so on but also in the problems of transferability in our increasingly mobile society. In the area of social science this is applicable also. There needs to be a definite set core area that is covered by all students. In subjects like social education - and this part of the submission has spelt it out - we see a need to provide students with a basic set of facts - a basic fund of knowledge - which is going to help them face up to the everyday world about them. There are many areas that can be investigated to broaden this. However, the basic knowledge and the basic skills that we have mentioned throughout are a most important means of preparing students for further education and for everyday life.

MR. POWELL: On pages 4 and 5 you deal with the core subject problem. Are we to understand that when you say that 40 to 50 per cent of all subjects have an identifiable core you mean they are not just maths, English, history, geography and that sort of thing but a core in every subject?

MRS. PAGE: I suppose we would say every board subject, every subject other than those which are instituted entirely by schools or local areas.

MR. MILLER: Coming back to page 16, you say in regard to SEMP -

> "Literature emanating from the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra leaves no doubt as to which of these two educational philosophies SEMP espouses."

Would you like to enlarge on the C.D.C. philosophy?

MR. BRENNAN: I have not with me the actual material referred to, but I think if we take the two broadly outlined philosophies here we can say one does set out to give some definite established values and the other one, which the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra obviously is supporting, believes that there are areas which cannot and should not be defined, and therefore we take the students into these areas and present all possibilities and leave the student, if you like, to fight his own way out. What we would be saying is that surely with centuries of wisdom and tradition we have established values which can be identified and which the education system should be guardian of, and these are the values which we think should be put forward. We do not believe that we do a service to the student by taking him into areas which are probably beyond the degree of his maturity to understand and then not point any guiding way, and that seems to be the basis on which we objected to the emphasis of SEMP.

MR. MILLER: Does the C.D.C. serve any useful purpose or should it be abolished?

MR. BRENNAN: I do not think I could say it does not serve any useful purpose but my opinion would be, I think shared by this committee, that it does not justify its existence.

MR. POWELL: I think you have probably answered that fairly well, but I want to talk about absolutes. On page 18 you say that it is apparent that SEMP accepts no absolutes. You make the point that the law of the land is based on absolutes and probably the majority of citizens accept absolute principles, but if any other agencies that normally set public attitudes - churches, etc. - appear not to support the idea, can schools win the battle alone if the churches are opting out and not trying to teach absolute values. Should the schools try, and can they win that battle?

MR. BRENNAN: I don't know if it is a case of whether they can. I think the school possibly has to be realistic, but at the same time it must be principled, and we would argue that if these values can be identified as community-held values - if I could just digress there to say we believe it is the job of government to try to identify these values because they must make their judgment and stand or fall by the community acceptance or rejection of these values.

MR. POWELL: And that would be part of the core curriculum?

MR. BRENNAN: I would say so, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: On page 19 you talk about re-writing of the teachers' handbook in relation to SEMP. Who should write it?

MRS. PAGE: We feel in our committee that the sort of approach that our department was taking, which was a very responsible approach, when they were asked to survey the whole of the SEMP material before this whole matter of the inquiry was generated by the public discussion at the time, that they were basically providing a guide to the material which was objective and could hardly be sort of discussed from any contentious point of view within those areas which were considered undesirable for Queensland schools and within other areas which there was some question about and which were considered as possibly only useful for Grade 11 and 12 students in a guided way and so on. You know, with that as a basis I feel that you would certainly have some people in the department who would be able to assist with such a re-writing of the handbook because this seemed to be a very responsible committee, and if the work was done very carefully in conjunction with our education advisory council which we hope you will be setting up or will be recommending at a very immediate date, this is the sort of thing which could be overlooked by such a council.

THE CHAIRMAN: We do have the report of that committee.

MR. MILLER: Going back to page 17, you refer to the inquiry method of teaching. Have you any evidence that the inquiry method is any more effective than other methods of teaching?

MRS. PAGE: This is quoting from SEMP. This is being used as an illustration to show the sort of work covered in the SEMP resource material. Our stance on the whole matter of inquiry-based material is that this is all right as long as there are definite guide-lines in the approach to the situation and as long as it comes in at an age when the student is able to cope with it, is mature enough to cope with the sort of alternative presented. What we are most concerned about in this whole area is the open-ended approach which leaves the student to make his own judgments. It is very vulnerable. It is open to a great deal of abuse by irresponsible teachers. We do not feel there are many of these but there has been evidence, I am sure, placed before you that there are some.

MR. MILLER: All students would not reach the same level of maturity either, would they?

MRS. PAGE: Certainly not, but as long as the mainstream of the students who are being presented with this material are able to cope with it, and there is a definite guiding sort of framework which the teacher presents, and we feel that such a handbook could be re-written to make use of some of the valuable material.

MR. MILLER: Is that built into SEMP at present?

MRS. PAGE: No. It seems to be very open-ended, and this is one of our chief objections to it, that it is too open to abuse.

MR. MILLER: So the average teacher would not have any guide-lines whatsoever in that regard?

MRS. PAGE: There are lots of guide-lines on ways to make it interesting and so on, but very few on ways to make it responsible.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can't most of that be left to teacher professionalism?

MRS. PAGE: Yes. If all teachers abided by their professional ethics that would be most desirable, but unfortunately we feel that this is not always so in 100 per cent of cases. We feel it is important to protect students from the possibility of abuse.

MR. MILLER: Isn't it more than just ethics, though? Each teacher might have their own personal values as far as morals are concerned.

MR. BRENNAN: I think, getting back to the comment of the chairman, that while we can speak about professional ethics there is no code of ethics drawn up for the teachers so it is left to their own judgment.

MR. MILLER: And they all have their own moral standard?

MR. BRENNAN: Yes. So ultimately there is no accountability or channel of accountability to the parent for what values or views have been given.

MR. MILLER: As long as they believe it is all right, it is right.

MR. BRENNAN: That is the philosophy of SEMP, in fact, that it can be passed on to the students, but they make their own judgment and whatever judgment they reach is, in effect, right for them.

MR. SHAW: Wouldn't it be, though, that if there was that sort of a teacher that whether they have SEMP available to them or not then they can misuse the system?

MR. BRENNAN: There is some form of redress if he is not given an imprimatur, if you like. If this is put out and approved by the department the teacher is then given a licence, if you like to use it as he wishes. But if you set up some guide-lines and the teacher oversteps them, you then have some of check on him.

MR. SHAW: You would surely have to go through every library and ban everything that you thought could possibly be misused?

MR. BRENNAN: I do not think that would be necessary. If you had guide-lines, each thing then could be seen to fit in within those guide-lines or else not to fit in. I think that would apply with nearly every subject.

MR. SHAW: Let me come back the other way. If you had sufficient guide-lines in the way it could be used, would it not also be possible to use SEMP?

MR. BRENNAN: If SEMP did in fact give guide-lines; and this is what we are talking about when we talk about rewriting the teachers handbook.

MR. SHAW: If you put the guide-lines over the top of SEMP and said, "You will use this in this way"?

MR. BRENNAN: We would say that a lot of SEMP is acceptable material if it is based on correct philosophy or correct use.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should move into another area.

MR. MILLER: New courses, on page 24?

THE CHAIRMAN: In relation to the balance of the submissions, it is not going to be possible to go into every area. This is the first time we have had before us a submission that goes into so much detail in the area of isolated children, and I think we should get to that and talk about it. I suggest that we should allocate the last few minutes to that. I will allow your question.

MR. MILLER: In the thirdlast paragraph on page 24, you begin the paragraph by saying, "So far the need for new courses stated in this paper evolves around the development of parenthood." Is this really a matter for the school system, or rather for the home or adult education or some other agency?

MR. WREN: I was very concerned, in looking at the correlation between the development of the child in the present setting, about the tendency increasingly for other than the parent to take over the development of the child, and I had in mind the system in Russia and other countries where, as soon as the child is born, it is virtually put into a kindergarten. There is quite a stack of evidence now to indicate that if you can keep parent and child together in a relationship a lot of the problems that occur subsequently in the school system and in the educational system tend to disappear, and for this reason I believe the major weakness in our system at the present time is the separation of the child at an early age without the parent having the opportunity of being with the child during that developmental period.

MR. POWELL: On pages 37 and 38 you speak about discipline. Again, we have had very little input in this field. About half way down page 38 you are advocating the reintroduction of full sports programmes in schools. I have not been under the impression that the sports programme has been taken out of the schools. Have you evidence that there has been a lessening of the sports programme in some areas?

MRS. PAGE: I think just a different emphasis. The point is that one of the problems we see in the whole area of discipline is the growth of very large schools, particularly large high schools, where you are getting an increasing number of students, particularly in the last few years of unemployment problems who are staying at school who would not previously have done so,

obviously. In this type of mass situation, we feel it is very easy for a student who is not achieving anything very much in any particular area to become rather alienated and take out his frustrations as best he can. Now, it is unfortunate that it is in those very large schools that, because of the increasing emphasis on inter-school sport and area and regional-based competitive sport, the emphasis in the school falls on the few who are capable of being in the school team, or one of the school teams, in this area, and the intra-school sport for the rest of the students often gets left behind and takes very much a bottom seat and is not very well organised, and sometimes students are just left out altogether because there are not enough sporting facilities available to cover all the children.

MR. POWELL: So it is an upgrading of intra-school sport?

MRS. PAGE: Yes, that is what we mean. There is a great deal of emphasis on inter-school sport; perhaps too much.

MR. POWELL: I was just going to ask you that. Would you offer an opinion on downgrading of inter-school sport?

MRS PAGE: Certainly; if it would help to improve the situation for students who are missing out altogether at the moment. I do not know whether this is so. This is something we feel could be investigated.

MR. WREN: The vital point on this one is that at the present time the young person is not getting a chance to develop their self-reliance because of being tested. I mean tested physically and tested for endurance, and along these lines to be tested for self-reliance and self-discipline. It does not really matter what type of sport they play, where they play it or under whose control. What is important is that it allows the individual to develop their own personal character and their own self-discipline, and encourage them in that way. We believe that that in turn, built back into the system, would improve discipline in the schools.

MR. MILLER: Can we turn now to page 33 - isolated areas - Mr. Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. MILLER: I am very interested in this new pilot scheme of itinerant teachers, and I am wondering whether, when this teacher goes out, is it only the students on the one property who benefit from his visit, or does he actually have a wireless with him so that he can talk to a number of students in the area - say a 50-mile radius?

MRS. PAGE: Before we answer these questions, I would like to mention that this section was prepared for us by a member of our committee who is also the Queensland president of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association, and he is the expert in this area. We can only, as best we can, fill in. I think they envisaged that not only would they use radio but that there would be gatherings at a certain property of people from around the area when the itinerant teacher arrives,

MR. MILLER: And also using a radio to take in a much bigger area?

MRS. PAGE: Yes.

MR. WREN: You would need to extend that one a little bit. There are models to look at in the United States, where in fact the gathering at an isolated place becomes a social event for

the community as a whole. The use of satellites in transmission of batched material by high-speed transmitters means that they have got a whole stack of material ready on that particular occasion. As the Commonwealth Government is now investigating that particular problem, I think it is well to add it to this particular section in those terms.

MR. MILLER: I am very happy for the isolated children and hope it works out all right.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is the National Party aware of any independent boarding schools in the girls' boarding school area that are in severe financial difficulty?

MR. BRENNAN: There are some. I could not name them with accuracy, but there is one in Toowoomba that I think has closed down. I presume you mean ones that are struggling at this point. I do not know of any particularly that are near to closing. I know that some of them are continuing to put fees up quite a lot, to the point where they are starting to lose their numbers, so it is starting to react against them. I think there is a problem in this area.

MR. HEWITT: I think that the problems of isolated children are of a different dimension from those of remote schools; isolated children are one dimension further. We have heard a great number of lamentations about the high turnover of teachers and principals in remote areas, and we are very sympathetic to this problem. We believe that we should have some incentive system whereby teachers and principals are encouraged to stay in remote areas for a longer period. A year seems to be par for the course. Have you thought very much about this, and would you like to give us the benefit of your advice upon the problems of remote areas and the high turnover of teachers and principals?

MR. MILLER: I think you are referring more to country areas than to remote areas.

MRS. PAGE: We have discussed this over the years. We have even discussed it with the Queensland Teachers' Union a few years ago when they were talking quite a lot about the same thing, you will remember. What do you think were the main points that came out of that?

MR. WREN: I think the main point that I can recall was that we believed that special incentives should be made available for the teacher to go to that area.

MR. HEWITT: Not so much to go, but to stay?

MR. WREN: To stay. We were very concerned with the young graduate with limited experience being placed in probably one of the most difficult situations that existed.

I think on that point the union agreed with us completely, but regrettably it went no further than that.

MRS. PAGE: Like many things in country areas, improvement in the whole quality of life in country towns is based on the improved viability of some rural industries; that would all contribute to this, too, don't forget.

MRS. BRIMBLECOMBE: I think the submissions mention that courses for working in remote and isolated areas at teacher-training institutions are a good idea. I know that some of them are emphasising the sort of life teaching requires in remote areas. If a teacher knows what he is going to come across and knows how to handle it he will stay longer. Some people who come from those areas want to return to them. It may be a matter of selection of teachers who will stay two or three years. I don't think we want any teacher to stay there 10 or 12 years. He needs to come back closer to people like himself for discussion. I think we could get them to stay for four or five years.

MR. HEWITT: When you say that he will stay you give the impression that he will stay of his own volition. We would welcome your advice about an incentive scheme with respect to higher emolument or a chance of earlier promotion and with housing, that would encourage him to stay there. I emphasise that we are very sympathetic to the problems of children in remote areas. We want to make some positive recommendations in that area.

MR. WREN: In fact, the National Party's policy on this issue confirms your statement , but I think this is an issue that the advisory council, if and when established, should take as one of its first tasks - to identify the needs of the community and the teachers concerned. It is a vast subject.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have recommended that there be no external exams. Are you quite sure about that?

MRS. PAGE: We have discussed this matter at great length - more than any other matter - in the last few years. We are very impressed by most of the sentiments expressed in the Scott report which I believe you have been considering. We feel that that report is possibly the first thing of its kind that has done just what we have been asking for for years. It has been very sensitive to public concern. We believe it is a very responsible document. Strangely enough, though Mrs. Brimblecombe had a copy before she wrote her section of our submission, the rest of us did not, and we were amazed afterwards on just how many points we were very united on. I will allow Mrs. Brimblecombe to elaborate on this. We feel that most of the recommendations in that report are very closely in line with our committee's views.

MRS. BRIMBLECOMBE: We think that to return to public exams will rigidify the system that we have managed to free. It needs every sort of freedom once you have got it, to find out the limits. I think the Scott report is looking at the limits of the new freedom that was given in spirit but did not come about in practice because we have had only a few years to do it. I think the Scott report is well worth trying out to see after four or five years how it goes. A return to public exams, I think, would not be appropriate.

THE CHAIRMAN: We thank you very much. We are grateful for your submission and its weight. I should be pleased if you would convey to your organisation our sincere thanks.

National Party of Australia, Queensland

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite Professor Evans to appear before us. We are very pleased this afternoon to welcome you before our Select Committee. I thank you for the hand that you have had in several submissions to the inquiry. For the purpose of our records, the one that we will be addressing ourselves to now is coded Au-116. That is the submission from the Curriculum Development Centre.

GLEN THOMAS EVANS, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Am I to understand that you had a hand in the preparation of the Department of Education submission J1-600 and the Queensland University submission, which is coded AU-5?-- Yes.

I thank you for your submission. Perhaps I should open the inquiry by saying to you that we have read the material and it is unnecessary to go over any of the ground. A number of people have questioned the necessity for the C.D.C. Some would like to see it abolished leaving matters to the State Curriculum Branch, and sort of attending to co-operative matters from time to time on a ministerial level. Do you know what the cost of running the C.D.C. is at the moment?-- Yes, I can give you its budget. I seek some clarification: I understood that you were to interview Dr. Malcolm Skilbeck at a later date - the director of the centre.

THE CHAIRMAN: He has written and offered to appear. It is one of the problems I have to face and arrange.

PROF.EVANS:I am quite happy, and I am sure that he is quite happy for me to answer, but I am not now formally associated with the C.D.C. I am ex-chairman of the council as from a couple of weeks ago.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thought we had cleared the line.

PROF. EVANS: If it is all right with you I shall be pleased to go ahead.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Are you happy to talk about this submission?-- Yes. I cannot speak for the C.D.C. That is the only thing.

I am anxious to clear any protocol problems before we proceed. Dr. Skilbeck had written to us indicating that he would be very pleased to meet the Select Committee. I have it marked for attention at a later time?--Thank you. I can answer your question.

Seeing that you were associated with the preparation of this document----?-- I was not, but I did see the draft of the original document, and the council of which I was chairman at that time suggested to the centre that such a document might be prepared. I also have seen the present document and, on the whole, I endorse it quite thoroughly. So I am very pleased to answer questions of the kind that you are putting. The cost of running the C.D.C. is a budgetary cost; it has an annual budget made by the Federal Government; next year's budget will be about $2,100,000.

Do you feel it has been worth it?-- Oh, I think so. The C.D.C. was set up as a creature of the various States, in the first place. You may recall that there were two national committees set up by the Federal Government in about 1971.

One was the National Council for Social Science teaching and the other the National Council for English Teaching. The first of those got under way very smartly; the second did not actually come into being until after the C.D.C. was formed. But the A.E.C., that is the Australian Education Council, the conference of Ministers for Education, had a very large hand in the formation of the ASAT programme and its conduct.

They wanted a body that would further that kind of curriculum development in Australia and take it somewhat further than that. In the setting up of the C.D.C. the Australian Educational Council, virtually the seven Ministers, were very much behind it. They saw it as a body that would enlist the co-operation of the States and co-ordinate some State efforts. It would provide on the whole a facility that would be a service to the States. I think the response of State education departments throughout Australia bears out that it has been useful because it has been very much used in a variety of ways.

We have had some criticism expressed through submissions about some education treaties that were allegedly signed during the currency of the Labor Commonwealth administration with the United Nations. Are you aware of this and are we bound by these treaties in respect of C.D.C. programmes?-- I am not familiar with the treaties. So far as I know, in the Act setting up the Curriculum Development Centre there is no implication for anybody outside Australia. There is absolutely no relationship between the C.D.C. and any other Government so far as I know. I am sure there is not. C.D.C. in fact has one project called Pacific Circle. That is an agreement to exchange curriculum materials that has been set up by those members of O.E.C.D. which bound the Pacific - New Zealand, Australia, America, Japan and Canada. It is simply an exchange of curriculum materials between those countries. It is an enrichment of our resources in a sense.

There was an O.E.C.D. report. It is nothing to do with that?-- There was an O.E.C.D. report on curriculum development in Australia and that had something to do with the C.D.C. It was at the behest of the C.D.C. There was a conference set up by the C.D.C. and a number of international educators visited Australia, with 60-odd Australian educators. There was a week's deliberation on curriculum development in this country. But the O.E.C.D. report on education in Australia was quite independent of the C.D.C.

BY MR. MILLER: We have heard two propositions about the curriculum. Firstly, we have heard that curriculums should be developed nationally by the C.D.C. Secondly, we have heard that curriculums should be developed at the school level. Are those two propositions contradictory?-- They could be contradictory. I do not think the C.D.C. would want the first one. The C.D.C. certainly has developed materials nationally because that was part of its charge. That was part of the request of the State Governments and the Commonwealth when the C.D.C. was formed. The N.C.S.S.T. project, which became the SEMP project, was in effect a request from the States in the first place and the C.D.C. was the facilitator for that, in a sense, and the provider of the grant in the long run. It also supervised some of the procedures. The C.D.C. would not see itself as a national curriculum planner and would resist that vigorously. The job of the C.D.C. is to provide some materials in a co-operative way when a request comes for them to have a crack at solving various curriculum problems, to show how they can be solved, and to set up prototypes of solutions to curriculum problems. One of those prototypes is in fact local curriculum development and one of the major thrusts of the C.D.C. at the moment is trying to push forward the idea of school-based curriculum development in some areas to find out its limitations and advantages. It deals with that kind of project and that probably is best done at national level because it is a job that requires co-ordination and some kind of correspondence from State to State. But the C.D.C. would be most interested in local curriculum development.

I am very concerned about the thrust of curriculums. Yesterday afternoon we were out at the Mt. Gravatt C.A.E.

There we were shown a booklet and the very first sentence in it was, "My Dad's got a telephone." This seems to be the trend in curriculums today and the C.D.C. is certainly not in isolation in this regard?-- That is not a C.D.C. product, of course. You are referring to Mt. Gravatt's reading scheme. The book you refer to has, of course, a theory behind it.

What is your theory on it?-----

MR. HEWITT: The word "got" is the most redundant word in the English language.

WITNESS: I am being second-hand on this.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think that is a question in relation to areas that I think we should traverse without getting involved in a discussion about the reading scheme at Mt. Gravatt.

MR. MILLER: I am trying to tie it up with the C.D.C.

WITNESS: I think it would be very difficult to tie it up with the C.D.C.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should take advantage of being able to talk to Professor Evans about SEMP, its development, and some other projects of the C.D.C. I think it is reasonable that we should use our limited time in that way.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: To come right to the heart of the matter, I should like to ask you this: many people have written to us about SEMP material - I personally have not had an opportunity to study them in detail - and I should like to get your reaction to what they say. Here is one quote: "There is inordinate emphasis on life in the raw. Why not a balancing stress on the uplifting and ennobling and enriching? Or does this then become indoctrination?" What is your reaction to that, about the SEMP materials that are supposed to be balanced?-- The SEMP materials are balanced. I really am not a social science expert and probably it would be presumptuous and rather silly of me to comment on that particular statement. I do not believe it is true. What I can comment on are the procedures that were used to develop these materials, and perhaps the criteria for curriculum development have to rest on those procedures of evaluation that responsible curriculum developers use. I think this applies not only to SEMP but to all curriculum materials. I put this forward because there is otherwise I think a great risk of curriculum material being judged, as it were, in an ad hoc fashion on the basis of prejudice and perhaps on the basis of little information and so on. The SEMP materials were in fact the result of a project that was done in a rather particular way. It was the first project of its kind that involved the collaboration of the various State Government departments. The intention was that each of those departments, together with the Headmasters' Conference of New South Wales - at one stage it was to be the Catholic education authority but finally it became the Headmasters' Conference of New South Wales - would develop in some sense independently a set of materials that would answer the needs that were expressed by a large number of teachers in social education subjects throughout Australia. That was a responsibly conducted survey. It was as accurate as such a survey could be. It was conducted in 1972. The eight topics chosen were those that were agreed by all State Departments of Education to be the areas in which materials were most lacking on society in Australia today for the purpose of educating about Australian society. There was simply nothing in the country that would allow teachers to teach anything about our society as a modern living society. The procedure used was to set up a team of teachers

experienced in curriculum development, three in each State under the supervision of the State Education Department. Those people were then to write materials based on inquiries in the community in which they worked. In Queensland, for example, which dealt with consumerism, there were inquiries made of a number of community bodies. Approximately 800 such bodies, I am told, were actually surveyed to find out the kinds of issues that were most important in the education of young people at school in consumer education.

The same thing applied to the other States. After those submissions were received, the materials were put together and run through a fairly rigorous testing, first of all within the teams and then within the schools which were representative - they were trial schools - so that the teams had a chance to reject them, the schools had a chance to reject them and so on. Finally they were trialled interstate with, in many cases, reports from both - of how the children were able to work with them and reports from teachers and in many cases reports from parents on their responses to the materials.

Could I interrupt and say that one of the submissions we have said that the problem with this material is that it was prepared by preachers and teachers and that you should have people actually involved in it with mud on their shoes. Actually, what you are saying is that it was developed by teachers, although they consulted with some others?-- They were experienced - they were teachers who were also experienced curriculum developers, and they certainly did consult. The development of curriculum materials in education is a specialist activity. You have to make sure that the materials are readable, that the kids are going to use them, that they meet certain requisites of ordering, sequencing and so on. I do not believe this could be done by anybody who was not experienced at the job. I certainly believe in the consultation.

One of the segments which was done in Queensland was on consumerism. I have asked a number of people whom I respect to have a look at it and they say it is definitely,on balance, hostile to business?-- Well, I was elaborating the procedures used in C.D.C. and the final check, as it were, is that the materials were read in the Curriculum Development Centre by the officers of the centre and, in most cases, by the director. They were also read by publishers and advice was sought. In some cases the centre has not yet published the materials. Consumerism in Queensland has not yet been published.

We have access to the materials, though?-- I am saying that it has not passed the final voting procedures that are used in the centre. Those materials are not yet being used in schools or offered to schools.

Certainly we have seen the materials on consumerism?-- Yes, you would have, but it was a version not a publication and it was not something that would yet be available to schools.

BY MR. MILLER: So that some of the criticism could well have been founded because some of it is not final?-- It is not in its final form and that would be true, I think, of some of the other materials about which I have heard criticism, that the Curriculum Development Centre would not accept them either.

BY MR. HEWITT: Of the eight courses, which are or were available in their final, finished, polished form in Queensland?-- I would have to say that the information I got from Mr. Newton was that you were going to wait till Dr. Skilbeck was here to talk about this and I did not bring the SEMP materials with me and I cannot answer that question off the cuff.

BY MR. MILLER: It is a broad question that I want to ask you. If SEMP is so good, why was it necessary to revert to crude drawing and offensive language?-- Again I am speaking for the developers. I am outlining the kinds of procedures that we used and the procedures of evaluation and trial were done so that the people who were going to be closestto it - that is teachers and parents - would be able to respond to the materials.

I have some responses to individual materials, just as you have some responses to individual materials. I think that I have then to weigh whether the response I have is in fact able to be set against the response got from a responsible evaluation, so that the drawings may appear crude but I am prepared to believe that they in fact enhance or push a particular use that the teachers might have or that the teachers that developed those materials were able to put into them.

If you cannot answer this, fair enough, but why is the average housewife shown there with an apron on, a cigarette hanging out of her mouth and her hair in curlers? To me, that is not an average housewife?-- I am not totally familiar with that piece of material but I think that the idea - and again this is a second-hand version - was not to denigrate the role of the average housewife --------

But it does?-- But in fact to draw attention to particular inequalities, to sex inequality and sex roles and sex expectation.

BY MR. HEWITT: Assuming that the average housewife sees herself in an inferior role and I am not prepared to make that concession?-- I think you will find that in the construction of the materials themselves - you are referring to a portion of the family unit, I take it?

Yes?-- In the construction of the materials themselves, there was a very careful attempt at balance by that group from the New South Wales headmasters.

BY MR. MILLER: What is the balance to that housewife situation?-- I cannot answer that.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: I think we can wait for Dr. Skilbeck?-- I think you should. I think there is a balance and it was put there to attract - it certainly attracted attention. It would attract the attention of readers. It was put there to promote the very kind of discussion that perhaps we could have now if we cared to go into it and if we had time to go into it.

How were the teachers' handbooks developed?-- They were developed by the teams, that is, by collaboration between the teams and there was finally set up a committee whose task was to develop those handbooks. Some portion of the handbooks refer to particular aspects of the teams. If you go through them you will find that there are, for example, sections that refer most particularly to the work of some of the teams. They were developed, first of all, simply as an information of what was in the various units and, finally, as a means of setting up materials for teachers who would be doing in-service activities with the materials.

BY MR. HEWITT: You said that SEMP was the end result of the input of all State departments. Was that an exercise in isolation or is there another exercise presently under contemplation or actively in process and, if it is actively in process, what is the nature of the next course?-- SEMP was set up at a time when the C.D.C. Council was first formed and there was a very small staff at centre and there was a certain anxiety to develop those materials on the part of the other curriculum agency, the National Council for Social Science Education. Since that time, the centre has been fully staffed and it has a full budgetary programme. It has produced a number of priorities which are changing from year to year

or are modifying from year to year. The basic priorities have been in terms of the junior secondary school initially. It is now expanding to primary and senior secondary school. That interest was essentially in the whole school curriculum, efforts to improve those aspects of curriculum which affects all subjects and the planning of curriculum in all subjects, so that there has been a considerable interest in the centre in things that cut across the curriculum as it were, and two of the major thrusts now are in language development - that is the development of programmes for reading, speaking and listening and so on, which is presently being - well under way - and also a programme that is not so far advanced on core curriculum, that is, asking a question - what is it, or how can you define? How could any State department, for example, define those aspects that every child in school should learn and emerge with from school, so that at the moment there is a great deal of interest in that. In addition to that, there are a series of programmes concerned with science education, environmental education, maths education, cultural education, national education and so on.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Could you respond to the criticism that has been made about C.D.C. that goes something along the lines that C.D.C. is preoccupied with controversial matters, that it has done SEMP, that the next one is Aborigines, and then the environment.

I hope that the environment is not too controversial.

Isn't it likely to be with the uranium questions? It has always been controversial here?-- I see. I think there is a programme on environmental education, but unfortunately it is not going ahead at the rate that many people would hope. There is also a programme on Aboriginal education. There are two strands to that-----

Aboriginal education, or educating the rest of us about Aborigines?-- As I was saying, there are both - one educating the rest of us about Aboriginal culture and there is a very fine set of materials produced on the Aborigines of north-east Arnhem Land which the C.D.C. is presently seeking a publisher for. Those materials have the blessing of the Aborigines concerned.

BY MR. MILLER: How much did SEMP cost to produce?-- It cost in the vicinity of $2,000,000.

What is the cost to the school?-- It is not a course; it is not a complete package.

But if you want to buy the full text?-- I would be guessing, but I think of the order of $2,000.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have detailed information in that regard on file.

BY MR. HEWITT: Is the thrust of the centre based on the proposition that there should be uniformity in education throughout Australia? Or do you still recognise the need for diversity in education?-- As I was explaining at the beginning, the centre's concern is with local development in education. If the centre has a bias it is probably towards what may be called school-based curriculum, so that it is not at all interested in producing a national curriculum.

So one could use the word "diversity"?-- Yes.

And would you endorse the use of that word?-- There are many important considerations here. There ought to be guidelines for curriculum. I happen to believe that there should be national guidelines for curriculum, but that is a personal opinion and is not shared by the centre. Certainly there ought to be State guidelines for curriculum, and within those guidelines, which should give a fair degree of autonomy to schools - the task of the schools is to provide a curriculum that is suitable for the particular children in the school. I would be very fearful of any kind of central domination of curriculum. I would fear it if it happened in the State just as much as if it happened in the country. It seems to me that there need to be guidelines, and I think you will find that in a couple of the reports that I have had something to do with. But there also needs to be an ability of the school to cater for those particular children, in the particular area, with the particular community in which the school finds itself. Unless schools can do that you cannot really say that you are providing an education suited to the children of the school.

BY MR. MILLER: The major criticism of SEMP concerns its underlying philosophy. Surely the question of the appropriate philosophy to be followed in education is a matter for Parliament, not the board or the teachers?-- Well, Parliament is ultimately responsible to people and might very well have a hand in the setting of educational guidelines. But I do not really think that Parliament is the right body to set those guidelines; they would have to be set surely-----

Even in the area of philosophy?-- They would surely have to be set in consultation. I would have thought that Parliament had a very important role in education in terms of provision and ensuring the quality of educational opportunity, of having some idea of the kinds of core of educational principles that should govern education in this State. But the working out of curriculum is in fact a fairly complicated matter. It is not something that one can easily do. Even the working out of the philosophy of education is quite complex. I believe that there is an important area of balance and that the community at no time can say that it has got its philosophy of education fixed. I don't suppose any of us could say that. What I would rather see is a kind of gradation of educational responsibilities from Parliament, down. I suppose the final adaption of the curriculum should be in the hands of the school community itself. The parents, the teachers and the children of the school are the ones most immediately concerned, and we should really consider that there is a very natural aspiration of people to have some kind of control over the kind of schooling that their children should get. But that would be the final level. I think certainly Parliament would express a philosophy of education but that it would rather express that not so much in detailed statements about syllabuses as in statements about provision and the kinds of hope you would have for the sort of people that Parliament would like to see in this State. It would be a very broad statement of principle.

Should every State, then, have a different philosophy of education?-- We are all Australians. You would find that even if we all came at it independently, there would be a large amount of communality from State to State. I cannot see that you would not have that.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for appearing; we greatly appreciate it. I want to reassure you that we will make contact with Professor Skilbeck. I understand from our secretary that he is overseas at the moment; is that right?-- He has been overseas. I am not sure when he is coming back.

It is next Monday. When it is possible we will arrange for him to come to our inquiry. We will give him the opportunity to answer the questions in relation to the submission?-- Thank you.

Thank you very much for giving us your time and thank you for the input and the helping hand you have given to others who have appeared before the Committee?-- Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very pleased now to welcome representatives of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. I reassure you, gentlemen, that the submission has been received and studied by members, so it will not be necessary to speak to it. It is coded for our purposes Au-50. I ask you firstly to please identify yourselves and state the positions you hold in your organisation.

MR. WILMOT: My name is Eric Wilmot and I am current Chairman of the Education Advisory Committee of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

MR. BARLOW: I am Alex Barlow, Education Research Officer on the Institute of Aboriginal Studies and Executive Officer of the Advisory Committee on Education.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, gentlemen. We will proceed with the questioning.

MR. MILLER: In the long term will it be better for Aborigines to live their traditional lifestyle or live closer to the European society?

MR. WILMOT: In the long term Aborigines will decide for themselves in their various groups and communities.

MR. MILLER: But who will pay for it if they do?

MR. WILMOT: Wait a minute. First of all, it is my view that there will be some communities - there will be no communities that will maintain a completely traditional society, because they are part of the space age, like everybody. However, many will maintain or will opt to maintain a more or less traditional kind of lifestyle. Then there will be some who will opt for a lifestyle that is indistinguishable to everyone else at this table.

MR MILLER: We are talking about education and education for work more so than about education for life. Most people who have come before this Committee and people we have met at public meetings are concerned about education for work rather than about education for life. If I opt for a lifestyle similar to the one you are talking about I will have to look after myself. Can you see the Aborigines looking after themselves if they decide to opt for the traditional lifestyle?--

MR. WILMOT: I think all of us are going to have to opt for a lifestyle that will match Australia's economics of the future, which may not be anything like what it is now. That is a start. I think this is the reality that we face as educators - all of us - in the future. When we talk about lifestyles in relation to employment and the economic base on which we work, we will start thinking about a variety of employment modes rather than simply the idea of employment or non-employment and so forth. I can see possibilities where kinds of employment modes will be practicable in places like the Northern Territory, where extensive land rights areas have been established. In general, Aborigines are going to have to ride the same boat as everyone else. Their employment modes may differ somewhat, but they will fundamentally need to establish a similar economic base at least and it will eventually become their responsibility to do this.

MR. MILLER: Therefore, they would have to move away from their traditional lifestyle, surely, and towards our lifestyle if they are going to accept the responsibility of landlords.

MR. WILMOT: The responsibility of landlords is a little different in the Aboriginal concept. For instance, there are a number of Aboriginal landholders now, such as the Gurindji property at Wavehill and so on which are at the moment functioning in a more or less economically viable way for them.

MR. MILLER: At whose expense?

MR. WILMOT: At their own.

MR. MILLER: The Commonwealth Government does not subsidise them in any way at all?

MR. WILMOT: The Commonwealth Government subsidises groups in some cases. For instance, another example is Strelly Station in Western Australia, in the Pilbara area. At the moment this has a fairly high Commonwealth Government subsidy, which is mainly related to their educational programme. Strelly Station itself is starting to come towards a kind of economic base. It is different from what I am sure a European cattle station owner or operator would be prepared to accept; but many of these people will look towards this kind of lifestyle as satisfactory. I admit it has dangers in the economic environment that we might be in, but I think it is the best that these people can do at the moment.

MR. MILLER: The average white can't afford to opt for that sort of life, can he?

MR. WILMOT: It is not a matter of "afford". It is a matter of being culturally able to cope with that kind of life. I am of Aboriginal descent myself, but I am sure you and I could not live on the Gurindji property in any kind of lifestyle that would satisfy us.

THE CHAIRMAN: In your submission you seem to be placing a greater emphasis on the education of white people about Aboriginal problems, when it seemed to me that the principal problem might be developing particular programmes, curriculum material, props and so on to assist Aborigines in the classroom to have better achievements. This is a philosophical argument. Do you agree with this? There would seem to me to be a dearth of programmes that are particularly developed to assist Aboriginal people to accommodate to the educational programmes that we give them. Your major emphasis is on educating the white people.

of their children's English."

Has the committee had any success with its aim? How many or what percentage of Queensland Aboriginal children would be bilingual with the Aboriginal dialect of their first language?

