



1980  
QUEENSLAND  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

# REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

COMPRISING —

THE FINAL REPORT

and

FIRST INTERIM REPORT: Composition and Functions of the  
Board of Secondary School Studies and  
Secondary School Assessment

SECOND INTERIM REPORT: The Aims of our Schools and the Future  
of Social Education

THIRD INTERIM REPORT: Literacy and Numeracy

FOURTH INTERIM REPORT: Human Relationships

FIFTH INTERIM REPORT: Isolated Children and Isolated Schools

SIXTH INTERIM REPORT: Post-Secondary Education



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# PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

## FIRST INTERIM REPORT

### COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDIES AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

#### SECTION 1—GENERAL

1.1. By resolution of the Parliament on 4th April, 1978, a Select Committee was appointed to inquire into, report upon and make recommendations in relation to the system of education in Queensland and the extent to which it meets the expectations of students, parents and the community, and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, with particular reference to the following matters:—

- “(a) the efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education;
- “(b) appropriate emphasis in primary education between basic education and other activities;
- “(c) adequate technical and further education to meet today's industry needs;
- “(d) a review of the decision-making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
- “(e) adequacy of social education courses for primary and secondary students;
- “(f) the need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them and the administrative machinery for implementing them;
- “(g) the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organisations concerning any aspect of education; and
- “(h) any other matter pertaining to the matters for inquiry, report and recommendation as aforesaid;”

1.2. It was further resolved that the Committee consist of Messrs. M. J. Ahern, W. D. Hewitt, L. W. Powell, C. J. Miller and E. F. Shaw.

1.3. It was also resolved that an Advisory Panel be appointed and that Dr. Rupert Goodman, of the University of Queensland; Mr. Peter Krebs, Headmaster of St. Paul's School, Bald Hills; Mr. Kevin O'Connor, Principal of Wavell State High School; and Mrs. Jan Herron, parent representative; be invited to serve. The Committee is pleased to report that all these people accepted the invitation to join the Advisory Panel and wishes to place on record its appreciation of their continuing support and advice.

1.4. Mr. Ted Newton, an official of the Parliament, is the Secretary of the Committee and Mrs. Annette Graham is the Committee Stenographer and acts as assistant to Mr. Newton.

1.5. Because of the very wide terms of reference and the large number of submissions received, it became obvious that the Committee would require additional research assistance. Accordingly, by arrangement with the Parliamentary Librarian Mr. John Barnes of the Parliamentary Library Research Staff, has been seconded to the Select Committee as Research Officer.

1.6. The Select Committee has realized that there is a vast amount of work to be done to present a worthwhile report on Education as a whole. However, it has been represented to us by the Minister for Education, that there are certain matters on which he would appreciate an early expression of the views of the Select Committee and the Parliament, in order to facilitate the ongoing work of his Department. The Select Committee has therefore resolved to utilize the powers available to it under Section 205 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly to present interim reports to the House on matters which it believes require urgent consideration.

1.7. As part of its terms of reference, the Select Committee is required to report on “the efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education” and the “adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary students”. The problem of secondary school assessment is one on which the Committee has received a considerable volume of evidence and comment from all sections of the community. In addition, the recent publication of the report commissioned by the Board of Secondary School Studies *A Review of School-Based Assessment in Queensland Secondary Schools* (The Scott Report—1978) has occasioned much public debate. There has also been considerable discussion in the community and much concern expressed to the Select Committee, with respect to social education and its place in Queensland Schools. Uncertainty regarding this latter issue has caused much disquiet among parents and children and has placed many teachers in a difficult position, particularly with regard to curriculum planning. The Select Committee, therefore, resolved that these matters would be made the subjects of interim reports.

1.8. The implementation of any recommendations concerning secondary school assessment might require considerable preparatory work by the Department of Education and the Board of Secondary School Studies and would inevitably be subject to a significant time lag before full implementation could be achieved. For this reason and because of the demonstrated public concern regarding this issue, the Select Committee resolved to make it the subject of its “First Interim Report”. The Committee also resolved that the question of the composition and functions of the Board of Secondary School Studies was one to which it ought to give priority, and that it would be appropriate to include its findings on these matters in the same report. It is the intention of the Select Committee that the question of the adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary students shall form the subject of its “Second Interim Report”.

1.9. The Select Committee wishes to point out, however, that the presentation of an interim report will not in any way preclude it from making a more extensive reference to the matters discussed in such a report, when it presents its main report to the Parliament.

#### SECTION 2—THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDIES

2.1. The present composition of the Board is set out in subsections (1) and (2) of Section 36 of the Queensland Education Act as follows:—

36. Constitution of Board (1) There shall be constituted a Board to be called the “Board of Secondary School Studies” which shall consist of such members as the Governor in Council from time to time prescribes by Order in Council published in the Gazette.

(2) Until the Governor in Council otherwise prescribes, the Board shall consist of—

- (i) a person appointed by the Governor in Council to be and who shall be chairman;

- (ii) eight nominees of the Director-General, of whom at least three shall be practising teachers;

- (iii) two nominees of the Senate of the University of Queensland and one nominee of the Council or other governing body of each other University in the State at any time;

- (iv) one representative of colleges of advanced education, other than teachers colleges, nominated by the Minister in accordance with the procedure prescribed;

- (v) one representative of teachers colleges nominated by the Minister in accordance with the procedure prescribed;
- (vi) four teachers employed in Queensland non-government secondary schools nominated by the Minister in accordance with the procedure prescribed.
- (vii) two nominees of the Queensland Teachers' Union;
- (viii) one nominee of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, being a teacher in a non-government secondary school;
- (ix) the executive officer of the Board who shall be an ex officio member.

2.2. A number of submissions have been received, proposing that representatives of commerce, industry and the community at large, be included as members of the Board of Secondary School Studies. The Select Committee supports the principle that the Board should be representative of all groups which have a significant interest in the standard of secondary education in our State. At the same time, any proposal for wider representation must, necessarily, be balanced against a need to ensure that Board membership is not expanded to a point where its effectiveness as a working body may be placed at risk. With this in mind, the Select Committee recommends that the size of the Board should remain at a membership of twenty-three, the number authorized by the present legislation.

2.3. In formulating its recommendations as to the composition of the Board, the Select Committee examined several alternative proposals for reform made to the Minister by the Board itself, together with views expressed to us by other interested parties. We have accepted the latest proposal of the Board, dated 10th February, 1978, as providing appropriate guidelines, but have recommended certain changes which we believe will enhance the authority of the Board in the eyes of the public and are in line with our belief in the widest possible community involvement in education. We believe that the constitution which we present will, if implemented, provide a balanced membership in which the major community interests are represented, either directly or indirectly, but in which no single group can exert undue influence.

2.4. Whilst we are confident that all Board members will regard themselves, first and foremost, as representatives of the interests of students, we have recommended specific provision for the nomination of a parent member who, in addition to the normal duties of a full Board member, we would see as having a special duty to present the viewpoint of the children and the family.

2.5. The Select Committee has also accepted the recommendation of the Board of Secondary School Studies that a person concerned with the administration of Primary Education should be nominated to the Board, as of right. It is believed that such a person would bring to the Board special expertise concerning the problems associated with the transition of students from primary to secondary education.

2.6. The Select Committee believes that it is proper that the teachers, on whose co-operation the successful implementation of our educational policies ultimately depends, should be formally represented on the Board of Secondary School Studies through their major professional organisations. We are satisfied that the representatives nominated by these organisations in the past, have made substantial and useful contributions to the working of the Board, and are confident that they will continue to do so. We have, therefore, recommended that the right of the Queensland Teachers' Union and the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools to nominate members to the Board of Secondary School Studies be continued and supported.

2.7. The Select Committee believes that the membership of a statutory Board should be clearly described in the legislation together with the method of and responsibility for its

appointment. Only in this way can Parliament discharge its responsibility to ensure that the composition of such boards is appropriate to the task and balanced in its representation. The Select Committee does not believe that the composition of statutory boards in general and the Board of Secondary School Studies in particular should be subject to amendment by the Governor in Council without reference to the Parliament. We are aware of a line of argument which says that it is necessary for the Parliament to delegate this wide power to the Governor in Council, in case some member should abuse his position of trust. We reject this argument. We have already suggested that the balanced membership of the Board effectively precludes any member or group from exerting undue influence. We would also point out that the primary role of the Board is advisory to the Minister and that Section 45 of the Education Act already requires that subordinate legislation recommended by the Board be approved by the Governor in Council.