MR. WILMOT: It is very interesting that you ask that question, because it relates very much to Queensland. We eventually came back to Queensland to seek a very specialised service in relation to Traeger Park. Traeger Park is a school of close contact children, with a range of mixed-race children through to traditional children living in fringe areas in fringe camps around Alice. We brought the principal and one of his staff to Queensland specially to have a look at a special programme that is being trialled now at Petrie Terrace. They looked at the Cherbourg school and found that to be very similar in their minds to what the Traeger Park problem was. We had Dr. Margaret Sharpe carefully examine the linguistic situation. Her conclusions were quite clear that it was not a bilingual problem. There was not so much distance between the two languages used in the school to be considered as two separate languages. The problem was a dialectic form of English in a sense. That is the simplest way to put it. Queensland pioneered work in this form with the old Van Leer project. Currently the most advanced language programme of this sort - that is, where you are deviating from normal English to some extent, or what we call standard English - is being established at Mt. Gravatt. At the moment we have reached the stage where we now have located at least what the linguistic problem is and feel that our greatest assistance can be gained from the kind of work and programmes established at Mt. Gravatt.

MR. POWELL: Would you be keen to preserve Aboriginal dialects and have the Aboriginal children follow a bilingual sort of course? Can't it be done?

MR. BARLOW: Are you talking about Aboriginal/English dialects or about the traditional Aboriginal language?

MR. POWELL: The traditional language.

MR. HEWITT: If one could make an addendum to Mr. Powell's question, is there a traditional Aboriginal language as such?

MR. WILMOT: There are about 200 Aboriginal traditional languages remaining. They are very distinctive languages. They are in many ways unique in the world. They are fairly sophisticated and highly developed languages, and very useful.

MR. HEWITT: Is there any one that takes a superiority over the others?

MR. WILMOT: If we were sitting in South Australia I could say, "Yes, there is only one - Pitjantjatjarra." That is all you would need to worry about. If we were dealing with the east coast of Arnhem Land, I could name you about six major ones that would cope with it. If we are dealing with Queensland, the consideration is fairly complex. In areas where you have dense population, such as the Aurukun area, you have Wik Munkun and its variety of dialects as a major language. It is as worth while maintaining these languages for the sake of cultural continuity as it is in maintaining Greek or Latvian or Finnish or Italian. There is no way you are going to tell these Europeans new in this country that their languages aren't worth maintaining, even though they are not even related to the continent in any way.

MR. POWELL: Are any of the Aboriginal dialects written languages, and is it possible to teach them?

MR. WILMOT: Some of them are not only written at this stage but fairly highly developed. For instance, the language I mentioned for South Australia, Pitjantjatjarra, I saw recently a very sophisticated translation of "Alice in Wonderland" in the language. Many of the languages have been developed quite well for language teaching, even at secondary level. In Queensland, too, the Education Department has operated a number of bilingual programmes, and as a result a lot of these languages have been quite well developed now. I think there are at least three in Queensland that could easily be introduced at schools, certainly at primary level, but as secondary studies quite well, yes.

MR. MILLER: On page 14 you refer to the book, "The People of the Western Desert". We have had a number of submissions criticising this book. We have also heard that the New South Wales Minister for Education is investigating a complaint of role-playing by children in New South Wales schools. Have you any comment to make on this?

MR. WILMOT: I have. I would like Alex also to talk about this but I would just like to make this comment quickly. Resources like the "Western Desert" have an unfortunate aspect to them. They are designed for teachers who are highly trained to use them, and used under those conditions are excellent resources. There is a problem, of course, that you train a bunch of teachers in a school to use such a thing and next year you find none of them are there and somebody who has no idea how to use it picks bits and pieces out of it and it can be not a terribly good resource at that point. But fundamentally I see nothing wrong with the desert kit at all. In fact, I see it has a tremendous number of positive advantages.

MR. MILLER: Would you like to explain a little further what you mean by "not a very good resource"?

MR. WILMOT: It can be counterproductive to what you are trying to get across. For instance, one aspect of the 'Western Desert" kit I do not like is this: if I am teaching Aboriginal studies - that is my profession, I am a lecturer at a C.A.E. - to teacher trainee students the first photograph they see of a traditional Aborigine is certainly not somebody out of the western desert because I do not want to create a prototype of some desert nomad. I make certain that the first Aboriginal photographs they see are Victorians wearing sewn clothes and looking very little different to, perhaps, American Indians. Then let them see the others to give them an idea that there is not a single prototype. This is a big continent and every square metre of it was settled by Aborigine people. Of course, like everyone else they adapted perfectly to it and had quite an affluent life-style here, particularly on the east coast and even more particularly in Queensland where, even in prehistoric times one-third of the entire population lived, and it still has about the highest Aboriginal population. I would like Alex to comment on the "Western Desert" kit.

MR. BARLOW: I would support Eric all along the line in what he has offered in the way of criticism of this particular kit, and let us make it clear that it is a teaching kit which was carefully devised over a period of time in New South Wales. But it is also a kit which, as you have remarked, has come under a fair amount of criticism from Aboriginal people and from educationists along the lines of the criticism that Eric has offered. I have on many occasions spoken with the woman who was responsible for producing the kit, and I know that in recent times she has been discussing with Aboriginal and educational authorities in South Australia, Victoria and New

South Wales aspects of the kit and she herself recognises that there are certain things in it that need adjustment. I suppose that the major problem is this concept of the simulation game, the concept of trying to get children to get some appreciation of different cultural attitudes through trying to simulate this attitude. Quite frankly, some of us have heard of the things children were doing in these situations and we felt that the simulations they were doing were in no way going to make it possible for them to appreciate what Aboriginal life-styles are all about.

MR. MILLER: I have only heard about it. Would you mind telling me what they were doing?

MR. BARLOW: The main core of the simulation concept is that children within a class-room are put into various kinship relations with each other. They are given a little badge to identify the particular group that they belong to, and from knowing that they are in that group they are able to work out their relationships with each other and also know the behaviours that are expected of them in relation to those things. So that one child may become in the position of mother's brother which gives him certain authority and certain obligations towards mother's son within the kinship situation. So the children, through those simulations, are learning in some way just how Aboriginal people perceive their relations and react to those relationships. The problem is, of course, that it is simulation, and Margaret Simpson says herself how quite frequently she will be walking down the street and a child will come up and peer at the badge she is wearing and say, "Oh, you're my mother's mother's father's sister" or something like this. She says it is delightful but, of course, in an Aboriginal situation it does not operate like that. It is a much more meaningful and much more intensive thing for Aboriginal people and there is no way we can really simulate it.

MR. WILMOT: Can I just add a problem fundamental in teaching this sort of thing. When you teach Aboriginal kinship, it was perhaps the most highly evolved and developed kinship system ever developed by any group in the world. Aboriginal people tend to use it rather like Europeans use mathematics. It was a kind of intellectual plaything. Like mathematics, they learnt it as children and internalised it. If we teach adults, or in fact older children, the same thing we have to externalise it, the same as you can externalise mathematics and teach people to use matrix tables instead of series tables, and you can get the same kind of results. But it is never quite the same, especially with kinship, so that Aboriginal children do not need badges and they do not need to draw little diagrams of whose mother's mother's father or anything is. They have internalised this whole process by the time they reach initiation. If you try to simulate this then your simulation, like all simulations from an educational point of view, is never perfect. If it is badly simulated by a teacher who does not really understand what he is doing you can get this blue eyes/brown eyes problem arising.

MR. MILLER: Is this Margaret Simpson a member of C.D.C. by any chance?

MR. BARLOW: She is a member of the New South Wales Education Department and is still a practising teacher in New South Wales.

THE CHAIRMAN: What you are suggesting is that it is the role of the teacher to change the attitudes of children about Aborigines, is it? You would not worry that that is described

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as indoctrination by some?

MR. WILMOT: Australia is one of the few experimental societies, societies that were not based on an indigenous society but were experiments in transplated and mixed populations. We have a different thing to do, too, to Africa, India, Britain or any of the European countries. We have to come to terms and come up with a viable population, a viable culture and a viable way of getting on together. It is a responsibility for the whole population to accommodate and learn to get on culturally with each other. Now, if you have such a country formed where you have one large dominant culture it has certain responsibilities, and in amongst the minor cultures that may also be part of it , the indigenous culture forms a very important part, firstly because they in a sense, and in a world image, spiritually, geographically and ecologically mucked around with this country for thousands and thousands of years and are identified in a sense in a world image, which makes it an easy base for a new culture. That is one thing. The other thing is that if Australia is to develop a viable culture, particularly a really viable Australian cultural image, then you are mad if you don't start with indigenous culture. When you see a New Zealand plane land, look at its tail and look at the tail of QANTAS and you will see the difference. New Zealand has somehow done that thing and on the tail they express something about Polynesia, something that really makes you think New Zealand is, certainly populated partly by Europeans and partly by an indigenous group, but they have somehow got it together - not perfectly, but a lot better than we have.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Time is running against us, and I am sure that we could go on all day very happily. Could I ask whether you think that in the schools, in relation to education of children of Aboriginal descent, we are going forwards or backwards?

MR. WILMOT: I think we are definitely moving forward. In any forward progress you are going to stub your toe every now and again, and what you need to be is reactive.- to be able to react to that quickly and not to continue problems when you run into them. For instance, the sort of programmes that Queensland is carrying out now so far as the education of Aboriginal children is concerned - you can go into the schools - Queensland has itself examined the language problem, from complex bilingual things right up to the dialectic English thing. They have also now hit on one very important thing , which is to say, "Well, look , one way out of the problems is to balance teacher numbers - that is, population numbers and teacher numbers." They have set up a major teacher-training programme in Townsville C.A.E. and in 10 years time they are going to have a balance of numbers - the only State that is going to be anything like it. That is the sort of thing where you can make quite leaps forward. But meanwhile, as you are progressing through the actual technology of education, let us face it , there are constant errors being made with children of the major culture, let alone the various minor cultures. What you have got to do is be flexible enough to react to this and, if you do make a mistake somewhere, do not completely condemn the whole thing because of some error. This is quite often the danger with things like "Western Desert" kits. You make an error in the way you use something, so you say, "Right; throw all those out." That is ridiculous and a bad educational approach and ideology to do that. You have to be careful and make certain you know what you are doing and proceed, as education always does, conservatively, but at the same time keeping in mind objectives that need to be reached. Unfortunately, where most of the Aboriginal problems occur now is in secondary, and this is a little bit like the difference between a bowser boy and a mechanic, you know. The apprentice mechanic right up till his last year of apprenticeship, you have still got doubts when he puts the spanner on your car, without the mechanic standing by. He may be just as good as the mechanic at that stage, but there is that funny leap. That is the structure of our society, and that is the problem in secondary education. Until we get significant top-end output from secondary, its almost impossible to measure your improvement. Primary is different. You can measure significant improvements in primary school, and that has been made. We can only assume, particularly in Queensland where quite a lot of work has been done in secondary, that significant improvements are being made also in secondary. But they will not be detected for quite a while, and you face that problem and you will face it, I think, for at least the next five years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, you have argued very eloquently this afternoon and I assure you that your submission will begiven very serious consideration by the Committee. It covers an area in which,up to date, we have worried that we had not had a balance of views put forward, and if you can help us with some further input in this area I would appreciate it. I thank you very much and I would be pleased if you would convey to your association our thanks for their thought in the preparation of this submission.

Ladies and gentlemen, this brings to an end a fortnight of penance for Committee members who have sat here very

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patiently and I convey my thanks to all those who have co-operated to make it possible. There will probably be one or two days more of public hearings of the education inquiry. They will be scheduled for some time well into the future - probably next month. I again thank all those who have co-operated - the "Hansard" staff; the members of our advisory panel, who have sat here very quietly and advised profusely; the members of the news media who have given us a balance and, I think, an excellent coverage; the witnesses, who have now totalled in the vicinity of 100; Ted Newton, our long-suffering secretary ; and the other members of the Committee, who have not once moved a motion to disagree with the ruling of the Chair. I hope that the outcome of the inquiry is going to be consistent with the approach so far.

The Committee adjourned to a date to be fixed.

ERYER
Mss.
81/12

16th day

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE 13 OCT 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M.J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W.D. Hewitt
Mr. C.J. Miller
Mr. L.W. Powell
Mr. E.F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:
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Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P.A.B. Krebs
Mr. K.P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E.S. Newton

BRISBANE, 13 OCTOBER 1978

SIXTEENTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 9.30 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the hearings of the Select Committee are reconvened. Before commencing this morning's hearing, I should like to indicate that this is the final day of hearings by the Committee in respect of submissions that it has received from outside organisations. We have received in the vicinity of 4,000 written submissions, and we have had the very difficult job of selecting those from whom we would hear in public hearings in Brisbane. However, we have made our selection, and those who are before us today are the final ones we will be hearing and will complete our hearings in respect of the submissions. We will have one more day of hearings from the departmental officers, who are coming back to summarise some of the matters on which we have received submissions and to answer some further questions.

I am very pleased to welcome now members of the Diocesan Council of Education (Anglican) in respect of submission SE-62, and to welcome Archbishop Arnott. Would the gentlemen with him please indicate for the purposes of the record their names and the positions that they hold with the council?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: May I first thank you very much for seeing us at this late stage. I have been overseas for over three months,, and I am very grateful to you for waiting till the last day. I should like to introduce, on my right, Mr. Hayward, who is the headmaster of the Church of England Grammar School at East Brisbane, our largest Anglican school; on my left, Reverend A.J. Stonier, who is secretary of the Diocesan Commission of Education and also chaplain of The Southport School, who was a schoolmaster before he was ordained; and Archdeacon Newell, who is the rector of Christ Church, St. Lucia, and is at the moment the vice-chairman of the commission, and who was also professionally a teacher in Victoria before ordination.

We have had this commission working, set up by Synod, for nearly four years. The first commission was chaired by Archdeacon Newell and produced a report to the Diocesan Synod of 1977. It was then reconstituted in a slightly different way to continue its work as a liaison between the Anglican diocese and its schools. I should make clear that I am speaking only for

the Diocese of Brisbane, not for the Province of Queensland, because although there are schools in North Queensland, they are under the control of the local diocese there. This commission on education is nothing to do with our department of religious education, which has a different purpose. This is a small commission, which has a headmaster and a headmistress on it; it has also on it not only these members but members of governing bodies, two assistant teachers, some clergy, one or two parents, and interested people. We meet pretty regularly to review what is going on, and this submission - SE-62, I think you called it - is the work of the joint commission, and we now formally hand it over to you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I thought perhaps, because I realise your time is limited, that rather than us try to go through it, it might be much better if you and your fellow commissioners asked questions of us and we tried to answer them.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was about to say that. Indeed, the submission has been read by members.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: There is one rather serious misprint that we found only this morning. On page 6 under "v" it should be the need for"lesser" rather than "greater emphasis on vocational preparation.

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: That will involve a second alteration, also, on the first page where the subsections and titles are mentioned.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask first how many schools are under the control of your diocesan council?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I could list them very quickly. There is the Church of England Grammar School and St. Paul's School in Brisbane, amongst the boys' schools; then there is the Southport School in Southport; in Toowoomba there is The Church of England Preparatory School; and in Warwick, The Slade School, which is boys and girls. In girls' schools, we have St. Hilda's School at Southport, The Glennie School at Toowoomba; then there are two schools, St. Margaret's School and St. Aidan's School which are run by the Society of the Sacret Advent, but the property of them both is vested in the diocese and there is relation and they have been represented on our commission.

MR. MILLER: Your Grace, for some reason your submission has little to say about the role of religion in education. In a church-based education system, I find that rather strange. Would you like to comment on that?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: First, could I just say that there is on the last page, page 8, a section on the church in education. I think the point is that this particular commission is rather more concerned with education as such and the church's role in education in general rather than specifically with that question of religious education, which is handled by another department of the diocese. We do see religious education as something that runs through the whole life of the school in its pastoral care of students, not only in the work of the chapel and religious instruction but also in all sorts of other subjects as well. Perhaps I could hand over to my colleagues to make further comments.

REV. STONIER: I should like to say that we see our schools as a community. Therefore, we see the Christian emphasis as not

confined in terms of subject area but rather as the very raisen d'etre for our existence. Therefore, we see our religious education programme in this way: while we have specific subjects, religion as such is seen as part of the total environment rather than as a separate subject, and that is why we have aimed our direction here to the overall position we see in our schools.

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: I think it needs to be said, too, that if one emphasises the religious aspect, as we would want to, that must not be at the expense of the general education. After all, people send their children to schoo.. to be educated in the fullest sense of the word, and we would not want to present a submission that so emphasised the religious side that it was felt that the other was not important. We take a very broad view of the importance of education.

MR. MILLER: Would you favour the teaching of world religions?

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: In a comparative sense, do you mean?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: To some extent, yes; but I think that the basis of our country is Christian and certainly, as Anglicans, we would want to emphasise the Christian approach. Our religious approach would be open-ended, not the old dogmatic approach that seeks, perhaps, commitment in the class-room - and I think that point is made there - but which exposes children to the religious dimension and assists them to reflect upon it with a view to, at an appropriate stage of their life, making a commitment one way or the other. Some people think this is very vague.

MR. MILLER: Would you favour a humanist society coming into your schools?

MR. HAYWARD: I was not going to answer that question directly I was going to say that I think there is a definite place for comparative religion in a programme of religious education, probably at Grades 11 and 12, when you are looking at issues of concern for Christian people.

I do not know enough about the humanist society to take them into our schools. Before you take people into any particular school you need to find out about them.

MR. HEWITT: Your statement laments the lack of understanding of the working of Radford by parents. I think that is valid. You mention the need for better communication with parents. Once again that point has been laboured very significantly during our hearings. Can you advise us on how better communication can be established with parents and how we can enjoy a better community input in schools.

MR. HAYWARD: Speaking as someone who arrived on the Queensland scene after Radford was under way, I think that one of the areas of concern with Radford is the assessment. I think that parents have not fully understood it and I think that when Radford first came in teachers did not fully understand it. I have thought in my own mind - and this is quite personal - that it would take 10 years for Radford to be fully understood in schools and the community at large. I think that now while it is not working as well as it might, that it is pretty well understood in schools. In the next five years, if it were to continue, I think it would be very much better understood by parents. Probably one of the disadvantages is that it was brought in very quickly; that people were not prepared for it. I was not here at the time but I think a member of your Commission would be able to comment on this.

MR. HEWITT: If that is a valid criticism that it was brought in too quickly, is that a note of warning we should be striking in regard to the Scott report?

MR. HAYWARD: I think that is right. Anything that the Scott report brings in - I know that there is a timetable at the back of the Scott report - within reason should be open-ended; but not so open-ended that it never comes, just so that it comes in its own time.

MR. HEWITT: I am interested also in your comments about the T.E. score alone being the basis on which entry is gained to university and other tertiary institutions. You mentioned that other factors should be taken into account. We are not unsympathetic to that proposition but we recognise the enormous difficulties. We should be obliged if you could help us out.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I would make one point because a couple of years ago when I was sitting at the end of a table like this and we were looking at medical education for example, we were very concerned then on that commission about relationships, that somehow, particularly in the medical faculties, there was so much concentration on examination results and high T.E. scores; whether people had a natural facility to get on with others was entirely neglected. That seemed a vital point, particularly for people who were to be doctors and engaged in that kind of profession. I don't think, though, the criticism really was of the T.E. scores, but the way other people make use of them. That is the point I want to make, particularly with the university faculties.

MR. MILLER: Are you saying that the faculties should set their own examination standards?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I don't think it is a matter of setting the examination standards. I think that is all right. But I think that probably in selecting people for certain avocations there should be also a kind of interview approach.

MR. MILLER: You mean in conjunction with?

Yes.

ARCHDEACON NEWELL:/ If I may interpose, it is not examinations; it is establishing certain criteria and then seeking some way of measuring that. It is probably more qualitative than quantitative.

MR. MILLER: This is before training commences?

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: On page 7 you refer to a board subject on biblical studies. This is an interesting one that has not been presented to us before. Is this something that you have recommended to the Board of Secondary School Studies, and would you be prepared to assist us on it?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I will make a few comments and then hand over to my colleagues. We did make some submissions on this general field a few years ago when I first arrived nearly eight years ago, to the then Gutekunst Commission. A long submission went from both the Anglicans and a group representing Roman Catholic, Anglican and other churches. We have made our submission. I think we would strongly support both a system of religious education of some kind in the State school system and also as a subject for secondary school study. Perhaps Mr. Hayward may care to comment because he is doing some work along these lines.

MR. HAYWARD: I do not think we have put this forward to the Board of Secondary School Studies. It is certainly a subject in Victoria for the V.U.S.E.B. In my opinion, it is an excellent subject. We have discussed this. One of the difficulties would be to ensure that a certain proportion of the more able students had an opportunity to do this subject.

THE CHAIRMAN: How about making it a school-based subject? Is that happening?

MR. HAYWARD: No, it is not something that is happening. This is just a recommendation from this committee that we should look to developing a board subject in biblical studies. It may well start as a school subject.

REV. STONIER: It seems to me it is the next stage of evolution of the religious education group that I am working with within the Education Department. Certainly I believe it would improve teaching in this area if this area could be dealt with in an academic way. Where it has been explored in Victoria, maybe the title "Biblical Studies" is misleading. While the major emphasis is a Judaeo-Christian emphasis, there are still sections on comparative religions and other areas that could also be explored. It seems that religion is an important part of culture and of mankind, but it is an area that we often ignore totally or completely when it comes to our more formal education system.

MR. HEWITT: Your submission refers to a social science curriculum, but deliberately or otherwise you avoid the two words "MACOS" and "SEMP". I should be interested in your observations about MACOS and SEMP.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: Could I say that Mr. Hamilton, who happens to be a member of our commission, arranged for us to go to the Bardon centre. We had all the members of our commission plus headmasters and headmistresses of almost all our schools. We spent an evening looking particularly at the SEMP material because we thought that to some extent MACOS was a bit of a dead letter. We were, I think, very impressed generally speaking with

the SEMP material. I looked at a good deal of it personally - and I think other members of the commission had. I suppose with any syllabus a lot depends on who teaches it and how it is taught. We thought that it opened up a very sane and wise approach. On the whole, I think it would be true to say that as a commission, we strongly supported that particular approach to the secondary school child. Perhaps my colleagues could again speak on that.

MR. MILLER: Before your colleagues speak, could I ask you if you have viewed the films associated with SEMP?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: There is a tremendous amount of material. We viewed a great number of them. Again one has to think that they would be taught and not seen as sometimes horrifying films are in a home by children without any supervision. I did not see anything which I personally felt was thoroughly objectionable. I admit perhaps that if I had been producing them they might have been slightly different. But still we did see a good number of the films.

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: I think, in reflecting upon it, that I do not remember any member of the commission being outraged by the material, but rather the opposite feeling was that it would need trained teachers, but we assumed we have those. We felt much of it would be exceedingly good material. We felt not every teacher would use every segment, that there was a need to select according to one's particular ideas. If I may presume to speak for the whole commission, I think generally we were impressed by the quality of the material in SEMP.

MR. MILLER: What is the advantage of using bad language in schools?

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: I cannot think of any advantage myself.

MR. MILLER: Yet you say there is nothing wrong with the films? The Education Department has condemned 4 of the 10 films as unsuitable for class-room use.

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: We certainly did not see 10 films. Frankly, I do not remember seeing one with bad language.

MR. MILLER: You have been shown only part of the SEMP material?

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: It sounds like that.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I have seen all 10.

REV. STONIER: We were all so led to believe in terms of the films that some of them were open to be reviewed for possible modification or for change. I think, in the case of bad language, while we are not condoning it, it is certainly part of our society and it will not go away by pretending it is not there. I have not seen the films with the bad language in them so I cannot really make a judgment.

MR. MILLER: Would you be concerned that what is taught in schools or allowed to be discussed in the class-room situation can become the norm in society? Do you openly encourage bad language being used?

REV. STONIER: Of course not.

MR. MILLER: Then why say it in a class-room situation?

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: I think we are at a disadvantage because the expression "bad language" is open to a lot of interpretation. I am not quite sure what we are talking about.

MR. MILLER: Four-letter words.

ARCHDEACON NEWELL: I would not be in favour of that at all.

MR. HAYWARD: I have seen some of the SEMP material but I have not seen any of the SEMP films. I think the important thing about SEMP is this: it is an additive, it is not a diet in itself, and there is material there that could well back up certain material that you may be teaching in a school, and, as such, it is an added resource. Obviously you would use the material that enriched the sort of thing that you are trying to get across. You asked me earlier if I would allow a society to come into the school. I would look carefully at who came into the school, what films are shown and it is very bad educational practice to show children films without having seen them first. It is what is done after the film that is very important. The back-up is very important. I would say that, as an additive. I saw quite a lot of printed material which I would be very glad to use, as a teacher of social science or Australian history, because it would take me years to collect that sort of stuff myself.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did you see any that you would not use?

MR. HAYWARD: I am sure there is stuff there that I would not use. It would depend on the age group and the emphasis. I might not use it because it is dull or because it is offensive or may not have been appropriate at the particular age level.

MR. MILLER: So you could not give an overall blanket cover to SEMP?

MR. HAYWARD: In what way?

MR. MILLER: By accepting the whole of SEMP?

MR. HAYWARD: I think you have to allow teachers, heads of departments, and schools themselves to come to a conclusion about what they might use.

MR. HEWITT: There are so many pros and cons. If some films have a few naughty words in them, there is also the course on computer awareness which I am told is the best stuff that is available.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: In any teaching one has to make selection. There would be certain parts of Shakespeare that I would not want to teach to people down at the bottom end of the school. I can remember, as one who was brought up on a classical education, that there were certain satires of Juvenal in Latin which one was not allowed to read until one got to the university.

MR. HAYWARD: The second thing about SEMP is that, as a curriculum, it was constructed in the right way. A great deal of time and effort went in from teachers and it was trialled. They had stuff back from parents about it. In fact, as a curriculum, it seemed to me to be well put together. The principle of curricul construction seemed to be good.

MR. HEWITT: I should like to talk a little about teachers. The purpose of a teacher obviously is to teach, if one reduces things to simple terms. Teachers in pursuit of their professionalism are saying now that they should participate in the right to select curriculum and make determination on syllabus and things such as this. Are you satisfied that the training of teachers in fact makes them competent in this field?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: One of the good things about the independent school system - and that is what we are talking about to you today - is that one is not open necessarily

to small pressure groups too much, but you can listen to other people and one does have regular meetings with staff and you talk. There is possibly much more discussion between staff and heads of departments and the headmaster. There are meetings between staff and the council. Parents can freely express their point of view. They cannot control the thing any more than the staff could. It is the headmaster's prerogative. But there is a sense in which there is a much greater openness of discussion about education and its problems than perhaps is possible in a State school system. This is one of the reasons why I approve so fully of independent school education.

MR. HAYWARD: I think there are two points here. One of the thrusts of Radford is that the curriculum has changed a great deal and school-based curriculum planning which takes into account the opinion of parents. After all, independent schools are client oriented. This is something that is desirable. The other point you bring up about the training of teachers - is the training of teachers sufficient to enable this to go on effectively - opens up another very large area.

MR. HEWITT: It does indeed.

MR. HAYWARD: To which I do not know how competent we are to comment on.

MR. MILLER: On page 5 you say, "We live in an open society in which every person can decide for himself what is good." Isn't this contrary to Christian teaching?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I would not have thought so. I would have thought that everybody has, to some extent, to make his own decision. I think this is what Plato said. I think it has been a part of educational policy generally that you try to set out your values, and ultimately the person must make a personal choice. Just exactly where on page 5?

MR. HAYWARD: The top of page 4 leads into what is on page 5.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I think if you look at a study of the New Testament ethics you will find that Our Lord, for example, rewrote in the Sermon on the Mount to some extent the Ten Commandments which is the most sacred part of the Jewish Law in the sense of saying, "These must be applied not negatively, but positively.

To hate a person in your heart may be tantamount to murder. To have lustful thoughts may be as serious an offence as actually committing adultery." What we are really saying there is that it is the people's motives that control their actions. It is always a question of choices and so often in life, unfortunately, the choice is not always between absolute black and white but, because of the society in which we live, between two shades of grey.

MR. MILLER: Would this be the reason for the fall-off in church attendances?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I don't think that is relevant, if I may say so with respect.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think you are right. In the limited time that we have we had better stick to subjects that are apposite.

MR. MILLER: Turning to the top of page 5 - how can the school really teach children to live with change?

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: I think I might ask one of my colleagues who are teaching all the time to speak to this.

REV. STONIER: Surely the one thing that is certain in our society is change. The rate of change seems to be something that is accelerating. Therefore one of the difficulties facing every educator is that the children whom we now have in our schools will be spending most of their adult life after the year 2000. Therefore it is very difficult, when talking about facts, to know exactly what you should be teaching.

MR. MILLER: But this has always been so.

REV. STONIER: It is more so now than in the past. The rate of change has accelerated. You ask: How do we teach children to live with change? What we should be doing is teaching them how to handle skills so that after the year 2000 they will be able to handle whatever changes there are at that time. Besides imparting our culture and certain knowledge that must be had, our education must prepare them so that they can be mature adults and make mature decisions at that stage of life.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you really think you can do that? Do you think you are trying to do something that is virtually impossible? One thinks back to one's schooling and thinks, "It would have been quite foolish for my school to try to foresee all of the possibilities." Education is a life-long process.

REV. STONIER: That is true; but can't we teach our children to be discerning? Can't we give them the skills of how to make judgments? We certainly do not have all the knowledge that we need, and that is why we must prepare them, so that they can cope when they are adults.

MR. MILLER: Why do you advocate lesser emphasis on vocational preparation?

MR. HAYWARD: This is a continuation of the same thrust. Schools should be trying to give people skills so that they will be able to cope with changing situations. The skills would be literacy, numeracy and the ability to be able to make choices, to speak and to do research. These are the very important things. We need to have a balance - a balance of the past, the present and the future. To answer that

particular question - what is being got at here is that just to prepare someone for a particular vocation may be outdated. Maybe something will change. What is required is more to prepare people generally for the sort of conditions that they will meet in their lifetime and to enable them to go on learning. Preparing for a vocation is very probably not the role of secondary school. There are other organisations for vocational training.

THE CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, gentlemen, time has beaten us. We have a very full programme. We are honoured indeed to have you appear before us. Thank you very much for the thought you have put into the preparation of your submission and also for appearing personally before us to present it.

ARCHBISHOP ARNOTT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for receiving us courteously. We have enjoyed talking to you. We wish we could have had another hour.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite representatives of the Australiah Association for Religuous Instruction to appear before the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee is now pleased to welcome representatives of the Australian Association for Religious Instruction, whose submission has been received and studied by members. For our purposes it is coded AU-163. It will not be necessary to read it. Could I ask, firstly, if the representatives would identify themselves and the positions they hold in the association?

REV. NEEDHAM: I am the Reverend Gregory Needham and I am a member of the Australian Association for Religious Education. I was one of the founders with Professor Rolly Busch of the parent body in 1960, which was then the Queensland Institute for Christian Education.

REV. MAVOR: I am the Reverend Dr. Ian Mavor and I am convenor of the Research Subcommitte of the Brisbane Branch for the Australian Association for Religious Education.

SISTER KELLY: I am Sister Gretchen Kelly, the secretary of the association.

THE CHAIRMAN: Might I ask you firstly a little bit about the association and its membership, why it was formed, a little bit about its contemporary history, how many people it represents and so on?

SISTER KELLY: The present situation is that the membership of the association extends throughout the State, there are over 70 members, many of whom are on a postal basis. The association meets monthly to discuss issues or to hear papers presented on subjects connected with religious education. In the August holidays the national conference of the entire Australian Association for Religious Education, in which we represent the Brisbane Branch, was held. It was attended by people from all States and addressed by an overseas expert on religious education, Mr. Michael Grimmett.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is, all religions?

SISTER KELLY: All Christian religions are represented at the moment, but it would be open to others were there any offering.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am corrected by my colleague; I mean all denominations.

SISTER KELLY: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: To what extent are you affiliated with the various denominational organisations?

SISTER KELLY: We are not directly affiliated with any of them. We have a membership which includes members of all denominations, with some notable exceptions of the smaller sects that one would expect, but most of the major churches in Queensland have members in the association, with many of them who are serving or have served in executive positions.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have affiliation with any other organisation?

SISTER KELLY: Not directly. The Reverend Gregory Needham could say something about the origins of the association.

THE CHAIRMAN: For our information and for the information of everyone else, we would like to know a little more about that.

REV. NEEDHAM: The Queensland Institute of Christian Education, which was the parent body in Queensland, was founded in 1960 with the intention of encouraging a professional educational approach to religious teaching in schools. At the time of our foundation or shortly afterwards we had a loose association with a similar body in Britain called the Christian Institute of Education, at that time. It is now the Christian Education Movement, having combined with other movements. We continued as the Institute of Christian Education for some years until the Australian body, which arose out of a body under the aegis of the Headmasters' Conference originally for the conferring of chaplains in independent schools, widened its programmes and became not just a committee but an association. Being the Queensland representative of that association, we were then requested to bring our name into conformity, which we did. Our main purpose remains the same. We are concerned with all ranges of education, both in State and in independent schools, and we are concerned primarily with a professional approach to the subject of religion.

REV. MAVOR: If I could add to that, I think the main emphasis that some of us would see in the association at the moment is for it to function in a manner something like a subject association. Last year in Toowoomba we had a State conference with some 90 people present. This year we had a national conference in Brisbane. Queenslanders involved in those would include clergy, lay persons who are operating in independent and church schools, and people who are going into State schools to conduct religious education programmes. The association presently has branches in Brisbane, Toowoomba and Rockhampton and, as Sister Kelly has said, people throughout the State who are corresponding members of the association receive papers that are prepared, and so on.

MR. MILLER: Do you believe the Humanist Society should go into the schools and teach its philosophies?

REV. MAVOR: At the moment the Education Act provides that representatives of religious denominations may go into schools and operate with children of that denomination. I am not quite sure what you are asking. If there are Humanist children in a school, are you asking whether they should be able to go to teach those children?

MR. MILLER: As I understand the new system, the Humanist Society was to be invited into the school system to put forward its philosophy. Do you believe that the Humanists are a religious body, for a start?

REV. MAVOR: I find that very difficult to answer. First of all, I am not sure what Mr. Miller means by the "new system".

I do not know of any new system under which that was or is being proposed. If families who are members of that society wanted their children to be taught by a representative of the society, that would have to be dealt with in other places. I do not know what the legal position would be on that. Under the present system, if a minister of a denomination wishes to invite someone to come as a resource person to talk to the children he or she is working with in religious education, the Education Act gives them that opportunity. That would be a choice to be made by the denominational representative.

MR. MILLER: Under the Act, would they be recognised? I am trying to find out whether the Humanist Society would be recognised as a religious body. Do you, for instance, recognise that society as a religious body?

REV. NEEDHAM: It would not be recognised as such at the moment. The A.A.R.E. has had no direct contact with the Humanist Society. The question is rather on the outside of our scope of activity.

MR. MILLER: Could it be a member of your organisation, for instance?

REV. NEEDHAM: I would say that if a person who is a Humanist wished to join our society this would be quite possible. There are no creedal barriers. It is a professional association concerned with the teaching of religion in schools. If a Humanist were interested in this area, he would certainly be free to join the association.

THE CHAIRMAN: Aren't the two terms - Christian and Humanist - mutually exclusive?

REV. NEEDHAM: I would say no. I think Archbishop Arnott has answered this question once before, publicly, by saying that the original humanists were in fact Christians. Now we do tend to distinguish between Christian humanists and secular humanists.

MR. HEWITT: The Saint, Thomas More, was described as a humanist.

REV. NEEDHAM: Yes. A humanist is a person concerned with human values and human concerns generally. Generally speaking, the word now seems to suggest that a person is a non-religious person because he is a Humanist, and the Humanist Society would tend to emphasise an agnostic, at least, or atheistic approach to human problems. In my own mind - and I think in that of many members of the association - humanism is an attitude which does not exclude, certainly - and very many times does include quite specifically - the concept of God.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you aware of the Humanist manifesto?

REV. NEEDHAM: In recent years I have had very little contact with Humanists. I have been on a panel in which a Humanist member was speaking with two Christians. That was a few years ago. However, I have not read the Humanist manifesto, no.

MR. MILLER: Was the Humanist a Christian?

REV. NEEDHAM: No, he was not a Christian. The occasion was at one of the training colleges. The student body asked us to appear to talk about religious education in schools.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I may quote from the constitution of the

Humanist Society of Queensland, it says in section 2 of subitem A -

> "to provide a constructive alternative to theological and dogmatic creeds."

REV. MAVOR: I think it is a problem like small "l" and large "L" Liberals. Not all liberals are members of the Liberal Party. Not all humanists are members of the Humanist Society; nor could that society claim to be the total representative of the humanist viewpoint. I would want to call myself a Christian humanist, a small "h" humanist, or whatever. I would want to stress a point we made in our submission, because I think there has been some very unfortunate clouding in the current debate. Terms such as humanistic psychology and humanistic education are being used in a way that has nothing to do with the Humanist manifesto or the Humanist Society. The Humanist Society may take a non-theistic stance and reject belief in God; but to talk about a humanistic education is to talk about an education which emphasises the human dimension and helping people to become human in the fullest sense of the word. It has nothing to do with theism, atheism or anything else. That is a totally different emphasis. There needs to be a recognition of the distinction between a humanistic approach to education, psychology, or whatever and the sorts of things that are claimed by the Humanist Society.

MR. HEWITT: Your submission makes some criticism of our inquiry, its structure and its terms of reference. That is your complete right. We accept that criticism. We, in our turn, are permitted to respond to some of that criticism. You say that the very composition of this committee tends to preclude some of the contribution which could have been derived from a more general inquiry. Recognising that we have received over 4,000 submissions, that all professional groups have waited upon us and that people have been pleased to come and see us from Melbourne and Canberra - academics of great standing - we would be grateful to you if you could tell us what further contribution might have been forthcoming if the inquiry had been different.

REV. MAVOR: If I could respond, first of all I would say that that analysis was written at the early stages. Personally, I would say that the way the inquiry has developed has been very encouraging. It seemed to me that, when the inquiry was being set up, it was set up, as we said in our report, in a mood of confrontation. One of the assumptions that seemed to be made was that the only people who could investigate the education system were people outside the system.

It seems to me that if proposals are to be made that are appropriate to that system then the persons who are operating within it must be listened to very carefully. It would seem to me that the members of the inquiry have taken care to do that, and that is a very positive sign, but it was that assumption that was certainly a popular view that was being expressed in the media and other places when the Committee was established, that you had to have people somehow outside the system which set up a kind of break between the inquiry and the system. I thought that was an unfortunate emphasis.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think that education is something that is the business of parents, teachers and children or do you think everybody ought to have a view?

SISTER KELLY: I think it is everybody's right to have a view on anything that is of public interest in society. I certainly think it is of perhaps primary interest to parents who, after all, are the customers, if I could put it so, of the education system. I think it is of very great importance to educators, but I think what I have seen happening - not so much in recent months, as Dr. Mavor has said, but before that - the feeling was that for some reason or other parents were not receiving or being able to make their voices sufficiently heard or receiving a good hearing, and that the whole structure was being run by a group of educational bureaucrats. In my mind education is the prerogative and the concern of every, certainly adult but also non-adult, member of society in that education is directed towards assisting to form the type of society which we are hoping and expecting to form.

MR. MILLER: Are you concerned, though, that a minority group might take control? How do you get every parent involved?

SISTER KELLY: I think it is important that every parent be offered the opportunity to be involved. I am very concerned that a minority group might take control, and in fact that was part of the motivation behind our submission, because I felt that there was a very real threat of this happening. I think it is important that as many people as possible be listened to, be allowed to express their views, be encouraged and assisted to express their views, because not all of them feel, owing to the general climate of feeling that educationists have all the answers - which I do not believe they do - but the general climate was not conducive towards assisting less articulate members of society to also put their point of view and have that listened to as sympathetically as those in positions of so-called authority in education circles.

THE CHAIRMAN: In your submission you seemed to divide opinion into fundamentalist and progressive. I think you talked about that on more than one occasion. Where would you put your organisation on the scale?

REV. MAVOR: I am not quite sure we used that division quite so sharply.

REV. NEEDHAM: I was wondering where it appeared.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have made a note of it. Could I ask it another way? It seems to me that your organisation represents a fairly radical approach to the question of education generally. Would you share my opinion on that?

REV. NEEDHAM: I actually made a note of things that would be our concern to discuss with you if the opportunity arose, and one of these things was the question of balance. I think the Association for Religious Instruction is very much concerned with seeing the whole view. I do not think it is radical in the sense of being extreme, but it is concerned with education as a community matter in which different aspects of the community are implicated, and it is a kind of partnership. It is not concerned simply to press a particular concern so much as to the fact that we, as an association for religious instruction, spoke primarily about education as a whole as well as the nature of our approach to education and its relation to religious education. We do not consider ourselves a fringe group with an axe to grind so much as a professional group which wishes all aspects of education to be entertained when coming to decisions, and which is concerned with the need for a wide range of decisions at appropriate levels, so that many people make decisions in education at the appropriate level and that this is in fact a partnership of decisions.

REV. MAVOR: The reason I pause when words such as "fundamentalist" and "progressive" are used is indicative of one of the problems of our society, that they become catchwords and brand people and attack them in a negative way. Certainly our association would take an attitude that students would recognise that they, too, in their lives make certain decisions and commitments for themselves, and that education should help to prepare them for those decisions and commitments, and it would recognise that in our society there is no simple single point of view that must be imposed or should be imposed upon all students in the education system.

MR. MILLER: On page 14 you say -

> "Indeed, teachers are entitled to present their point of view when relevant, but with the proviso that acknowledgment be made of the existence of other points of view."

Some parents object to this. They do not believe that all teachers should be able to express their points of view, and I was wondering if you would be happy if a teacher decided to teach your daughter or son that pre-marital sex was quite in order or that the smoking of marihuana was quite O.K.?

REV. MAVOR: It seems to me that when that sort of complaint comes we want teachers to promote one point of view but not the other, and the question is raised only when that point of view is in opposition to what parents might want. Our concern would be that in every case the students are going to be in plenty of contact with pressures towards pre-marital sex and possibly the smoking of marihuana, and that the education system needs to help students to recognise that they have to make decisions about how they will chart their course through those pressures. What we are talking about here is whether the teacher is promoting a positive viewpoint - that, too, also needs to be seen as, "O.K., this is a decision I have taken. I have come to that position by a personal choice", and to help the students to see that they, too, have to make some personal choices so when they do bump up against those pressures and temptations they have some sense of where they stand. So I think that by the teacher making clear that what is being put here is an attitude, a commitment that has been undertaken, then the students themselves can

recognise that they, too, have to make some decisions about this.

MR. MILLER: Do you believe teachers can have a very big influence on the student?

REV. MAVOR: Undoubtedly, and that is why we think teachers have to make clear when they are putting a particular viewpoint that they do say, "This is my viewpoint; other people think differently."

MR. MILLER: I was involved in having a teacher removed from a high school here in Brisbane because so many parents complained to me that this girl - not a woman, a girl - an unmarried mother was teaching the children that it was not necessary to be married to have a child - in fact, she did not believe in marriage and she indicated that she intended to have children outside marriage. Now, there was so much pressure brought to bear that I had to take it to the Education Department. What you are saying here is that she has the right to do that.

REV. MAVOR: No, what we are saying is that every married teacher has the right to talk about marriage.

MR. MILLER: How about the unmarried teacher?

REV. MAVOR: What we are saying is that if the unmarried teacher were talking about that then she has to make it very clear that that is a personal viewpoint, and not to talk about it as if it is some kind of new absolute truth.

MR. MILLER: You cannot see any danger in what you have said there?

REV. MAVOR: What we see is a safeguard that covers the situation you are raising, and the situations that are directly contrary to that. It is recognised that education must seek to help students make decisions about their own lives. There is a limit that the society might seek to put upon certain attitudes, just as society puts a limit on certain parental behaviour as inappropriate and destructive of the rights of many young people. The society may choose to put certain limits upon the range within which teachers may operate. There are many behaviours that I would certainly not want teachers to talk about or promote, but we are suggesting that in promoting any point of view that is in fact a point of view the student is helped if that is shown to be a point of view that determines - certainly coming back into the religious area, we would see it as very important for religious education to help students to recognise that if they are going to be involved in religious observances and so on that there is a faith commitment that underlies that; that there are decisions and commitments that are of a personal kind.

We think that the education system should help to sharpen that and help students to see that they need to make decisions in that area. I have no problem about the society putting limits upon the range of viewpoints that are dealt with. We are not suggesting that everything has to be laid out. That would be quite inappropriate.

MR. MILLER: That is the way it reads, isn't it?

REV. NEEDHAM: May I add a few words? We were concerned in our submission not to deal so much with exceptional situations as to give an attitude to what we thought education was about, and it seems to be fairly obvious to us that if you are going to educate people - and I think one has to make a distinction between an approach at primary level and at secondary level, but I will not press that at the moment; I am thinking particularly of people at the secondary level - if you are going to encourage them to understand the nature of their community and what life is about, you do need to have things fairly open for discussion. Obviously, there must be an authority to say when a teacher who is supported, say, by the State, who is a member of the State Department of Education and, therefore, represented by an authority, has gone too far and say, "We think you are not representing what we believe education is for." We were not concerned with the edge situations, which, naturally, have to be dealt with. We were concerned much more with the nature of education as a whole and what kind of openness is necessary in order to encourage people to develop their own criteria for making judgments, because unless people do that, they are not really educated. Our concern with education is to help them to become educated and to develop criteria by which they can make appropriate judgments in different situations, and they need a certain amount of information in order to make these judgments. So we would combine, I think, the need for knowledge and criteria of judgment in order to consider that we have the basis for a proper education.

MR. MILLER: Have you suffered throughout your lifetime because basic information was not available to you?

REV. NEEDHAM: I have been very fortunate, I think, if I look back at my own education. I do not think this is of any concern to this particular submission, but I would consider that I have had, on the whole, teachers who were willing to discuss things with me, whom I could approach, and who were willing to present material in an objective way that did not take value from it but which, nevertheless, made it something that was part of the community knowledge. I was introduced, I think, in a very reasonable way to community knowledge and values. I have come across teachers who I, as a child, would have objected to if they had gone too far in trying to suborn me in particular directions; but, fortunately, I was free from most of that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask you whether the answer to this is that a set of professional ethics should be drawn up, a breach of which could lead to cancellation of registration or something like that?

REV. NEEDHAM: I think there are advantages and dangers in codes of ethics. I think it is quite good to have a code that is a guide. If it becomes a kind of guide-line by which you appoint or sack people, I think it could lead to certain unfortunate situations. If it is going to be drawn up, I think it should be drawn up by the profession itself so that it is a guide to the members of the profession. If it is drawn up and imposed as a kind of guide-line for the people with the authority

to appoint and to sack, I think it becomes rather totalitarian in its intention.

THE CHAIRMAN: What you are saying is, "Yes, it is a good idea, but the committee should not draw it up."?

REV. NEEDHAM: I was not talking about this committee; I did not think this committee was necessarily concerned with such a responsibility.

MR. HEWITT: I was going to ask a very fundamental question that probably should have been asked at the start. What is the adequacy of religious instruction in Queensland schools at the moment? Does it measure up to your criteria?

REV. MAVOR: I would think it is very difficult to assess overall. Some schools would say they are doing very well; others would say that nothing is happening. We have been trying to upgrade - some of us are involved in a project that is trying to upgrade the offering of religious education in the schools and to provide training so that it can be done more effectively.

MR. HEWITT: Is the movement towards the seminar situation on a less frequent basis instead of the half-hour every week a movement in the right direction?

REV. MAVOR: I would think that often that is unfortunate. I think that is happening often because of the sheer inability of the churches to provide adequate staff for the half hour a week. My personal conviction is that religious education best takes place in a teaching context in a small enough group on a regular basis, and the seminar tends not to allow that. It does provide for some things to happen, and it is better than someone trying to take 100 students on their own and just sort of speaking en masse; but the seminar system does have many disadvantages although it solves some other problems. What is happening at the moment is that in each school decisions are being made as to what can be done with the staff available and to attempt to improve the situation.

SISTER KELLY: I would see it as unfortunate that the seminar system should be regarded by the public or anybody else as part of the "new" system. The seminar system just happens to be the only one that in many school situations is viable at all, given the fewness of religious education personnel for those schools. But in schools that are able to maintain a weekly or fortnightly religious education class, I would see that as much preferable, and to the greater advantage of the students in particular.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think that we will have to leave it at that. Time has beaten us, and we have a big programme. I should be pleased if you would convey our thanks to the members of your association who were responsible for the preparation of the submission, and I thank you also of doing us the honour of appearing before us today.

REV. NEEDHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We are glad to be here and we appreciate your inviting us to come. We are sorry that it could not have been for longer so that we could have thrashed out some of these questions and put them in better perspective, in order to help you in the job you have to do. We are grateful for the time that you made available.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are pleased to welcome now to the Select Committee hearings representatives of the Queensland Counsellors' Association. A submission has been received and studied by members, so it will not be necessary for you to read any of it. It is coded for our purposes Au-51, and I now invite the representatives who are appearing before us to identify themselves and indicate the positions that they hold with the association.

MR. O'BRIEN: First, I should like to introduce myself. I am Marshall O'Brien, president of the Queensland Counsellors' Association, a practising counsellor within a C.A.E. in Queensland; Dr. Sam Beevers, vice-president of the Queensland Counsellors' Association and chairman of the sub-committee that drew up the submission that has been made, a lecturer at the University of Queensland; and Mr. Michael Byrne, a member of the subcommittee and also of the association, and a guidance officer at Queensland State High School.

MR. MILLER: May I ask what is the difference between a counsellor and a guidance officer? You seem to use the two terms.

DR. BEEVERS: The term that I am most familiar with is the term "counsellor", which has generally been used in the States. The term "guidance officer" is used here. Counselling is one of the activities that a guidance officer would carry out, so there has been this almost historical confusion between the two terms "guidance" and "counselling".

MR. MILLER: They are in fact one person?

DR. BEEVERS: Yes; they do the same work.

MR. HEWITT: Is there adequate recourse to guidance officers in high schools?

MR. BYRNE: I would suggest that that is one of the problems that has been pointed out. We are facing generally in the high schools a ratio of about 3,000 students to one guidance officer, and in the primary schools it is much worse.

In terms of the number of students who want to, and need to, see a guidance officer and parents who want to consult with guidance officers, and teachers who want to consult with guidance officers, there are not enough in the schools generally.

MR. HEWITT: Your answer suggests to me that there are not enough guidance officers in schools. That may be valid. Even acknowledging that, is there as much resort to guidance officers as there should be by students?

MR. BYRNE: That is a very good point. Many times, perhaps, students are not aware of the services that can be offered to them. There are many concerns of theirs about decision-making problems and so on that could be helped if they sought guidance at the appropriate time.

MR. HEWITT: Why aren't they aware of them?

MR. BYRNE: I think it is largely human nature in many ways with the students, certainly when they don't begin to make the decision-making process, or realise that there is a need for help until the conflict or decision point is reached. It is a sort of general laziness in terms of coming to grips with the situation. Suddenly there are big demands for guidance officers at this time of the year when students are forced to make crucial decisions. No matter how you try to suggest that they should be looking at it in a developmental way, in terms of planning for the decisions coming up, it is very difficult to get them to be more aware of the need. It is a public relations job, I think.

MR. HEWITT: Could it be that guidance officers have to project themselves a little more?

MR. BYRNE: Yes.

MR. HEWITT: It is not sufficient to sit in the room and wait for the students to come; maybe it is necessary to get out to the work place and indicate what services are available.

MR. BYRNE: This does happen. Generally one of the first tasks the guidance officer will be doing very early in the year is some sort of class talk to groups of students informing them of the services available and some of the reasons that they may want to visit the guidance officers for, such as for information on some of the choices, options and decision points coming up. Perhaps that is obviously not working as effectively as it could, but they do try to do it.

MR. HEWITT: What training does a guidance officer have to make him competent to give this advice?

DR. BEAVERS: I have the responsibility at the University of Queensland for the diploma in the School Counselling course. Guidance officers like Mr. Byrne are seconded to the guidance branch for a year of in-service training. The major part of that is undertaken at the University of Queensland within the diploma school counselling. We try to cover the basic parts of the counselling process, the counselling theory, the vocational development theory, the career decision-making process, the providing of information services and a number of other things in our courses also. The primary school counsellor or guidance officer works more in consultation with parents and teachers rather than in a direct one-to-one relationship with pupils. At the guidance branch they carry on a major part of their training more related to the nitty-gritty every-day aspect, and use of occupational resources. I can say that so far as the public relations

aspect is concerned, that is, getting the counsellors out into the schools, that this is one thing I emphasise in training - the importance of projecting the image of somebody who is interested in helping the students in this choice process. I do not know whether I have answered your question or not.

MR. MILLER: Are guidance officers concerned only with career problems, or do they also handle personal problems?

DR. BEAVERS: They do handle personal problems, but more of a developmental nature, however; not the intense problem requiring psychotherapy, or some deep-seated personality problem.

MR. O'BRIEN: Could I add to that, that a career decision is a personal problem in that it cannot be made outside the person making it, and his particular constellation factors - what support he has from the family, his ability in school, etc.

MR. HEWITT: I think Mr. Miller was referring to the fact that if a child had very heavy personal problems does he refer them to a guidance officer, the senior mistress, or the headmaster?

MR. BYRNE: I think to a variety of people; often times they are referred to the guidance officer. He will make an initial identification of perhaps what the deep-seated concern or problem is, and he will find the appropriate referral point for that particular student's problem.

MR. MILLER: Are guidance officers trained to make those decisions?

MR. BYRNE: One of the requirements for getting into the guidance training is to have a certain amount of background in psychology, so in terms of the initial diagnosis of who would be the best agency to send the student to, I think they are very adequately trained for that assessment.

MR. MILLER: How many guidance officers are required in Queensland? How many are we short of? You said that we have approximately one to every 3,000 students at the moment.

MR. BYRNE: Yes, in high school, and in primary school it is about one to 10,000. It is difficult to say what an ideal situation is relative to where you are going to get a sort of cost benefit in terms of the number of the guidance officers and the cost involved, and the benefits obtained. I think a good target to aim at in general terms would be about one to 400 or 500 students. Not only would that mean perhaps more than one guidance officer in most large high schools, but also, there would be a chance for greater service because of a greater mixture of areas of expertise. One could help the other in many ways and they would have much more chance to help individual students when needed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Should we have social workers in our schools or will we have demarcation problems?

DR. BEAVERS: There are some demarcation problems between the fields of counsellors and social workers. I have always considered the social worker in relation to the guidance officer as the person who might intervene more with the family situation and work on more of an intensive case-work basis. As I said a moment ago, a guidance officer or a school counsellor - you can use either term - is more concerned with the transitional problem - problems that are more of a developmental nature. When some intervention is needed at home, with the family unit, where the child's behaviour or performance at school is affected

by the family unit, that would be more in the social workers' book.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think the social worker should be down the road in the community health centre rather than in the school?

MR. O'BRIEN: Whatever the demarcation problems may be industrially, I feel that this association is concerned that there are caring people available to help whoever has problems in any sector of society, particularly the young, and therefore in schools in particular. I therefore do not think that there is any problem at all in increasing the resource of caring people for us as an association. Whether they should be located in the school or down the road in the community centre is very difficult to decide, except that you do have the problem of what I refer to as visibility.

A moment ago we talked about accessibility to a guidance officer by schoolchildren. It is to be noted that it is only in the recent year - I would say in the last year - that in fact the major high schools in Brisbane alone have had one guidance officer available per school. Most have only had, over the years, a visiting guidance officer.

MR. O'BRIEN: People who have a problem, whether it be purely a vocational decision-making type or other, wish to sort it out very often in privacy and that takes an enormous amount of time; even half an hour with a simple problem and many hours with a large problem. So a single person gets consumed very quickly in a school. So the increase of resources would be greeted, I am sure. I am not sure whether it will make much difference whether it is down the road or actually in the school, except I think if they are available in the school it is easier for students to identify with them and feel that it is O.K. to approach them.

MR. MILLER: Do counsellors themselves have work experience and, if not, how can they really guide young people?

MR. O'BRIEN: Obviously, all counsellors are workers in that they are working and earning a salary.

MR. MILLER: Yes, but I am talking about work experience.

MR. O'BRIEN: I would define being a teacher, as all these guidance officers would have been, as working, working as counsellors. Some have had a wide working experience. I know guidance officers, although I am not a guidance officer myself, have come from other professions such as pharmacy, and social work where they have worked for many years. Others have come from the trades into being guidance officers. Therefore they have a wider spread of work experience. But, at face, we would maintain that that is not entirely relevant because the conditions within any employment category change rapidly and are changing increasingly rapidly. Therefore the relevance of my experience which I had some 10 years ago beinga truck driver or working on an assembly line is relevant today, except it may increase my empathy who do do that sort of work.

MR. MILLER: What training do you have to fit you for the role that you play?

MR. O'BRIEN: The training and the role is concerned with being able to help the person that you are dealing with locate where he wants to work and what type of work he should choose. First of all his choice of work and then finding if it is available. Once he finds it is available, obtaining and holding that job. They are all separate processes. Finding what he wants, finding if it is available, actually obtaining it through an interview and then holding the job.

MR. MILLER: Do you believe students should have experience of work experience before making a decision?

MR. O'BRIEN: I think it is extremely helpful. I think it is noticeable, in the 30 years of my life, that children have less access as I have seen it in growing up in Australia today to seeing work experience. As a child I worked in many situations just as part of growing up. Today's suburbanised children have very few models before them. Surveys have shown that very many children do not even know what their fathers do, have not witnessed their fathers working, are very unfamiliar with most work roles except the ordinary ones or the extraordinary ones of the local butcher, chemist, doctor and the outlet girls

at the supermarket. They are deprived of models.

MR. HEWITT: I am interested in the community involvement with the schools. Recently, in Mr. O'Connor's school, for example, local business people and industry people were invited to the school to inspect its facilities. The rapport I would like to see established is that people in the mid-environment of the school draw their work-force from it. It would seem to me that there is a role for guidance officers to play there in establishing that rapport. I wonder whether it would be appropriate to ask Mr. O'Connor the number of invitations sent out and the response that he received because I think it is very germane to the discussion.

MR. O'CONNOR: We issued 74 invitations and we had eight acceptances, which was much better than some other schools. One issued 100 and got 1.

MR. BYRNE: We have an experience at Cleveland where we issued almost 200 to 300, going around individually in the community, because Cleveland is much more of a separate community than some of the Brisbane schools and we got 11 responses. We were pleased with the day but disappointed with the response, but realise some of the problems employers faced.

MR.HEWITT: It is a thrust that must be maintained.

MR.BYRNE: Yes. The school was very pleased that that initial step was taken and we built up some contacts. Before, we have always had very good liaison with business houses in the community. For example, we have a continuing programme where we invite various speakers in from various occupations to talk to groups of students and there is good support.

THE CHAIRMAN: You might have to enlist the services of the service clubs to assist you.

MR. BYRNE: That is one of the sources of getting speakers, such as Rotary.

THE CHAIRMAN: In your submission you make reference to the problem of unemployment. People have told us that we have to educate people to be unemployed now. They are overreacting to the statistics and are saying that we will have 30 per cent unemployment so we will have to teach children to do things when they are unemployed. Do you think they are overreacting, as guidance officers and people preparing children for employment situations and vocations? Do you think maybe the system is overreacting to this problem of unemployment at the moment?

DR. BEAVERS: I can never see that we would want to educate or counsel children for permanent unemployment. I think what we have to do in the counselling and guidance area is try to help them to learn to cope with periods when they might be unemployed and to give them maximum skills in terms of job seeking, range of possible options, so that they can look at a number of areas of life where they can gain satisfaction, where they might not be able to get the ideal job, if there is such a thing, but could look at others as a maximum number of employment opportunities and also develop their coping skills for the periods when they would be unemployed, to realise that this is situational and does not say anything about them as a human being, as a person, but to give them still the skills to go out and try to make every opportunity they can for employment.

MR. BYRNE: I would like to add that my experience for 12 months with the Educational Programme for Unemployed Youth in the TAFE programme, with which I was involved, indicated very clearly that unemployment is an exceptionally demoralising experience for all persons. Despite whatever labels people might put on the unemployed, they find it exceptionally demoralising and they need enormous support to retain their self-concept and to keep their job-seeking skills well honed to give them at least a chance to obtain a job and retain their self-respect.

MR. MILLER: Do you think it is realistic to talk to primary schoolchildren about careers?

DR. BEAVERS: Yes. A lot of the research that has been done particularly by Professor Donald Super, formerly of Columbia University and now at the National Institute for Career Education Counselling at Cambridge, England, shows that vocational development does start at an early age, even at the fantasy level. What we try to do - we do not try to get the child to the decision point at Grade 4 or 5, but we are trying to acquaint him with a range of jobs in the work-force, the fact different workers make a contribution to the community, to the well-being, and how jobs begin to interrelate together , and progressively narrow our talk about the world to make it more personalised as he approaches that decision point.

MR. MILLER: Do they all want to be policemen or firemen?

DR. BEAVERS: Well, we have a lot of fantasies coming from kids, who want the very popular occupations such as policeman, fireman, and aeroplane pilot is another big one, that seems to appeal to most 10 or 12-year-olds.

MR. MILLER: You emphasise the difficulties facing young people in selecting future careers. Do you believe some form of manpower planning would help?

MR.O'BRIEN: Yes, but it is clear from involvement with the whole process of manpower planning and the general assumption of that responsibility by the Commonwealth Government that it is in fact a very difficult process to do. It does not give certainty. One of the realities that we, as counsellors, must inject into dealing with young people is that the world is changing rapidly, that currently statistics tell us that people change their careers four times over their lifespan - that is in Australia; a national figure - so that we are not preparing them for slotting into one single job category; we are preparing them for a lifetime of career choices and that process of learning how to make a choice and being confident about making that choice is a part that is very much our responsibility and should take place in the formative years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I thank you very much for appearing before us today and for taking the trouble to prepare your submission. I also thank you for responding to our questions.

I recognise the presence in the Chamber of Professor Roger Scott and his wife Ann. He has been doing some research on the submissions that we have received so far.

The Committee adjourned at 11 a.m.

The Committee resumed at 11.30 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are pleased to welcome before the Committee representatives of the Queensland State Special Schools Principals' Association, whose submission has been received and studied by members of the Committee. It will not be necessary for it to be read now. It is coded for our purposes AU-165. I would now ask representatives who are appearing before us to identify themselves and the positions they hold in the association.

MR. VIDLER: My name is Leon A. Vidler, and I am president of the Queensland State Special Schools Principals' Association and presently principal of the Queensland Schools for the Deaf. On my left is Mr. Lescha J. Coory, who is an executive member of the Queensland State Special Schools Principals' Association and principal of the Inala Opportunity School. On my right is Mr. Richard Bruce Lane, who is secretary of the association and principal of the Redlands District Opportunity School.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. We will commence the questioning.

MR. MILLER: Do you regarded gifted children as a special education problem and, if so, what is done for them in Queensland?

MR. VIDLER: Within the ambit of this submission prepared by the principals' association this aspect was not referred to specifically. Personally, I feel that gifted children could be considered to be special children and certainly special education provision should be made for them. The extent of this present education provision at the moment is outside the ambit of my expertise and knowledge.

THE CHAIRMAN: You talk about a"national at risk register". Might I ask you something about it? It is the first time I have heard it suggested that it should be on a national basis. Registers are maintained in schools now in certain circumstances. Do you think there should be some safeguards in relation to that? After all, a child might be at risk at a certain stage in life but he might go on to be a parliamentarian.

MR. VIDLER: I will commence the discussion, and perhaps my colleagues might like to make additional points. The concept of an at-risk register has been in our minds and in the minds of special educators for many years, particularly in areas of physical handicap such as hearing impairment and deafness, maternal rubella or German measles causing deafness. We have maternal rubella/German measles outbreaks every five, six or seven years, and many children are born deaf as a result of German measles. For example, in 1964 in Queensland over 82 children were born deaf and were admitted through our pre-school centre and the Queensland School for the Deaf. We have no statistical information as to the extent of that maternal rubella outbreak and because of this it was difficult to provide planning, services, equipment and teaching staff for these children when identified. In the area of visual handicap - you might think it is easy to identify. In terms of total visual loss or of grossly disturbed vision it is not very difficult to determine, but in areas where there is partial loss of sight adversely affecting educational process there should be detection, ascertainment and diagnosis, and this information should be available to planning services. Mr. Coory might like to add to this.

MR. COORY: The whole thing in planning is that we need to have some viable base where you can check figures and, in the light of those figures, allocate your provision. In Australia we do not have this. It is not so much to label children - and we would hope it certainly would not label children. We thought in terms of a national register primarily because the information could be made available to individual States. If there was movement between States the central body would have the required information to pass on. Unless you have identification it is very difficult to put in the kind of early intervention procedures that we are now saying should be part of special education provision.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about safeguards? Who would have access to it?

MR. COORY: The kind of safeguards that would be imposed on it would be those that now exist with that type of information that is available to the medical profession and perhaps available now in the schools to guidance officers. There is at present available in schools information that is not passed on to teachers indiscriminately. Certain limits of confidentiality are adhered to. But the point is well taken. Like any other intervention, this has with it an element of some kind of risk. There is cost in it, but we would hope that the benefits would outweigh the cost.

MR. HEWITT: You have a problem now with the population being so mobile. Keeping and transferring records would be tremendously difficult. Wouldn't it be sufficient for a child to be diagnosed and parents to be given that diagnosis, with the onus placed on parents to bring it to the attention of teachers as children progress through their careers?

MR. VIDLER: This is the case at the moment. It is not proving to be effective. In various areas of handicap, or exceptionality, whether it be physical handicap or mild mental handicap, there would be ascertainment diagnosis. There would be the medical aspect through medical practitioners - the specialists. There would be noting by a number of authorities - the Health Department, the Guidance and Special Education Branch of the Education Department and the school authority. However, we do not have the information sufficiently early to be able to provide early intervention - such aspects as pre-school services, parent guidance counselling and early training - or to enable us to provide for these children within the State adequately, because of lack of information. I have personally been in countries overseas which have at-risk registers. There is a high degree of confidentiality. The parents must give authority for the child to be included in the register. The medical profession comes in on the confidentiality. It appears to work extremely well. We are impressed with the early intervention programmes and the provisions in those centres in the United States, Europe and the United Kingdom which have these registers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 63 of the Select Committee on Specific Learning Difficulties Report recommends this, doesn't it?

MR. COORY: Yes. Could I raise one other point there? What is at issue here is the whole acceptability of people who are handicapped and handicapping conditions in general. If we raise the point that we have to protect children who are handicapped from being known, then that surely highlights the fact that we must improve the public attitude towards the handicapped. In fact, the handicapped are part of society - and very, very worthwhile members of society - and while they have handicaps that limit their functions in certain aspects, that should not be used as a weapon to denigrate either them as human beings or their function as human beings. So it really comes back to the very basic issue of educating public acceptability of children who are handicapped.

THE CHAIRMAN: Still, I think you would have to accept that, if a person had a record of autism as a child, he might want that confidentiality preserved. I would not like my medical history to be a matter of public record and ask for understanding about it.

MR. COORY: No. The point is well taken. They seem to go hand in hand. There seem to be two sides to the coin.

MR. MILLER: You indicate the desirable ratios of teachers in special schools and the various handicapped groups. From your figures, how many more teachers are needed in these special schools?

MR. VIDLER: The matter of staffing within special schools is presently being and has been continually assessed by the Department of Education, Special Education Division. We, as principals of special schools, are aware of the staffing within our own schools and we have access to statistical information concerning staffing. The allocation of teacher-pupil ratios, if you like to call them that, is in terms of our judgments relating to the needs of our special education children in terms of individual differences, their special needs and the needs for special grouping. This staff ratio is one that we consider would be effective, provided there is flexibility within it.

MR. HEWITT: Would some of the unemployed teachers lend

themselves to retraining for special school duties?

MR. VIDLER: This could very well be a consideration. I would consider that in our present economic climate a number of teachers undertaking training have not been guaranteed employment. I wouldn't consider that we would have a shortage of supply of teachers. The methods of selecting suitable teachers for special education schools and centres would involve a constellation of factors. This could very well be one area for consideration for, as you say, retraining or in-service training.

MR. MILLER: Are you talking about 500 or 5,000 more teachers?

MR. VIDLER: I would not have figures on the number of teachers we would require within special education, say, at the beginning of next year. This information could be obtained for you through our Planning and Services Section.

MR. LANE: There are fewer than 1,000 special teachers in Queensland at the moment. From what we gather, the numbers in our submission are reasonably well adhered to at the moment, but they are very tight. The essence of special education is that you have a particular kind of person.

MR. MILLER: When you say "a particular kind of person", what necessary training is required?

MR. LANE: It has been possible for years to get into special education just by volunteering. Once a person volunteers, there are courses available, particularly at the Mt. Gravatt C.A.E., for the Diploma of Special Education. That involves two semesters. General suitability is terribly important in special education. I think all of us have seen people who have come in simply because there was a job available but who have not lasted. You do need to be a person of certain flexibility and understanding.

MR. MILLER: What percentage of the teachers have been properly trained, do you feel?

MR. LANE: I would think at the moment just about all of the teachers in special education have undergone some training or retraining.

MR. MILLER: Through the Mt. Gravatt C.A.E.?

MR. LANE: Yes, either pre-service or in-service.

MR. HEWITT: You mentioned about teachers having to be special persons. That draws my attention to your submission when you talk about a high-stress situation for teachers in special schools. We would be interested to know a little more about those high-stress situations.

MR. LANE: The fact of dealing with children at all provides a certain element of stress, but dealing with children with handicaps - and some of them are multiply handicapped - necessitates teachers living on the edge of their chairs most of the time - for instance, when you are dealing with children who are epileptic or who have gross behavioural problems. These things provide the kind of existence that puts us on our toes all the time. The essence of this facet is that teachers in special education are more inclined to wilt as the term goes on. Heading towards the end of the year, as the third term goes on you find more and more of them having their own private

or personal problems - nervous breakdowns and things of that kind.

MR. VIDLER: There is one aspect that does support this, Mr. Chairman. Those questions from Mr. Miller and Mr. Hewitt are pertinent. In special education we must have teachers with specific training. There is a special course mounted at the Mt. Gravatt C.A.E. There are special ed. stands in other colleges of advanced education. We have at the moment quite a good system in terms of selection of suitable personnel for special ed. in that all teachers undertake the first year of training as a generalised course. At the end of that first year the students are enabled, should they be interested, to visit a number of special ed. centres. This in fact happens. Students indicate their interest in special ed. towards the end of first year. A short list is drawn up through interview techniques and through the knowledge of college lecturers and others of the capabilities and so on of the students. The students visit the centres. Then, at the end of the first year of training, the students are selected for special ed. courses. These are pre-service students. Their second year is general and special. Within the second year they undertake teaching practice within a number of special schools.

Towards the end of the second year they elect their area of specialty such as mildly mentally handicapped, deaf, cerebral palsy, etc., and the third year is a specialised year within the framework of education of the particular area. During those two years in particular there are many ways to determine the suitability of the students within the special school for temperament and other areas which we feel are important - high frustration tolerance, things of this nature. As Mr. Lane has rightly said, almost all teachers in Qld in special education have specialised training in that teachers who came into the field from general education have received a special two-semester in-service course, and the third category are graduate teachers who undertake a special two-semester course. The high-stress situation is most important. It is something that should be borne in mind in terms of the need to have adequate staffing because we do have teachers at risk on the firing line, and there are times when we must rest them.

MR. MILLER: Would it be more desirable to draw these trainee teachers for special schools from teachers who have had a number of years' experience in a normal school situation?

MR. LANE: I do not think it is necessarily more desirable. There are people available within the primary schools who have sufficient experience of life to be able to relate to retarded children, and there are some very good college students that have some experience of life who are coming into the schools and doing an excellent job. I do not think there is a rule "one or the other", I think it is a selection of the most suitable available in all fields.

THE CHAIRMAN: When talking about mainstreaming, you give me the impression of being a little cool about it. Do you think the department might be overdoing it?

MR. COORY: Yes, there is a problem with mainstreaming. The philosophy of mainstreaming, to integrate children as appropriately as possible with their normal peers, sounds on the surface a very acceptable idea. However, it is fraught with some practical problems, and it is also a fact that it refutes the evidence from history. Special schools were in fact established on demand from both parents and teachers because, firstly, parents felt their children were not being properly catered for in the regular schools and, secondly, the teachers just felt that they could not cope with the great variance between the normal child and the handicapped child. So it has many practical problems. The other aspects that come to mind are that you can enact for children to be integrated; you can make regulations for children to be integrated, but it is the child himself who has to do the integrating, and if he is in fact for some reason or other that much handicapped that he cannot make that transition then special school placement might be required. The other aspect that comes to mind is that if both co-exist - the special school as a special entity and mainstreaming where possible - then parents have the choice, and I think, too, that guidance officers who place the children have a choice as to which might be the better provision for the child. But I would make a strong plea for a very flexible arrangement between children moving into special schools and back into the regular course and not cementing them into a special education institution once they are admitted. In other words, I am saying there has to be a continual re-evaluation of the child to see if he can get back into the normal school.

MR. MILLER: Can anything be done for outback children with special education problems?

MR. COORY: Yes. We have at present an isolated children's unit that is looking at various means of supporting children in the Outback. This is done by specially prepared materials, by using tape material that can be played on little cassettes. There are teachers now specially seconded to do this. But the education of any isolated children is a profound problem, and the education of handicapped isolated children is a much more complicated problem. We are, I think, just scratching the surface. There are schemes to bring children down to a central point from time to time, or to take further resources out to centres that might be established for this. But it is a most difficult problem and we are just scratching the surface.

MR. MILLER: How can these children be put on the at risk register?

MR. COORY: If they are in an isolated area it would have to be through the medical profession.

MR. HEWITT: We are amending the Health Act at the moment to make it obligatory for medical practitioners to report cases of ill-treatment of children, so I suppose you could do it by legislative process if you wanted to. Just to support your argument, Dr. McBride of thalidomide fame is a strong advocate of a national register.

MR. COORY: Yes.

MR. MILLER: Are there adequate boarding facilities for these children?