2.8. The Select Committee, therefore, recommends that subsections (1) and (2) of Section 36 of the Education Act be amended to read as follows:—

36. Constitution of Board. (1) There shall be constituted a Board to be called the "Board of Secondary School Studies".

(2) The Board shall consist of—

- (i) one nominee of the Minister who shall be appointed by the Governor in Council to be and who shall be chairman;
- (ii) the Director of Secondary Education—ex officio;
- (iii) six persons concerned with the administration of education, consisting of—  
four nominees of the Director-General of Education of whom one shall be a person concerned with the administration of Primary Education, two persons concerned with administration of Technical and Further Education and one, a principal of a State secondary school;  
one nominee of the State Director of Catholic Education;  
one nominee of other non-government secondary schools, who shall be a principal of a secondary school;
- (iv) three persons nominated by the Minister, each of whom is on the staff of a secondary school, one to be a teacher in a non-government secondary school, and two to be teachers in state secondary schools, of whom one shall be a principal;
- (v) two nominees of the Queensland Teachers' Union;
- (vi) one nominee of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, being a teacher in a non-government secondary school;
- (vii) five persons concerned with tertiary education, consisting of—  
one nominee of the Council or other governing body of each of the three Universities in the State;  
two nominees of the Minister representative of colleges of advanced education in the State;
- (viii) three persons nominated by the Minister who are representative of community interests, two of whom are to be concerned with commerce and industry, and one of whom is to be a parent appointed as such;
- (x) the Executive Officer of the Board—ex officio.



## SECTION 3—THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDIES

3.1. The present functions of the Board of Secondary School Studies are set out in Section 37 of the Queensland Education Act as follows:—

37. Functions and Powers of the Board. (1) The functions of the Board of Secondary School Studies shall be—

- (a) to advise the Minister on secondary education, regard being had to the requirements of a sound general education and to the specific needs of students related to their age, aptitude, ability and special interests;
- (b) to issue Junior Certificates and Senior Certificates in accordance with the regulations;
- (c) to approve syllabuses for those subjects designated or to be designated Board subjects on Junior Certificates and on Senior Certificates;
- (d) to determine procedures for the assessment of students for the award of Junior Certificates and Senior Certificates;
- (e) to make such arrangements as are deemed necessary for the assessment of students for the award of Junior Certificates and of Senior Certificates;
- (f) to appoint, pursuant to the provisions of this Division of this Part, a moderation committee and subject advisory committees, and to appoint such other committees as it deems necessary from time to time to assist it to perform its functions;
- (g) to arrange with the Department and with such schools, persons and authorities as it thinks fit for the services of suitable persons as moderators for such periods and on such terms (including payment of salaries, fees and allowances, if any) as the Governor in Council may from time to time determine;
- (h) to confer and collaborate with the Department in the performance of the Board's functions and the exercise of the Board's powers;
- (i) to make recommendations to the Minister with respect to the annual appropriation of funds required for the purpose of adequately performing its functions;
- (j) to make by-laws pursuant to the provisions of section 45 of this Act;
- (k) to furnish to the Minister as soon as practicable, but not more than three months after the thirty-first day of December in each year, a report of its works and activities during the year;
- (l) to perform any additional functions prescribed by the Governor in Council.

(2) The Board shall have and may exercise such powers and authorities as are incidental to the proper discharge by it of any of its functions under this Act, or as the Governor in Council from time to time prescribes by Order in Council.

3.2 The Select Committee has considered representations concerning proposed changes to the Board's functions including proposals made to the Minister of Education and to the Select Committee by the Board itself. In recent times, the Board has seen its role as advisory to the Minister of Education. The Select Committee is of the opinion that the interests of public accountability require that the Act be amended to give explicit recognition to this and to the Minister's responsibility to maintain an overview of the activities of the Board, on behalf of the people of the State. Although this represents a major change in legal principle, it will not involve any significant change in administrative procedure. This change is intended to give recognition to what has become the proper and accepted role of the Board.

3.3. We have also recommended certain other additions and amendments to the functions of the Board which have become necessary as a result of the natural process of

evolution of the Board's activities. These changes have been requested by the Board and again, represent recognition of current practices which we regard as entirely proper.

3.4. We wish to stress that our recommendation of these changes does not imply any criticism of the present Board or the way in which it has discharged its responsibilities. On the contrary, we recommend that the proposals for change submitted to the Minister by the Board on 10 February 1978 be now accepted.

3.5. Accordingly, the Select Committee recommends that Section 37 of the Education Act be amended to read as follows:—

37. Functions and powers of Board. (1) The functions and powers of the Board of Secondary School Studies shall be—

- (a) To advise the Minister on—
  - (i) matters relating to secondary education, having regard to the requirements of a sound general education and the specific needs of students taking into account their age, aptitude, ability and special interests;
  - (ii) the staff necessary to perform the functions of the Board;
  - (iii) the annual appropriation of funds necessary for the performance of the functions of the Board; and
- (b) Subject to the Minister—
  - (i) to issue, in accordance with the regulations, such certificates as to educational standards attained as it considers necessary;
  - (ii) to approve syllabuses for courses of study designated by the Board as approved courses as the basis for entitlement to certificates issued by the Board;
  - (iii) to determine procedures for the assessment of student achievement with a view to the grant and issue of certificates by the Board;
  - (iv) to make such arrangements as the Board considers necessary with respect to the assessment of student achievement with a view to the grant and issue of certificates by the Board;
  - (v) to appoint such committees as it considers necessary to assist it in the performance of its functions and the exercise of its powers and authorities and to fix fees and allowances payable to members of committees so appointed;
  - (vi) to arrange with the Department and with such persons, bodies or schools as it thinks fit for the services of suitable persons as moderators for such periods and on such terms (including payment of salaries, fees or allowances) as the Governor in Council determines;
  - (vii) to confer and collaborate with appropriate educational bodies in the performance of the Board's functions and the exercise of its powers and authorities;
  - (viii) to promote the participation of teachers in the State in formulating and implementing, by such methods as the Board determines, the policies of the Board;
  - (ix) to furnish to the Minister as soon as practicable but not more than three months after 31st December in each year a report on the operations of the Board during that year;
- (c) to perform such other functions as the Governor in Council may from time to time determine.

(2) The Board shall have and may exercise such powers and authorities as the Governor in Council by Order in Council prescribes and so far as not prescribed as are necessary for the performance by it of its functions under this Act.



## SECTION 4—SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT

4.1. The Select Committee received a very considerable number of representations from individuals and from a wide variety of commercial, industrial, educational and community organisations concerning the appropriate method of assessment of students in Queensland secondary schools. The proposals fall into four reasonably well defined groups. One group has advocated a return to public examinations in this State. Another group proposed that tertiary institutions set their own entrance examinations. Yet another recommended that assessment should be part external and part internal—50% from each source frequently being proposed. A further group defended the present system of assessment; and the report commissioned by the Board of Secondary School Studies *A Review of School-Based Assessment in Queensland Secondary Schools* (The Scott Report—1978) has recommended a change from norm-based to competency-based assessment in schools.

4.2. The Select Committee has considered all the proposals it has received. It has also reviewed the findings and recommendations of *Public Examinations for Queensland Secondary School Students* (The Radford Report—1970), *Some Consequences of the Radford Scheme for Schools, Teachers and Students in Queensland* (The Campbell Report—1975) and the report commissioned by the Queensland Department of Education and the Board of Secondary School Studies *Schools under Radford*, together with the review of the latter two of these reports contained in the "Scott Report". The Committee has likewise reviewed a significant amount of current and retrospective research material on secondary school assessment from other states in Australia, and from overseas. We have also studied current and proposed practices for secondary assessment in the other Australian States and New Zealand.

4.3. Many people have advocated the external examination believing that it provides the only reliable measure of public accountability in the secondary school system and that it would provide a fairer system than school-based assessment. On the other hand, others submitted that the external examination system contained many very undesirable educational features such as cramming, predicting, coaching in examination-passing techniques and that an external examination can discover only a part of a student's knowledge of a subject. It was also submitted that it is almost impossible to design an external examination which examines understanding rather than just facts. The result of a single examination was also questioned with regard to its fairness after a period of ten or twelve years of schooling. It was also drawn to the attention of the Committee that a state-wide external examination would destroy the degree of flexibility now being enjoyed in secondary schools. The Select Committee believes that this flexibility is desirable given the fact that the majority of students at secondary school do not proceed immediately to tertiary studies.

4.4. The Select Committee strongly recommends that a return to external examinations should not be considered. Even a system of part external examinations or a system where tertiary institutions set their own examinations would have many of the undesirable features referred to above. The Committee has examined the school-based assessment programme now operating in Queensland schools and recommends that the principle of school-based assessment should be supported.

4.5. The Select Committee has also given consideration in detail to the recommendations of the "Scott Report" which are being widely discussed at the moment. The Committee believes that the "Scott Committee's" recommendations for a change to competency-based assessment may help to overcome many of the difficulties which have been referred to in submissions with regard to the present norm-based assessment programme. However, the Committee believes that changes proposed in the "Scott Report" should be implemented with great care as "change is not made without inconvenience; even from worse to better". We have, however, in advocating the implementation of the "Scott Report" and supporting the principle of internal assessment in the schools, some

reservations concerning some of the "Scott" recommendations, in particular the system of reporting, which we discuss in Section 7.

4.6. There have been suggestions that under school-based assessment some students might be unfairly assessed because of teacher bias and/or prejudice. The Select Committee is of the opinion that supervision by school principals together with the procedures for appeal provide adequate safeguards in this regard. However, the Board of Secondary School Studies must take due note of this community concern. In our view, it is in the interests of both students and teachers, and crucial to public acceptance of school-based assessment, that the Board demonstrates that its supervisory procedures incorporate serious guarantees regarding the justice of assessment.

4.7. The problem of "over-testing" has also been raised in relation to school-based assessment. In addition to criticism raised in submissions to the Select Committee, both the "Campbell" and "SUR" Report have commented adversely on the policy of some schools in this regard. The evidence presented to us including the "Scott Report" suggests that the Board of Secondary School Studies has not communicated effectively with teachers in schools with regard to the assessment procedures. We concur with the recommendation contained in the "Scott Report" that the Board should re-examine its communication strategies with regard to schools. We recommend that the Board take positive action to encourage the exchange of ideas on assessment strategies and take steps to ensure that the importance of avoiding over-testing is regularly brought to the attention of school inspectors and school principals.

4.8. The Select Committee has been made aware that the present division of the school year into three terms, is inappropriate now that curriculum design is on a semester basis. We accept that this has compounded the problems of school administration and assessment. We have already indicated to the Minister our support for a re-organisation of the school year in conformity with the semesterisation of the curriculum, and note that the Minister now has the matter in hand. We recommend that this re-organisation be supported.

4.9. The Select Committee has noted with concern the difficulties faced by small schools, especially those in country areas, in administering a system of school-based assessment. These schools do not share the advantages of ease of access to the central administration and the economies of scale available to the large metropolitan high schools. We strongly recommend that these schools receive special assistance as a matter of urgency.

4.10. The Select Committee has been invited to consider whether there is a need to establish a state programme to test essential computation and communication skills. The primary aims of such a programme would, of course, be different from those of the reference test programme, although it would provide feedback to teachers and schools regarding the effectiveness of various teaching strategies. We have examined material on the *California Assessment Program* and on a similar programme entitled *The Essential Skills Testing Program* which is to be trialled in Victoria in 1979. The objectives of this type of programme are linked to the question of appropriate standards of literacy and numeracy, at various stages of the educational process. They must, therefore, be related to the question of standards in primary as well as secondary education. The Committee is seeking further clarification of what is proposed for Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools and intends to report its findings in its main report.

4.11. The Select Committee wishes to point out in the strongest possible terms that the principal aim and purpose of our school system is the education of children to take their place in the adult world. Although assessment has loomed large in public debate, it is but one facet of the education system. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the major interface between the education system and the community and a means by which educators account to the public for their stewardship. It is not, nor does it represent, the aim or purpose of education.

## SECTION 5—CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

5.1. The Select Committee is aware that a major rationale of the original "Radford Scheme" was to allow a greater degree of flexibility in relation to the curriculum. The evidence before the Committee suggests that this has been implemented rather more fully in some subject areas than in others. However, there is clearly considerable concern in the community about what appears to be an over-emphasis on the need for flexibility in the curriculum. Many parents are concerned about the problems which can arise when students have to transfer between schools. There is also concern that there may be a considerable diversity of outcomes in relation to a variable curriculum and its assessment. The latter concern was particularly manifest in submissions we have received from employers and tertiary institutions.

5.2. We believe that there has been an over-reaction to the need for flexibility, and suggest that consideration should be given to defining a core curriculum within each subject area. We support the concept of flexibility in relation to curriculum design, but we do not see flexibility and the need for a core curriculum as necessarily incompatible. The evidence we have received from teachers suggests most strongly, that a substantial majority of them do not want or need total flexibility in their curriculum. In many cases, because of the demanding nature of their particular employment, when faced with a very broadly outlined syllabus their understandable reaction is, often, to rely on a prepared text.

5.3. The Select Committee supports the retention of a significant degree of flexibility in curriculum design. This is particularly necessary in our state, due to the diversity which exists in both geographical locations and specific local occupational opportunities. It also enables individual differences and needs of students to be recognised and expressed in the overall educational programme. Nevertheless, in a large and decentralised state, within which there is considerable population mobility, the best interests of all children will be served if difficulties caused by movement from school to school can be mitigated. We believe that the introduction of a core curriculum will make a significant contribution to a solution to this problem.

5.4. We do not consider that at this time, our secondary education system can adequately fulfil the needs of all those different sections of the community who have a common interest in educational outcomes, including most importantly the needs of the students themselves, unless there is a degree of uniformity in curricular material. We

believe that the introduction of a core syllabus of approximately 50% in each "Board Subject" and "Board Approved Subject" would provide an arrangement which would be much more acceptable to the community in general and lead to a greater acceptance of the overall aims of the present secondary education programme.

5.5. Some people have submitted to the Select Committee that any degree of prescription in syllabuses would be an adverse reflection on the professional capacities and status of teachers. The Committee does not intend it to be, nor does it admit that this is necessarily so. Prescription of a core of approximately 50% in each subject area will still allow ample scope for the personal and professional development of teachers and also preserve their opportunity to develop courses or approaches in a manner appropriate to the needs of the community in which the particular school is situated.

5.6. The Select Committee also believes that a greater uniformity in curricular material is a pre-requisite for an adequate competency-based reference testing programme, a programme which, as we discuss in Section 6, we regard as essential, both to safeguard the interests of our secondary school students, and to fulfil the requirements of public accountability.

5.7. The Select Committee supports in principle the recommendation of the "Scott Committee" that a "Curriculum Task Force" re-write each syllabus specifying objectives in terms of cognitive skills and practical skills, as well as a quantitative expression of core content. We recommend that syllabuses should be re-organised to prescribe approximately 50% of the content, thus ensuring that the element of flexibility is maintained to cater for varying needs of different groups and areas. We also recommend that in re-writing each syllabus, greater detail be provided for the guidance of teachers.

5.8. It has been suggested that a prescribed core would inevitably come to dominate the curriculum to the exclusion of the elective elements. We do not accept that this is inevitable, nor indeed likely. Nevertheless, in the interests of public accountability we recommend that the Board of Secondary School Studies establish procedures to ensure that schools devote appropriate time to the teaching of all sections of each subject curriculum and that assessment is related to a student's performance over the whole curriculum and not merely on the core content.

## SECTION 6—REFERENCE TESTING

6.1. The evidence which has been presented to the Select Committee suggests to us that much of the criticism of the internal assessment programme has resulted from an alleged decline in the standard of education achieved by the majority of students, particularly in respect of basic computational and communication skills. Our investigations indicate that this concern is world-wide and not merely confined to Queensland or Australia. It is a concern which is being voiced in every industrialised country in the world. However, we have been forced to conclude that the evidence for supposing that there has been a decline in standards is indeterminate, both in Australia and elsewhere. We have compared the situation in Queensland with that which obtains in countries which have more highly structured, more centralised and/or more authoritarian approaches to education. We have also looked at the situation with respect to various methods of assessment. It is apparent that claims by the lay public that educational standards are declining are widespread and are independent of either the structure of the education system or the method of assessment of individual students.