MR. VIDLER: Yes. For the physically handicapped the residential facilities are very well organised and they are very suitable. In addition, the Department of Education, through the Government, has what is known as a private accommodation scheme, and this scheme is working very well in that host or receiving families within a town where special education facilities are available will host a child as a weekly or full-time boarder. There are also social workers. There is a special agreement drawn up and signed by the Minister for Education, the natural parents and the host or receiving parents. However, there are times, particularly in remote areas, where a family is loath to have a child moved to a town or city where private facilities are available and they themselves will move. I have seen this on many occasions, and I think my colleagues will bear me out. Many families have moved to a town or city in order to have their child at home with them to receive special education.

MR. MILLER: Is it more desirable that they go to the private homes you have spoken about or a boarding house situation?

MR. VIDLER: It depends upon a number of factors. There is the interviewing of the parents, their wishes and the child's attitude towards receiving schooling as to whether the child would be better provided for within a good residential school or within the private accommodation scheme. A number of children who are placed under the private accommodation scheme do not take to it very well. For one reason or other they wish to go to the school. It just depends on individual differences.

THE CHAIRMAN: We were talking about a half-way house. What need is there that is not now provided by our various institutions?

MR. COORY: We do have one group of children that present as a prime problem. These are the children who have gross behavioural problems. Some have been through the courts and have been legally declared as delinquents. Others are verging on getting into trouble with courts, and the limitations on the facilities and resources of the school just cannot accommodate those kinds of children. Many of us feel that they are beyond the help of the schools as we now have them, and we would be looking for some alternative placement on a short-term basis, or a longer term basis if necessary, for these children to acquire a different kind of training and treatment to obtain the appropriate behaviours that would allow them once again to function in the school environment. But they can be most disruptive and have a detrimental effect on the school, while if we had the right back-up services they could enter into that for a period and then come back into the schools.

MR. LANE: Between the very open situation of the school setting and Wolston Park and Wilson Youth Hospital, there are very few alternatives. Boys Town is perhaps one, for a particular kind of child; but it is without fences, and often these children, whether compulsively or by choice, are absconders, and I have had experience recently of a couple of children who you just cannot keep in the school in order to be able to teach them. The alternatives are, as I say, either Wilson Youth Hospital or Wolston Park, and these are quite extensive variations.

MR. VIDLER: This is a very definite need, this half-way house, as we call it. It is very, very important.

MR. MILLER: Do you want the Education Department to control it?

MR. COORY: Yes.

MR. VIDLER: Yes.

MR. LANE: Yes, very definitely.

MR. MILLER: Do you see it as a Children's Services role?

MR. LANE: We see it as an educational institution, because certain provision that now exists through the Children's Services Department does not have any educational provision in it, and we very much wanted educational provision because we did not want them to lose the skills that perhaps they might have.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think that Wilson Youth Hospital should have a greater educational component?

MR. VIDLER: We feel that a half-way house for these children, in order to present better models, should have an educational aspect. This should be significant. We do not consider that it should be medically oriented, with the schooling factor either insignificant or non-existent. We feel that with an educational basis we can have ready access to medical practitioners, psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers. Sure, they are important; but we feel that the contact between the children and their teachers and teacher-aides and the educational schooling factor is most important in terms of their development.

MR. MILLER: Can I read into that statement a dissatisfaction with, say, Wilson Youth Hospital?

MR. COORY: Yes.

MR. VIDLER: Yes.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. LANE: Its whole aspect is corrective, whereas what we want is an educational aspect where we can teach them.

MR. VIDLER: We are not being exclusives - that we are the educators and they are the medicos - not at all. We would look to a very close link and liaison, but not as a corrective institution.

THE CHAIRMAN: Time is running out, gentlemen. One quick question from Mr. Hewitt.

MR. HEWITT: One quick one and one loaded one. I should just like to know whether you are involved with the children in institutions such as Basil Stafford and Challinor Centre.

MR. COORY: Those institutions are predominently Sub-Normal Association.

MR. HEWITT: You do not have special teachers there?

MR. LANE: The department actually pays the salary of the teachers, but the administration of those is through voluntary organisations. The voluntary organisation for that one would in fact be the Queensland Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association.

MR. HEWITT: Now, the loaded question. On page 6 you say that there is need for colleges of advanced education to maintain close liaison to avoid "needless and costly duplication of courses". Could you give us an example of duplication of courses?

MR. LANE: Within the prospectuses of most of the colleges of advanced education is some Special Education department, and it would appear to us that if the colleges of advanced education and the universities could get together on this, it could be possible to establish one, or perhaps two, tertiary institutions that will penetrate into the research field in special education rather than have most tertiary institutions touch the surface. There would be a penetration and in-depth research into the field.

MR. COORY: And also to offer master courses and not just the bachelor courses.

MR. VIDLER: I think the point is that colleges of advanced education could be offering ad hoc special education strands and courses to suit local or regional needs without some centralised form of planning, and what we consider would be important is that, instead of having mailing coming through regularly each year from the various colleges of advanced education, there would be a directory of services or combined handbooks indicating to staff which courses are available and where. We feel that this would overcome the duplication of courses and provide for more appropriate, Mr. Hewitt - more appropriate; right? - in-depth courses for selection by various teachers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Time has beaten us, gentlemen. I thank you for the preparation of the submission and for appearing before us. Mr. Vidler, the committee finds that in its information-gathering exercise it has not visited a special school so far. We would like, if you are agreeable, to make a brief visit to the School for the Deaf in the immediate future, if that is convenient to you.

MR. VIDLER: We would be very happy to have such a visit.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We will be in touch with you to arrange a mutually convenient time.

MALCOLM SKILBECK, examined:

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, we are very honoured now to have with us Dr. Malcolm Skilbeck, who has come to us today from Canberra. I thank him very much for the thought that has gone into the preparation of the submission, which for our purposes is coded Au-116, and particularly for the co-operation that he has offered to us. We are very happy that you have travelled to Queensland today to assist us with our inquiries. As you will have been aware, the terms of reference of the Committee are wide. However, the most recent controversy in our State in relation to education was about the Social Education Materials Project, and I am happy that you have touched on that rather thoroughly in your submission. I think we will be talking considerably about that today. We have all had the opportunity to study your submission in detail. Thank you again for responding to our invitation. I hope you will be able to join us for lunch.

DR. SKILBECK: Thank you very much; I should like to do that.

THE CHAIRMAN: We can talk informally over lunch. I now invite members to ask some questions of Dr. Skilbeck. If Dr. Skilbeck has any points that he wishes to make at any time that are not covered in the questions, I ask him to indicate that to me and I will provide him with an opportunity to make them.

BY MR. MILLER: Could I ask what you see as a proper role for a national curriculum organisation?-- Well, first of all, the functions of the Curriculum Development Centre are determined and defined in an Act of Parliament, so that our role derives initially from the statute of 1975. That statute enjoins upon us a number of tasks, which include the promotion, the encouragement, the support of curriculum development and associated or related activities. In that case, curriculum development related activities include research related to curriculum. Now, that is a very general answer to your question. A more particular answer is that we see our role very much in terms of a support agency. The Curriculum Development Centre is a small body. The full-time staff of the centre is 34, and we have a number of people on secondment from State and Catholic education systems around the country. We do not have any aim or intention to become a large all-embracing body. The reason for that is twofold. First, we do not intend to duplicate the work that is being done by existing curriculum and research branches around the country.

Secondly, we hold the view that large organisations, so far as educational research and development are concerned, are not very functional. They run into organisational problems. By the way, that is my personal view, but it is shared by the council and by the Government, in its staffing policy towards the centre. The role of the centre is not easily summarised because we are basically a network kind of organisation. We work primarily through existing agencies. Very little is initiated by ourselves. Almost all of the work that we undertake is in response to some kind or another of defined or stated need. That definition comes normally from existing systems. We are very system orientated. We are very strongly backed and supported by the Australian Education Council which is the body that expresses the wishes and opinions of the State Ministers for Education. We have a very close and very cordial relation with all the State systems through various levels in the hierachy. We have similar relations with the Catholic education authorities throughout the country. I think I can truly say that the C.D.C. is a successful example of a body operating in a Federal manner according to the Government's views about federalism. In fact, I have the authority of the Minister for Education, Senator Carrick, to say that. We have worked very hard to develop that approach since we were established. We had the option of establishing ourselves as an independent body that would define its own problems and tasks, and which would seek to staff itself and carry out those tasks independently of existing agencies, but we rejected that option. I think it has been a successful rejection on the whole. As a final point about functions, we don't concern ourselves with the production of materials. In fact, in some ways that is a minor function, although it is a very conspicuous one. We concern ourselves very much with, for example, the undertaking of various studies and inquiries in relation to curriculum problems, issues and needs, with the collection and dissemination of information and ideas about educational problems, both within Australia and outside. We support a variety of activities that are taking place in existing institutions, through workshops, conferences, seminars, meetings and so on. Taking the work of the centre overall, I would say that the production of curriculum materials is not the most significant part of our work although it is the most obvious.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: In your research do you try to determine community attitudes? Do you have any sampling of community opinion on any matter?-- Our work on that front has been mainly through involving the community in various programmss, projects, studies and so on. The most recent example of that was an inquiry that we are carrying out in the subject of national core curriculum. The working party we have established there includes community representatives. As far as research into community attitudes is concerned we have not carried out any direct research into them. We tend to use and draw upon other research studies, including, for example, work done in this State on community attitudes towards education. We tend to be a more derivative body as far as research is concerned. Our role in research so far has mainly been synthesising, analysing and interpreting existing research rather than sponsoring big research projects of our own.

Is the policy of the C.D.C. in any way constrained by the UNESCO Treaty on Education, which the Federal Government ratified about four or five years ago?-- No. I am a member of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO. I have been for the last year. I think I can say that there has been no constraint on the C.D.C. resulting from either my membership of UNESCO or from the treaty that you referred to. We are involved in one UNESCO activity at present. It is the Asian programme

for Educational Innovation and Development. That is basically a self-help programme by educational organisations mainly in the South East Asian region. We participate in that in a very low-key, low-cost way. The direct answer to your question is that there has been no constraint that I am aware of and, in fact, no influence that I am aware of deriving from any UNESCO resolution or proposition.

BY MR. MILLER: Why do you spend so much on projects in the values area rather than on the basic skills? For example, $1,000,000 on SEMP, $32,000 on sex discrimination and $25,000 on urban studies?-- The answer to that is twofold. I think we have to look at the expenditure over a period of time. With a research and development organisation you cannot calculate proportions of expenditure on an annual basis because most of our projects and programmes extend over two, three, five or eight-year periods. It is better to look at expenditure proportions over a period rather than over any one year. If you make that calculation I think that you will see there is a much wider spread of our resources than appears from those figures. The second point about your question is that SEMP has been our major project to date in terms of scale. That was undertaken specifically at the request of the National Committee on Social Science Teaching. In the very early days of the centre - when the centre was established, it was established with a fair gestation period, but during a fairly heady period of social or political educational development in Australia. I was not here at that time. The centre was faced with the problem of undertaking a number of projects and programmes in order to justify its establishment at all. There was not a long lean period. Those bodies and organisations that came in with bids for funds were the ones that succeeded at that stage. This particular programme was generated by social science teachers throughout Australia. It was carried through the design stage by the National Committee on Social Science Teaching. The centre took it on board in response to a major defined need. That goes back to 1973 when the centre was still an interim body. The period from 1973 to 1974 was a period of considerable - I am not sure of the best words to use here, but decisions were taken quite rapidly of necessity. Since 1975 we have adopted a completely different approach to decision-taking. That approach, in fact, is indicated in this volume. We now do all of our thinking about commitments through three-year forward-planning cycles - triennial cycles. I will leave a copy of this for the Committee's consideration. We decided to move from what was basically a responsive mode, that is to say, people writing in and saying, "Wouldn't it be a good thing if the centre spent so many dollars on such-and-such?" The answer to that question, when you have dollars to spend, is, "Yes, it would be a good thing if you come up with a good proposal." We have moved from that mode to the mode whereby through extensive consultation and discussion we define needs. We now prepare our own programmes and proposals in response to those needs. Looking at the present, and looking ahead, over the next five years our major programme in terms of development will be in language. We have already started that. I hope that that will be a programme at least on the scale of SEMP, and possibly larger. We have also foreshadowed in a submission to Cabinet a programme of work in mathematics. Those are two key, basic areas in the curriculum in which we have already done some work. But over the next five years, I think you will see that the proportion of our development funds and resources devoted to those will be very considerably in excess of the proportion that you would see in any figures we have produced so far.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: What about racism? Are you going into that area at all, or Aboriginal studies?-- Yes, we do have a programme at present in Aboriginal education. I must say that personally I was very reluctant for the centre to become involved in Aboriginal education. It was not because I thought that there was

no need; I am sure that there is a very convincing need. It was because I doubted our capacity to do anything very substantial in response to that. We were put under considerable pressure by a variety of agencies, both State and Commonwealth, to undertake various programmes.

Just to clarify that, are you referring to special programmes for Aborigines or for teaching the rest of us about Aborigines?-- Both. We have programmes at present of both kinds. Again in the period before the centre became a statutory authority a major project in education about Aborigines was funded. That project is now coming to fruition. Since then we have moved increasingly into the area of education for Aborigines. That is the response to the pressure I am referring to, because there is a very great sense of need which we have been presented with and reminded of. Taking the thing overall, Aboriginal education is not a major commitment of the centre. I describe it as a medium-level commitment of the centre.

BY MR. HEWITT: When you are talking about "we", that is, the staffing of the C.D.C., I am interested to know precisely who the "we" are. What is the staffing and the hierarchical structure of the C.D.C.?-- I should qualify that a little and say that "we" refers to not only the staff of the centre but also to the council. The centre as a statutory authority is governed by a council which is widely representative, although in my opinion not widely enough representative. But that is defined by Act of Parliament, the membership of our council. That is the body that takes the basic decisions about what the centre does. The function of the staff is to advise the council and to implement the decisions that are taken by council. I am both the director of the centre and the executive member of the council, so if you like, I am the link between the council and the staff of the centre. I am sure you will all appreciate that where you have statutory authorities with part-time councils, the staff of the organisation can play a very influential role - I would not wish to minimise that - but the technicality of the case is that decisions are taken by the council. Specifically on your question about the staffing of the centre - the figure that I referred to earlier of 34 includes total staff. That is everybody we have on our present establishment or, to be more technical, that is our ceiling. That includes clerical, technical, administrative, as well as professional staff. The staff of the centre have been recruited in a number of ways. We normally advertise nationally and in some cases internationally for staff. For example, my position was advertised internationally, the deputy director's position was advertised internationally and for other senior positions in the centre we normally advertise nationally, and we recruit according to job specifications and the kind of field we attract. We have a mixture of people at the present time with different backgrounds. Most of them have got quite substantial backgrounds in the practice of education, usually at school level, but they also add to that in many cases experience in the bureaucracy or in higher education institutions.

You say that the thrust of the centre over the next five years will be on languages?-- Yes.

How will you define that? You will have specific languages that you will concentrate on or will you teach new techniques of language?-- I should say language rather than languages. Our major project, which is now in the active planning stage, is called the language development project and that is concerned basically with the language of English in Australia.

It is about time it was rethought?-- Well, I suppose there are different views about our strengths and weaknesses in teaching language. We have done a fairly substantial amount of analysis of research findings on this subject. We have not undertaken any research of our own. We have analysed and synthesised the research findings in Australia over the past 20 years. My conclusion, which is indicated in the paper that is attached to our submission, in the appendix, is that there has not been any significant decline in language performance, but there are certain significant gaps which we want to do something about. My own view, which is well supported by opinions of other people and by research, is that oral language performance is very weak in Australia, and we need to do something about that. We also need to do something about reading, which seems to undergo some kind of decline or some kind of wobble at any rate in the lower years of secondary schooling. That is not true only of Australia; it is true of many countries mainly, I think, because reading ceases to be taught in secondary schools. So our language project is going to concern itself with the whole

range, the whole gamut , of language schools - writing and reading.

With the emphasis being on the mother tongue?-- The emphasis will be on the mother tongue.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should restrict ourselves firstly to a general discussion about the C.D.C. and its operation and then we can proceed to SEMP.

BY MR. MILLER: Would it be a serious loss to education if C.D.C. were to close down and those responsibilities revert to State curriculum branches?-- Yes, I think so, although obviously I have a special interest in answering that question. It would not be a serious loss, however, if the function and role of the Federal Government in education were analysed and redefined. In fact, I think there would be a considerable advantage in that being undertaken. The reason I say that is that the Federal intervention in education has become quite conspicuous in recent years and this has been reflected and expressed in the setting up of a number of authorities, institutions and bodies. I think they all do useful work, but also their work in some ways cuts across that which is being carried out by other bodies, especially in the States. My own view is that when you set up a number of institutions quite rapidly in response to what you feel is a need, after they have been running for a few years you should reveiw them quite critically to see whether they are doing the job they were set up to do and see whether you have the structures right. That is a view which I have put to our Minister for Education. It is a view which is held very strongly, I know, by State Departments of Education.

On page 3 you recommend that schools develop their own curricula ?-- Yes, we do. But then let me make a distinction here between the tasks that face schools that schools can reasonably accomplish and the tasks which are of a different order. I will give an example of what I regard as an appropriate function for a national curriculum agency, whatever shape it takes and I have already indicated to you that I think there is room for redefining functions and rules. I do not stick to the present arrangements at all. Amongst the functions would be the definition of some kind of common learnings which all people, as Australians, should be exposed to. I think that is a reasonable undertaking for a national body; but it would not be a reasonable undertaking for a national body to do that independently of all the other bodies which have an interest. So that the role of a national body would be basically a stimulating and co-ordinating role; that is to say , a whole lot of bodies around the country are concerned with that and you can bring them together, work with them, and try to get them to work on defining that problem. That is one example. The second example is that in the field of resources for learning, we are faced with, as in other areas of materials production, enormous problems of a financial kind. It is doubtful, in my opinion, whether Australia can maintain an independent educational development effort any more than it can maintain an independent manufacturing effort, for example, in the field of motor cars or aircraft or anything else like that. Many of the things that are being done at present by State Departments of Education and by private commercial publishers are a very good example of the waste of scarce resources. I would quote SEMP as an example of the attempt to get round that problem. There are certain kinds of materials that can be produced and should be produced on a national or even an international scale. The task of the school, then, is not to try to reproduce materials of that kind but to select from them and relate them to the particular aims and purposes that the school defines for its own community and

to choose those which seem appropriate both to the teaching staff and to the students. That is what we mean by schools developing their curricula. We do not mean that schools should simply get together and collect the resources for learning. That would be quite impossible. As I say, even a national agency will find it increasingly difficult in future to be able to match - competitively match - those materials which are produced internationally which reflect economies of scale and the whole process of organising large scale production. That kind of thing affects educational materials very much and we are faced with a very big problem in Australia of producing materials of sufficient quality at a low enough price for schools to be actually able to purchase them. That is the second reason I think you could say there is a case to be made for co-ordinating some production efforts at the national level; not all, but certainly some of them. Then there is a third function I suggest for a national agency which is very important and that is simply bringing about greater communication and co-operation amongst the States themselves, because there are many problems that the States face which are faced by other States. One of the benefits, I think, of the Commonwealth effort over the past few years - a kind of hidden benefit, if you like - is just bringing about facilities for exchange and communication; even having the facility to call meetings, to pay fares for people to attend those meetings, to pay allowances and so on, which the States find it extremely difficult to do. That has been put to us as one of the advantages of an organisation such as ours. I have nominated three functions which I think would be lost if you simply dissolved the Federal apparatus. I could nominate others but perhaps those three would be enough for our discussion.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Could we talk about the development of curricula on page 1; No. 2 of your recommendations? You say that schools should be given the freedom to develop their own curricula within broad guide-lines. We have widely visited country areas. In the north-west of Queensland we were told that that sort of statement is not practicable and that teachers today are busy people and that they do not really want to do that, they do not feel competent to do it, and that if they are given the opportunity to do it, what they will do will be to reach up to a shelf and pull down a prepared text and use it.

Today we are moving to the declaration of core materials anyway. We have had a review of our secondary assessment programme. Are you talking about curriculum development or method?-- That may be just a point of language. We are thinking that there is a fairly important shift that has taken place in education, not only in Australia but also in a number of other countries in recent years, whereby the whole range of decisions that we previously centralised in one authority or another have been somewhat dispersed throughout the wider education community. One example is the role of parents. There is no question that there has been a significant shift in that over the past 10 years, whereby parents are more involved actively in certain kinds of educational decisions than they were. We think that is a good thing, because we are on the whole committed to the view that parent participation and involvement in education is a good thing, in spite of the enormous difficulties that arise and the problems that sometimes occur. But we would rather face those problems than have a situation in which we did not have to face them. The same point applies to teachers as well. Basically there are two models of teaching. One of them sees the teacher as a functionary in a bureaucratic system, carrying out instructions and orders; the other recognises that the teacher is a professional person who has a competency to take decisions and a responsibility to take decisions. The first model is the one that has characterised Australian education during the first 100 years of its development - it was the public system. The second, we think, will probably characterise Australia's education during its second 100 years. We think that that shift is not going to take place in the course of a single generation of teachers. It is a long-term shift, and what we are doing is supporting and encouraging it. I fully appreciate the remark you have just made. I have met many teachers who have said exactly the same thing - not only in Queensland but in other parts of Australia as well. I accept that; I think that for the present it is quite true. What we are indicating in that submission is the direction in which we think education will and should follow over quite a lengthy period - decades, not single years.

Don't you think it will lead to a hotch-potch of educational outcomes all over the place - different outcomes everywhere - depending on which school you are at? Bear in mind that Australians travel around a lot and take their children with them and that this will create some enormous problems in time?-- Yes, it is a risk. That is why the emphasis of our work is now very much on what is involved in the support of school-level or school-based curriculum development. We see the core curriculum development programme,to which I referred earlier, as one of the necessary conditions for successful school-based and school-level curriculum development. In other words, you need structures, guide-lines and resources, and you also need the notion of schools' being able to tailor and shape programmes according to their assessment of individual children's needs and community needs, which vary. I quite agree there is a risk. We are very concerned about the risk and we are devoting quite a lot of our effort and energy to examining problems associated with that kind of change and seeing how much we can get round them.

How much is the core - 10, 20, 30, 50 per cent or more?-- I do not know that I can answer that. Just on a procedural point - we have established a committee, a working party, which is examining this question at the moment. Within a couple of months it will come up with a report. If I give my notions about what the core is and should be and if they do not coincide with the working party's report, I will be

all I want to say is that we have taken this problem on board and we will be coming up with a programme which, I hope, will lead to a national debate and discussion of core curriculum next year. I do not think it is as simple as saying it is 10, 20, 30 or 50 per cent. We will have to define core in such a way that there is still a great deal of scope and flexibility. That is the task. It is easy to define core in such a way that you say everybody will do so much maths, so much history, so much English and so on. It is a much more challenging task to ask how you run the two things together - the notion of some body of common knowledge, common understanding, common skills and the notion of adapting programmes to individual needs and requirements. It is reconciling those two things that is the heart of the problem in defining the core curriculum. As to mobility - it is true that Australians do move around a great deal, but I do not think it necessarily follows from that that you have to have the same programmes everywhere. I would simply say that the movement raises a certain kind of problem. It is not answered necessarily by having a common programme in every school in the country.

To a degree it is?-- To a degree.

If you have a high school student and you are being transferred as a member of the Education Department - there are whole courses not offered because of school-based decision-making. It is very real, isn't it?--I can quote some personal experience. I have moved my family around the world and my children have experienced a number of education systems in different countries. I certainly acknowledge the difficulty of the reality and have experienced it. However, there are ways around it.

There is a lot of community concern about this. Parents are saying to us, "Let us get back to set textbooks and set courses." If the submissions to us are in any way indicative of community opinion - I suggest they could be - there is a lot of community concern about it. However, we will move into another area?-- All right.

BY MR. MILLER: On page 7, under "Personal Development" you refer to "autonomous self-motivated students"?-- Yes.

Would you explain what you mean by that?-- I know that the word "autonomy" has caused a certain amount of difficulty, comment and controversy. I will comment on that in a moment. "Self-motivation" simply refers to a situation in which we think it is important that students should become committed in their own lives and in their own thinking to learning and study. That is to say it should not be an outcome of secondary education; that students are still undertaking learning tasks out of a sense of force or pressure. We know that many students study only if they are forced to or obliged to, but we think it is still an appropriate aim to get as many students as possible committed to learning and study as ends in themselves. That is the basic educational goal, that education should ultimately become something that people want and feel the need for rather than take to because of a sense of pressure or force. But that is a very idealistic goal. Nevertheless we think it is appropriate for schools to try to do that, and that is what we mean by "self-motivated". "Autonomy" is a rather more complex and difficult concept. What we are thinking of is that by the time students leave secondary school - that is, by the time they are 17 or 18 - they are legally and in other ways on the verge of adulthood. They have to exercise a whole series of responsibilities and

carry out a number of duties. They have a number of opportunities. We think that by that stage they should be capable of carrying out those responsibilities and duties with a proper sense of who they are as individuals and of their place in the social system. By that we do not mean or intend the notion that they are completely independent of any kind of influence. That would be absurd. Let us take the field of morals, for example, which is where the word "autonomy" has caused a lot of difficulty. I would say that by that age and stage our community should be in a position to make their own moral judgments and they should be making them out of a sense of awareness, understanding, commitment, appreciation of the consequences, the effects of their behaviour, their relationsiips with other people and so on. That is what we mean by "autonomy" in that field. In the intellectual field, by that stage people should be capable of forming, expressing and communicating ideas, of organising information for themselves and of knowing where to get information and ideas if they need them. You might say that that collection of words - "autonomous self-motivated" - refers to self-reliance, to use an old-fashioned term. People should be more self-reliant and show more capacity to act in the sense of independence and responsibility. We do not mean - this is what some people understand us to mean - that they should somehow be acting as isolated individuals free of any kind of community pressure or influence. In fact, I would suggest that the whole thrust of our SEMP programme is to get people more aware of their membership of communities and societies and of seeing their own independence and their own action in the context and setting of social life and community life.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should move into a discussion of some of the SEMP material.

BY MR. HEWITT: What proportion of the total SEMP course is now available?-- I have some figures on that, which I would like to leave with you, if I may. I have the most recent figures, which I will give you. I will answer your question more generally by saying that by December this year practically all of SEMP will be available. We have quite a bit in the publishing pipeline at the moment, and over the next three months it will almost all come out.

Obviously, this begs the question of the reaction to the overall SEMP material. Has it met with any hostility or opposition in any other State? To what extent is it being used in schools throughout Australia?-- First of all, as far as we can ascertain, the hostility has been very slight indeed. We are not aware of any hostility at all in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria. Recently there was some hostility expressed to parts of SEMP in Tasmania, but that has lessened. There seems to be no hostility, or none being expressed. We are not aware of any significant hostility in New South Wales. There is none that we are aware of in the Northern Territory or the A.C.T. So generally speaking, although there are some exceptions to this - for example, a brochure was produced recently in New South Wales by the Festival of Light, which you are probably aware of, that contains criticism of SEMP - the general position seems to be that SEMP has been well received. We have ascertained that general body of opinion based on very intensive as well as extensive surveys throughout the country. We have quite a dissemination programme for SEMP and we are very well aware of the market, if you like. There are two or three aspects of SEMP which have not been well received, however, which I could quote if you would like me to.

Yes, please?-- I would like to make a distinction between the films which were associated with SEMP and SEMP itself. The films were produced by Film Australia and not by C.D.C.

BY MR. MILLER: You have accepted them, though, haven't you?-- We have not accepted them. "Acceptance" is a rather - I will not go into the whole history of those films unless you want me to. It would take quite some time.

They are part of the kit, aren't they?-- They are referred to in our materials as auxiliary materials that may be used and can be used. We have tried to provide some material in relation to that; that is true. However, we do not take responsibility for the SEMP films. The SEMP films are the responsibility of Film Australia and not of C.D.C. I personally have reservations about some of those films. The council of C.D.C. has reservations, and expressed them at the time.

Did you? I have never read about it?-- No, because I suppose it is a matter of - if you are presented with a set of 10 films at the stage when they are all finished and the films contain two or three things which you are not very happy about, you can express your dissatisfaction, if you like, by refusing to endorse them or have your name put on them. That is the case. We have not endorsed them. Our name does not appear on them. There is no statement anywhere that C.D.C. as an authority endorses those films.

BY MR. HEWITT: C.D.C. would have commissioned the making of them?-- No, C.D.C. did not commission the making of the films.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: You must be a bit embarrassed about the films?-- We were extremely embarrassed about the way in which the films were produced. We are extremely concerned about the capacity of film makers to produce films without what we would regard as due processes of consultation and discussion at the critical stage, which is before the films reach their final form.

Is there any other area apart from the films?-- Just before I leave the films, I would say that, although we are embarrassed about particular incidents in four of the films, we are not embarrassed about the films as a whole. Taken as a whole, I think they are very good. There are four films which we believe should have been changed and could have been changed if we had been involved at the appropriate stage. For the record, our relations with Film Australia suffered a very severe decline after that episode. We have not commissioned anything since then. In future, any commissioning will involve very stringent control over things of that type. Nevertheless, I feel that the films taken as a whole are a useful addition to the whole programme. There are two or three other things in the materials to which exception can be taken and which have caused offence in certain places. I am aware of that. I make the general point, however, that we offer the materials as a comprehensive set from which selections ought to be made by appropriate authorities and bodies. In the case of Queensland, the Government decided that it was the appropriate body to select from the SEMP collection items which ought not to be featured in Queensland schools. That would be entirely consistent with our philosophy and our approach, which as I stated quite clearly is that selections ought to be made by appropriate bodies.

Do you mind my asking about the other areas? You have isolated the films. You are asking us to make recommendations to the Government. If there are any other areas you are not completely happy about, would you be prepared to say what they are?-- I would find it easier to answer the question by saying I am aware that there has been a review of the SEMP materials carried out by the officers of the Department of Education in Queensland. That review, I think, is an excellent analysis of the materials from the standpoint of Queensland education. I would be completely happy to go along with the recommendations of that body.

The Committee is in possession of that report?-- Thank you.

BY MR. MILLER: Do you intend to revise any part of SEMP because of it?-- Over the next five or 10 years we will substantially revise SEMP. SEMP is a long-term investment in educational materials. It will be in use in schools for many years to come. After the first print run has been completed, we will be faced with the question of whether we reprint the same materials or reprint some revision. We have not yet taken that decision. We will take it in the light of the evidence that we get from around the country about the usefulness, the quality and the weaknesses of the materials. There are weaknesses which are quite independent of the kinds of problems that I know have arisen in Queensland. We will find, for example, that some of the materials are using language in a rather unsatisfactory way, or that the examples used are irrelevant to certain situations, or that some of the topics are not particularly interesting or important for the schools. We

will look at a whole series of things as well as the criticisms of particular items.

I actually meant "revise" in the light of the criticisms being directed now. Do you intend that?-- No, because we think it is much too early. We would need to wait for two or three years at least to see how the materials are used in schools and to try to assess the overall community response.

We could have a lot of guinea pigs in Australia, couldn't we?-- No, I don't think so, because those materials were more extensively trialled in their preparation than has been the case with any other social education materials in Australia. We think we have done everything that was possible in the trialling stage to produce materials that were satisfactory. Nobody in his right mind is going to claim that a major programme of work will be free of problems. Every text-book publisher, for example, knows that when he produces a text-book there will be certain bugs in it. A text-book might go through a dozen editions over 20 years. Each edition incorporates changes, which reflect an attempt to improve it in the light of its reception.

Do you believe that SEMP is a well-balanced product? To me education should present both sides of an argument?-- Yes.

After reading some of the material, I do not think that it presents two sides of the argument?-- I would put it to you that the design of SEMP was basically derived from the notion that there were certain gaps in the existing materials. I emphasise that SEMP is not a course. We are not saying that SEMP is a complete course. We produced the SEMP materials to fill in certain gaps and deficiencies which were identified by social science teachers and by others around Australia. The actual philosophy behind the design, if you like, was not one of balance in that respect. What we are saying is that there are existing materials which present certain points of view, but there are gaps that have to be filled. If you are looking for balance, you would have to look at the total array of resources available for social education - but I would like to add a further point to that.

I do think that in the presentation of most, if not all, of the topics in SEMP there is an attempt, at least, to present several points of view. I do not say in all cases it has been successful, but that has certainly been attempted.

How about housing? Do you think there are any good landlords in SEMP, because I have had a lot of criticism on this?-- On that particular score?

Yes. People I thought who would be very critical of sex rather than anything else were very critical of the fact that there are no good landlords in SEMP?-- You may well be right that the perception of the role of landlords that many people have in reading the SEMP materials would lead to the view that we have presented a rather biased or unbalanced picture. But I still put it to you that the task of the teachers in using the SEMP materials is to supplement those materials. Very well, if you, the teacher or anybody says that an unbalanced view is being presented here it is within the competence and the responsibility of a teacher to say, "Very well, here is one side of the case being presented through SEMP; we are going to balance it", and in fact that is exactly what we advise teachers to do in the guide.

You believe the previous texts were biased?-- I wouldn't say myself they were biased because I am not an authority on the particular subject in question.

But you are saying that you are trying to counter bias that existed in the previous texts. That is what you are saying, aren't you?-- I am saying that the point of view that is presented in SEMP was not adequately presented previously. Yes, I am saying that.

MR. MILLER: That is a nice way of putting it.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: We do have a set of SEMP materials available at the moment in the Parliamentary library, and we have been looking at them. Can I ask you why it was thought necessary, say, in the courtship section to photocopy the page out of "The Mango Tree" instead of something a little bit more tasteful? You are inviting trouble, aren't you?-- Yes, I think that is true. We are certainly inviting a response. I wouldn't want to defend every single paragraph in SEMP. I do not think when you are dealing with a programme on such a scale containing such a huge array and variety of materials, and with such a large number of people involved in its production, that you can expect that any one person is going to say, "Yes, every single sentence in this satisfies all possible criteria." There are certain examples of materials included in SEMP which could probably be improved with substitutes - I wouldn't deny that - and there would be nothing to stop an education authority from doing just that. If an education authority said, "Look, we would like to substitute such and such or delete such and such" our answer to that is, "That is entirely your right and prerogative to do that. You should be going through the materials and making just that kind of selection." To be more direct in answer to your question, for some audiences - some groups of students - perhaps that material would be very appropriate and suitable. I think we have to acknowledge that the reality of the adolescent populations in Australian schools, especially in urban schools, at times is a rather tough reality. We are not dealing with children who have been insulated or protected from the world - far from it. We know this in terms of their life-styles, their language, their

family backgrounds, their interests, their television viewing habits, their reading habits, their record-listening habits and so forth, and a skilful teacher can use materials which, in other situations, might be deemed quite inappropriate in those situations. I suspect, and I am not trying to defend the particular passage, that the reason for the choice made by the team and endorsed by the Headmasters' Conference in New South Wales was a recognition of that kind of reality, but I equally would say that a teacher who feels that that particular page is unsatisfactory has only to open the folder, take it out and not use it.

How do you respond to the suggestion that there are enough forces trying to pull down the morals of the youth of the country and shouldn't we in our schools be trying to reverse the process if we can rather than just saying, "Well, everything is going down today, let's go down with it."?-- I would defend SEMP there. I would say that in terms of value formation, value development, value classification, value expression and value communication that SEMP is defensible. I think that the result of studying SEMP and responding to it would be an improvement in community values in Australia rather than a decline. I think, for example, SEMP shows a great deal of concern for sensitivity, for regard for others, concern for others and recognition of others' rights. It shows a great deal of concern for personal responsibility, for behavioural responsibility towards other people, for the survival of communities and the growth and development of communities. In the area of families, which has been a most contentious area, I think, the general value thrust of that whole unit is towards the strengthening of family life. So my contention about SEMP in that regard is that the result of studying SEMP would be an improvement in Australia's morals and in the general value disposition and tendency of Australian communities.

BY MR. MILLER: On page 21 you refer to many new disciplines involved in new social science courses. How can teachers ever be competent in all of these fields?-- They can't. One of the important outcomes of SEMP is that it is a learning programme for teachers as well as students. We have to recognise that that is the case not only in the social sciences but in all subject areas, that there is a very big gap that has opened up between, if you like, the frontiers of knowledge and the capacity of teachers to cope with subject teaching in schools. It is an important function, therefore, of educational materials that they should do a great deal towards educating the teachers as well as educating the students. We might feel that in the best of all possible worlds the teacher should have sufficient knowledge and competence in subject fields for that not to be necessary, but we don't live in that kind of world, and we see it as an important function in the production of materials to provide teachers, as well as students, with support, guidance, information and ideas.