6.2. It is not part of our mandate to report in detail on the claims and counterclaims concerning educational standards. It is not the first time in the history of our State that concern has been expressed about standards, or that it has been claimed that our schools were not adequately meeting the needs of the individual or society. We have seen, in the last twenty-five years, a rate of change for which there is no historical precedent. Society has become more complex, communication more rapid, exposure to a variety of often contradictory and hence confusing information sources, has become more widespread, and leisure and work patterns have changed considerably. The percentage of students continuing at secondary school beyond year ten has risen significantly in recent years. The Com-

mittee is aware of the strains that this sustained period of rapid expansion of the school population has placed on the system and the teachers. We also feel that there is persuasive evidence to suggest that there has been a rise in the minimum entry level of competence necessary for the school leaver to begin to learn to cope with adult life.

6.3. There is evidence to suggest that a minority of students are not achieving an educational standard which we could accept as adequate, either for employment, or for day-to-day living in the modern world. Rapid developments in our more complex technological society have produced a demand for a more highly educated and skilled workforce. Hence, many students who in earlier times might have taken an unskilled or semi-skilled job requiring only minimal academic competence now embark on training for much more skilled work requiring, in particular, much higher mathematical and communication skills. It also appears that the standard of literacy and numeracy required even for unskilled jobs has risen. Hence, it seems to us that the important question is not so much whether standards are rising or falling, but rather whether the standards are appropriate.

6.4. Unfortunately, most of the evidence which we received concerning appropriate standards was vague and contradictory. A major difficulty appears to be a lack of information both about what it is possible for the education system to achieve and what level of skills school leavers actually need. We were particularly disappointed to find that submissions from employers and employer groups contained no definitive statements of the standards they require for particular occupations. We recognise the responsibility of the education system to take account of the needs of employers. We also wish to draw attention to the equal responsibility of employers, to communicate their needs to the education system in precise terms. Some employers

have suggested to us that teachers do not understand the world of work, many teachers claim that employers do not understand what the education system is trying to do. In these circumstances, confusion over the assessment of standards seems to us to be almost inevitable. We would remind all sections of the community of the necessity for meaningful dialogue concerning their expectations with respect to the education of our children. A changing world implies changing educational standards. It demands a positive and continuous effort on the part of the education system and the community at large, to maintain a consensus on what can be achieved, to define and re-define appropriate standards and to strive to achieve and then surpass those standards, for the ultimate benefit of the whole of our society.

6.5. There is also public concern regarding the appropriate procedure to ensure state-wide comparability of assessment. It has been claimed that the present moderation system has been a major source of criticism among teachers, students and parents. The Select Committee accepts that this is the case but believes that much of the hostility from students and parents has arisen because they have been inadequately informed concerning the system. A popular belief has been that the distribution of ratings to a school is predetermined, hence, for example, if a school were allotted only two 7 Grades and had three outstanding students in that subject, one student must perforce be disadvantaged. It has been represented to the Committee that such is not the case—and yet the belief persists.

6.6 The "Scott Committee" has proposed that the present moderation system be discontinued and replaced by a system of accreditation of proposed work programmes and competence criteria, and certification of reported standards of achievement. The system of consensus moderation would be abandoned in favour of a system of peer advisory and consultative meetings to plan work and assessment programmes and arrive at appropriate performance standards. The maintenance of State-wide standards would be monitored by a programme of periodic reference testing.

6.7. The Select Committee believes that the public require and are entitled to expect, serious guarantees from the Board of Secondary School Studies concerning the maintenance of appropriate State-wide standards. In our opinion the requirements of public accountability can be met by the system of subject accreditation and certification proposed by the "Scott Committee", monitored by a comprehensive system of reference testing. Such tests would be applied to the cognitive and practical skills specified in the curriculum and to the core content of the syllabus.

6.8. The Select Committee therefore recommends that the proposals of the "Scott Committee" to replace the present moderation system by a system of accreditation of work programmes and certification of reported standards of achievement backed by a programme of periodic reference testing, be approved in principle. The procedures should be designed where possible to reduce, and under no circumstances to increase, the administrative load on schools and practising teachers. We also recommend that the introduction of the system, and any subsequent changes or modifications, *must* be preceded by a comprehensive programme of public education, and a well-planned programme of pre-service and in-service training for teachers.

6.9. We also recommend that each subject should be tested on a state-wide basis, the maximum period of time between tests to be specified by the Minister with the advice of the Board of Secondary School Studies. We suggest that once every four years should be considered. Additional tests should be applied to samples of schools when this is considered necessary by the Minister for educational reasons, or in the interests of public accountability. The pattern of the use of reference tests should be randomly determined so that schools cannot predict when they will be tested, the intention being to discourage attempts to "coach" for tests.

6.10. We further recommend that information regarding overall standards in individual subjects, and including the results of the reference testing programme, should be reported to the Parliament each year in the annual report of the Board of Secondary School Studies. That report should make specific reference to the maintenance of standards over time and should include recommendations as to how these standards may be supported and improved. A report on each individual school should be made available to the appropriate administrative authority and to the principal of that school.

6.11. We have stated that we believe that the proper concern should be for the maintenance of appropriate standards. This, in a changing world, implies a need for those standards to change and probably to be raised over time. In terms of comparability we do not see this as a significant difficulty in the short run, but, we recommend that in making its annual report to the Parliament, the Board of Secondary School Studies make particular and detailed reference to the comparability of the standards reported.

## SECTION 7—REPORTING

7.1. This was an area in which considerable concern was expressed in many of the submissions to the Select Committee, particularly in those from employers and parents. Although the Committee accepts arguments, which were put to us, that some of this concern has resulted from a lack of understanding of the system, nevertheless, we accept that some of this concern is justified. For example, the present system is considered unsatisfactory by many people because it is norm-based. This means that ratings are determined by the student's position in the distribution of scores and not by an objective standard of ability. Such a procedure may be unexceptionable for those students who intend to continue on to tertiary education. It is, however, much less useful for the majority of students who intend to proceed directly into the workforce.

7.2. The Select Committee, as already stated in Section 4, upholds competency-based assessment in principle. We believe that it will be much more meaningful both to parents and to prospective employers than the present norm-based scheme. However, the Committee disagrees with the system of reporting which is recommended in the "Scott Report". This advocates a scale of levels of competency described as:—

Highest Level of Competency  
Highly Competent  
Competent  
Limited Competence  
Very Limited Competence  
Ungraded

We have two criticisms; first, the terms used for the lower levels of achievement have pejorative overtones which many people might find offensive. We think that the

terminology should be positive rather than negative. Second, we think that the terms "Competent" and "Competence" have been over used which could lead to confusion.

7.3. The Select Committee has considered proposals for a numerical or alphabetical category system, both of which have merit. However, on balance, we support the view of the "Scott Committee" which argues that a numerical system would lend itself to the invalid malpractice of summing levels of attainment, while an alphabetical system would require a translation step to a description in terms of competence.

7.4. The Select Committee suggests that the following terms be adopted:—

Highest Degree of Attainment  
High Attainment  
Very Competent  
Competent  
Coped with Basics  
Low Attainment  
Not Tested

7.5. We are aware that it is the intention that performance criteria for each level of competence for each dimension of each subject be stated in specific terms by the schools in their accredited programmes. We regard it as essential that there should be easy public access to these statements. However, we also recommend that brief descriptors of the principles on which the levels of competence appropriate to each reporting term are to be based, are essential, if these terms are to be accepted as meaningful by the community at large. The Board of Secondary School Studies

should develop appropriate descriptors which should be printed on all report forms. As indicative of what we believe is required, we present the following tentative definitions:—

**Highest Degree of Attainment**—The student has attained the highest degree of understanding of the concepts and underlying theoretical principles of the subject, together with the acquisition of associated skills of the highest order. The student also possesses deep insight into the application of knowledge and skills of the subject to complex theoretical and practical situations.

**High Attainment**—The student attained a high degree of understanding of the concepts and underlying theoretical principles of the subject, together with the acquisition of associated skills of a high order. The student also possesses insight into the application of knowledge and skills of the subject to complex theoretical and practical situations.