Would it be unkind of me to say it is a case of the blind leading the blind?-- Yes, it would be unkind because the students are not blind, nor are the teachers, especially in the field of the social studies. Social studies are really based ultimately on everyday experience. They are not fundamental esoteric subjects at all unlike, say, foreign languages or science. Therefore the students are not blind. Students, particularly when they go to secondary school, have already had a very substantial social experience. They are already involved in and are part of the community. They are really very well aware of many of the things we raise in the

SEMP materials, so they are not blind. As for the teachers, they have had that experience - and a great deal more - and have already been trained - at least in some cases. There are still some untrained teachers about. In many cases, but not all, they have had a specific preparation in some aspect of the social sciences. In many cases, but not all, they have had in-service courses and training. Then we have provided them with a substantial body of material and a lot of guidance, advice and assistance. Then, last of all, teachers as professionals are aware of their own deficiencies - their own ignorance, if you like - so that if they can be said to be blind at least they know they are blind, and that is an important qualification when it comes to people leading other people. But I am talking in somewhat idealised terms. I recognise, of course, that there are some teachers who will not use SEMP well, just as there are some teachers who won't use any material well. Our task is to concentrate on them and try to get them strengthened and supported as much as possible.

Is SEMP ahead of its time?-- Not too far ahead of its time.

BY MR. HEWITT: On the question of assessment of students, we presently have a public debate here in Queensland with regard to norm-based assessment contrasted to competency-based assessment. We would be grateful to you for any observation upon that?-- Norm-based assessment has some value - it has uses, without question. If you are trying to consider the overall performance of an educational system and you are seeing pupils as members of that system then norm-based assessment is an extremely important consideration. You want to see how people are doing in relation to one another, what the overall levels are and you want to compare those with levels elsewhere. So from a system point of view the norm-based assessment has still got a great deal to offer. One of the great problems about it, of course, is that people misuse the concept of "norm" and they get very worried, for example, when they realise that there are some pupils above or below average, and all kinds of rather crude errors result from that kind of thinking. Therefore the problem about it is not so much the procedure but the use of the procedure, the interpretation of the procedure. The competency-based assessment or, more technically, the criterion referenced or based assessment has the great advantage that it really sets a target for each individual learner and it gives you an idea as to whether that learner has achieved the target or not. It does not help, however, in making comparisons. It does not tell you how far below the target the individual falls or how far beyond it he might go, so it, too, is a rather crude measure in certain ways. But it is extremely useful in terms of getting away from some of the shortcomings of the norm-based assessment. I would see them as complementary rather than as alternatives.

I would also say, though, that we have to be extremely careful in using any kind of State-wide or national assessment system, because we have to think of the unintended consequences or outcomes of that, and I would draw your attention to two. One of them is that all assessment systems are extremely complicated and expensive to run, and you have to ask the question as to whether the money that goes into them is really worth it, because the money tends to build up, and the bureaucracy builds up even more, to run any kind of assessment system. The second problem is that all kinds of assessment systems put pressures on parents, on students, and on the community, and lead to a situation in which people are teaching for exams rather than using exams or assessment as a kind of post hoc thing. That is a natural, normal human tendency. I am only drawing attention to it as one of the widely experienced problems that follow the introduction or the use of State-wide or national assessment systems.

BY MR. MILLER: How can you assess students in social education?-- There are a number of ways in which you can assess them. The most important way to assess them is to try to find out how they live their lives according to the experiences they have had in the class-rooms.

You are dealing with attitudes and values, aren't you?-- We are, yes - not exclusively; amongst other things. We are also dealing with skills and we are dealing with knowledge. The skills area is not so difficult to assess. I do not want to exaggerate the ease, but it is not as difficult as the values area. The knowledge area is not so difficult. The attitudes are not so difficult if you are assessing or observing them within the school environment; likewise the values. The difficulty, of course, is that values education is really a matter of building up dispositions in people - dispositions to behave in one way rather than another. Those are lifetime things. You are not concerned so much with the particular behaviour; you are concerned with the capacity or the tendency to behave in a certain way in certain situations. There is no way in which a school can adequately assess the formation of a disposition, which is a lifetime component of human experience.

THE CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, we have to conclude our hearings at this stage. Thank you very much for travelling from Canberra to be with us today. We hope that we have not caused you too much inconvenience. I invite you to have lunch with us now. Would you please convey to your staff, also, our thanks for their co-operation.

DR. SKILBECK: Thank you very much for the invitation and for the very fair hearing you have given me. I should like to leave two or three documents with you, in case you do not have them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

The Committee adjourned at 1.4 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 2.14 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, we are pleased to welcome the representatives of the Board of Teacher Education who are to appear before us. Before they introduce themselves I indicate to everyone that the submission we have received, which is coded AU 153 has been circularised and studied by members, and it was in response to my letter to the chairman of the board, Mr. Guymer. I think it may be useful if I read that letter. It is in these terms -

> " You will no doubt be fully aware that I am conducting an Enquiry into education in Queensland and the terms of reference, I am certain, would have been brought to your attention.
>
> To date, we have not had an input from the Board of Teacher Education and, frankly, I appreciate why that was not thought necessary. It is not specifically referred to in the terms of reference and there is currently an enquiry under way.
>
> However, I feel that it would not be appropriate if our Committee was to wind up its public hearings without some input from the Board of Teacher Education. I say this particularly in the light of quite considerable criticism that has been presented to us fromvarious parties regarding teacher education in Queensland. Allegations have been made that teachers are not being taught to teach and that there is not enough practicality in teacher education today as well as some other criticisms.
>
> I would be pleased to arrange for your appearance before the Committee."

That resulted in a response from the Board of Teacher Education. We are pleased to welcome the chairman of the board, Mr. Arch Guymer, Mr. Jim Golding and Professor Betty Watts. In relation to the submission, we will be offering some questions.

MR. MILLER: When can we expect to have a copy of the Basset report?

MR. GUYMER: This report was commissioned both by the Board of Teacher Education and by the Board of Advanced Education. I can see no difficulty in making that available as soon as it becomes available to both boards. As yet it has not been presented to the Board of Teacher Education.

THE CHAIRMAN: What frame of reference did that inquiry have?

MR. GUYMER: The inquiry, I suppose, looked into what direction teacher education might take in the future, bearing in mind the problems that appear to have arisen in the present time. Basically, I think that is the nature of the report.

MR. MILLER: Should there be a code of ethics for teachers?

MR. GUYMER: There always is a code of ethics for any profession and I think teachers themselves have indicated a code of ethics to which they should adhere. So far as the board is concerned, it has not considered it necessary to apply itself to that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before we leave my line of questioning, can you tell us if the inquiry had a brief to look at teacher institutions from the point of view of cutbacks, quotas and so on?

Is this one of the matters to which the Basset inquiry will be giving attention?

MR. GUYMER: From the board's point of view, it was not spelt out in detail, but it was expected that it would look in detail at any matter that pertained to changing directions or inadequacies in teacher education at the present time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Rationalisation of institutions, abolition of some and amalgamations?

MR. GUYMER: I do not know whether they have in fact looked into those matters because I have not yet seen their report.

PROF. WATTS: I have not seen the report yet but I don't think so; I think it was more on general issues within the field of teacher education. The chairman of the Board of Advanced Education in whose quarter that more fairly falls may be able to comment.

MR. MILLER: Returning to the code of ethics, it has been said to this Committee on many occasions that it is very difficult to sack a teacher. Wouldn't it be easier to sack a teacher if there were a code of ethics spelt out in detail?

MR. GUYMER: I think that this refers largely to a community expectation of teachers. When you refer to a code of ethics, I imagine that the code of ethics pertaining to any behaviour of any group of people has changed considerably over the past 50 years. It would be very difficult to get an agreement within the total profession on any specific lines.

MR. MILLER: Are you concerned that it is very difficult to sack a teacher?

MR. GUYMER: We don't sack teachers except they come before the board for offences that render them unfit to remain as teachers - to remain on the register. By reason of their removal from the register it would mean that they could not be employed as teachers.

MR. MILLER: Does the Education Department find it very difficult to sack a teacher?

MR. GUYMER: They will give their own evidence on that.

MR. HEWITT: I would like to know how you respond to the allegation that teachers are not taught to teach.

MR. GUYMER: I would like to know why they say that. I speak now from my own personal experience over many years rather than as chairman of the board. It would appear obvious to most people that teachers come from much the same background as they used to come - much the same background. Their preparation encompasses a much longer period and their basic educational requirements, before they start their courses, are higher than they have ever been before. I fail to understand why it is that the complaints are so widespread unless they are peculiar to individual situations rather than general situations.

THE CHAIRMAN: It was put to us by a principals' association - the Townsville Principals' Association. Would you think they would know what they were talking about?

MR. G UYMER: I am not going to question their opinion. I have just given you my opinion.

MR. GOLDING: If I could give a personal opinion - the feedback that I have from inspectors of secondary schools - and this again has nothing to do with the Board of Teacher Education as such - is that teachers are far better prepared and far more dedicated - the young teachers - than they have ever been.

MR. MILLER : In the teaching of reading?

MR. GOLDING: Reading is not a secondary matter so much as a primary matter.

MR.HEWITT: Preparation in the things they are teaching might be a valid point , but is there equal preparation in the art of teaching?

MR. GOLDING: I think the amount of teaching practice that students have these days -that is in the actual work situation compared with the amount of teaching practice they had years ago - is greater.

PROF. WATTS: Teaching itself is a very complex act and the judgment of whether a teacher is adequate is again a very complex act. The professional preparation of teachers is in some ways more difficult than the professional preparation of doctors or engineers because one is dealing with a very diverse group of people. Having said that - the way the colleges have attempted in the past to help teachers master the art of teaching, in terms of teaching reading or maths, has been not only to do formal work in the college in terms of the background to teaching but to offer the students while they are in training various, what they call clinical, experiences which are teaching practices in miniature so that they might work with half a dozen kids, have it recorded on videotape and then they are taken through it. In addition to that, the teachers have done teaching in practice in schools. I guess from the beginning of time both colleges and practising schools - I am speaking now as the chairman of the Course Assessment Committee because we keep looking at issues like this - have been concerned about how they might wed two quite different things together. I think there have been very considerable attempts by the colleges since I have been chairman of the Course Assessment Committee, which I think is about three years now, to increase this. It is interesting that, at this very moment, all colleges are re-presenting their diploma of teaching programmes to be reassessed and reaccredited. The move in all the ones we have received to date has been to include much more on teaching of reading. They are being responsive to all the reports that have been coming out; they have been extremely responsive in fact. The other interesting thing is that in addition to keeping their college programme going and keeping the school practice programme going they are coming up with some additional activity that some are calling, for example, school-based studies. When the present diplomas are reaccredited and the students move into the new programmes next year there will be some quite creative and inventive ways of trying to bolster the actual teaching skills of the teachers in training. That is how it looks on paper.

MR. MILLER: Do you think there is any need for internship in the teaching profession?

PROF. WATTS: I do; certainly. Whatever you do with people during those three years - and I believe extremely creative things are done - when you put a teacher into a class-room , even if it is only 25 youngsters, they are all different from one another. In this day and age in Queensland,

not as markedly as , say, in Melbourne and Sydney, but still to a very large extent , there are very diverse groups of youngsters and it takes a lot of actual doing of the job before you can become competent at it.

MR. HEWITT: What would your advice be on an internship and how should it be implemented?

PROF. WATTS: I would certainly think this is one of the issues in the Basset report. I hope it is.

MR. GUYMER: We hope to get advice from the Basset report in this particular area.

MR.HEWITT: Another point of view has emerged with regard to participation of teachers in the selection of curriculum and syllabus and we wonder whether their training in fact equips them to participate in that sort of activity.

MR. GUYMER: I think the teachers who are involved, yes, they would have had a great deal of experience and sufficient experience to know what they feel is important in this area. But you are in another area where this Board of Teacher Education does not, of itself, have anything to do with the syllabus that goes into the schools, although I think the skills that are required of teachers and are taught and the experiences they are given at colleges and so on would contain aspects of curriculum construction.

PROF. WATTS: One of the problems with curriculum is that it is an awfully difficult word and let us hope the Basset Committee makes a comment. One of the problems is that people - the outside world - say "curriculum development" but they do not really mean development starting from scratch and developing curricula; they rather mean skills in interpreting and applying curricula. What the colleges have tended to do over the last several years, as you would be aware, most of them have been approved to offer a fourth year, a B.Ed. programme, and most of the colleges have concentrated on the curriculum section in that fourth year. There is probably a fair amount of heart-searching about whether it is best done in a pre-service stage of teacher education or whether it is better done later. Certainly in the pre-service all the colleges would be having an emphasis in the courses they present on students being able to interpret and apply curricula. But most of the B.Ed. programmes - the fourth-year programme - has a pretty heavy emphasis on curriculum.

MR. HEWITT: Are you concerned about the unbalance in the sexes in the teaching profession - so many women, contrasted to men?

MR.GUYMER: Certainly I am.

MR. HEWITT: Is that balance being corrected?

MR. GUYMER: This is not an expression from the board. I believe that there has been such a drastic swing from a male-dominated situation to the female, and it has come too quickly, and perhaps the balance is not as it should be.

MR. GOLDING: Queensland is not out of step with other countries. I would have to say that, in the secondary field, you probably would find that there is a greater percentage of males than females.

MR. GUYMER: These have been the trends overseas. In the secondary field, the male-female ratio is much the same -

fairly even as a matter of fact - but in the primary field it is very much dominated by the female teacher.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Tertiary Education Commission report for the 1979-81 triennium says , "Universities Council believes there is scope for further rationalisation between universities and colleges of advanced education in the field of education." Would you like to comment on that?

MR. GUYMER: No. I was involved in the early discussions in one such area but this belongs to another area and perhaps it does not come within the scope of the board.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is the Board of Advanced Education you are talking about?

MR. GUYMER: Yes. It is the Board of Advanced Education that will certainly make some decisions and not the Board of Teacher Education.

MR. MILLER: We have had some submissions advocating that teacher education should come back under the umbrella of the State department. What are your thoughts on that?

MR. GUYMER: This is a personal one. I would say that as the board has a responsibility to all Queenslanders, irrespective of what the employing authorities of teachers may be, it would seem to me to be more appropriate that the board does not seek to come under the domination of any department.

MR. GOLDING: We have to remember that a large number of teachers who are being prepared in our colleges of advanced education are not destined for the State Department of Education; they are going into the non-Government system. A large number of them are doing this. The colleges of advanced education that are involved in teacher education are not training teachers for the State system of education; they are training them for the whole system of education.

MR. MILLER: What say does the Education Department have as an employer?

MR. GUYMER: On the board's activities?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MR. GUYMER: Representation.

MR. MILLER: Does it have an actual say in the training of these people?

MR. GUYMER: As a board member, yes, certainly. If you look at the constitution of the board you will see that we have two directors and on my appointment I was Director-General. So there is quite a large input from the Department of Education to the board.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are we training too many teachers today?

MR. GUYMER: This is a question that the Board of Advanced Education will be better able to answer.

MR. HEWITT: Your responsibility is to register teachers. What criteria have to be met before registration is granted?

MR. GUYMER: Educational criteria, qualification criteria and character criteria. A person has to be of good character. Indeed the board has removed the names of people from the register by reason of trouble people have got into. That indicated that fitness was not there.

MR. HEWITT: Would registration be refused to many graduates from the C.A.E.s?

MR. GUYMER: It is not refused to any graduates, provided they have character references. One of the aspects that are required by the board is that they submit to the board character references from people of substance who say that these young people who come for registration are fit and proper people.

PROF. WATTS: There is the additional point that on graduation from a C.A.E. or from a university the teacher receives provisional registration. At the end of the year there is a report from the principal and if that is satisfactory the registration is confirmed.

MR. HEWITT: Is there any follow through on those character references? Are they physically checked out?

MR. GUYMER: Not by reason of the board. With the number of people coming to the board, we accept the names of people who are responsible members of the community and who know the people concerned. As Professor Watts has indicated the first position on the register is provisional registration and there is a probationary period. You also have the fact that in the eyes of the community that person has to be a responsible person. If a person is involved in

any activities that bring him before the court, this is a matter the board must look into.

THE CHAIRMAN: You would be aware of Mr. Hamilton's recently reported statements in which he said that we have a lot of teachers we can well do without, such as radicals and so on. Do you think that is something for your board to contemplate in future - how to better screen teachers into the profession?

MR. GUYMER: I would not subscribe to that statement. It is a personal opinion. I am hoping that the Basset report, which we are awaiting, will give some research in this area and some points of view which should be considered by the board. It is one that is an emotional issue largely in the selection of people. It is pretty difficult to be able to say with certainty whether a person is or is not going to be the right person.

PROF. WATTS: Added to that - there is no one right person to be a teacher. We need an extraordinarily diverse range of people because we have a diverse range of youngsters. It would be very difficult to say that we can have a nice straight line and on this side they are all right and on that side they are all bad. I would not like to draw the line.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did the board have an input into Senator Carrick's inquiry on teacher education by Professor Auchmutey?

MR. GUYMER: No. I think the board is considering it after the receipt of our own report. I think we want the support of our own committee report before we do that.

MR. MILLER: We have had some criticism to the effect that the ordinary class-room teacher knows very little about remedial teaching and is unable to diagnose even elementary help. Do teachers receive any remedial class-room training?

MR. GUYMER: For a number of years they have been through the Education Department. In the letter I sent to you I indicated that one of the concerns of the board about 18 months ago was the preparation of teachers' reading and associated language skills and the preparation of generalist teachers for teaching atypical children in the normal class-room. This was in conjunction with the committee on special education, which brought forward a report making certain recommendations in this area. I suppose you could sum up that report by saying it is possible and in many cases desirable that the class-room teacher does have skill in this particular area to isolate and perhaps to deal with children, as long as they are not too divergent from the norm. That has been done.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Guymer, Mr. Golding and Professor Watts, for coming and for responding to our invitation to be here. As I said at the outset I would be worried if we did not offer you the opportunity to respond to some of the criticisms that have been made. You have done that, and we are very grateful to you for having done so.

THE CHAIRMAN: I now invite officers of the Board of Advanced Education to appear before the Committee. I had written to the chairman of the Board of Advanced Education in a similar vein to that in which I wrote to Mr. Guymer, thinking that exactly the same situation applied and that opportunity should be offered to the board to answer criticisms and to help us generally with our inquiry for the sake of completeness. Dr. Allen was good enough to respond. His letter has been circularised to members and studied by them. It is coded AU-139. I would ask Dr. Allen to introduce his colleague.

DR. ALLEN: I am accompanied today by Mr. Norman David Alford the executive officer of the Board of Advanced Education.

THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps it might be a good thing to start by asking you whether we are educating too many teachers.

DR. ALLEN: The answer to that is that in Queensland, no. For some years now, under the auspices of my board, we have had a standing committee, which Mr. Alford chairs and which contains representatives drawn from the Department of Education, the Catholic Office of Education and the Board of Teacher Education. It has kept under regular quantitative review the supply and demand for teachers in Queensland. You may like to know, for example, that as a result of commencing this task some years ago we are in the process of bringing down very considerably the number of commencing students in various sources in teacher education.

For example, if I may take primary-teacher education to start with, the simple fact is that in 1973 - and I have a graph that will perhaps illustrate the situation - we had full-time commencing students in pre-school, primary and special education numbering 1,600 in colleges. This year it is down to a little over 1,000. By 1982 it will be down to 750, where we expect it to stabilise. That I think is a fairly remarkable achievement. We have done that without disrupting the process of the colleges - and that is well on the way to halving the number of entrants to primary-teacher education. In the secondary field there has not been anything like the same change because, as you will appreciate, the colleges are distinct from the universities. While we do have some people taking diploma of teaching courses in maths, science and arts/humanities, a very large number of the secondary teachers trained in the colleges are in such areas as art, music, home economics, commercial studies and things of that kind, where the demand has continued to be high. Having said that, I should make the point that the task of this matching of supply and demand and adjusting the numbers accordingly is necessarily fraught with some assumptions. Those assumptions are not necessarily constant. I will, with your approval, invite Mr. Alford, who is the chairman of the committee, to provide any additional detailed information, particularly on the matter of the way in which the committee goes about its task, and indeed on some of the uncertainties which are inherent in the assumptions that are necessarily made.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anything you want to add at this stage?

MR. ALFORD: I am conscious of the shortness of time. If members would prefer to ask specific questions, that might be preferable.

THE CHAIRMAN: We would be grateful to have a copy of the graph you were referring to if you are able to give it to us now or at some future time.

DR. ALLEN: Certainly.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is a question that follows from that: if we are drastically reducing the number of teacher trainees, would it be efficient to close down some of the institutions that are producing graduates?

DR. ALLEN: It may be. The situation is that, in addition to the involvement of the colleges of pre-service teacher education, the colleges are currently engaged in a quite major programme of upgrading the very large number of teachers who were trained after the war in this State under emergency one-year and two-year-training programmes. We have in fact been able to keep most of the colleges essentially at their current levels by, in effect, substituting places for in-service and Bachelor of Education programmes as an alternative and as a replacement for the pre-service courses. So there has been no serious case, except possibly one, of precipitate action of that kind being necessary. However, the forward situation is perhaps less clear.

As you well know, in recent times the State Government has in fact placed staff ceilings on the number of teachers employed in the State teaching service. If those ceilings persist at approximately the current level much beyond 1979, we expect that we will have to look again, because that is one of the new variables that enters into the situation. All of the sums have been done on a certain modest increase in the number of teachers employed. If by direct Government decision that is not to happen, we will have to look again. Under

those circumstances and given some conditions, it could happen that two or three of the colleges will begin to fall below the level that the board would consider appropriate for the size of the input group in pre-service courses.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before going into detail on the ones that we would like you to talk about, would you like to put in context this question of the universities council believing that there is scope for further rationalisation between universities and C.A.E.s in the field of education, which was contained in the Tertiary Education Commission report?

DR. ALLEN: Yes, I know the report. I know the particular section of the report. Firstly, you will need to appreciate that Queensland is the only State that has taken the action it has and carried it to this stage. You will note, for example, that the Partridge report in Victoria recently recommended action in Victoria which really should have been taken three or four years ago. We have taken the action. So the problem that is referred to there is mainly a problem in other States. There is a particular problem in New South Wales between the Sydney Teachers' College and the University of Sydney. That is the background of that particular paragraph, which has almost no application to Queensland, because we are in continuous contact with the University of Queensland and with James Cook.

The board's report on teacher supply and demand are made available to and discussed with the universities, which have responded accordingly. Moreover, the point I would make is that the universities in Queensland are not engaged in primary-teacher education. They are also not engaged in some of the areas of secondary-teacher education which the colleges engage in - for example, commercial studies, home economics and art. These are matters which are dealt with in the colleges, not the universities. So the area of potential duplication or overlap is a quite narrow one and is handled quite adequately by informal and continuing consultations.

THE CHAIRMAN: If there are some institutions to go, who makes the decision?

DR. ALLEN: The Queensland Government. The board is required to advise the Minister on developments of advanced education in Queensland. That is a requirement of the Act. The board would conduct its analysis of the situation and, whether it be a college or a field of study in a college, the board would so recommend to the Minister and the matter would then go to Cabinet. The fundamental decision is a decision of the Queensland Government.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have received representations about the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College. Would you like to talk briefly about that and also about the Conservatorium of Music?

DR. ALLEN: Let me first say a word or two about the Kindergarten Teachers' College. For quite some time the board has had under review the future of the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College. You will appreciate that it is an institution which has a particular sort of history. Its primary raison d'etre has been the production of teachers for community kindergartens. That has been its long-term pattern. Last year we began to give consideration to this matter. In February of this year the board began its consideration in detail. It has consulted widely and received submissions from a very large number of people. It has had three sessions with the college itself and has sought

advice from all manner of people who have interests in this area. In July this year it presented a report to the Minister, making certain recommendations. That report forms part of the submission which the Minister carried to Cabinet fairly recently and on which Cabinet made a partial decision and, I think, sought the views of your Committee on the submission that the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College have made to you.

MR. MILLER: Couldn't your argument equally apply to the Queensland College of Music and the Townsville C.A.E.?

DR. ALLEN: Could I just finish the answer to the first question? I am happy to answer both of those questions in some detail. The board, in looking at this matter, is concerned not so much with the numbers game - and that is obviously one issue - as with the educational issue of how to maintain an effective and viable educational programme; how to ensure that what has been a special attribute of the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College can in fact be preserved and indeed more widely disseminated in a larger context. The board is not in the business of recommending mergers lightly. It has not recommended a merger. It has recommended a merger with Kelvin Grove with the proviso under very specially defined conditions that a centre for early childhood education and care be created in the larger institution.

In this way we see it likely that in an ordered way the special advice of the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College can be preserved, developed and extended and, what is more important, disseminated through a much wider group of people concerned with the teaching of youngish children. It is true that if some action along these lines is not taken the simple fact is that there will be a decline in the number of children, particularly in the 3 and 4-year old population in Queensland. That figure will fall from 79,500 in 1975 to 69,500 by 1980 - those people have already been born - and that is about an 11 per cent drop in numbers, which is quite a major situation. Moreover, the estimates which we have made, and we have examined this in considerable detail, suggest that the chances are that we would have to reduce the number of commencing students in the pre-school course at the B.K.T.C. to about half the present number. If that occurs, then you are a long way below the number which would make it an ongoing, viable enterprise educationally in this context. Moreover, there is very little prospect of adding additional courses or developing further courses under the constraints which we are currently presented with. However, I might then turn briefly tc say a work or two about the Conservatorium because that matter has been raised. I think the point you made on the phone the other day was the possible amalgamation of the Conservatorium of Music and the Queensland Institute of Technology. I might say that if that proposition was seriously presented and adopted by the Government I think this State would be the laughing-stock of the Western civilised world. That is a fairly strong statement, and I should justify it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was not making the statement.

DR. ALLEN: I am saying the statement has been made. Let me make the point that the board, with the Minister, is charged with delivering advanced education in Queensland to meet the needs of the State of Queensland, and this means looking at such criteria as quality, quantity, the range of fields of study, levels of course and so on. The simple fact is that there is no compatibility between the objectives, the operations, the educational programmes, the staffing, the organisation or the style of management of the Conservatorium of Music and the Queensland Institute of Technology. Indeed, in my view, to contemplate that sort of merger would be totally contrary to the provisions of the Act.

MR. MILLER: Would members of the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College say exactly the same thing in their case?

DR. ALLEN: Yes, but without the same justification. There is in fact a very close relationship between the tasks and the objectives of the B.K.T.C. as stated and those of any other teachers' college.

MR. MILLER: They have put information before this Committee that when the merger took place in England it showed a very drastic downfall in quality.

DR. ALLEN: May I just respond to that, and I made the point before, that the board has not proposed a merger; it has proposed a merger for the creation, under very specific conditions, of a centre for early childhood education and care deliberately because it was conscious of that particular claim. I will develop further the Conservatorium of Music if you wish.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the Townsville college?

DR. ALLEN: The Townsville situation is that you need to appreciate that the board has no responsibility for universities, and if, indeed, an issue of this kind involving a university and a college arises it becomes a matter for the Minister, not a matter for the board. In August 1976 this matter has been going the rounds and the Minister made a quite clear cut and unequivocal statement setting out his view of the situation, and I have his approval to draw that policy statement to your attention. Briefly, it was that he would consider the question of amalgamation of James Cook and the Townsville college only if the result would enhance the quality, quantity and range of higher educational opportunities in North Queensland, and that is the position on which he has sought to stand. For the present time James Cook University has adopted the position that while teacher education is a proper function of a university, James Cook University would not undertake to present courses at a sub-degree level. If, therefore, that condition remained and a merger took place then there would be a gross diminution in the opportunities for higher education at the diploma or associate diploma level both now and in the future in North Queensland, and in the context of the Minister's position it means that unless there is a significant change in the position adopted by James Cook University there would not be any serious prospect of that merger taking place.

MR. MILLER: Will the Williams committee be likely to make recommendations concerning these colleges?

DR. ALLEN: The Williams committee in its terms of reference is concerned to deal specifically with a number of issues including the overall pattern of institutions and courses including their objectives, and that is to deal with what one might describe as the future structure of higher education in this country. In addition to the board's major submission to the Williams committee, I happen to have had a long personal association with him, and therefore he has taken upon himself the task of consulting me privately on a number of matters, so I have a fair degree of knowledge of the direction of his thinking. Based on this knowledge, his report will certainly stress certain issues of broad structure, but there is no way in the world, in my view, that he will take up the case of individual institutions. He will, no doubt, pick up the general problems which he sees in places like Townsville, Newcastle, Armidale and Wollongong, which all present a common structural pattern with a C.A.E. and a university more or less side by side. That is an issue he will undoubtedly deal with in terms of a general proposition, but I should make the point that I think ultimately the question of whether there are mergers or changes, or whether any revised structure is adopted, is fundamentally a matter for the Queensland Government. It is not a matter for the Commonwealth Government except perhaps as influencing the situation via a funding route. Basically it is a decision for the Queensland Government. I might say that although I think you may have had some expectations that the Williams report would be available shortly, the latest information I have is that it certainly won't go to the Prime Minister until some time in November, and it wouldn't surprise me if it were not available publicly until early next year. Certainly the vice-chancellor's committee had arranged a conference in Canberra in December to consider the report, but it has now cancelled that conference because the report will not be available. So the Williams committee report is some distance off in terms of time.

MR. HEWITT: I am interested to know if you had any dialogue with employers with regard to the retraining of teachers?

DR. ALLEN: In the letter which I addressed to the Chairman in reply to his letter I did in fact spell out in considerable detail the procedures which the board adopts in the general area of course assessment, and I think this sets out the situation in considerable detail. In the third paragraph on page 2 I make the point that courses are developed initially in the college. The membership of the development committee includes persons external to the college. It goes to the academic board of the college council which contains up to 10 ministerial nominees, so there are at least two elements of potential input there. Moreover, one of the members of that council is a nominee of the Director-General of Education, so that one of the big employing authorities does in fact have a direct access to all college councils, and that is, I think, a fairly important matter.

The course assessment committees, generally speaking, contain people drawn very widely in the community - people who are expert in the educational area, people who are involved in the employer area, and people who may even be seen more as general community people. We have - I do not know whether you appreciate this - throughout the college system and the course assessment committees operating under my board, something like 300 people of senior and established status in the community who are involved in that course assessment, and I think in my letter I made the comment at the end of page 2 that I ventured to suggest that there was no other sector of education which was remotely in the same class in terms of public accountability - accountability to a quite wide-ranging group of people.

Now, in the matter of teacher education it is complicated by the fact that the Act requires that my board and the Board of Teacher Education shall confer and collaborate. One of the ways in which we do this is by having a common course assessment committee. It is a committee appointed by the board - and Professor Watts, who is here this afternoon, is the chairman of that committee - by the Board of Teacher Education, which reports to that board for the purposes of registration and to my board for the purposes of accreditation of the award.

MR. MILLER: At this stage, could I ask you whether there is any need for two boards? Is there overlapping?

DR. ALLEN: No, there is no overlapping whatsoever. The functions as laid down in the Act are quite distinct and quite separate. My board has no role in registration. There are similar situations. For example, there is a Board of Nursing Studies.

MR. MILLER: Could you combine the functions of the two boards?

DR. ALLEN: You could, but I think it would not be very helpful. The type of membership of the Board of Teacher Education is quite different from the type of membership of my board. It is, I might say, Mr. Miller, a system that really works extraordinarily well, and I think the fact that the two boards came together and set up the basic committee is conferring and collaborating in reality. We have a number of those things. For example, there is now a Board of Nursing Studies, and we are required also under the Act to work with it. It is proper that you can have a board of narrow responsibility and then a much broader board. Provided that "confer and collaborate" operates well, it presents no great problems in terms of duplication or anything of that kind.

MR. MILLER: The Board of Advanced Education is apparently concerned with colleges of advanced education; the State department is concerned with TAFE institutions; the three State universities apparently go their own way.

DR. ALLEN: Yes.

MR. MILLER: Is there a need for some State co-ordinating body to plan the development of all post-secondary education?

DR. ALLEN: That is a policy matter for the Government rather than one to which the board would give any consideration. There have from time to time been suggestions in those terms. I think it is widely recognised that, unlike most other States, in Queensland the relationship that exists between those three components in the post-secondary area probably work on a more

equable basis than they do elsewhere. There is not in fact any significant conflict. That is achieved by a number of routes. Firstly, the Director-General of Education and myself are the two principal advisers to the Minister, and there are any number of issues on which we advise him jointly. That ensures that sort of relationship. There are processes and there are agreements of consultation, so duplication of courses between, say, certificate and associate diploma courses do not exist. There are formal agreements and there is a standing committee that keeps that matter under review. So there are good circumstances of consultation and that, I think, does not present a problem of duplication.

On the university side, the Minister fairly recently established a body called the Joint Advisory Committee, which consists of the three vice-chancellors, myself and the Director-General of Education. While that body clearly is not going to be able to resolve a conflict situation if it arises, it provides a continuous linking in that situation. I think there have not in fact been grave problems arising. The question of a post-secondary commission has been raised once or twice. I think that the present Minister and the present Government have shown no great enthusiasm for an additional body. Where this has in fact been, or is about to be, created in Victoria, it creates a tremendous complication. I think that a lot of things can be solved and dealt with in the way in which we deal with them in Queensland. It so happens that almost every other State system has been grossly disrupted in the last couple of years. We have not been so disrupted; we have got on with our relationship, one with the other. Inevitably, the odd situation will occur, but that is a matter which can be resolved by consultation. We are, I think, on the whole, committed to ensuring that those relationships continue to be in good order.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think that the community is spending too much money on higher education - fewer colleges of advanced education and more TAFEs?

DR. ALLEN: The present Commonwealth policies, of course, are to hold the universities and colleges of advanced education at a constant level and constant funding and to provide additional capital money to TAFE. I should mention, however, that in comparison with the national scene, the participation rate in colleges of advanced education and universities is several percent below the national average, and has continued to be that way, and Queensland has lost consistently, year after year, between $15,000,000 and $20,000 for that simple reason. Part of that is a demographic problem - the people are more widespread - but the simple fact is that we were making reasonably good progress towards closing that gap and now the situation has been totally flattened and the Commonwealth is committed now to having a flat situation forward by way of enrolments. We will stop making any progress towards bridging that gap, which is about 2 or 3 per cent.

MR. MILLER: One criticism that has come before the Committee is that lecturers involved in teacher education are not teachers, have never been trained as teachers or had experience in schools. In fact, it has been said that their lecturing is remote from the realities of the class-room.

DR. ALLEN: That simply is not true.

MR. MILLER: It is not true.

DR. ALLEN: Simply not true. The very large proportion of

academic staff in colleges of advanced education engaged in teacher education would be teachers who, firstly, would be academically qualified, and, secondly, had had considerable experience in actually teaching in schools.

MR. MILLER: In class-room situations?

DR. ALLEN: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Dr. Allen and Mr. Alford. We appreciate your attendance and thank you for your co-operation.

I now invite officers of the English Teachers' Association to appear before the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am very pleased to welcome representatives of the English Teachers' Association of Queensland. Their submission has been received and studied by members, and it is coded Se-81. It will not be necessary to read it. We will now proceed to questions. May I ask, firstly, the officers of the association who are present to identify themselves and the executive positions that they hold in the association.

MR. LIVINGSTON: My name is John Livingston, and I am an executive member of the association.

BROTHER LONG: I am Brother Griff Long; I am a member of the executive.

MR. VOLK: My name is Noel Volk; I am a member of the executive and a vice-president.

THE CHAIRMAN: In relation to your submission, gentlemen, do you consider that a better balance could be achieved between the new and the old approach to teaching English? By that I mean, in developing the worthwhile gains of improvement in oral expression, etc., has the loss of discipline in grammatical understanding been too big a price to pay?

MR. LIVINGSTON: I do not really believe that there has been such a movement away from the traditional methods. I think that this is believed by a lot of people; I do not think it is true. Some evidence that I would like to cite to back this up is evidence from the Bullock report. Admittedly, it was a British study, but a lot of the same criticisms were made of British educationists and teachers.

The Bullock committee found that in fact very few teachers had moved away from traditional methods; very few teachers did not care about spelling, punctuation and basic forms of literacy.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the syllabus? Hasn't it changed?

MR. LIVINGSTON: The syllabus has changed in that it is now a broad framework syllabus. Under the old syllabus content was described in terms of literature. All of the students in Queensland virtually did the same novel or the same play. Now a set of aims and objectives are structured but the syllabus still aims to achieve basic lanugage competency. For example, on page 41 of the syllabus, there is a list of headings such as punctuation, capitalisation, spelling, functional writing and usage. All these things are intended to be developed.

MR. MILLER: You say that there has been no change, but if you turn to page 2, subparagraph 2, you say that one does not learn to write by learning about writing. We have had quite a number of submissions critical of creative writing; where students are not told to correct bad spelling or to point out errors in construction and grammar. Surely one has to learn the rules of writing and it is part of the job of the English teacher to teach these rules.

MR. LIVINGSTON: I think there is a very great misconception about what happens in English class-rooms in the community. As a person who has been to a lot of moderation meetings over the last number of years and talked to a lot of teachers, I have never yet come across a teacher who has said, "Look, that student has really brilliantly creative ideas but he cannot spell, write, or put a sentence or paragraph together; but that does not matter because it is the idea that is important." I have not come across anybody like that.