**Very Competent**—The student has mastered the content and skills of the subject, and has demonstrated some understanding of its underlying theoretical principles. The student can apply the knowledge and skills of the subject to reasonably demanding theoretical and practical problems and situations.

**Competent**—The student has mastered the basic content and associated skills of the subject and can apply the knowledge and skills to routine theoretical and practical problems and situations.

**Coped with Basics**—The student has demonstrated an ability to acquire knowledge of basic content and associated skills of the subject but is limited in applying the knowledge and skills to theoretical and practical problems and situations.

**Low Attainment**—The student has not acquired a knowledge of the basic content of the subject or mastered the associated skills.

## SECTION 8—THE TERTIARY ENTRANCE SCORE

8.1. The T. E. Score system was seriously criticised in a number of submissions to the Inquiry. Major areas of concern were the statistical basis of the system, its alleged weaknesses in respect of possible abuses, particularly in respect of the administration of the Australian Scholastic Aptitude Test (A.S.A.T.) and the possibility of inaccuracies in assessing the performance of smaller groups.

8.2. The Select Committee has researched the total situation very thoroughly and has examined all matters raised in submissions to it with great care. We have had extensive discussions with Universities and Colleges of Advanced Education—the ultimate users of the system—and with the Board of Secondary School Studies. We have examined research evidence concerning scholastic aptitude tests and their use as moderating instruments in general and the use of the A.S.A.T. test in the calculation of the Queensland T. E. Score in particular. As a consequence of this detailed study, we do not believe that the criticisms have been substantiated in any important respect.

8.3. However, we wish to comment on one of the criticisms raised; namely, the possibility that inaccuracies occur in assessing the performance of small groups of students. The problem arises in subjects which are offered by a relatively small number of schools and/or which are studied by a relatively small number of students (e.g. Indonesian/Malaysian, Agriculture and Animal Production). The Board of Secondary School Studies has developed special procedures for dealing with this problem. The main difference from standard procedures is that each subject group is treated as a State group rather than as a school-group when special subject assessments are adjusted to A.S.A.T. Once these special subject assessments have been scaled in this way, they are fed back into the normal system and combined with the other subject assessments for a given school. The Committee is satisfied that, given acceptable procedures for appeal, which we discuss in paragraph 8.7., the approach adopted is adequate, and fair.

8.4. The tertiary institutions, for whom the T.E. Score was devised, do not wish to recommend any change at this time. They have backed up their support for the system with statistical data which shows that the predictive capacity of the T.E. Score with respect to success in tertiary studies is not significantly different overall from the predictive capacity of the previous senior external examination.

8.5 The Select Committee believes that for the present, the T.E. Score system should be continued and supported. However, the Committee recognises the fact that no system is perfect and we would expect that the Board of Secondary School Studies will continue to carry out research and to liaise with other educational bodies, with a view to further refining and improving the system of tertiary selection in Queensland.

8.6. Some submissions have proposed that School Subjects should be included in the T.E. Score. The Committee has argued the need to retain a significant degree of flexibility within the education programme, having regard to the wide variation in student needs. We consider that the recommendations of the "Scott Report", that provisions should be made for including, by choice, in the T.E. Score, assessments totalling two semester units of certified School Subjects, supports that argument. In a modest, but, we believe, desirable degree, it would enable schools to offer a broader-based education to those students who, on entering Year 11, wish to keep open their options in respect of tertiary education. The Select Committee urges that the suggested discussions between the Board and the tertiary institutions take place with a view to implementing this recommendation.

8.7. The Select Committee considers that the administrative procedures adopted by the Board of Secondary School Studies for reviewing any alleged injustice are satisfactory in principle. However, we believe that the "right of appeal" should be more clearly defined and publicised. In our opinion, this would be helpful in allaying public concern about this complex subject.

## SECTION 9—CONCLUSION

9.1. The Select Committee in recommending changes to the composition and functions of the Board of Secondary School Studies has sought to foster a greater community involvement in Secondary School Education in our State. We are convinced that a more active dialogue between the education system and the community at large is essential if our education system is to maintain its standards of excellence in a rapidly changing world.

9.2. In supporting the school-based assessment programme in secondary schools, the Select Committee has, in general, supported the proposals of the "Scott Committee" with some recommendations which we believe will constitute improvements. These recommendations have been prompted by the

submissions we have received and a general community concern for greater public accountability in the education system.

9.3. We are satisfied that, if these recommendations are implemented, the system of school-based assessment will be more widely understood and accepted by the community. The system of public accountability which we propose will, we believe, do much to ensure an even greater degree of community acceptance in the future.

9.4. In conclusion, the Select Committee wishes to point out that our research shows quite clearly that what has been achieved in Queensland is gradually being accepted as the norm, in the other states in Australia and in other countries around the world.

## SECTION 10—SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

(Figures in brackets refer to the appropriate paragraphs in the body of the Report)

10.1. That the size of the Board of Secondary School Studies should remain at a membership of twenty-three. (2.2.)

10.2. That subsections (1) and (2) of Section 36 of the Education Act be amended to read as follows:—

36. Constitution of Board. (1) There shall be constituted a Board to be called the "Board of Secondary School Studies".

(2) The Board shall consist of—

- (i) one nominee of the Minister who shall be appointed by the Governor in Council to be and who shall be Chairman;
- (ii) The Director of Secondary Education—ex officio;
- (iii) six persons concerned with the administration of education, consisting of—
  - four nominees of the Director-General of Education of whom one shall be a person concerned with the administration of Primary Education, two, persons concerned with the administration of Technical and Further Education and one, a principal of a state secondary school;
  - one nominee of the State Director of Catholic Education;
  - one nominee of other non-government secondary schools, who shall be a principal of a secondary school;
- (iv) three persons nominated by the Minister, each of whom is on the staff of a secondary school, one to be a teacher in a non-government secondary school, and two to be teachers in state secondary schools, of whom one shall be a principal;
- (v) two nominees of the Queensland Teachers' Union;
- (vi) one nominee of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, being a teacher in a non-government secondary school;
- (vii) five persons concerned with tertiary education, consisting of—
  - one nominee of the Council or other governing body of each of the three Universities in the State;
  - two nominees of the Minister representative of colleges of advanced education in the State;
- (viii) three persons nominated by the Minister who are representative of community interests, two of whom are to be concerned with commerce and industry, and one of whom is to be a parent appointed as such;
- (ix) the Executive Officer of the Board—ex officio. (2.8.)

10.3. That Section 37 of the Education Act be amended to read as follows:—

37. Functions and powers of Board. (1) The functions and powers of the Board of Secondary School Studies shall be—

(a) to advise the Minister on—

- (i) matters relating to secondary education, having regard to the requirements of a sound general education and the specific needs of students taking into account their age, aptitude, ability and special interests;
- (ii) the staff necessary to perform the functions of the Board;
- (iii) the annual appropriation of funds necessary for the performance of the functions of the Board; and

(b) subject to the Minister—

- (i) to issue, in accordance with the regulations, such certificates as to educational standards attained as it considers necessary;
- (ii) to approve syllabuses for courses of study designated by the Board as approved courses as the basis for entitlement to certificates issued by the Board;
- (iii) to determine procedures for the assessment of student achievement with a view to the grant and issue of certificates by the Board;

(iv) to make such arrangements as the Board considers necessary with respect to the assessment of student achievement with a view to the grant and issue of certificates by the Board;

(v) to appoint such committees as it considers necessary to assist it in the performance of its functions and the exercise of its powers and authorities and to fix fees and allowances payable to members of committees so appointed;

(vi) to arrange with the Department and with such persons, bodies or schools as it thinks fit for the services of suitable persons as moderators for such periods and on such terms (including payment of salaries, fees or allowances) as the Governor in Council determines;

(vii) to confer and collaborate with appropriate educational bodies in the performance of the Board's functions and the exercise of its powers and authorities;

(viii) to promote the participation of teachers in the State in formulating and implementing, by such methods as the Board determines, the policies of the Board;

(ix) to furnish to the Minister as soon as practicable but not more than three months after 31st December in each year a report on the operations of the Board during that year;

(c) To perform such other functions as the Governor in Council may from time to time determine;

(2) The Board shall have and may exercise such powers and authorities as the Governor in Council by Order in Council prescribes and so far as not prescribed as are necessary for the performance by it of its functions under this Act. (3.5.)

10.4. That a return to external examinations should not be considered. (4.4.)

10.5. That the principle of school-based assessment should be supported. (4.4.)

10.6. That competency-based assessment be supported in principle. (4.5.)

10.7. That the Board of Secondary School Studies should re-examine its communication strategies with regard to schools. (4.7.)

10.8. That the Board of Secondary School Studies should take positive action to encourage the exchange of ideas on assessment strategies and take steps to ensure that the importance of avoiding over-testing is regularly brought to the attention of school inspectors and school principals. (4.7.)

10.9. That the school year be re-organised in conformity with the semesterised curriculum. (4.8.)

10.10. That small schools receive special assistance with the administration of school-based assessment as a matter of urgency. (4.9.)

10.11. That a significant degree of flexibility in curriculum design be retained. (5.3.)

10.12. That a "Curriculum Task Force" re-write each syllabus, specifying objectives in terms of cognitive skills and practical skills, as well as a quantitative expression of core content. (5.7.)

10.13. That syllabuses should be reorganised to prescribe approximately 50% of the content. (5.7.)

10.14. That in re-writing the syllabus, greater detail be provided for the guidance of teachers. (5.7.)

10.15. That the Board of Secondary School Studies establish procedures to ensure that schools devote appropriate time to teaching of all sections of each subject curriculum and that assessment is related to a student's performance over the whole curriculum and not merely on the core element. (5.8.)

10.16. That the present moderation system be replaced by a system of accreditation of work programmes and certification of reported standards of achievement backed by a programme of periodic reference testing. (6.8.)

10.17. That the introduction of the system, and any subsequent changes or modifications, must be preceded by a comprehensive programme of public education, and a well planned programme of pre-service and in-service training for teachers. (6.8.)

10.18. That each subject should be tested on a state-wide basis, the maximum period of time between tests to be specified by the Minister with the advice of the Board of Secondary School Studies. (6.9.)

10.19. That information regarding overall standards in individual subjects, and including the results of the reference testing programme, should be reported to the Parliament each year in the annual report of the Board of Secondary School Studies. (6.10.)

10.20. That in making its annual report to the Parliament, the Board of Secondary School Studies make particular and detailed reference to the comparability of the standards reported. (6.11.)

10.21. That in reporting levels of competency, a system of verbal as opposed to numerical or alphabetical categories be used. (7.3.)

10.22. That the Board of Secondary School Studies develop appropriate descriptors of the terms adopted to be printed on all report forms. (7.5.)

10.23. That the T. E. Score system should be continued and supported. (8.5.)

10.24. That provision should be made for including, by choice, in the T. E. Score, assessments totalling two semester units of certified School Subjects. (8.6.)

10.25. That the right of appeal against the T. E. Score awarded should be more clearly defined and publicised. (8.7.)

M. J. AHERN, Chairman.

Queensland Legislative Assembly,  
28th November 1978.

## APPENDIX A

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND HELD IN THE LATE LEGISLATIVE  
COUNCIL CHAMBER ON TUESDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER, 1978, AT 7.30  
P.M.

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Messrs. M. J. AHERN (Chairman)  
W. D. HEWITT  
C. J. MILLER  
L. W. POWELL  
E. F. SHAW

### OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. R. D. GOODMAN  
Mr. P. A. B. KREBS  
Mr. K. P. O'CONNOR  
Mr. E. S. NEWTON (Secretary)  
Mr. J. M. BARNES (Research Officer)

Following a series of deliberative sessions, the Committee met to consider the draft First Interim Report in detail. The Chairman read the Report to the Committee and it was resolved that the Report be formally presented as a whole, rather than clause by clause. It was unanimously agreed that the Report represented the consensus view of all Members of the Committee. It was further resolved that the Chairman table the First Interim Report in the Parliament on Tuesday, 5th December, 1978.

**SECOND INTERIM REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**ON EDUCATION**  
**IN QUEENSLAND**

THE AIMS OF OUR SCHOOLS AND  
THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL EDUCATION



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# PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

## SECOND INTERIM REPORT

### THE AIMS OF OUR SCHOOLS AND THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL EDUCATION

#### SECTION 1—GENERAL

1.1. By resolution of the Parliament on 4th April, 1976, a Select Committee was appointed to inquire into, report upon and make recommendations in relation to the system of education in Queensland and the extent to which it meets the expectations of students, parents and the community, and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, with particular reference to the following matters:—

- "(a) the efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education;
- "(b) appropriate emphasis in primary education between basic education and other activities;
- "(c) adequate technical and further education to meet today's industry needs;
- "(d) a review of the decision-making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
- "(e) adequacy of social education courses for primary and secondary students;
- "(f) the need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them and the administrative machinery for implementing them;
- "(g) the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organizations concerning any aspect of education; and
- "(h) any other matter pertaining to the matters for inquiry, report and recommendation as aforesaid;

1.2. The Select Committee consists of:—

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

1.3. An Advisory Panel has been appointed and consists of:—

Dr R. D. Goodman—University of Queensland;  
Mrs Jan Herron—Parent Representative;  
Mr P. Krebs—Lately, Headmaster of St. Paul's School, Bald Hills;  
Mr K. O'Connor—Inspector of Schools.

1.4. The Select Committee staff are:—

Mr E. S. Newton—Secretary;  
Mr J. M. Barnes—Research Officer;  
Mrs A. L. Graham—Stenographer.

1.5. The relevant extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the First Session of the Forty-Second Parliament, No. 4—Tuesday, 4th April, 1978, which was the motion to establish the Select Committee on Education in Queensland, is set out at length in the "First Interim Report" and it has not been considered necessary to repeat it in this report.

1.6. Under the powers available to it under Section 205 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly the Select Committee has resolved to present interim reports to the Parliament on matters which it believes require urgent consideration. The *First Interim Report: Composition and Functions of the Board of Secondary Studies and Secondary School Assessment* was presented to Parliament on Tuesday, 5th December, 1978.

1.7. In its first interim report, the Select Committee announced its intention (paragraph 1.8.) that the question of the adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary students should form the subject of its "Second Interim Report".

1.8. In presenting this "Second Interim Report" the Select Committee wishes to point out once again, that the presentation of an interim report will not in any way preclude it from making a more extensive reference to the matters discussed in such a report, when it presents its main report to the Parliament.

#### SECTION 2—THE AIMS OF OUR SCHOOLS AND OF SOCIAL EDUCATION

2.1. The Select Committee in its *First Interim Report* drew attention to the fact that rapid developments in our complex technological society have produced a demand for a more highly educated and skilled work force. This need has resulted in increasing pressure on the limited time available for the primary and secondary education of our children. It has led some sections of our community to question the usefulness of social education and even to suggest that the time might more profitably be employed in purely vocational pursuits. We would emphasize, however, that education now as in the past must serve other purposes besides the preparation of our youth to enter the work force, important though this may be. In 1863, speaking at the opening of the Ipswich Grammar School, Sir George Bowen commented:—

"By education is meant not a mere preparation for some specific trade or profession, but rather a preparation for the whole business of life—a preparation which shall fit the student to fill his part well as a member of a family, of a professional or commercial community, of society generally and of the State."

a definition of education which the Select Committee approves and supports.

2.2. All education is, in some sense, "social education", however, for the purposes of this report it is necessary to adopt a somewhat narrower definition. Whilst we recognize that other definitions are possible, for our purposes we have defined "Social Education" as comprising Social Studies, Religious and Ethical Studies, Health Education and Sex Education. Social Studies we define as comprising those portions of the social sciences that are selected for use in teaching. The social sciences are the fields of

knowledge which deal with man's social behaviour, his social life, and his social institutions. The fields which are most frequently drawn upon in school social studies courses are history (the study of man's past), human and economic geography (the study of man's relation to his habitat), civics (the study of man's duties and rights), sociology (the study of society's institutions and processes), social anthropology (the study of the culture of groups), and economics (the study of man's use of scarce resources both human and material).