MR. MILLER: They have come before this Committee and said that.

MR. LIVINGSTON: If that is what they have said, I would say that they would be in the minority.

MR. MILLER: Even copies of the work have been produced.

BRO. LONG: And being approved?

MR. MILLER: The teacher approved of the system of not correcting spelling mistakes.

THE CHAIRMAN: One teacher in my electorate told a parent, "Spelling is not important. I carry a dictionary with me wherever I go."

MR. MILLER: Yet you say there is not much change taking place. That was not the case many years ago.

MR. VOLK: We would wonder how general that was, or the extent to which you could generalise from evidence of that kind. We would agree that it is likely, but we have not heard or sighted the examples you are referring to. It is likely that they would come up but we would wonder about their application or their existence on a sort of widespread basis.

MR. LIVINGSTON: Individual cases can be quoted. All I can say to that criticism is that only last week I was at a meeting of 35 English subject masters in the Brisbane South region. I can tell you that the feeling of that meeting was that our prime aim still is to produce children who can use language effectively and correctly.

MR. MILLER: On page 5 you say that it is part of the responsibility of the English teacher to ensure that there is a balance in the kind of literature offered for study. Do you mean that books by the great writers of literature must be balanced by some of the third-rate novels? There seems to be a tendency for third-rate novels to be the norm for English teachers today?

MR. VOLK: We don't know about the latter part of your statement, whether or not these have become the norm, but we have found - or firstly on the balance, we would look for a balance between the traditional authors. We would also want to make sure that some of the more contemporary poets, playrights and novelists, where appropriate, are included in the course content. I say "where appropriate" because although a lot of us would like to include more Australian drama, it is the belief of a lot of people that many of our contemporary plays, written by Williamson, for example, are certainly very good for the theatre and for adult audiences, but would not necessarily be suitable for inclusion in even senior English courses. The other point is that it has been the experience of a lot of teachers that teaching the classical writers en masse to a very heterogeneous - a very mixed group of students coming from various backgrounds, with varying linguistic capabilities, tends to be a rather difficult exercise. Their language, vocabulary and concerns often seem rather remote. That being the case we have found that using more contemporary writers proves to be more valuable as an activity under the aegis of English.

MR. MILLER: Is it the vulgar language that makes them so acceptable to students or teachers?

MR. VOLK: No. It would have a lot to do with the kind of idiom. I think all of us recognise that choice of words - I don't mean the vulgar, as opposed to the non-vulgar - the vocabulary, register and so on varies from group to group and time to time. The way of reflecting on experience in books also varies. The kind of characters and the way in which they are represented is either more or less remote according to the closeness of the era in which the student is living and the literature is produced.

MR. MILLER: There is a danger of getting down to the lowest common level.

MR. VOLK: Yes. I guess the other way of answering it is that I do not think any of us here believes that you can teach literature satisfactorily by asking a whole class to read a single novel and making that the basic way of organising a course. It seems inappropriate when we have a variety of types of novels to make everybody study the same novel, in the same way, at the same time and at the same pace. It has often been said that some of the books chosen - you may have heard of "Catcher in the Rye" - are not appropriate for all students. I think that is true in a way. There are some for whom I think it is better, in a sense, with their innocence; it seems to me that their security, happiness and development could, in some way, be best promoted by giving them the kind of literature that is not as close to the raw edge of experience as others. On the other hand, there are those whose development depends very much on coming to grips with some of the less pleasant or less ordered aspects of experience. I think that for those it would be a mistake in long-range tactics especially, to confine them to those novels that are essentially narrative and do not do much more than tell a story.

MR. MILLER: From what you say, the English teacher has a great responsibility.

MR. LIVINGSTON: That is true. To back up what Mr. Volk was saying concerning the amount of individuality in each classroom, especially in year 11 now compared with what it may have been 10 or 20 years ago, I have a class of year 11 students at the moment. We are at present embarking on a prose unit. Some of those students could handle any of the classical authors, and they will. Others don't like novels. One student told me that he had never read a novel in his life other than what he had been forced to do at school. I don't think that forcing him to read more Charles Dickens will do anything for him educationally. It is my aim to try to find some area that he will read and enjoy.

MR. MILLER: Is there something in between?

MR. LIVINGSTON: Yes. But it is up to me personally not to push him right off the edge to pornography; to find some middle line of lower-level worthwhile modern literature.

MR. MILLER: Is that the norm for English teachers, to try to find the middle area? We don't seem to be getting the message that you do try to find it.

MR. LIVINGSTON: I do not know that we are trying so much to find the middle area. I think the tendency now is to try to find, or to get each student into the area that he is best suited for - the idea that has just been raised of providing many books so that indeed we develop them into the area.

For example, we have some students who will leave our class-rooms and the only communication they will ever have will be from a television screen. We have to be realistic. The content is not so much the problem as what we do with the content. You can take literature and have abominations in it but as long as you point out to the students that it is an abomination and why, and if you cannot, you have no right to be in the class-room. The only way to lead students in a world that is filled with books and filled with far more books of the type of literature you are referring to is to educate them so they will know what is good and what is bad, so that they can tread warily. If we ignore the presence of this literature what are we doing? We are putting our heads in the sand. I am not saying that we should rush in and put books before them filled with pornography. What I am saying is let them know what they will find in books when they go to the book store; let them know what they will find in the literature today; let them know what will be in the book that everyone is talking about and will be in the newspapers and will be advertised on television, and let them know how to make a judgment on it and know, indeed, whether it is worth reading.

MR. MILLER: I hope all English teachers do as you say.

BRO. LONG: That is what we are hoping for.

THE CHAIRMAN: I shall now turn to literacy. On page 3 you say, "We might well ask if we really know whether most school-leavers can read newspapers with a reasonable level of comprehension." The ACER study on literacy answered this by saying, "At the 14-year-old level, 30 per cent had not achieved mastery in obtaining information from a newspaper and 33 per cent could not comprehend a newspaper." Is this good enough?

MR. LIVINGSTON: I really am befuddled by statistics. If that is true, I am really sorry about it. I can only talk about my experience and it is that students do read a lot more than people think they do. For example, there is a tremendous turnover in the fiction section of our library. It is not uncommon to find students taking four or five books home. I am well aware that there are classes within my school with a great number of students who do not cope very well with reading. There would be a very complex number of factors as to why they do not cope. It is not as simple as saying that they are not taught reading. I have seen those same students sit for a citizenship education exam paper which has asked them to pick from a list of politicians their local member, and Mr. Eric Shaw has been made chairman of the Communist Party in China and President of the United States. Those kids are having trouble learning basic facts which they have been taught. Learning to write and read is a much more complicated thing. It is a very difficult thing. All I can say is that we are all trying hard to achieve it.

THE CHAIRMAN: You will be receiving a copy of this transcript so I shall read into the record that the document from which I am quoting is the Education for Literacy and Numeracy in Australian Schools by Dr. J. P. Keeves, Australian Educational Review, No. 11. Another interesting statistic in it concerns literacy standards. People are worried about standards. When you are talking standards, you have to look at statistics. On page 27 of the report , a table shows results of the word knowledge test for students aged 14 years by State, 1970 and 1975. It shows a drop in the mean between these years of 1.5 in Queensland which was the highest drop in Australia and higher than the national decline of 1.3 .

Are you worried about that?

MR. LIVINGSTON: I am worried about any student I come across who does not have a very good command of language. I could quote examples of Queensland studies which show that reading ages have improved. The Jacobsen study carried out by members of the Research Branch of the Department of Education shows this. There are various other studies which one could allude to which would show that there has been no drop in standards.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is the Australian Council for Educational Research study.

MR. VOLK: A couple of weeks ago I read a report put out by the Research Branch of the Department of Education in Queensland. I was interested - rather encouraged - to note that this particular body is responsible for looking at, particularly, reading standards over about 30 years. I was encouraged to notice that , while the general finding is that students are reading a bit slower now than they were in 1946 and earlier, their comprehension rate has actually improved and that what is happening in Queensland compares very favourably - in fact quite favourably - with what is happening in the other States.

BRO. LONG: They are not taking into account sufficiently the increasingly large proportion of schoolchildren now coming from homes where English is not spoken in the home. If you take this over 10 or 15 years ago, the percentage has increased enormously in this regard. I think these children not because of a fall in our standards of education but because of an increase in the percentage of children from homes where English is not even spoken, or if it is spoken it is not standard English.

MR. MILLER: I note in your tables one and two, on the evidence relating to the teaching of formal grammar, that most of the findings relate to the period from 1903 to 1939. Have you anything more up to date?

MR. LIVINGSTON: There is a great amount of evidence and I did some research on this. We changed the nature of our submission. If we had kept on going in the way we were, you would have had a very thick submission. I have in my hand my very first hit and it deals specifically with grammar teaching. I started a time line of research which started in 1903 and I got up to 1965. I consulted various experts in this field from the university who told me that they had really not been keeping up to date because it was a closed issue; it was proven that the direct teaching of grammar had very little effect on a student's ability to use language in an oral form or in a written-easay form. It depends, of course, on how you define grammar and how you define the direct teaching of grammar. In saying that, I do not mean that we throw out of the window altogether any formal instruction about the nature of language. Simply what I am saying is that the syllabus asks that the content of what is being said be regarded as important as the way in which we write, whereas in the past all you had to know was that a verb agrees with its subject in number and person. We are asking now that people be able to use that knowledge.

MR.HEWITT: How can they use it if you do not have it?

MR. LIVINGSTON: The research shows that whereas a person might be able to learn off by heart that a verb agrees with the subject in number and person, in the same

way as we can teach a parrot to say, "Polly wants a cracker.", when it comes to translating that abstract concept into practical use, there is very little transition.

MR. HEWITT: You do not convince me. It seems to me that people wrote letters better years ago when they learnt those simple bases, such as the structure of a sentence. It seems to me that people no longer understand the structure of a sentence. I was speaking to a trainee teacher on one occasion about positive, comparative and superlative degrees. I may as well have been speaking a foreign language. I think people had a better appreciation of words when they were taught roots. Roots have now gone. You do not convince me, to be quite honest, when you say that it was not important and that they did not relate to those things. I say in a personal sense that I related to those things very much indeed and still relate to them.

MR.LIVINGSTON: You are obviously a success story in the education system and I think we all are. I will say two things. Firstly, I will speak about research. Research evidence shows this. I could quote research evidence from people like the 1947 Macauley study, the Macauley study of 1957 and the Harris study of 1962 to 1965, where test papers were given to students over a period. They were given to students who had been instructed in the formal way in grammar and to students who had not been instructed.

The students who had not been instructed did marginally better. I am not saying that that proves very much, but at least it proves that the direct teaching of grammar was not terribly beneficial to those students. I can speak personally from a teacher's point of view. I have a class of year 9 students and there is a great variety of students in that class. Of the 29, 23 use language extremely well and six of them have basic sentence, spelling and punctuation problems. It would be wasting the time of the 23 members of the class if I spent most of my time drilling them on grammar. So I have given those six students who have weaknesses individual tuition. I give them extra homework. I cater for them individually.

MR. VOLK: It is also partly a matter of method. What we are talking about is the rote memorisation, out of context, learning of grammar. That is the thrust of the evidence. That kind of approach does not seem to produce any noticeably good effects. On the other hand, what we have found to be more useful is follow up writing exercises with workshop sessions so that the grammar content arises out of specific problems that have come up in the writing, and if you set a group of people to work on a specific writing task, you have taken it up, corrected it and found that there are a number of areas of weakness in sentence structure and what have you - it makes more sense to follow that up immediately by a workshop lesson in the context of that exercise and the aims that you have rather than a teacher once a week holding a skills lesson out of context on the conventions of punctuation, grammar or spelling. I started teaching in the early 1960s and at that stage we had a rush of books - I suppose in some ways they were very well prepared - that invited students to do a whole range of exercises in filling in blanks, changing singular nouns to plural forms, getting the spelling correct and so on. We found that they could do that superbly. They could fill in the blanks, they could find antonyms and synonyms, rearrange sentences, make the passive form into the active and so on. They could do that splendidly, but there seemed to be no spin-off. We would test them a few days later or a week later, and find that nothing appeared to have stuck. That particular technique did not make for any improvement in the writing. That is why our own experience tends to bear out what the research is pointing to there. I appreciate the point you are making, that it depends a little bit on the student and his particular approach and interest. Some people do respond to the structural approach.

MR. MILLER: On page 11 you refer to the department's Curriculum Branch. Given adequate staffing could this department handle your needs and meet your needs? Or would you prefer a national body?

MR. LIVINGSTON: I think the existence of a Curriculum Branch to keep teachers abreast of modern developments and to give teachers aid and direction is an excellent idea - except that at the moment one person is looking after both primary and secondary. It simply is not sufficient.

MR. MILLER: But given adequate staffing is the State department preferable?

MR. LIVINGSTON: I would rather have the State department doing it, because it would cater for our special circumstances.

MR. VOLK: I have used the Curriculum Branch on a number of occasions, but even though it is understaffed, I have been most impressed with the sort of help it has been able to give us.

MR. MILLER: Would you want any connection at all with the C.D.C.?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is launching into a big language programme shortly. It is to be the next big one.

MR. LIVINGSTON: Obviously, there would be some connection, but I think the ordinary class-room teacher would appreciate help from the State body more.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, gentlemen, for appearing before us. Time is our enemy. I would be pleased if you would convey our thanks to your members for the preparation of the submission. Thank you for appearing before us this afternoon and answering our questions so frankly.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are very pleased to welcome before the Committee representatives of the Women's Action Group, whose submission has been received by members and studied by them. It will not be necessary to read it. For our purposes it is coded SE-78. I would ask the ladies who are appearing to give us their names and to indicate the executive positions that they hold.

MRS.GROSSKREUTZ: I am Marie-Ann Grosskreutz and I am president of the Women's Action Group.

MRS.BOWERS: I am Mrs. Barbara Bowers and I am spokeswoman for the Women's Action Group.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We will commence the questioning.

MR. MILLER: In the middle of page 2 you refer to teachers' recruitment and you say that it should be of the highest quality. Do you favour a system of teacher selection on grounds other than academic?

MRS. BOWERS: Yes. This is included in the body of our submission. It has come to our notice that there are a significant number of trainee teachers who are there because they did not receive sufficient T.E. scores to go to university to follow another occupation that they would prefer, so in some ways they are a little disappointed in following the particular training career that they have undertaken. We believe, and it has come to us from a number of our members that not everyone is psychologically equipped to deal with children. This is very much so for parents, who have them as a matter of course, and just as much so for people who tend to want to take on the teaching of them. For example, there have been instances where teachers find it not only difficult to relate to children but, in some cases, have been quite sadistic and obviously are not suited. We believe there should be some form of psychological assessment - not just the superficial one that I believe is undertaken now, by which they see if they are suited in general terms. There should be an in-depth one to see whether they are suited in a job which demands tremendous patience, skill and social communication at that level.

MR. MILLER: What about homosexuals?

MRS. BOWERS: What? Should they be allowed teach?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MRS. BOWERS: I think you can have in a class-room a teacher whose private life never intrudes upon his professional life. I think it goes for, shall I say, promotional heterosexuals as well. When their personal beliefs - whether of the Left or Right - or their personal sexual followings - of one or the other choice - intrude, that is when you have the right to step in.

MR. MILLER: Should teachers who are promoted to the position of principal, also undergo a test? We see teachers promoted to the role of principal on length of service rather than ability or qualifications in other areas.

MRS. BOWERS: We have in our submission a section on principals. It has been brought to our attention and we believe that at present the role of principal is unfortunately far too administrative in terms of paperwork - doing things for the department - rather than remaining as the head teacher and as such having complete jurisdiction over the quality of the teacher in his or her care. When we hopefully revert back

to when the headmaster becomes the head-teacher rather than the head pen-pusher, a psychological assessment would need to be taken out as is done in business to determine whether he is in fact a fit person or an able person to have the rapport and co-operation of those under you.

MR. MILLER: Are you concerned that some principals should not be principals?

MRS. BOWERS: Yes. I could name a few. I won't, of course. I also think that there are a lot of people who are principals and doing the work that the department asks of them in a book sense who are far better in the class-room with both teachers and pupils. They tend to fall into the older, more traditional category; but I believe - and it has been brought to our attention - that a directive at departmental level was aimed at getting the headmasters back into their offices and away from the verandas and the jurisdiction over their teachers. I think that this is lamentable.

THE CHAIRMAN: In paragraph 2 on page 3 you say -

> "It is apparent that many educationists, both at Departmentl and classroom level, indulge quite openly in social engineering based on their own personal and quite subjective values."

Could you amplify or give some example?

MRS. BOWERS: Yes. I was once asked to an educational seminar in, shall we say, the pre-SEMP days - when SEMP was in fact being used. There were only two lay people there. Dr. Charles Noller was one and I was the other. Whilst the majority of people there were in fact good teachers, in the sense of the role they had to play, some of the more influential ones - I might add that these people came from all over the State and from interstate - quite openly said that they felt and believed that it was their role, if a subjective-value judgment was asked for by the students, to give it, and they felt, if they did not agree, it was their right to impart their particular slant to those students irrespective of the background the students came from. I think that this is a denial, first of all, of the rights of the parents and, secondly, it is something that is not isolated within the teaching profession.

Again, it tends to fall into age groups. You tend to find the younger, more evangelical teacher who is coming out now - and I use that in the true sense of the word; they are out proselytising, on street corners, talking about text-books or whatever - in that category rather than the traditional teacher. I think it is because they believe they have the right to make changes as they see fit. This has been borne out by parents who have given us instances in class-rooms. I have been in a situation like that with my own children. That type of idea is not just something that we have thought up. It is a consensus.

MR. HEWITT: I would like your definition of "constructive discipline".

MRS. BOWERS: If a child is being totally disruptive - swearing or perhaps even picking its nose - one can tell it to cease in a class-room situation, where you are looking for a constructive consensus in which to work. That is discipline of a constructive nature. You then can tend to go the other way, where it becomes totally repressive and gets to the point of where a teacher is singling out and picking on a child to the detriment of that child's work. Instances of that have come to my notice. I had it put to me at a primary school principals' conference at which I spoke - unfortunately it is a very sad thing, but this is the type of question they see fit

to bring up - that if you do not allow them to impose one type of value - one type of discipline - in a class-room, why should you expect them to impose another in terms of discipline - for example, if two children were indulging in sexual intercourse down at the end of the primary school playground? I have yet to know of a principal complain about that. Secondly, I think it is against the law; so he could say that any illegal activity within the schoolgrounds was not permitted. Thirdly, I think they use their common sense. There are certain social jurisdictions within which they have to work. It is usually politeness; discipline in terms of school rules which parents know about when they send their children to those schools. It is that type of constructive discipline which does not go over the bounds into the quite regressive, nit-picking type of discipline which is counter-productive.

MR. HEWITT: A good deal of disciplinary problems occur in high schools because children do not want to stay in the school. They are absorbing nothing and they are just killing time until they reach the age of 15. They want out. Would you subscribe to the opinion that the leaving age should have greater flexibility and there should be a discretion to allow children to leave at a younger age?

MRS. BOWERS: I think there should always in almost any rule be a certain amount of discretionary leeway to account for individual cases; but, just on that point, sometimes if you see a child who does not want to stay at school, I think you must look at why he does not want to stay. It is not always because he is a low achiever or cannot do the work. Sometimes, if you look at the class-room situation, you find that he has no rapport with the teacher with whom he is working; he is encountering certain difficulties in the class-room; or perhaps there is some sort of social upset at the school. I think that has to be taken into consideration as well. However, as I say, with any rule there should be an amount of discretion on either side so as to take individuality into account.

MR. HEWITT: You heard a good part of the submission from the English Teachers' Association.

MRS. BOWERS: Oh? The English Teachers' Association?

MR. HEWITT: You heard our questioning of them. Would you have any observation about the more basic things that we taught about parsing, analysis of sentences and the use of roots?

MRS. BOWERS: Using my own experience in secondary schools, choosing a debating team to represent Queensland.- where once the number from which we could choose was quite wide and we had difficulty in making a choice, we have a difficulty in making a choice now for far different reasons. It is mostly because children are becoming far more inarticulate, I believe, and unable to express themselves in a disciplined manner. That does not mean to say that they do not talk very much. They talk quite a bit, but they are not learning the disciplines of the English language. Most parents - and this is also in the body of the submission - feel we should be getting back to some basics so that they have the basic tools of communication and expression that will take them out into the wider world and enable them to communicate both on a social and commercial level. It does not mean that they have to be sent out as the complete, finished product; but they are given the tools so that, when they do go out and decide to go on to tertiary education and perhaps to a higher degree, or perhaps to be a plumber, they are not retarded by never having been given those basic skills. This is why we believe that Greek and Latin roots, which are

the building blocks of a vocabulary, ought to be taught. I have found that the vocabulary of senior students in particular is quite lean.

MR. MILLER: Whilst we are on the subject of basic skills, in paragraph 4 of page 4, when you are talking about the curriculum, are you suggesting that students should meet certain requirements or standards throughout primary-school years?

MRS. BOWERS: This seems to be the consensus among parents - that there has to be some standard, some precise standard, against which they can measure the achievement of their child. It was with some regret that we noticed in the midst of this inquiry another report was released and a subsequent Press report said that we are now going to say - I forget the exact words - that a child is competent, most competent or not very competent. They are resorting to the use of words. As anyone who works in the area of words knows, different words mean different things to different people at different times. It is with some abhorrence that parents see the move away from the more precise gradation into a quite alarming variable. If you get an "average", for example, or if you are given a "good" or you are given a squirrel or you are given a puppy dog to say you have done well in a poster, it does not mean as much as 7 out of 10. At least 7 out of 10 is 7 out of 10, whereas a dog might mean he is dux of the school and a squirrel might mean he is an abject failure.

Whereas with competent, what is "competent"? The type of standards parents are asking for is some set curriculum that they know what the child should be achieving, that the teacher knows what he is supposed to be imparting and that the headmaster knows what the standard should be so that in all there is a consensus of accountability.

MR. MILLER: Following on that, do you believe that a student who does not come up to that passing standard should be kept down? We have had teachers coming before us at primary level saying that they should not be kept back.

MR. HEWITT: The argument there, if I can try to help you, is whether you let the child go ahead with his peer group so he is not disadvantaged by being left down, or do you disadvantage him by letting him go ahead without maintaining standards?

MRS. BOWERS: There are two ways to overcome this. Firstly, there are a number of teachers who are very much against streaming, but our submission is in favour of it because you should allow children, or anyone for that matter, to progress at their own pace surrounded by people with whom they can compare favourably - preferably favourably. Secondly, there is an instance in some schools of a transitional class, which means you can have-----

MR. MILLER: The Gap Primary is one.

MRS. GROSSKREUTZ: Corinda is another.

MRS. BOWERS: It was until they lost their teacher, unfortunately, and we understand she was not replaced by the department. A transitional class means that if a child is a slow achiever at the end of the year, and he has just not come up to standard, it does not mean to say he needs another year in that class. To reach the standard he may need only another 3 or 4 months, so he is then streamed off, if you like, into that transitional class, gains the individual attention - which one teacher spoke about earlier and which I think is very creditable - and then is re-oriented into his peer group who went ahead without the use of the transitional class. I think that is something the department might look at. Some years you might have a dozen children in the transitional class, but in another year you might have only two or three, but it is far preferable to keeping that child down.

MR. HEWITT: What about parent input into schools? Have you thought about community involvement, the extent to which parents should have a say in the determination of courses that are offered and the general conduct of the schools?

MRS. BOWERS: Parents at the moment feel very much at a disadvantage. First of all, they are not legislated for in terms of having a say. As I understand the Act the p. and c. does not have any legal standing in terms of enforcement. Say a p. and c. meeting comes to a certain decision. They have no power to see that the headmaster implements that decision even though every parent of every child in the school says that that should be so.

MR. HEWITT: You might be encouraged to know that the Government proposes to give statutory recognition to parents and citizens' committees.

MRS. BOWERS: I think that is a step in the right direction, although I think that parents should not always be up at the school forever breathing down the necks of the teachers. I think they have to be allowed a certain amount of autonomy. After all, it is their area of expertise. This gets back to the set curriculum and textbook situation. When books do not come home parents cannot help their children with their homework; firstly, because they do not know what they are doing and, secondly, the books are not available because of this new system where two children may have to share one book and the books are not released from the school. Thirdly, when the reports do come home they are set out in such a way that the parents really do not know how their children are going. One of the best implementations I have seen over the last couple of years is the introduction of the parent-teacher interview at school. We believe that that should remain, but it should be additional to a more precise report evaluation.

MR. MILLER: This is the face-to-face interview you are referring to?

MRS. BOWERS: Yes, that is extremely good. The parents also worry about accountability. Who do you go to if you don't like what is going on in your school? With the present system of personal assessment of the student by the teacher it is indeed a brave, if not foolish, parent who will jump up and down about a teacher knowing that that teacher then is responsible for the personal assessment of that child. So quite often they swallow their pride and forget many of the injustices they feel are going on in class-rooms. Conversely, many a student does not write down what they really think, either in English or social courses, they write down what they know a teacher will like, and so go through school and through the education system, as it were, with two trains of thought, what they really believe - which they will use later - and what they know the teacher wants, which I think is rather counter-productive all round. Accountability is quite a worrying thing because of the department. Who do you go to in the Board of Secondary School Studies? I know one name. How many people know where to go. We even put a book into the curriculum branch for assessment 18 months ago, for example, and I think they lost it. You can't find out who lost it. Who do they go to? I think until such time as there is accountability parents are not going to be entirely satisfied with the system at present.

MR. HEWITT: That is one of our terms of reference. We have to make a recommendation on whether or not there should be an independent person, almost in the role of an ombudsman to whom people can refer.

MRS. BOWERS: When ombudsmen become effective I think it would be a good idea, but I think ombudsmen really are not effective, especially in that situation where you would probably draw him from the ranks of public servants whose sympathies are perhaps a little more with his past colleagues than the general public.

THE CHAIRMAN: On page 4 in relation to curriculum you talk about a set structured curriculum. Are you talking there about a totality or a core plus an optional component?

MRS. BOWERS: Core plus optional component. I think you can't be so strict-----

THE CHAIRMAN: It is very hard to teach Shakespeare to some of our isolated communities; it just would not be relevant at all.

MRS. BOWERS: I do not know that Shakespeare is relevant to the more urban communities at the present time. What parents say is that you have to face up to the fact that there are certain requirements asked for by employers and employing bodies when you leave school, and to go out and say, "Look, I have all these passes in all these electives, and they are not terribly well defined but I was very good at them", they are not really specific and it seems to me there is a need for some core curriculum with leeway on, as I said, either side. This also helps in the textbook situation. You can move from school to school - indeed, from class-room to class-room - within the same structure and the outlay for books for parents is quite prohibitive, and they do not seem to be of any use. Some books, for example, do not seem to be used at all. "Citizen in Society" was one. I was told, "You do not really have to worry about it because quite a bit of it is inaccurate. They will probably only use two or three pages out of it." But that book was $11. Surely if you are going to use only two or three pages out of a book perhaps it could be incorporated with two or three pages out of another book so that you end up with a book of about 250 pages, all of which can be used.

MRS. GROSSKREUTZ: I received a phone call from a mother who was concerned about this curriculum and core curriculum situation. She told me that her daughter doing English has been asked to study Ibsen's "Doll's House" and yet the mother is taking English at the adult education level and she is studying "Wuthering Heights". She feels that the adult class she is attending is based on the old traditional system whereas the reading list for her child is totally different.

MRS. BOWERS: This is compounded by the problem that if you object to a certain textbook being used, this is under the autonomous jurisdiction, really, of the headmaster, but obviously a headmaster in a very big school cannot read every book within the school so it then falls under the province of the subject master. If you jump up and down with the subject master or mistress who is responsible for the moderation and assessment of the student, again I say the parent will really find himself in a very bad situation. What do they do? So I think there should be some sort of committee or body set up which can assess those books which parents, citizens or anyone, for that matter, consider to be unsuitable, inadequate, incorrect or just not up to the standard which they would require.

MR. MILLER: On page 5, you have strong words to say about social education. Have you any views on MACOS and SEMP? I cannot let you go without asking you that question.

MRS. BOWERS: SEMP, from my own experience, I felt was a very good concept which went wrong. I think that there is some benefit in what you would call pre-packaging subject material for teachers because of the heavy work-load they have. However, there were parts of it that were totally unacceptable and should not have been there in the first place. I would like to know who put them in, but, again, you can never find out who. You would even have subject-masters standing up and saying, "Look, we agree that they really should not be there, but they probably won't be used." "Probably" is not good enough. If they are not going to be used or should not be used, they should not be there, anyway. Pre-packaging to the extent where a teacher really does not have to do any work or think, anyway, is probably allowing us to fall into an ever-growing trend where teachers can become very sloppy, and many of them have, particularly in the open class-room situation.

THE CHAIRMAN: If there is a lot of good in SEMP, what do you think we should do about it?

MRS. BOWERS: I think you take out the bad bits and you keep the good bits if they are considered to be relevant. Did you really need SEMP? Was SEMP really going to fill a void, or was it merely going to absorb? As one teacher from up North said, "SEMP is a four-letter word and it is going to take over the world." They had already - proudly, I might add - taken away geography, absorbed history. It was like a great amoeba that was going round taking in all these things, so that you ended up with a one-subject-norm bland little mass called SEMP. Really, geography has its own expertise; so does history; so do a number of other subjects. But, according to the great advocates of SEMP, they were all going to be eaten and become the one-subject programme.

THE CHAIRMAN: Really? Were they not resource materials in all those subject areas that you are talking about?

MRS. BOWERS: Well, I can only go on a subject-master from North Queensland who said, "We have successfully done away with the geography and history classes, and we now have SEMP." Who better to tell me what they are doing with it than someone who is using it?

THE CHAIRMAN: But the curriculums, courses, and so on, are laid down by the Board of Secondary School Studies, not by the Curriculum Development Centre that produced SEMP. SEMP was a set of resource materials for use in the teaching of a variety of social-science-type subjects, I understand.

MRS. BOWERS: That is right. As I said, quite a bit of it was considered good as resource material, but parts of it, of course, should not have been used. They were not useless; they were quite useful depending on what you wanted to use them for.

MACOS I did not see at all, but the question that was raised in my mind was: why did we need it at that early stage, and why, more importantly, as Mrs. Grosskreutz has here, after 30 hours' in-service training of the teachers who were going to teach it was there no assessment of the effectiveness of that in-service training of those teachers? So were they really qualified to teach something as socially delicate as MACOS?

MRS. GROSSKREUTZ: We asked why wasn't there an assessment of the teachers after the 30 hours' training and we were told that it would be an insult to their professionalism if they were assessed or examined in any way on the 30 hours' work that they had done. One of our members went through the 30-hour course, and she said that really you could have signed on, gone to sleep for the 30 hours and then claimed to be able to be proficient in teaching MACOS.

MR. MILLER: You advocate the abolition of autonomous boards such as the Board of Secondary School Studies. Have you reasons for that?

MRS. BOWERS: Basically, I, along with a number of other people, have an innate suspicion of autonomous bodies or statutory bodies that give very good reasons why they should become so but, once becoming so, refuse to give any reasons as to why they do certain things. You have a Minister for Education for a very good reason. You also have Directors of Education for a very good reason. Of course, if real jurisdiction over autonomous bodies within education, what real control will the parent ever be able to exert in the areas in which he or she has the right to have control without knowing who to go to? That is why, until there is such time as there is accountability from these bodies, we would certainly be very much against the institution of any more of them. I mean, one is enough at this stage. The role of the Minister becomes terribly important, which again puts him in a very bad position because it is then seen as politics being infused into education. Until such time as teachers themselves and educationists and planners take on a more responsible role, and certainly are more accountable to both parents and the community, it is an unfortunate fact of life that wherever the Legislative power lies, that is where it will have to be used.

MR. MILLER: Would you favour an advisory committee?

MRS. BOWERS: Made up of whom or what?

MR. MILLER: An advisory committee to the Minister. I have not thought about the make-up.

MRS. BOWERS: Yes. As a matter of fact, we put in an independent submission, or an idea, some time ago that there should be an independent tribunal made up of both professional educationists and parents - not necessarily drawn from the State p. and c. body, I might add, because I have my own ideas on just how representative that body is - parents, community and commercial interests - so that education is meeting not only the needs of the community but the needs of the people who are in fact being educated. At the moment, I think it is fairly ad hoc, and we have great expectations of the outcome of this particular inquiry because we are given to understand that it has the greatest input of any equivalent inquiry.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I should like to thank you for your submissions. We have been enormously impressed by the number of people and organisations who have presented submissions. We have now come to the end of public submissions presented to us, of which we have received - we have not stopped to count them all - approximately 4,000. We have offered to about 100 parties the opportunity to come before us to canvass their arguments. Unfortunately, many people have had to be left out. The parties who have appeared have represented the major organisations that have a major interest

in education and in the community generally. They have represented parents, teachers, educators, employers, employees - anybody whom we thought would appreciate an opportunity to come before us. Some have been disappointed, and I regret that. The public hearings began on 13 June this year. They have been interrupted by Parliament - I think that is the appropriate way of putting it - but I wish to thank all those who have contributed, in particular the representatives of the Women's Action Group who made the final appearance before us this afternoon. We now have one half-day for further discussions with departmental officers, and I am shortly going to ask the Minister for Education to appear before the Committee. I again thank officers of the Women's Action Group who were here today and ask them to convey our thanks to their members.

MRS. BOWERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I invite the Minister for Education, Hon. V.J. Bird, to appear before the Committee.

MR. BIRD: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

THE CHAIRMAN: As you have heard, Mr. Bird, we have had a tremendous input of information. So far we have had, at an estimate, something like 4,000 submissions of one type or another. We have had 100 parties appearing before us and we have travelled widely throughout the State of Queensland. We have talked with your departmental officers. I take this opportunity of saying to you a word of thanks for the full co-operation that you and your department have offered. It is fair to say that not in one small instance have we found lacking any information or co-operation, both here in our inquiry and as we moved through the State. We have been very pleased to have regional directors arrange programmes, transport and accommodation for us and to offer advice freely. On behalf of the Committee I emphasise that co-operation has been excellent. Is there anything that you would care to say?

MR. BIRD: Thank you very much, Mr. Ahern. I am very pleased that I have an opportunity to appear before you today. My departmental officers are extremely pleased with the way that they have been received by each member of the Committee. It is obvious to them that the Committee realises, or each member of the Committee realises, his or her responsibility. The questions that have been asked obviously have been asked after very careful consideration. Nothing has been taken lightly. I have received nothing but glowing reports on the way all my departmental officers have been received by the Committee. I thank each member of the Committee for that.

As Minister for Education, I am extremely pleased that the Committee is dealing with this matter in such an earnest way. There could have been nothing worse than for it to have been dealt with frivolously. It is a very important issue. As Minister for Education I am aware of the concern of parents, the public generally, and students throughout Queensland. I receive letters continually expressing all types of concern and varying opinions on what should be happening in education in Queensland. Only good can come from this inquiry. It will assist my department to meet the expectations of parents, students and the general public. I am a little surprised that some people are not aware after the publicity this matter received, that I have an ombudsman. My former Press secretary, Mr. Rick Nathan who has never really been associated with the Education Department has always been on my private staff. He, in fact, is my ombudsman. He has dealt with complaints of the type mentioned more latterly this afternoon. He has, I think, dealt with those complaints to the satisfaction of the people raising them.

On the matter of textbooks I might say that I have not had a complaint about wastage concerning over-ordering or changing textbooks too frequently - and this concerns other books used in schools - since the direction went out about two years ago. Those things are well in hand.

As Minister for Education, I shall be looking forward to the results of your deliberations when you have received all the submissions and had time to peruse them.

THE CHAIRMAN: The task that we have been set has been enormous. We are aware of the fact that your department, and particularly Cabinet, are awaiting on us for advice. I indicate to you that we are aware of the particular problem in relation to the secondary school assessment programme. We are giving priority in our considerations to that. That will be the first interim paper

presented to the Parliament, so as not to hold you up unduly.

MR. BIRD: Thank you very much, Mr. Ahern. I appreciate that because this matter is important. An early decision has to be made on it. I look forward to the results of your deliberations.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are proceeding to undertake four more visits to schools. We will be visiting the Eagle Farm Technical College, the Primary Correspondence School, the School for the Deaf, and we will be going to the Bundamba High School. That will complete our information-gathering phase. On Monday 23 October we look forward to welcoming your Assistant Director-General, Deputy Director-General and Director-General, which is where we began to talk about the various problems that have arisen, and this will be a rounding-off to our inquiry. Do any of the other Committee members wish to make any comments, or have you something more to say, Mr. Bird?

MR. BIRD: I have no additional comments to make unless there are some particular matters you wish to raise with me.

THE CHAIRMAN: Members of the Committee having nothing further to raise with you, Mr. Bird, I must thank you for attending today. I felt our hearing would not be complete without offering the Minister for Education the courtesy of appearing briefly to enter into a discussion with us for the purpose of the record. I thank you very much, Mr. Bird, for your co-operation. The meeting is now adjourned. It will reconvene on Monday 23 October.

The Committee adjourned at 4.17 p.m.

FRYER
Miss.
81/12

17th day

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE 23 OCT 1978

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(Issued subject to correction upon revision.)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

MEMBERS:

Mr. M. J. Ahern (Chairman)
Mr. W. D. Hewitt
Mr. C. J. Miller
Mr. L. W. Powell
Mr. E. F. Shaw

Advisory Panel:
Dr. R. D. Goodman
Mrs. J. Herron
Mr. P. A. B. Krebs
Mr. K. P. O'Connor

SECRETARY

Mr. E. S. Newton

BRISBANE, 23 OCTOBER 1978

SEVENTEENTH DAY

The Committee resumed at 10 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the final public hearing of the Select Committee is now in session. The Committee has been operating since late June with its public hearings. It has had difficulty inasmuch as there has been a delay in the presentation of some of the submissions and the operations of the Parliament have intervened in the work of the Committee and made difficult the scheduling of its public hearings. We have been grateful for the response we have received. Those who will have an opportunity to peruse it will see that we have had a complete sample of the information that we require.

I have said many of these things previously. However, I would like to say that the information-gathering phase of the inquiry is not quite complete with today's sittings. We have four or five school situations that we wish to visit and we will be attending to that within the next fortnight. We are deeply grateful for the full co-operation that we have received from the Department of Education. We have been very happy to receive a number of position papers presented to us for our consideration. I have brought with me today six of them which, I think, is the complete list. They describe the position of teachers for State schools, the preparation and authorisation of syllabuses for primary schools; there is a similar document for secondary schools; the provision of State secondary education in Queensland, social science courses for primary and secondary school students in Queensland - an overview, and appropriate emphasis between basic and other activities im primary education. Those documents have been prepared specially for us and have been enormously helpful to us.

We are now at the stage where the Committee felt it may be appropriate if we again offered to the three senior officers of the Education Department an opportunity to come before us in a summary role to talk firstly about anything that they would like to cover before the Committee and, secondly, to give us an opportunity to place a few questions in summary before them.

This morning, we are very pleased to welcome Mr. George Fitzhardinge Berkeley, who has been very helpful to us during the course of the inquiry. I ask him if he would now like to make some initial summary comments to us.

GEORGE FITZHARDINGE BERKELEY, examined:-

THE CHAIRMAN: You might firstly care to make some comments.

MR. BERKELEY: Thank you, Mr. Ahern. Firstly, I would thank you and the Committee for this opportunity to appear again to put one or two points. From the point of view of my position in the department, and the department generally, might I say that we certainly feel the inquiry must have a significant effect on the future development of education, even if you do not get around to writing a report. The involvement of so many people - professional educators, parents, members of the community, employer and employee organisations - in preparing submissions has helped to clarify for the community at large a number of issues on which there may have been very woolly thinking before. The particular thing that pleases me personally is the involvement of community organisations, especially their expressions about curriculum in schools. I would express the hope that the Committee will give some thought in its recommendations to ways in which the community may continue to be involved in the processes of deciding what is to be taught in schools. Through your courtesy, Mr. Ahern, I have had the opportunity to read the submissions that have been presented to the Committee - "peruse" may be a better word because of the tremendous volume. The second point I would make is that it would be a pity if those submissions were, as it were, buried. I would hope that there may be some procedure, when you have concluded your deliberations, whereby at least the substantive submissions made to the Committee can be collated as some kind of a record of views of a large number of people. That, I am sure, would assist the department in its future decision-making on such issues.

THE CHAIRMAN: I reassure you at this stage that one of the very substantial benefits we see coming from the inquiry is the collation of this information. We will be anxious to adopt some procedures whereby this evidence will be available to the public, to the Parliament, to the Department of Education and to researchers in a continuing sort of way. We have not finalised the details but we do have in relation to the substantial submissions 10 copies. I think that is an option we can consider seriously.

MR. BERKELEY: It has always seemed to me - and I have been involved in a large number of committees, but not parliamentary committees - that there is a waste of human effort when so many good submissions are prepared and, to an extent, are buried. I was pleased to hear you refer to the position papers. My colleagues - particularly those junior colleagues of mine - who have spent many hours in preparing those documents under my general direction and that of Mr. Warry, have been a little bit concerned, since there has been little reference to them in the proceedings, about whether the effort might have been worth while. I am pleased that your Committee has found them to be valuable. The last one might need some comment by me. It arose from some discussions that you had with our Minister following, I think, some visits to schools where you raised with him the issue of staffing. It was prepared very hurriedly, but I hope, thoroughly, and we thought it worth while to look at the staffing position over the last five years and to look at it for the next five years. The Budget for 1977-78 presented us with some substantial and severe problems in staffing in that, because of the monetary and budget limit on teachers, there was a sudden end to a planned improvement in the provision of teachers in the State. That paper examines both the effects of the Budget restrictions at the present time and for the future. I would be pleased to explore some of those issues with the Committee if its members wish to do so.

There are two other issues I would like to comment on. From my reading of the proceedings and from the submissions, apart from our first submission in relation to the organisation of the department, I do not think that your Committee has given - I have no evidence that your Committee has done this - consideration to the professional and administrative support staff of the department. I think it would be a pity since the staffing of the department is central to many of the issues that you are exploring if some comment were not made on this. From a comparative point of view the Queensland Department of Education is poorly staffed. I speak quantitatively rather than qualitatively. It is poorly staffed and suffers very considerably in terms of the professional and administrative support staff that is available at the senior level and the secondary level in comparison with New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia.

That is one issue that does need some explanation, particularly if your Committee is to come forward with recommendations - and I am sure it will - which will involve rethinking and probably reorganising of the way in which education is administered and functions within this State. The final issue that I would like to mention - and this is rather without offering any solution - is that I have only finished up more confused in reading the submissions and reading the proceedings on the very important issue on the specificity of decision-making. Most submissions seem to me to deal with this at not a level in depth and not having thought through the issues, yet it is central to the issues which your Committee has to deal with. If we take as the historical precedence to the establishment of this committee the question of the banning of SEMP in Queensland schools, then that was very much concerned with the level of specificity in decision-making. It is a level on which I have some views , but also lots of doubts, and I have looked for the submissions and the proceedings to clarify that. I do not think that it has, or it certainly has not clarified it for me. It has made me even more confused than I was before the Committee started. Again I would be happy to answer any questions that members might wish to put on my views in that area. Apart from that, I was a little disappointed - I know it was only an indicator - at certainly one of the questions that you stated in your letter that you wished to discuss with me. I would have thought there were many more important issues to be discussed in a final session than the teacher effectiveness training. I would not have selected that as one of the final three as being more important. I would certainly have considered that staffing and issues such as decision-making would have been ones that I would have preferred to comment on rather than what appeared to me to be a very minor matter such as teacher-effectiveness training.

BY MR. MILLER: What other important issues would you like to discuss today?--I think I have outlined them.

There is nothing else besides them?--No.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Could I put into perspective for you the purposes of my letter to the Director-General regarding this hearing. He indicated to my secretary that he would like an indication of the type of questions that we might like to ask. It is a question that we have had put to us all the way along and the sheer enormity of the task of trying to predict the type of questions that would arise has made our job difficult. As this is the last opportunity, I sought to offer that service to the Director-General. In doing so I realised the inadequacy and I believe that I qualified it in my letter. I sought to mention some of the issues that I felt our Committee, in discussions, had felt were not adequately traversed and one was teacher-effectiveness training. I did not think it had been traversed adequately. The role of the State Development Committee has not been touched on practically at all in public submissions before us although it is covered in the written submissions. And then there is SEMP, which was not unexpected. However, I believe that I did qualify it. It is probably quite proper to criticise the other questions that are to be asked of the other gentlemen who will appear this morning and say that I think you are being a little unfair to suggest that this is, in effect, a complete list. It is not . All that we are doing today is tying the loose ends and going into summary matters. I hope that the opportunity will be offered, during deliberations, for you and the other officers to provide us with some further help in a continuing way, because we will need it. That is the history which is behind those questions?-- My concern really was just that I think teacher-effectiveness training was blownup

out of all proportion and I simply wanted to express my concern that I did not regard it as a major issue. I will be very happy to answer any queries about it and, in particular, relate it to the operations of the State Development Committee, because that is where the issue did come up in the first place.

This was an honest effort to foreshadow a couple of matters?-- I am not in any way impugning your honesty. I just wished to make that point clear.

I was trying to be helpful, realising the inadequacy of what I was trying to do. In order to dispatch it could you talk about it? People have put to us in their submissions some criticism of teacher-effectiveness training. Is it a matter not to be concerned about?-- Perhaps if I start off with a very brief outline of the operation of the State Development Committee and how it makes its decisions and how that leads into this question of the training course in teacher effectiveness, which came up out of a proposal before that committee - the State Development Committee administers the School Commission's Funds for teacher development and, by the directive or the conditions laid down by the Schools Commission for the expenditure of such funds, they have to be administered by a committee representative of all the bodies which will share in those funds. So the first point to make is that the State Development Committee is not a State department committee. I happen to chair it but it is not even essential that a State officer chair it, although it does facilitate the administration of the funds, since they have to flow through Treasury into our Estimates, and out in that way. But it is not essential that a Department of Education person be chairman. The deputy chairman, for a long while, was Mr. Briody, but the present deputy chairman is Mr. Gary Everett of the Catholic Education Office. That committee consists of representatives of the Department of Education - senior administrative officers and officers involved in in-service education - the Catholic Education Office, the independent school system, teacher organisations, such as the Queensland Teachers' Union, the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, allied educational organisations such as the Queensland Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association, the teachers centres that operate throughout the State and, in the last 12 months, a representative of each of the nine regional groups that have been established as part of the committee's policy of decentralising the operations of the State Development Committee. So it is a very large committee. It meets now about five times a year but we are gradually cutting that down to , we hope, once a term.

The subcommittee meets in between those times and deals with decisions within the policy guide-lines of funding at the State level. We have distributed some of the funds to the regional groups, and decisions about those, again within guide-lines which have been determined by the central committee, are made for in-service activities within a region. If it is across two or three regions, those regional groups can get together. The funds available were of the order of just over $2,000,000. That is the recommendation for 1979 that has now been approved by the Commonwealth. The funds are divided between replacement salaries for teachers undergoing courses of some length and normal in-service activities. The balance - the commission lays down the guide-lines that it should be 60/40, and it could be anywhere between a 60/40 distribution of those funds. Last year in Queensland it may have been around about 44/56 per cent, but it is around that, with a little bit more on the in-service than on the replacement salaries. One of the problems is that, as with most Commonwealth funds, the amount of money has not increased. Although it has been indexed to a certain extent, it certainly has not been increased over the past three years. The increases due to indexation have not been sufficient to cover increases in costs, such as costs of travel and accommodation for teachers, which are the major costs. So the activities of that committee are shrinking. The central committee has been very much concerned with the development of very clear guide-lines in an attempt to make the best use of those funds. Proposals may be brought to that committee by any of the constituent bodies that are represented on it. The proposal for funding a course for trainers in teacher effectiveness training came to the committee from the subcommittee and prior to that, as I understand the history of it, from the group of full-time in-service co-ordinators of State and non-State systems. In the State system we have a full-time in-service co-ordinator at secondary level and one at primary level. The independent schools have an officer who spends a high proportion of his time on the co-ordination of in-service education activities, and the Catholic Education Office has a similar body. Those four people often meet to co-ordinate and to avoid overlapping in education activities. They were concerned with teacher/pupil relationships and with the view that no matter how effective the preparation of teachers or content is, that unless conflict as much as possible can be avoided in the class-room, unless teachers understand the best way to motivate students, much of other in-service activity might in fact be wasted. That, plus the strong tendency over the last couple of years to make in-service education as school-based as possible, rather than externally imposed by big State-wide conferences, has led to an emphasis on training within the school situation - in-service activity within the school. From those two background viewpoints a proposal was put to the State Development Committee to fund the courses for about 20 people throughout the State who would then be able to run courses on teacher effectiveness training. The immediate opportunity was that a couple of trainers ffom the United States of America who are versed in this area were coming to Australia, and the chance had been offered to them to come to Queensland. The committee considered that and over about four meetings was concerned about some aspects of the course, in particular at the fact that the teacher effectiveness programme in the United States and the trainers required of the people trained a contract that they would sign an agreement that they would only use the particular materials produced by the organisation. As chairman, I did not like that approach and it was discussed by the committee at some length and agreed that we would not be involved if our instructors were to be tied down in such a way. Discussions were held with the representatives of the American authorities and they agreed that they would not want to bind us to such a contract. We then had appear before the committee two teachers who had been involved in courses, two teachers working in Catholic schools in Brisbane, to express

to the committee their views as to how worth while the course was and whether the undertaking of the course had made them feel that they were better practitioners in the class-rooom. Following that discussion, it was agreed that negotiations could continue and that a course for trainers would be held, the idea being then that these people could go back into the regions and offer courses - they were to be week-end or evening courses - for teachers who were interested in this as a means of improving their effectiveness. I might add that teacher effectiveness training had grown out of a programme that had run in America for many years, a programme called parent effectiveness training. The person responsible largely for the course was an American psychologist by the name of Gordon. The committee did approve of the funding, and that is all the committee essentially does, and then it was up to the people who had been funded to proceed with the organisation of courses. The department had agreed to the release of any departmental people who were selected, and other authorities had agreed to the possible release of any of their people who were selected. For technical reasons involving change of plans of the people who were to do the training, the course was withdrawn. Unfortunately, at the same time there were letters to the Press, particularly from the STOP and CARE organisations, which made a number of claims about the course. Most of those claims were, in my view, unsubstantiated. A comment on those was made available to you, I think. I would stress the point that it was neither a personal decision of mine, nor was it a departmental decision, to have the course; it was a recommendation of people involved in in-service. The Department of Education agreed to allow its people to participate once the State Development Committee had agreed that it would make funds available. That is the way in which the State Development Committee operates. I don't know a great deal about teacher effectiveness training; I have had no involvement whatever with it - just as I have had no involvement with many areas that come before the State Development Committee. It is not my field of operation. I am not a teacher trainer, nor am I essentially an in-service educator. I have a general view about the effectiveness of various kinds of courses, but as chairman of the State Development Committee my view is to guide it in its decision-making and make sure that all viewpoints are expressed. I consider that in this particular instance that was very thoroughly done by the State Development Committee. I can table a policy statement for the guidance of applicants on how grants are administered by the State Development Committee and also policy guide-lines on decentralisation of its operations. This might be background material for the committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Are there any questions?

BY MR. MILLER: Is there equal representation on the State Development Committee from the Teachers Unions, the Catholic schools, the independent schools, the Education Department and so on?-- It is probably unequal representation. The Teachers Union complained fairly bitterly because it has only two representatives on it, whereas the Subnormal Children's Welfare Association has two, the independent schools, and so on.

What does the State Government have?-- It varies. Directly, we have four directors who sit on the committee, plus our in-service co-ordinators. It is not meant to be a representative kind of committee. No formula is laid down by the Schools Commission. What we attempt to do is make sure that an interested body has a voice. The subcommittee, which in some ways is the more executive type, deals with the specific applications for grants and simply recommends or approves them as long as they are within guide-lines. It consists of the in-service co-ordinators of the four systems, a representative of the Queensland Teachers Union and the Catholic Education Office and a chairman.

The regional groups are set up on much the same pattern. They are not exactly alike in each region. The committee drew up guide-lines and suggested to the local regions that they follow these guide-lines broadly, but not necessarily specifically, because circumstances develop in each region. For example, there are no private secondary schools, other than Catholic-system schools, in the north-west region.

Do you think that teachers would be more effective if they had to spend more time at school? I have noticed in our rounds that quite a lot of teachers are prepared to spend time in school after the children leave, whereas a lot more seem to race the children to the front gate. If it were compulsory for teachers to spend more time in the school - rather than our depending on them doing their work at home, having them do it at the school - would that be more effective, do you think?-- I don't think so. I have doubts that you achieve any increase in effectiveness by regulation. For example, some of the teachers who might appear to race out the door at 3 o'clock or a quarter past 3, as the case may be, could well be the hardest workers.

They could be; we don't know?-- We don't know, and that of course is a professional decision. However, if in fact we said, "You all must stay till 4 or 4.30.", my view would be that the likely reaction would be that once 4 o'clock came that would be all the work the teacher would do. I have lived in homes where the wife was a teacher and I have colleagues whose wives are teachers. They frequently complain about the fact that their wives work till 10 and 11 every night on preparation work.

I have heard that myself, too?-- I just don't believe that you can so legislate. I agree with you that there are some people who dash out the door and probably don't think about the next day's work until they are coming through the gate; but I think they are a very small minority. I don't think we would ever overcome them. They would probably sit around the staff room smoking, anyhow.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions on that topic?

BY MR. MILLER: You are the liaison officer within the department for the Schools Commission?-- Yes.

Are you happy with the existence of this body or do you feel that it interferes too much in State education?----

THE CHAIRMAN: We are into a new area now. Are there any further questions on the State Development Committee and teacher effectiveness training? If not, I will allow Mr. Miller's question.

WITNESS: Dr. McKinnon refers to me personally as the greatest States-righter with the exception of the Premier. I am well-known and have published a number of papers in the in the area of States' rights, particularly on the financing of education. I could make that paper available to you, Mr. Miller, if you are interested.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: I personally would like to see that, if you don't mind?-- Not at all. It was published by the Federal group for the study of Commonwealth-State financial relationships. I do not have five copies left, but I certainly have one copy that I could make available. My own belief is that there are times when any Commonwealth instrumentality,

probably more because of its bureaucracy than because of its legislative intent, does impede the proper operation of States' rights. My view is that the Commonwealth in these areas should express its broad guide-lines and objectives for which it makes additional moneys available. Then, as long as the State lives within those guide-lines, that should be all the involvement of the Commonwealth. When they get into administrative detail - at the moment we are having some problems over the collection of statistics that take up the time of officers whose time is limited - then I become very anti Commonwealth assistance. I believe that it is the State's right to determine the way in which it operates.

It might be a good opportunity now to indicate that the Committee invited the Federal Director of Education in Queensland and the Schools Commission to appear before us, and they declined?-- That would probably be at the theoretical level of not interfering in State education. It doesn't always work that way at the practical level.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions in the area of Federal intervention in State decision-making before we go into another area? If not, Mr. Miller has a question on another area.

BY MR. MILLER: Are there some aspects of the Schools Commission work which you object to?-- Not in general, except in the issue of decision-making. I don't even object to that if the Commonwealth says, "For the good of Australia as a whole, we think that these things in education should be supported and pushed. If the State does not have sufficient money to achieve that objective, we make this money available." Then I think a State certainly should expend the money in that direction. However, if the Commonwealth then gets down to the detail of specifying very closely how it should be spent, I would object to that. Let me make it quite clear that the provision of Commonwealth funds since 1975 has been very beneficial to Queensland education and to Australian education. What we were talking about before is one of the great examples. Teacher development - teacher in-service activities - received a great boost from Commonwealth funds - and, I think, a very worthwhile boost. From the direction it has taken, teachers have become much more conscious of their own responsibilities for their own professional development. That, I think, has grown out of the funding that has enabled so many more conferences at local levels to be held than were held previously, with a limit to the amount of financial sacrifice teachers have to make themselves, whereas earlier they had to make very considerable sacrifices.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think we should get together in this area of in-service activities for teachers and talk about amalgamating teachers' centres and education centres and bring about a rationalisation?-- Certainly, I think we should. I am never too sure what the difference is between a teachers' centre and an education centre. There are some differences, in that some are federally funded and others are just locally funded by teachers themselves. I think that this rationalisation is coming, anyhow, because the Commonwealth funds are drying up. Unfortunately, so are the State funds.

BY MR. MILLER: What are your views on the innovations programme? Do you think it is a waste of public money?-- As a generalisation, I do not think it is a waste of public money. I think some things have been called innovations which have not been innovations at all. I am sure some things have been approved which I personally would not have approved. It has had great benefits, however, in that again it has

provided the facility whereby teachers could think through a local need and do something exciting and often innovative without having to scrounge and beg and borrow and almost steal funds. There are many, many examples of very worthwhile innovations. In order to try to spread the knowledge of some such innovations within the department, a year or so ago we published a booklet that listed some of these on the basis that an innovation which is kept within a glass case is not of much use. The purpose of the innovations grants system was to act as a seed. Unfortunately, one of the views of the Commonwealth is that it is a seeding agent; but, having planted the seeds, it leaves the watering, development, growth - and payment - to the State. That, in my view, doesn't work out. It is not the most responsible attitude, particularly if you are aware that the State does not have the funds to carry on such a programme. Many of the things that have been funded under innovations are not innovations. They may reflect the need, however, particularly in rural communities, for a service that has not been provided in some other way. Every second request from a country school is for a bus, for example. That probably reflects, firstly, the isolation of some country schools, and, secondly, the fact that it is difficult to move children in country areas, and they see that as prime. There is nothing innovative about it, however.

From what you said, does this mean teachers would not innovate if there were no funds?-- No, not at all. Some teachers have always innovated. The provision of funds makes it easier for a teacher to innovate, and often makes it possible for them to innovate according to their well thought out plans, whereas if no funds are available they may think a plan through and then, when they run up against a shortage of funds they have to modify and this reduces the effectiveness of such a programme. It has been a very considerable boost, I think - particularly where the programmes have in fact been innovative - to teacher development and, too, what I think is a desirable thing - differences between schools.

BY MR. HEWITT: What emphasis is placed upon innovative programmes in in-service training?-- A pretty strong emphasis in most kinds of in-service training particularly, as I say, where we of the State Development Committee and the State Education Department have very much encouraged school-based in-service activity and withdrawal of whole school staffs, where they get together and say, "Now, let us look at the objectives of our school. Let us look at how we are going about our task. Let us look at where we think we are failing. Let us now look at positive ways in which we might overcome our failings." To my mind, that is what innovation is, it is a new approach to a problem which has not been successfully handled before. There is every encouragement to that kind of innovation. I would hope that in-service attitudes are not being used to encourage gimmickry, and I would like to distinguish between gimmickry and innovation.

You defined it as a new approach to old problems. I do not think anyone would have any reservations about innovative programmes if that were really it, but they seem to be placing emphasis on entirely new things and not merely approaching old problems in a different way?-- I am not too sure if anything is ever really terribly new. But if you could throw up an example I might try and apply my criteria to it.

No, I find it difficult to give an example, but I have very much in mind the comments of a teacher of some 20 years' standing who places great value on her own professionalism and her own teaching methods, and she says that inspectors seem to ask more about what are her innovative programmes rather than how she is handling well-established techniques. When she goes to in-service seminars they talk about new programmes, innovative programmes - different things - instead of fortifying the techniques that she has understood for so many years. One almost gets the impression that the old teacher who has adopted teaching practices over many years, and I emphasise again who is jealous of her own professionalism, is almost given a feeling of being redundant, that she is no longer relevant?-- I certainly wouldn't agree with that approach. I do not deny that that kind of questioning or emphasis might sometimes appear. If it does it certainly needs to be corrected because it is extremely important that the teacher that you referred to, provided that she is constantly reviewing her procedures in terms of the characteristics of the children - and to my mind she has to be innovative for that purpose - if she is using exactly the same procedures regardless of which group of children she has each year then she may only be covering up her lack of problem-solving to say, "Well, I have done that, I have tried it, it is successful and I can continue to try it." There will be different circumstances prevailing in any year with a different group of kiddies. Now, provided she is making that sort of modification that is fine, but innovation for innovation's sake is what I call gimmickry, and I think it

should be discouraged rather than encouraged. When the inspector visits the school and a teacher comes out and holds up a list of what he calls innovations, if I were the inspector I would say, "O.K., we will look at that later, but let us look at your basic procedures and make sure that the children are achieving at their proper levels."

It is not our role here to be political, and this question is not asked in a political context - it is important I give you that reassurance - but would the mistake that the Whitlam Government made be placed in this context, that it made too much money available for innovative programmes too quickly and the money could not be absorbed successfully?-- I would think that was right. I think we did need to prepare teachers for using it, and many of the early approaches that were made - any programme needs gearing up, and many of the new approaches that were made would not hit the deck now when the competition for funds is much more severe, when people have had time to think through programmes and dream them up. But as you say, in those days suddenly money was coming up in great heaps everywhere and you had to grab hold of it. It was like a few years ago there were about five different bodies making money available for research in education, and in fact we had people ringing us saying, "Won't you put in an application to carry out this piece of research, we've got money." In other words, the prime reason for doing research was because there was money that had to be used up. At the end I declared a moratorium within the research branch of the department because everything was being started and nothing was being finished. The availability of money is not the prime reason for carrying out education research and, secondly, the availability of money should not be the prime reason for rushing off with a thing called innovation.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Time is running away from us. We must conclude by 11. Could I ask you about SEMP? There has been a lot of input to the inquiry in relation to SEMP. There have been suggestions made to us that we might suggest a re-writing of a handbook for the use of SEMP and that we might exclude some sections of it. Dr. Skilbeck has come to Queensland especially to talk to us, and you are aware of his evidence. He was critical of some sections. He said he could understand some of the criticism in relation to the films, and how some of the other sections might give offence. What do you think we should do now that we are in the summary stage?-- As you might imagine, I have read most of the submissions dealing with SEMP with very considerable interest, and I have also followed the questioning which the Committee has done. My consensus, if such can be arrived at from reading this, is that there has been considerably more support for the SEMP materials than there has been a large number saying that they are just not suitable for schools. But I have had the feeling that there is still a lack of understanding of the purpose of the materials. There are still many people in this category. Even in this week-end's "Catholic Leader" I noticed someone writing in referring to the SEMP course. There are still misunderstandings that it is a course whereas, of course, it is a resource. Now, I have tried to analyse all of the opinions that have been set against that background. What to do in Queensland? Well, I would hope that the Committee would recommend that the SEMP materials be made available to Queensland schools. I would hope that you would recommend that the department would set up a continuing monitoring committee similar to the monitoring committee which prepared the first report for the department, which I think has been made available to the Committee. That would be

necessary because there are still materials being prepared in the Social Education Materials Project, and therefore they need to be reviewed and commented on.

G.F. Berkeley

I read again over the week-end the teachers' handbook to see whether I thought anything would be gained by re-writing that. I do not think so. What one must remember is that for all of the materials there is the handbook or the overview document. It was a guide to be used in the first year or so of the dissemination exercises, which were to acquaint teachers with the SEMP materials and with the approaches that the SEMP materials lent themselves to. It does that, but within the lines of the other materials there are handbooks for that use, teachers' guides and handbooks. So we should not really think of the brown book as being a teacher's workbook; it is an overview document. In fact, this monitoring committee may well involve people outside of the State department, as well as within the State department, but certainly from the view of the State department would involve a range of people with interests and skill in these areas, and in curriculum areas generally, and for a range of courses. If it continually monitors the material - as, in fact, was done with the first exercise - if it published guide-lines of certain criteria, the criteria, to my mind, would determine the guide-lines for use, and they would need to cover a number of areas. They would need, for example, to point out to teachers, to save them a lot of work, that this material is suitable in some cases from year 8 right through but, in other cases, only for years 11 and 12. It would need to give some guide-lines on the usefulness of material at various year levels and various ages of pupils. It would need to set up some kind of categories, such as were used in the initial exercise, and say, "This material is completely suitable at all levels and for pupil and teacher use in schools." This is material about which some reservations should be made and it may be useful only with older pupils, or it may be useful only as teachers' reference material; material which, in the committee's view for various reasons - whether it had no relevance to any courses being undertaken in Queensland or whether it was because of the use of language which might be regarded as offensive or not sensitive enough for a particular situation as determined by these guide-lines - should not be used in Queensland. I think in this case it would have to be for State schools only. That seems to me to be a very logical way in which to describe and guide people in the use of the materials. It could be followed then, if that seemed to leave gaps in areas in which there were a large number of students involved in Queensland, by the preparation of substitution material for Queensland. I have to say that with the full limitations of staff and of money. The Curriculum Branch within Queensland is understaffed and it is under heavy pressure to service a whole host of committees. If the recommendations of the Scott committee proceed, it will have a lot more things on its shoulders. While I say "preparation of substitute materials", either for gaps of stuff which SEMP never got to, or in materials which we say are unsuitable and therefore we should prepare our own, that has to be done with that limitation in mind, because our experience in the department of preparing teacher books or material for pupils has shown - and I can go back to the first exercise that I was involved in in 1958, and that was the preparation of the teachers' handbook for the Happy Venture scheme which was first introduced into Queensland schools - that it is very time-consuming and expensive. Generally, experience has shown that professional publishing companies are able to do it better than Education Departments. Western Australia tried this in a very large way and has largely moved out of it. No other State is essentially in the business of publishing its text-books. So I caution any large-scale preparation of a Queensland version of SEMP, if only for human resources and financial resources means.

You are talking about impinging on this question which you encapsulated as a specificity of decisions?-- Yes.

You are saying that the department ought to have this role?-- No, I did not say that completely or without limitation. I believe that it is the Government's responsibility to lay down the broad guide-lines and the broad objectives of an education system. I would have no doubts about that at all. If a Government determines to lay down very narrow guide-lines, as a public servant I do not quarrel with that. I would find it difficult to work with, but it would certainly be of great assistance to me as a curriculum developer to know what are the objectives of education that whatever Government is in power wishes its school system to try to arrive at. Having done that, of course, the basics of materials' development, of course content, of approaches and of methods that are used in schools are a little easier. But at the moment there are no guide-lines that I know of, other than the aims of education that have been arrived at within the State department for the objectives of the school system in this State.

BY MR. POWELL: You said that you were a curriculum developer. As a curriculum developer do you see that the teacher has a role in questioning a student's attitude to the family, religion, etc.?-- Do I think the teacher has that role?

Yes?-- I am not too sure what you mean by the question. Certainly if a teacher says, "You are", and names a particular order and says, "You should not be" - I certainly do not believe that he should have that right. If a student in discussion, and it was open discussion in a class-room, was making dogmatic claims or extremist claims about what should be the view of religion and why others should have that same view, then I think the teacher should point out that while he is entitled to that opinion, so every other child in the class is entitled to his opinion; and in that way certainly question if such an approach were adopted.

That is not really questioning?-- Questioning or commenting. What do you mean by "questioning"?

SEMP material on the family section, for example; whether there are questions that are used regarding the family attitude of an individual student. One can see the way that might be developed perhaps to a student's consternation. Do you believe that a teacher has that right?-- No, I do not believe that a teacher should cause a student to change his views or the views that the family has developed within the student.

At the beginning you referred to the number of support staff in the Education Department in Queensland compared with the other States. Do you have any figures to give us an indication?-- We have been preparing a submission for the Public Service Board on this area, but just to give you a rough guide-line, South Australia, which has something like two-thirds of the school population of Queensland, I think has twice as man senior administrative personnel as does Queensland.

Victoria, which has twice the population of Queensland, probably has three times as many administrative staff. It is certainly of that order.

In which areas have they the extra staff?-- Really right through the administrative levels and the support staff for administrative levels.

BY MR. SHAW: Can you explain briefly why you feel that publishing companies have more success in preparing material than does the department?-- Well, it is their business to start with.

Publishing, yes, I would not have thought with education so much?--No, but if you are going to publish school texts there is content and approach to be determined firstly. That is certainly an education business and publishing companies use educators to do that for them. It is all the other business, the way in which it is printed, processed, prepared and so on. With the SEMP materials it was decided that publishing companies, once the basic materials had been prepared - and that is certainly an educational decision - would have the materials made available to them to do the actual business. An Education Department is not set up to run a commercial enterprise.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: I will take you back to the question of specificity of decision. I am somewhat confused. There is quite a lot of input into the inquiry in this regard about school-based decision-making and the levels at which Government decisions should be made. I have in mind a particular one from the Mt. Gravatt C.A.E. that tries to define levels of decision-making. Would you care to venture your attitude in this regard?-- To start with, my basic principle is that the Queensland education system is just about getting to the stage where it is too big.I think that New South Wales and Victoria are far too big to have an Education Department running it. We have been working towards devolution of authority and decentralising to regions. But that does not come to grasp with the central issue of determining the way in which the system operates. I think we will always have problems while we have a system as big as we have;and it does not show much sign of getting smaller. If we have that system we have to spell out as clearly as we possibly can the levels. There is, as we said, the Government level that lays down the broad objectives of an education system, and I would hope, of course, that there has been very considerable input into that from the various party education committees, from the parties and from the people. Having got that, it seems to me that the Education Department, if there is such an entity, deals with that broad set of guide-lines and produces a narrower and more specific set of objectives for its education system; it probably breaks that up into objectives at the various age and school-type levels. Those objectives to my mind become the guide-lines for the curriculum-determining bodies. In the present Queensland system that is the Primary Curriculum Committee and the Board of Secondary School Studies largely at the secondary and primary levels, and they should have a set of what I might term external guide-lines on which to operate. They then prepare the specific outlines of courses. They take it to another level of specificity which defines the borders or regions of subject areas, if you like, or of a core curriculum, preferably, the objectives in terms of competencies that are to be obtained, the attitudes that are to be developed and the issues that should be dealt with. The school is then the next level of specificity. The school should determine within those quite clearly spelt-out and reasonably detailed but broad guide-lines,the actual content, the way in which it will be organised and taught and the way in which it will be presented. That is the curriculum view of

organisation; I tend to have a curriculum view of organisation. External to that, of course, has to be a set of parallel decision-making, whether it be the same or other bodies,which make the organisational decisions - the financial decisions and policy decisions - about structure, fabric and the like. In my view the curriculum process is central to the process. It needs those different levels in a system, and I am taking that we have the system that we have, that is State wide and State organised. What I have not said is what are the avenues of input for each of those levels of specificity. I think I expressed the view at the beginning of this session that I think we should increase the levels of meaningful input of all of the interested parties and in particular the community, the teachers themselves, the parents and, in appropriate cases, the students. That has to be built into the model all the way along. What I am really saying is not what is a solution, but that if the system is to operate there have to be clear guide-lines at each level. In my mind it is a series of smaller and smaller circles as you come down, which gets into more and more detail, with the fine detail being decided at the school level, up to the very broad detail at the system level, but with every appropriate person having an opportunity for meaningful input. I think "meaningful" is the important word. We have looked at and examined the various attempts that have been made around the country and in other parts of the world to have full participation of all the people involved in education - the parents, the community and so on - and each one of them has its problems. Therefore I do not think there is a panacea - a solution - that can be applied generally. I see the solution as having to be worked out in each particular area or interest. It has a chance of being worked out if there is a model of the way in which the total system should operate. My model would be that stepped-down model for specific levels of decision-making.

THE CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, ladies and gentlemen, at this stage I must again thank Mr. Berkeley for his generous help to our inquiry so far. I thank him again for coming before us this morning and for talking to us so frankly. I am particularly thankful for the last part of your submissions, Mr. Berkeley, in which you talked to us very frankly about models of decision-making.

The Committee adjourned at 11.9 a.m.

The Committee resumed at 11.30 a.m.

WILLIAM LESLIE HAMILTON, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: We are pleased to welcome the Deputy Director of Education. I thank you, Mr. Hamilton, as I have already thanked Mr. Berkeley, for your assistance and ready help during the course of our inquiries and for your input in the way of various submission papers that have been presented to us. I offered Mr. Berkeley an opportunity to make some preliminary comments. Would you like to do so at this stage?-- If I may, very quickly, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity of making a short statement and then I will be pleased to answer any questions. I think you would be pleased to know this. Obviously I know many teachers. When the Committee of Inquiry was set up in rather an emotional and, may I say, irrational atmosphere, teachers in general were very sceptical about the outcome but, because of the exemplary way in which the Committee has carried out its inquiries, teachers are, I feel, much more relaxed. You have no doubt been surprised and perhaps even shocked by the variation of opinion about education amongst teachers themselves, the general public and various organisations. No doubt you realise by now that the administration of an education system and the development of policy for that system are, therefore, extremely difficult in trying to rationalise those various points of view. This is by no means peculiar to Queensland . I suppose that you would also realise that great demands have been made and are being made upon schools. You have received many submissions advocating the introduction of more and more subjects into schools, such as foreign languages for primary schools, consumer education and driver education, greater emphasis on the arts, and so on. You have probably also come to realise that the standards attained by children and their attitudes to learning in general are affected by many social pressures outside the schools. In short , both the policy makers and the teachers are under great pressure to achieve the impossible, namely, to satisfy everybody. I have read the transcript of your hearings with great interest and hope. I am more concerned, however, about the submissions that were not made, or were not emphasised rather than those that were. That, of course, is not the Committee's fault. For all I know you may have already filled in these gaps in your deliberations. I am concerned, for instance, that there appears to be general confusion regarding the desirability for and the extent of community involvement in these schools. Incidentally, Mr. Hewitt, you were mistaken at page 1019.

BY MR. HEWITT: I remember it well?-- Cabinet, quite some time ago, refused to accept our Minister's advice regarding the status of p. and c. associations and that matter is still very much in limbo. I am sorry to say that.