2.3. The Select Committee is of the opinion, however, that it would not be sensible to attempt to discuss the adequacy of social education courses, without first addressing itself to the more general question of the aims of the school system as a whole. We believe that schools must have aims against which to judge the effectiveness of their work and hence the kinds of improvements that they need to make from time to time. If the community is to continue to grant schools a degree of autonomy in devising curriculum and teaching methods, we think it essential to the maintenance of public confidence, that the Parliament set out in the Education Act a general statement of its expectations with respect to the school system. The translation of these aims into classroom practice will naturally depend upon the characteristics of individual schools and the localities they serve.

2.4. We propose the following statement of aims:—

The principal aim of education in Queensland Primary and Secondary Schools is to help and guide children to progress towards the full attainment of their potentialities as individuals and as adult members of our society.

In particular, it is the duty and responsibility of our teachers and educational administrators—

- (i) to help children develop lively, enquiring minds, giving them the ability to question and to argue rationally, and to apply themselves to tasks;
- (ii) to help children to the maximum development of their physical qualities, giving them an understanding of the means of achieving and the benefits of physical fitness, health and hygiene;
- (iii) to help children to use language effectively and imaginatively in reading, writing and speaking;
- (iv) to provide a basis of mathematical, scientific and technical knowledge, enabling boys and girls to learn the essential skills needed in a fast-changing world of work;
- (v) to instil respect for moral values, for other people and for oneself, and tolerance of other races, religions, and ways of life;
- (vi) to help children understand how our country is governed and to instil an awareness of the social, civic and political responsibilities and rights of adult citizenship;
- (vii) to teach children about human achievement and aspirations, and in particular to make them aware of the traditions and culture of Queensland and of Australia and of the heritage of our past;
- (viii) to help children understand the world in which we live, and the interdependence of nations;
- (ix) to help children to appreciate how the nation earns and maintains its standard of living and properly to esteem the essential role of agriculture, industry and commerce in this process;
- (x) to encourage and foster the development of the children whose social, physical or environmental disadvantages cripple their capacity to learn, if necessary by making additional resources available to them.

2.5. The aims we have proposed are adapted from and are similar to statements of aims which our research suggests have achieved acceptance in other countries. We believe that they are representative of the wishes of the majority of the Queensland people expressed to us in the many submissions which we have received. It is, however, unlikely that there would be the same consensus on how these aims should be achieved, or indeed on the way in which they ought properly to be translated into a practical school curriculum. In the field of social education, for example, some submissions have favoured eclectic courses often described as "Social Studies" or "Study of Society", whilst others favour the traditional approach of offering separate courses under the titles of the more familiar academic disciplines such as History, Geography and Economics. There are also those who believe that social education in whatever form, comprises an unbalanced proportion of the school curriculum, and that undue emphasis on social studies has resulted in a neglect of the basic computational and communication skills.

2.6. In our "First Interim Report", we drew attention to the need for improvement in the standard of communication between the education system and the community. We also draw attention to the report of *The Commission of Inquiry into The Nature and Extent of the Problems Confronting Youth in Queensland* (Q.P.P. A85—1975) which was appointed by the Government on 5th October, 1974, under the Chairmanship of His Honour Alan George Demack, then a Judge of District Court, which found there to be "... considerable interest in education in the community, and much hesitation and uncertainty", and went on:—

"It is apparent that in recent years a great deal has been achieved in the education system at all levels, and that the community as a whole has little appreciation of this. In a rapidly changing world, there is a need for the community to evaluate not only achievements in social progress, but their impact upon the community. As one of the leaders in social change the education system has a responsibility to assist in this evaluation. An important part of this requires the frank discussion of educational issues, the clear statement of educational goals and the open discussion of achievements and failures. Some of the hesitation and uncertainty that the Commission observed may indicate that the education system has not encouraged this degree of openness."

The Select Committee endorses this view. Unfortunately, whilst we have been pleased to see some notable exceptions—some individual schools have made highly successful efforts to promote dialogue with parents and the community at large—the evidence we have received suggests, that in the four years since the publication of the "Demack" report, the education system as a whole has still not made a sufficient effort to encourage this kind of open discussion. However, we have also found that the efforts which have been made have seldom evoked the interest, or received the level of community support, which they ought to have received, given the importance of education for the future stability and prosperity of our community. We have been critical, and we believe rightly so, of the lack of positive effort on the part of the education system to communicate with the public; regrettably, we find it necessary to

be equally critical of the manifest unwillingness of the majority of the community at large to become actively involved in a continuing and meaningful dialogue with the educators.

2.7. It has been represented to us by the Department of Education that whilst schools in a pluralistic society embracing democratic ideals are expected to be responsive to the demands and expectations of society, there are often vigorous and mutually exclusive demands placed upon them. In recent years, a great deal of controversy has revolved around many issues which are a concern of the social sciences. These issues include the teaching of values, content which deals with controversial issues, aspects of resource usage in schools, and certain teaching methods which include values clarification techniques and simulation games. The array of competing requirements and polarized viewpoints is vast, and it would seem that consensus on the purposes, content and methods of the social sciences is extremely difficult to achieve. This view we also endorse; it is clearly reflected in the wide variety of points of view expressed in submissions to the Select Committee. We therefore wish to draw particular attention to the inescapable fact that, in the face of competing claims, some compromise is inevitable. Not all the expectations held by the public are compatible, and the availability of time and facilities precludes all expectations and needs being met. The question therefore is not whether everything is being done, but rather whether the time, manpower, money, and facilities available are being used as effectively as possible, to meet as many expectations and needs as possible.

2.8. Despite the obvious difficulties, in order to report on "adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary students", it is necessary, *inter alia*, to arrive at some conclusions with respect to community opinion on desirable priorities in social education. In addition to the many submissions we have received, which have included commentary on social education, the Select Committee has also had the benefit of the reports of three recent surveys on community attitudes; these are:—

Ian Wren, *Attitudes to Education in Queensland*, Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education 1976;

P. B. Botsman and R. K. Browne, *Community Attitudes to Education in Queensland*, Australian College of Education 1977;

Kevin Piper, *Essential Learning About Society*, A.C.E.R. 1977.

The Select Committee does not discuss these reports at length in this report, but we believe we have presented sufficient material to support our recommendations.

2.9. The survey by Ian Wren was carried out with the assistance of the members of the National Party Education Committee and Members of the Queensland Parliament between August and November, 1975. The aim of the survey was to ascertain what expectations people in Queensland have regarding the education system, with the intention of helping the Education Committee of the National Party to advise the Minister, its Executive, Branches and members, of issues and trends in education. The responses to three survey questions which seem to us to bear directly on the social education problems were as follows:—

- (a) As a result of recent study in another state the aim of secondary education was stated as follows:—

"The central aim of education, which with home and community, the school pursues, is to guide individual development in the context of society through recognisable stages of development towards perceptive understanding, mature judgement, responsible self direction and moral autonomy."

Do you agree with this?

Yes	..	..	..	..	74.46%
No	..	..	..	..	7.26%
Undecided	..	..	..	..	18.28%

- (b) There are many aspects of life on which traditional attitudes are often difficult to reconcile, religion, sex, politics, morals, use of drugs including alcohol and tobacco for example.

Is there a place in the school curriculum for study of the problems associated with these?

Yes	..	..	..	..	74.19%
No	..	..	..	..	9.14%
Undecided	..	..	..	..	16.67%

Additional comment suggested that close liaison between parents and school in these matters was also considered to be very important.

- (c) The rapid changes in education are often blamed for parents' apparent lack of interest in their children's education. Has the rate of progress or rate of change been too speedy for parents?

Yes	..	..	..	..	34.67%
Partly	..	..	..	..	29.30%
No	..	..	..	..	22.58%
Undecided	..	..	..	..	8.87%

Many respondents, including those who answered in the negative, highlighted the weakness caused by poor communication between department, school, teachers and parents.

2.10. The survey by Botsman and Browne was undertaken during 1977 on behalf of the Australian College of Education. The major thrust of the study was the alleged deterioration of academic standards in schools, and it included a section entitled "The Educational Values of the Public". Items which the survey found were regarded as highly important by the public were:—

- Teaching Health Education including first aid;
- Teaching for a sense of right and wrong;
- Helping students understand the rights and duties of citizenship;
- Teaching students history, geography or social studies;
- Providing drug education;
- Teaching human relationships;
- Teaching wise buying habits;
- Teaching for an understanding of family life;
- Teaching about government, the political parties and voting procedures;
- Teaching alcohol education.