I am glad you told us. We will certainly bring that up?-- The general question of who should make what decisions about education is still the important one and this fundamental question, I believe,has been dealt with fairly superficially in your hearings. For instance, it is of no practical value to say that the Government should make the decisions about education. I will not say any more about that because I caught Mr. Berkeley telling you quite an amount in that area. There was very little discussion, I believe, about regionalisation in Queensland. This is a very, very important aspect and this again ties in with the remarks being made by Mr. Berkeley towards the end of his session regarding the areas of decision-making in education. I believe that much more

attention should be paid to regionalisation. Not enough, I believe, was said about the staffing of schools. Our most recent submission has quite a lot to say about this, about pupil-teacher ratios and about specialist teaching. One area regarding staffing in schools that I am not sure has been mentioned to you is the need for greater pastoral care in secondary schools. I believe that is a very important area that should be looked at. I believe that Mr. Berkeley may have mentioned something about the staffing of the Education Department. I can simply say that, in attempting to run a $5,000,000-plus a year business, we have fewer top administrators than other State departments and overseas departments and, in fact, comparable big business in the community. Our support staff is very thin. In particular , you would be interested to know - and you may have already been told this - that we are very, very short of research officers. So that many of the important questions that have been exercising your Committee are unavailable to us in terms of research. I have made many requests, as the director, for research in vital areas and we have not been able to meet those requests because of the paucity of research officers. The same can be said of guidance officers and curriculum officers. I do not believe that very much was said about the pattern of schooling in Queensland. Has anybody questioned the pre-school/seven-year/five-year pattern. This may have been questioned, but I do not believe it has received sufficient emphasis. My personal opinion is that there should be some sort of separate inquiry looking at the structure of Queensland education. Not enough emphasis, I believe, has been given to the education of minority groups; quite a lot has been said about migrants, but not so much about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. In short, I believe that there has not been sufficient understanding in the submissions of individual differences amongst children. I think this is a very, very important area that must be a background to all decisions that are made in education. Many submissions appear to hover around trivialities based on unproven assumptions. For example, one recent one was the teaching of Latin and Greek roots for understanding English and developing vocabulary I do not want to follow that through. But these, I believe, are trivial matters based on inadequate data. I realise that one expectation of this Committee is to make pronouncements about certain specific topics, such as MACOS , SEMP and the basics. But I implore the Committee to see through the fog created by hot opinion meeting cold opinion; see through to the structure of our schools and ask whether or not that structure will support the weight of the 21st century.

One of your findings might indeed be that the complexity of your task can only be satisfied by the setting up of some form of advisory body, representative of the community. For truly I believe that the community gets the schools that it deserves.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. I would make one remark in respect of some of the matters you have mentioned. I believe that the question of community involvement has been traversed quite extensively before the Committee. We have had the Brisbane North Regional Educational Council and a group from my own electorate appear before us talking about regionalisation, community involvement and so on. As to the other matters you mentioned, it is difficult to find in the evidence any question that has not been mentioned?-- I realise that. I was pointing out a matter of emphasis.

In terms of emphasis, I appreciate what you are saying. We would now like to move to some of the specific matters, and I think that we should take you firstly to the question of the teacher education inquiry. There has been an interboard inquiry - do I describe it properly?-- It is a combined board inquiry.

The Board of Teacher Education and the Board of Advanced Education. We have been calling it the Basset inquiry?-- I am a member of that committee.

We are awaiting anxiously some of the recommendations from that inquiry. You would be aware of some of the concerns that have been expressed to us. Do you think that some of those concerns will be met in the recommendations from the Basset inquiry?-- I do believe that most of the criticisms and concerns about teacher education that have come before you have been well and truly dealt with in the Basset report. In particular, the claim that has been made frequently that student teachers are not taught to teach is one that has been looked at very carefully, both in terms of college content and in terms of practise teaching. The report contains some specific recommendations. The main recommendation would concern the pattern of teacher education which is seen as a threefold sequence of events: pre-service education, a period of induction and a period of in-service education. That is nothing new, of course, but the emphasis now is very much on those three stages. The second and third stages are seen as the quality-control stages, if you like. There is a hope among committee members that some way of making this pattern the regular pattern in becoming fully qualified will be found in Queensland and that a teacher will leave, after gaining a three-year diploma with some sort of provisional registration, and will then have to undergo successfully a period of probation and induction followed by further study towards a degree before receiving the full qualification. The pattern is seen as enabling the first three years to enable the teacher to prepare for the early days of teaching and that the more theoretical aspects of education will then be dealt with in the remaining year of training towards the bachelor's degree.

BY MR. POWELL: I wonder how far the deliberations of that committee have gone and if the committee has come to some final recommendation. Might I make the comment that in years gone by once a teacher left the training institution he was expected from day one to be able to control a class and teach the children in the class something. Why is it felt that today our students are not good enough to do that or are not being prepared enough?-- You have misintrepreted the committee's decision. It is not that the student is incompetent to do that; we believe that the beginning teacher must be eased into the teaching situation much more carefully than has happened in the past.

For what reason?-- So that that person may become a much more effective teacher.

But before the C.A.E.s took over the training of teachers - I might be prolonging this too much, but it is something that niggles me - and at the time when they were teacher training colleges, a student left such a college with a diploma, went into a school and was expected to do a day's work on the first day. That does not seem to be the case today, after three years at college rather than one or two?-- You have oversimplified the situation. Principals have always assisted their beginning teachers to ease into the school situation - some principals more than others - and teachers always received a great deal of assistance from their co-workers in the school. There always has been some form of induction. The situation that young teachers meet today is much more complicated than it was when you became a teacher or when I became a teacher. We were able to use the lessons that we used as students directly in the school that we were appointed to, because education was very much standard right across the State. That is not so these days. You have been talking about school-based decision-making. A young teacher is not sure which reading scheme he will meet when he goes into a school. This requires assistance and help from the principal and other teachers at the school.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Did the committee look at the year in the field as being offered to the students before the end of the three-year period? In other words, did it consider that they should do two years in the pre-service institution, go out into the field for a year and then come back and do the final year?-- Various patterns were looked at but -----

That was rejected?-- That was rejected.

I think we should move into another matter - staffing?-- All right.

BY MR. MILLER: We have had a number of complaints about young teachers' leaving college and going out into country areas. I understand there has been a proposal by the union to provide an incentive scheme for getting older teachers out into country areas. What plans do you have in mind for improving the staffing in country schools, especially those in isolated areas?-- We have always attempted to limit the turnover in country schools. We have always attempted to keep as many experienced teachers as possible in country schools. It has been a sad fact of life that in some of the smaller secondary schools and some of the schools with secondary tops the staffing has been with a majority of young teachers.

First year out?-- They have been very disadvantaged, and I think it is greatly to their credit that they have done such a good job. The answer to that sort of situation is not an easy one, as you will know. Some people believe that the changed employment situation will assist us in overcoming this; but I have no faith in that. Nor do I believe that monetary incentives are necessarily the answer to getting experienced teachers into country schools. What we will do with incentives, if we are allowed to use them, is retain some of the younger teachers in the country schools for a longer period, thereby converting them into experienced teachers. I do not see that there will be a mass exodus of experienced teachers from the more-favoured areas into those country schools.

BY MR. HEWITT: What is the problem in getting experienced teachers there? After they have put in four or five years, if they stay that long, do they then apply for transfers and, on their merits, are they entitled to be considered for those transfers?-- Yes, they do apply for transfers. We have found in our surveys that the most vital factor in a teacher's making his decision whether or not to stay in the country is the suitability of the housing for the teacher. We have tried valiantly over the years to improve the quality of housing for both single and married teachers in country areas. Where we have good married accommodation, we find that we have many teachers and their wives, who frequently are teachers, staying in those situations. I believe that housing is the most important single factor.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: There is a big problem out there at certain times, isn't there? One school we went to in Mt. Isa had about 70 per cent or 80 per cent who were first-year teachers. That is an enormously high percentage?-- Yes.

BY MR. POWELL: The Longreach Secondary School is another example?-- We are fully aware of these situations, but we have to keep those schools staffed. If we attempt to keep teachers there against their will, they are quite independent these days and they simply resign.

BY MR. MILLER: Have you any plans for retaining the more experienced teachers in country areas?-- The plan we have developed is that incentive scheme that you mentioned before. That is a joint union-department effort.

BY MR. POWELL: One of the submissions that was put to me was that, if teachers in some of these out-of-the-way places are given first-class housing, they will be living in housing of a far better type than the students they are teaching and that that may not be sound. Would you comment on that proposition?-- The gap between the teacher's socio-economic status and the pupil's socio-economic status is always a problem - but that is a problem in Brisbane. Most of the teachers who teach at Inala do not live in Inala. Most of the teachers who teach at Woodridge do not live in Woodridge. It is a general problem, not one that is specific to country areas.

BY MR. HEWITT: Except that the kids who live at Inala do not see their teacher's home, whereas in remote areas they would see the home?-- I have found from my experience living in the country - and I have had a lot of experience in the country - that the population in general expects the teacher to live at a higher standard than they do, and they would be very disappointed if he did not. Our greatest inhibiting factor is the rest of the Public Service, which is not making the same efforts to improve housing as we are. Some time ago a inter-departmental committee was set up which proposed an overall governmental body to deal with housing for all public servants, including teachers, but this was rejected. The status quo stands.

BY MR. POWELL: That leads to another question that is worrying us considerably, which is the power of the Public Service over education. Can you see some way in which we can remove the Department of Education from the Public Service without having an education commission?-- Without having an education commission? Frankly, no. I can see ways of doing it, but I don't see those ways coming into being. I do think we should have some advisory body with regard to the overall direction of education that would be representative of all sections of the community. I am not even sure at this stage

how that fits in with Government control of education. It is a very, very tricky area, and one which probably needs some sort of committee or commission to look at solely and to come up with some recommendations.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: How big would that advisory council that you are talking about be? Would it be a small thing or a big thing?-- Big committees or commissions are invariably cumbersome and not desirable. I think it should be about the usual size for such boards - 15 or 16 members. Up to 20 might be admissible. The problem of representation arises then, of course, but I believe that could be overcome.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we are going to traverse that with Mr. Gilmour.

BY MR. POWELL: You mentioned the lack of research officers, with the result that some work is not being done. Do you rely on the research staff or the findings of research in other States as a result of not being able to get enough work done in Queensland?-- We don't rely on such findings. We call upon such findings. We are continually culling the research from interstate and overseas to try to make decisions on a hard-data basis; but we always like to confirm or otherwise such information by replicating the research in our own setting. Might I say that most times we find that the general findings of research apply equally to our own situation.

BY MR. MILLER: It has been suggested that there should be more remedial teachers, resource teachers, social workers, guidance officers and so on. Nobody has quantified this. Has the Education Department any idea of the number of these specialised teachers that we require?-- We do have a proposed method of staffing, which you will find in that latest paper that we have delivered to you. I must say that I do not subscribe to the bald statement that we should have more remedial resource teachers. I think there is a limit. What I believe - and I believe this very sincerely - is that we should have well-trained teachers in charge of manageable groups, so that they can deal with children - help children - on the basis of their individual differences. If this happens, we will not need so many remedial teachers and resource teachers.

What about speech therapists?-- We certainly do require more speech therapists, although again it is my personal opinion that, when we did away with the speech correctionists that we used for many years, that was a backward step. I find that the professionalisation of many callings frequently is a backward step.

MR. HEWITT: I think that is a very valued comment.

BY MR. MILLER: There has been criticism of lack of co-operation or co-ordination between the primary and secondary levels. Would you like to comment on that?-- I know many primary and secondary school staffs that are doing magnificent work in this area. There are others who completely ignore the problem. It is very much a mixed bag. We have been encouraging the co-operation of the interface for many, many years. I believe that Grade 8 is the problem grade in our whole system. This is why I believe that more attention should have been paid to the structure of education in Queensland than merely accepting the results of the Watkins Report, which was a very slim report somewhere back in 1961 or 1962 that had very little to back it up.

BY MR. POWELL: I would like to leave your mind at rest. We are doing some work on the structure of education?-- I am very pleased to hear that, because I sincerely believe that this is one of the vital areas we are concerned about.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: You seem to be alluding to it. Have you any comments you would like to make about it? You seem to be implying that something is wrong with the thing now. It is such an enormous area?-- It is.

If I could restrict you to one, I would ask you about the area of early childhood education. Should we be specialising in early childhood education?-- We are specialising in that.

More than we are now?-- I believe this is going to be one of our more successful areas in breaking down the interface between one section of schooling and another. I believe that it won't be long before pre-school as a separate entity will not exist; that it will not be merged into the primary school but that there will be a very well conducted transition from pre-school to primary. The most - I was going to say "the most dedicated teachers"; I should not say that. There are many dedicated teachers in the early childhood area, and, from what I have observed, they are doing a magnificent job.

Should then we be getting rid of the B.K.T.C.?-- You ask the most awkward questions. I do not think the idea is to get rid of the B.K.T.C. As Dr. Allen pointed out to you the proposition appears to be to set it up within the structure of the Kelvin Grove C.A.E. as an early childhood institute. I believe that set up in that way it would be able to influence many more potential teachers than it can in its present format.

BY MR. MILLER: What real advantages are there, though, in taking it under the C.A.E. at Kelvin Grove?-- You have me at a disadvantage in that this is not one of the areas in which I have had a lot of input. This is a matter for the Board of Advanced Education and the institutions concerned. But a personal opinion is the one I have just given you. I believe that the demand for kindergarten teachers is going to drop as the population drops, and placing it in an early childhood institute will make its expertise accessible to many more students, including those who are going to work in primary schools; apart from which I believe it is a rationalisation which will be forced upon us by numbers in any case, therefore it should be done in a rational way.

Should there be more flexibility of age of entry into Grade 1?-- This is a subject that has been discussed at an Australia-wide level by directors of primary education. Various States have experimented in different ways of introducing children to school. I believe with a closer connection between pre-school and primary it will be possible to do this. There will have to be some adjustments in curriculum. At the moment the curriculum is designed on a year 1, year 2 and so on basis. I believe this will come about.

BY MR. POWELL: If I can throw another idea at you, we talk about the breakdown in communication between Grade 7 and Grade 8 teachers, and there also seems to be a breakdown between Grades 10 and 11 as the student moves from one to another. Ignoring the cost factor, which is always difficult, I suppose, do you believe we can perhaps be best served by a school which went from pre-school to Grade 12 in the one institution?-- Under existing conditions I do not think that will solve your problem because we have many schools which in fact go from pre-school through to Grade 12. We have high school tops that go through to Grade 12. I have inspected these schools, and I know there is as much a break in those schools as in any other. Again, I am only giving a personal opinion here. The pattern I would like to see emerge is some type of middle school that would encompass the adolescent age group. Then you would have your primary school or "K" primary school, your pre-school primary school at one end and your middle school or senior high school at the other. I am not talking about a junior high school along the American pattern, I am talking about a middle school along the English pattern, which would probably take in years 7, 8 and 9 as they exist now. That poses morelogistical and financial problems.

Not unlike our old intermediate schools?-- No, it would be quite different because the intermediate schools were tied fairly and squarely to the Scolarship.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: In the limited time that is available could we move to questions about the Scott report. In relation to a question which I foreshadowed to you, in the Scott report they talk about the possibility of comprehensive reference tests. How do you feel about this? They were initially a recommendation of the Radford Committee, were they not, and they have not really been carried out?-- There have been reference tests provided for schools in certain subjects, but

it is important to understand the objective of those reference tests. The objective is to enable the teachers to obtain feedback on the standards that they are themselves demanding of children in particular subjects. The danger in any reference testing is that the reference tests could become pseudo-external examinations, and that would be undesirable. The Scott report does refer in its supplementary recommendations to the use of reference tests for the purpose of feedback to the board, but at no stage does it recommend that all schools should be subjected to a reference test and then some decision made on what is happening in all schools on the basis of that reference test.

Could I quote to you from page 50 of the Scott report where it says -

> "Competency reference tests should be used periodically on a State-wide basis in specific subjects, and, periodically with a sample of schools either within a district or across the State."

What is your opinion of that?-- Yes, but the purpose of the reference test is that used by the school, not to amalgamate the results of those reference tests in terms of a State-wide result. Am I making myself clear?

Yes. I am wondering whether you have interpreted the intention of the Scott report accurately. They suggested that this information should gravitate to the board?-- Yes. I am open to correction in that, but I think I know the temper of the people who were on the committee, and I think I would be interpreting their feelings on this correctly.

What would be wrong for a time, if there is criticism of the standards in the wake of Radford, in doing some comprehensive reference testing and having a base of information available to the board for assessment to equate it with the internal assessment?-- The very word "reference" becomes inoperative if you do that. You are really indulging in normative testing if you have that objective in view.

What is wrong with normative testing?-- There is nothing wrong with it provided its results are used in a particular way. We do in fact have normative testing across the State. In this month all year 7 children were tested in reading comprehension, reading vocabulary, mathematical achievement, study skills and a general ability test. That provides information on which decisions can be made about the children and their future secondary schooling and, of course, it provides information to the Department of Education regarding the relative standing of the children in that particular year.

Is that information processed in a form that can be used by a wider group than, say, the department itself?-- Yes. It is processed in a way which will enable parents and teachers to assess the comparative standing of a child in his age group. For instance, if he has a scale score of 15 then you know he is in the very top, say, 2 per cent of the population in his ability in that year. If he has a scale score of 1 then he is in the lowest few per cent.

BY MR. SHAW: Are those results going to be sent to all parents?-- No. Those results are used for guidance purposes, but they are available to parents upon interview.

If they ask?-- Yes. They are not distributed as results.

I do believe there were some questions about these tests. I read some letters in the newspapers about these tests. I can assure you there is nothing sinister about them, and they are not external examinations.

BY MR. HEWITT: The Scott report proposes competency-based assessment. From discussions I have had with principals I have gained the impression that there is a great deal of uneasiness about it; that they are going to be called upon to make value judgments, and that there would be some reluctance to make an assessment such as "limited competence" and "very limited competence". It is much more emotive than the grading we presently have.

Have you discerned any concern among teachers, and, if so, how would you respond to it?-- I think there has been some criticism of the use of such words, rather than a scale, a 7-point scale or a 5-point scale. I think all of these methods of rating amount very much to the same thing. If you have a 7-point scale, then receiving a 7 or a 1 is still an emotive sort of a result because people immediately translate that into very good or very poor. I think what you must pay attention to in that report, and what the implementers of that report must be very careful about, is that the competencies are expected to be spelt out very, very carefully in the curricula on which the children are examined.

BY MR. POWELL: The difference between a 1-to-7 scale or a similar type of scale, is that the parent does not immediately equate that scale with a teacher's assessment, an individual teacher's assessment of the student, whereas if you have a competency-based assessment there is the link between what is written down and the teacher's own feeling about the student. Can you see that criticism?-- I can see that criticism, but it is not valid. A lot of people think that going back to percentages will solve the problem. A percentage is simply a scale, and it is no different from a 13-point scale, a 7-point scale or a 5-point scale. Whereas at the moment we try to give children a point on a scale by comparing them with their fellow students. Competency-based testing will attempt to put them on a scale according to how they achieve the aims of a particular curriculum. If teachers are prone to inject their own feelings about pupils into results, it is still open to them to do it whether there is competency-based or normative-based assessment. I do not believe teachers do this. I believe there are so many checks and balances in a school that even a teacher who may be highly prejudiced against a child finds it is well-nigh impossible to disadvantage that child by downgrading the child. In fact, if I were forced to give an opinion, I think it would be easier for a teacher working on a competency-based assessment to downgrade a child than with a normative-based assessment. Percentages, for instance, are very easy to manipulate.

You mean that the other way round?-- No, I do not.

Easier under a normative-based scheme than a competency-based scheme?-- No. I believe by asking particular questions under a competency-based scheme a teacher might, if he wished - and I do not believe teachers do this - disadvantage a child even more than under a normative-based scheme.

That is a criticism?-- I disagree that a change is necessary. I believe that we were doing very well with the existing scheme.

Good. You confirm what I was getting at in the first

place?-- I was trying to explain how a percentage is not a cure-all for relationships between teachers and students.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: You have opened up a very large question. Are you suggesting to us that the Scott report ought not be implemented?-- No. I believe that whatever is decided by the Board of Secondary School Studies, by the Minister and, in turn, by the Government, should be given full support, and I believe that our teachers will give it full support, that they will make it work. I honestly do not believe that there is a vital difference between one method of assessing children and another, provided the people who are doing it are genuine in their efforts and competent. I believe our teachers are that.

MR. HEWITT: That is an answer that would do credit to any politician.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for all the assistance you have given to us. Thank you very much for appearing before us and for all the help. We hope we can depend on you, as our deliberative phase begins, for some assistance along the road?-- I would be very pleased to give whatever help I can. Thank you for your courtesy.

CLYDE GILMOUR, examined:

BY THE CHAIRMAN: You initially gave a submission before our inquiry on, I think, 23 June. One of our advisers said that you are the alpha and the omega. Thank you very much for appearing. I offer to you the same thanks that I have given to the other two officers who appeared before us this morning for the enormous amount of support that you have given in terms of information and help. It has been appreciated. We have traversed a lot of ground. We would like just to go back very briefly over some of the areas that have been touched on before. I now offer you the opportunity to address the Committee if you so desire?-- Thank you. If I can speak for the department and for the officers who have appeared before you, we appreciate the manner in which we have been received and the courtesy that has been extended to us. The feed-back that I have, from people as far afield as John Keeves from Melbourne who came up and appeared before you, is all the same. They were quite surprised at the way they were received and the courtesy shown to them. Our officers have exactly the same feeling. In making a decision within the department, when you were first formed, we looked at what we could do to help. We decided it was in the best interests of education in the Department of Education to provide every assistance we possibly could. I hope that has been evident in the papers we have put forward. As you go into your deliberations after this and really start your work, officers of the Department of Education will be available any time you wish to call upon them for assistance in any way.

Is there anything else?-- I do not think so, apart from the fact that I personally have not had time to spend as much time as I would like to study the various submissions that came in to you. I have a certain amount of sympathy for you, for having to wade through them. I think it demonstrates the general interest that there is in education and the sincerity of people in making their submissions, even though their submissions, what they put forward, may not agree with what I put forward. I think they were sincere. Their motive is exactly the same as ours. We want to do the best we possibly can for the students in this State.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Firstly, on the Scott report and its implementation, is it the intention of the Education Department to support the Scott recommendations?-- I think it must be remembered that the Scott report at this stage is merely open for comment. That comment will be taken by the Board of Secondary School Studies. It may amend it when it gets the opinions in and put it forward in another form. Speaking for myself, I support the Scott report and what it has attempted to do. Perhaps I do not support it entirely but I think it is a very conscientious look at what is needed in the secondary system. It has a lot of major points in it. Some people will argue whether we have a statement of a number for a performance in a subject or whether you have a statement of classification. I think that one of the points which comes out in the report - and this has been stressed by Mr. Winkle on many occasions when talking to groups - is what people do with a report of the Board of Secondary School Studies. They will do a vertical addition and try to grade the student that way which, of course, is fundamentally wrong. If employers do that and use it as a basis of selection of students it is quite obvious that they will get into trouble on many occasions. I believe that the approach made by Professor Scott and his committee to come out with a statement will at least try to prevent that. It may also help parents to understand the quality of the student. When all is said and done, when a student comes home with a 4 the parents' first impression is to determine whether this is a pass or fail. I do not believe that we have ever got the message home fully to the parents and certainly we have not got it home to employers. They still think in terms of pass and fail. What is proposed here will help to obviate that.

BY MR. HEWITT; The report comments on the fact that the public has never understood the functions of the Board of Secondary School Studies. That begs the question of whether the Education Department has any plan to keep the public better informed of its activities?-- We can do that, but I think it is a bit more fundamental than that. When you are looking at a distribution curve, if you know nothing about it and have no experience, it is confusing. I don't think the majority of parents understand it and I don't think a lot of our employers understand it, either. We could go out on publicity and certainly we would like to go out on as much publicity as we could, not only on this, but also on all aspects of education. But there is a limit to what we can do and we have no control on who reads it or how much they comprehend it when they read it.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Will you now move into another area and look at the matter of Commonwealth interference with decisions made in the State area? It seems to me that there is a multiplicity of decision-making bodies operating in education and that there is need for some working party at State and Federal level to clear the lines. How do you feel about that?--I would agree with that. It is, of course, under discussion each time the Australian Education Council meets - that is, the Ministers for Education - and each time the Directors-General of Education meet it is discussed. There is considerable concern about it. Some of the concern can be overcome. Some is just a matter of the way things work out. One of the problems that we face is that we have to frame our State Budget before the Federal Budget has been approved. Therefore we have to make certain assumptions on funding for certain aspects that Schools Commission money will be available. If it is not, it alters our priorities on where we should go. In some of the other areas there is the influence of organisations such as the Schools Commission on the development of education facilities. One that comes to mind is the Priority School area, or under its old name, the Disadvantaged School area, in which they virtually determine the way the thrust should go. That need not necessarily be the way that our priorities would have been listed if we

had been considering that. In addition, we have the thrust that is made; the parents have become accustomed to a certain standard. If the money is cut off by the Schools Commission the State faces the dilemma of deciding, "Do we have to sacrifice something else that we want to do to keep that going, or do we have to stop it?" That is a major problem. Another area that gives us concern, which we consider to some extent is an interference is the collection of statistical data. We are not convinced that all the material asked for by the Schools Commission is in the best interests of the State; that it is to be used for allocation of funds in needy areas.

It may be evidence to be used against you?--True, and it is a worry. I had a case before I went to Hobart where the chairman of the Schools Commission wrote to me and complained about a letter that I had written in answer to one of his applications for statistics. I thought we had put it very nicely that we could not produce the statistics; that the time involved would be greater than the job warranted and that we did not have the staff to set aside to work on it. New South Wales wrote back one paragraph and said, "We will not do it.", and Western Australia did about the same. This, I believe, is an interference in State matters. If they want statistics they should be able to come to us and say, "We would like this and this is the reason we want it." If it is justified we would then prepare it. We see that as an interference.

BY MR. POWELL: Do you see any value at all in the Schools Commission?-- Yes. I think that the Schools Commission has played a very vital role in the overall development of education in the Commonwealth, which it must do because it has reasonably large sums of money that it has made available. You have only to look at the priority country area; we could not have done that under the State system. But it is the way that they do it that we may object to. If they looked at needs and made the money available to the States so that we could determine priorities within certain guide-lines and make thrusts as we saw them it would be a better system.

BY MR. SHAW: Is that fairly typical of the relationships between the States and the Commission?-- Yes

You might say that they are strained?-- That is true.

BY MR. POWELL: Would it not be better then if the Commonwealth gave to the States an amount of money without a Commission at all?--I think there are several things you must consider here. One is that when a Government gives money it wants credit for that money. When the Commonwealth gives money it likes to be able to say, "We did this; we built that school and we did something else." It would lose that. Secondly, if you are setting about improving the system you have some right to know that that money will be used within the areas that you want it used in. The Commonwealth may well argue if it made more money available to education in Queensland that the State Government might see fit to take some of its money out of education and put it elsewhere. That is not as foolish as it sounds because when some of the early Commonwealth grants came out that is just what some of the other States did. They took it with one hand and took it out with the other so the system did not benefit from it. I don't think you would want to do away with that.

BY MR. HEWITT: Mr. Hamilton distressed me by saying that a proposal from the Minister to Cabinet granting statutory recognition of parents and citizens' committees had been rejected. Speaking in good faith, I have been saying that that was the intention of the Government and that it would proceed as soon as the deliberations of this Committee had finished.

I am still firmly of the opinion that that statutory recognition should be forthcoming and I should like you to tell us if such recognition has been given to p. and c. committees in other States and, if so, with what result?--Yes, in varying degrees in other States. Victoria has gone to the stage of forming community groups within schools, with community representation, and has actually given them statutory authority in many ways. They have made sums of money available to them and they have to use that money in their best interests. So the community realises that if it wants to put up an activities block, that might be at the expense of an extension of the science block, and they do that knowingly as the parents of the students attending, as the teachers on the staff and as members of the community. The overall effect of this in Victoria, as claimed by Dr. Shears, the Director-General, is that they have saved money; not so much saved money, but they have better use of their money and they have better harmony within the schools.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Is that the type of statutory recognition that you were recommending in Queensland?-- No. We were not recommending going quite as far as that. The basic need for it in Queensland, as we saw it initially, was for protection of the p. and c. members. Unless they are incorporated, they could not be sued as a body; the individual members could be sued, which, of course, is a danger, and we wanted to avoid that risk. That is the reason why we put it up, but I think it could be extended.

Are there any other areas you were looking at such as trying to resolve some of the controversial curriculum decisions at schools? Have you allowed them in this area?-- I think that opens up another can of worms altogether, whether you allow curriculum development to go on in the school itself or whether you do it in a centralised area. At this stage I would certainly favour retaining curriculum development in the centralised area with latitude allowed to schools.

In the implementation?--Yes.

How do you react to the suggestion that there should be an advisory council on education in the State?-- Well, this, of course, was recommended by Professor Karmel, in his report in South Australia. Most people, when they read it saw it as a duplication costing a lot of money and achieving very little. It did not go quite as far as that; it was formed and never met. It has been abandoned. It has been replaced by a Council for Educational Planning. When you look at an advisory group there are two things you have to look at. Are you going to give them any real stature? Can they make decisions that are binding? Have they the money to back up those decisions? The second thing is that if you are going to have a group that is going to be involved in lengthy consideration, preparation of reports and research, you cannot do it with somebody who is going to give two hours a month to sit on a committee. It becomes a much bigger job than that; if you give it the staff and the personnel to do that, then perhaps what you are doing is duplicating the existing system. My own feeling is that what is needed is not the proposal as was set up in South Australia but rather an advisory committee that can be a sounding board. If the planning by the department, when it is prepared, can be fed to this committee and get a reaction from it, I think it is very worth while. The move within South Australia itself is more away from that centralised body to the decision-making within schools itself. So they are

actually going the next step.

THE CHAIRMAN: I wrote to South Australia and got that information and it is in the hands of the Committee.

BY MR. POWELL: Getting back to Commonwealth-State relationships - do you see the C.D.C. having an important role in Queensland education or should it be lessened in favour of our own curriculum section?-- I think that C.D.C. has an important role in Australian education. I think it is an example of co-operative working in that it has worked in very closely with the States. It is preparing curriculum material that can be used as required in any State, but it is only prepared once, rather than Queensland preparing one set of materials, New South Wales duplicating it and so on. It is a case where you can have the centralised preparation which is saving in the long run and is large enough to take on the magnitude of certain developments that the State could not take on.

Are you talking about the preparation of material or the preparation of curriculum?-- The preparation of curriculum material.

What about the preparation of development of curriculum? Does that properly belong to the State body?--It properly belongs to the State body in my opinion.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: They are doing some work on core curriculum at the moment?-- Yes.

Is that going to be in competition or at variance with State initiatives in this area?-- No. I think when it is completed it will be a model that the States can study to see whether it fits into its system of working and can be used if necessary or if the State wants it.

BY MR. HEWITT: Would you care to suggest any changes in the school holiday structure?-- We have been looking at this one for some time because we are concerned about it.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: I think I will rule that one out. We have had some communications with the Minister about it and we are aware of a submission that has been made?-- I think you know our views on it.

MR. HEWITT: And I know what is happening at different levels.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: Have you had a chance to look at all the submissions that have come in? I will forgive you if you have not. The community groups - the p. and c. committees, the progress associations - and the individual submissions have been displaying a fair amount of concern about basics - reading, writing and arithmetic. That is certainly a subject of serious community concern. You have given us a paper on it. Do you think there is really any need for some reaction on the part of your department in relation to that matter?--I must ask your forgiveness because I have not read in detail everything that has come in. At one stage I thought we would have to set up a special office to accommodate it. I have browsed through it and have been getting information fed to me. The publicity tests that have been carried out by an independent organisation have shown that Queensland is standing up very well compared to other States.

That is the ACER study?-- Yes. Where I think perhaps we need to take a stand is to inform people - parents and others - what they can expect. This is perhaps where we have not given enough information. When a student completes year five, what sort of calculation should we expect him to be able to do and what accuracy should he have? That flows on to the next critical point which is year seven and then year 10 and then year 12.

Most of the criticism comes from the stand of, "This is what I did when I went to school and that was right. They are not doing it now, therefore they are wrong." Once you start talking about some of the things going on in school today - they were never tackled when we went to school. This is where the comparison falls down. If you are going to make a comparison, you have to compare oranges with oranges; you cannot compare oranges with apples. And that is what a lot of people are trying to do.

Are you aware of the operations of the committee in Victoria under Professor Saint, I think it is - the standards committee?-- Professor Start.

I was close. Are you aware of that committee?-- Yes.

Is it a success?-- I do not think it has gone far enough yet. It will be another one of those cases of making an instrument available to teachers so that teachers can actually assess for themselves the standards of their particular classes. It is not a case of doing a 100 per cent test throughout the State and coming up with a report which says that school A is pretty poor at reading and school B is even worse at calculations. It is to allow teachers to do their own assessment.

Do you think we should do a Professor Start in Queensland?-- We are doing something here already. The Brisbane North Region - I do not know whether they explained it to you - have been doing some testing within their own schools on the same basis. If you do not have any information, I will arrange for the regional director to give you the information.

I would appreciate it if you would let me know. I am not quite certain that I know what you are talking about. It is an initiative, is it?-- It is an initiative within the Brisbane North Region, where they developed a series of tests. The teachers administer them and correct them. The regional office has collected the information and looked at it across that region - how are standards at a certain level. I think they selected year 5.

Why are we trying to be very careful that we do not designate a school as an area of low achievement? If school A is not achieving well, why are we restricting it to a region and not a school?-- This was a regionally initiated programme. I think that if you start getting down to individual schools and labelling schools you have to look at the needs of the students at those schools. If there are a group of students within a school, whether it be the background of the parents, the homes they come from or whatever, who are not performing well, why brand them? It is the responsibility of the teacher to do the most he possibly can educationally for the children in that particular class.

Can I ask if there is a particular problem there? I am not suggesting that you brand them; I am suggesting that you do something about it?-- I agree with that entirely.

What is being done about it, with that information?-- The Brisbane North one at this stage has not gone far enough to be able to do very much about it.

But the idea is that if there is a particular problem-----?-- If there is a problem within a school, I would say that the regional director or one of his inspectors would talk to the principal and the staff of the school and counsel them and advise them on the way that they think is best to help the children.

BY MR. POWELL: It has been brought to my attention that perhaps we are not doing enough in our schools for the gifted students. How do you react to that?-- I have always been opposed to the elitist-type school. I am not quite sure what you mean by "gifted". When most States talk about gifted children, they refer to children who have gifts in a particular way - in art, music -----

No; children with a high I.Q.?-- The children within any one grade or class year - their abilities span well beyond that, as you well know. It is the teachers' responsibility to motivate the child who is gifted and is ahead of the others to keep him going. There are other activities in which they can take part. Special mathematics schools are held at the end of the year and there is another one coming up in English. These gifted children can be with a group of other gifted children, not within their own school, in competition with children from other areas in that programme. It should motivate them even further.

Would you argue for a streaming of achievement level in the larger schools, where it is possible?-- I would not like to answer that yes or no. One thing that always gives me concern - I have seen quite a bit of this - is the effect on students of ambitious parents. I think it is a dreadful thing, what some parents are trying to do to their children to force them along. That is one of the risks you run. The other danger is that you become so tied up with this concept of the gifted child that you concentrate entirely on his academic work and forget about the other factors that go just as importantly towards his overall education.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Gilmour.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think we have reached the stage where we can conclude our hearings. We have had something of a marathon session. It has been a unique experience. I would like to thank all those who co-operated to bring it about. I want to thank the Director-General of Education, who is here with us today, and his officers. I want to thank our advisers, who have sat very patiently and been very helpful. I wish to thank the Hansard reporters, who have uncomplainingly carried out their job very efficiently. I want to thank Baxter McCarthy and his team for helping in that regard.

I would also like to say "thank you" to our secretary, who has had to go home ill. He has helped us in organising our programmes, and that has been a very difficult thing to do. He has had to fit a lot of busy people into a tight schedule. I thank the members of the Press, who very accurately and helpfully have reported us, and everyone else who co-operated, including Miss Glennie, who has very helpfully provided for us from time to time. Mr. Speaker also has helped us, and I convey my thanks to him. This concludes the public hearings of our education inquiry.

MR. HEWITT: Because it appears that you are going to work us hard in the deliberative sessions that we are now going to enter into, Mr. Chairman, the same spirit of affinity may not prevail. While it does prevail, may I say, on behalf of the advisory panel and your parliamentary colleagues, that we have been enormously impressed by the way in which you have conducted the proceedings. Your chairmanship has been quite outstanding. We are enormously grateful to you for your guidance out of session and your guidance in session. If our deliberations prove to be useful and if the Committee proves to be successful, it will be attributable in no small order to your chairmanship. I am sure I speak on behalf of everybody when I say that we record

our deep appreciation to you.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Hewitt. I now conclude this historic schedule of hearings of the Select Committee on Education.

The Committee adjourned at 12.50 p.m.