Items which the survey found were considered to be of moderately high importance included:—

- Involving parents in school policy making;
- Teaching about the mass media;
- Involving students in school policy making;
- Teaching sex education.

2.11. The study *Essential Learning About Society*, by Kevin Piper, was sponsored by the Australian Council for Educational Research. Its stated aims were:—

Is there a body of learning about society, and about living in society, which can be considered to be not merely desirable but essential—that is learning which all young people leaving the school system to enter the wider society need to possess if they are to participate fully and equally in Australian society?

If so, can this essential learning be specified?

To what extent is there agreement, or lack of it, among various groups in Australian society as to what constitutes this essential learning?

The results are summarized as follows:—

(a) Items on which there was HIGH CONSENSUS (more than 95% agreement) among Respondents to the Questionnaire Survey that the item is IMPORTANT—i.e. either Essential or Desirable:—

- Being aware of the need to find out;
- Knowing where and how to obtain information when it is needed;
- Knowing where and how to obtain help or advice when it is needed;
- Knowing how to obtain further education/training if it is needed;
- Learning how to interpret information and argument, especially as presented through the mass media;
- Learning how to evaluate information and argument, especially as presented in advertising, the media, and political propaganda;
- Learning how to make considered value judgements;
- Learning how to make a balanced assessment of social and political issues;
- Developing a questioning attitude towards society;
- Being aware of the need to make choice;
- Learning how to make considered choices;
- Learning how to act on choices;

Acquiring a background of factual information about . . .

- . . . the political system;
- . . . the Australian economy;
- . . . the mechanics of earning and spending;

Acquiring a set of basic concepts about . . .

- . . . the way society works;

Developing an insight into the relationship between society, the individual and . . .

- . . . the environment;
- . . . interdependence;

- Developing a sense of personal identity;
- Developing a sense of personal worth;
- Developing a sense of personal integrity;
- Learning how to communicate with others;
- Learning how to relate to others;
- Developing a sense of community;
- Learning how to co-operate with others;
- Developing a set of democratic values;

(b) Items on which there was GENERAL CONSENSUS (91% - 95% agreement) among Respondents to the Questionnaire Survey that the item is IMPORTANT—i.e. either Essential or Desirable:—

Learning how to make sound generalizations;  
Learning how to interpret legal and official documents in common use;

Acquiring a background of factual information about . . .

- . . . working in Australia;
- . . . our Asian neighbours;
- . . . the social aspects of human sexuality;

Acquiring a set of basic concepts about . . .

- . . . time;
- . . . social structure;
- . . . social relationships;
- . . . the individual and his place in society;

Developing an insight into the relationship between society, the individual, and . . .

- . . . the satisfaction of needs;
- . . . cultural differences;
- . . . social change;
- . . . conflict;

Developing a world view;

Learning how to function as a member of a group.

2.12. The Select Committee believes that the evidence supports the view that a majority of the people of Queensland regard social education in its broadest sense as an essential component of our formal education system, and also that, subject to appropriate safeguards and paying due regard to the age and capacity of children for understanding, all aspects of rules, values conduct and morality may, and indeed, should, be discussed freely and frankly in the classroom. As the "Demack" report pointed out, the community, having given adult status to young people at 18 years, expects that those young people will assume the full responsibility of citizenship at 18 years. This means that many of our students will be expected to assume the responsibilities of adulthood and full citizenship within a few months of leaving—and in a few cases even before leaving—school and that virtually all students will be required to assume these responsibilities within 3 years of leaving school. We quote with approval the statement made in 1973 by the Aims and Objectives Working Party of the Educational Development Conference of New Zealand on the subject of personal morality:—

"It is possible to force a moral code upon children and they may obey the rules of the code while it is politic so to do, but they cannot develop a personal morality in this way. Admittedly, children, like adults, must learn to accept the restraints which make community life possible, but there is nothing moral about such acceptance. Morality involves the exercise of personal choice. For this reason even quite young people need to be faced with limited choice in areas where the alternatives are all acceptable; in this way they begin to learn at a very early age to accept responsibility for the effects of their choice. As the children grow older, the area of choice should gradually be widened. They should understand the general moral principles of their arguments. By the time that the children reach adolescence they should be in the habit of dealing with a wide range of choice—of using their own judgement and acting upon it, and accepting responsibility for their decisions. The growth from dependent child to autonomous adult should be a gradual process. There can be no sudden change from dependence to independence . . .

We emphasize the importance of the teacher, and to this end it is necessary to ensure that through rigorous selection procedures, we have teachers, not only of superior ability but also of superior character."

The Select Committee believes that the "adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary schools" must be judged in terms of the extent to which such courses "help and guide children to progress towards the full attainment of their potentialities as individuals and as adult members of our society". However, we wish to draw attention to the dangers of equating education and schooling. A part, and we believe a major part, of a child's social and moral education takes place informally within the home and the community. Failure to consider these informal aspects of education has led some people to look to schools for solutions to all their social problems. Others have, perhaps, tended to over-emphasize the potential influence of the teacher in relation to the conscientious parent.

2.13. The Select Committee has felt it proper to consider primary and secondary school social studies courses separately. The courses have different although complementary objectives. Courses at the primary level, whilst having an important basic educational role in their own right, must also provide an appropriate base from which secondary school courses can be developed. Secondary schools must provide courses suitable for the terminating student as well as for those who intend to proceed immediately to tertiary studies in the social sciences. The capacity for understanding and hence the level of sophistication which is acceptable in the treatment of sensitive and controversial issues is clearly greater in the adolescent student than in the primary school child.

Nevertheless, we wish to stress that primary and secondary schooling ought to be parts of a single continuing process of education and the curriculum should be planned accordingly. It has been represented to us by primary and secondary teachers and by others, that there is often a lack of mutual understanding of the respective aims and difficulties of the primary and secondary levels of education. We accept this view and we make recommendations aimed at promoting more active formal co-operation in curriculum planning and design between the two levels. However, we wish to stress our conviction that the real solution lies in practising teachers taking more initiative in promoting informal contact at the local level.

2.14. The question of the suitability of the S.E.M.P. and M.A.C.O.S. packages for use in Queensland schools has been at the centre of considerable public controversy with respect to social education. The Select Committee has noted that there has been some tendency, particularly in media reports, to argue as if this were a single issue. We wish to point out that this is not the case, for the following reasons. First, *Man: A Course of Study* (M.A.C.O.S.) is, as its name implies, a self-contained course in its own right. The *Social Education Materials Project* (S.E.M.P.) does not comprise a course; it is a collection of resource material which may be accepted or rejected piecemeal. Second, the M.A.C.O.S. course is designed for use in Primary Schools whereas the S.E.M.P. resources are designed for use in Secondary Schools. Third, S.E.M.P. was designed in and for Australia. It was a co-operative venture directed by the Commonwealth Curriculum Development Centre but with input from the various State education departments. In contrast, M.A.C.O.S. was produced in the U.S.A. and was primarily intended for American students with a cultural background somewhat different from

ours. We discuss these courses in more detail in the separate Sections devoted to Social Studies in the Primary School, and, Social Studies in the Secondary School.

2.15. In examining the competing claims of various groups regarding the adequacy of social education courses in Queensland schools, the Select Committee has noted four issues which it appears to us are central to an understanding of the present public debate. First, the increasing tendency, particularly in social studies, to employ a greater variety of teaching methods some of which are very different from so-called "traditional" methods and which are unfamiliar to, and therefore often not well accepted by, many parents and others. This situation is aggravated by the fact that there is disagreement among educators as to the relative merits of the various techniques of teaching both in general, and for particular purposes. Second, the latitude given to individual schools and teachers as to what is taught and, more particularly, the internal balance of the curriculum, has meant that the content of social education courses varies between schools. Hence, when a parent group at "A" praises our social education programme and an apparently similar parent group at "B" condemns the programme, it cannot be assumed that they are talking about the same thing; indeed, on balance it seems almost certain that they are not. Third, effective communication between the education system and the community as to the aims of social education appears, in many instances, to have been seriously deficient both at school and departmental levels. This has contributed to a high level of misunderstanding, misinformation and mistrust in this most sensitive area. Fourth, lack of agreement regarding the extent to which Queensland is a multicultural and/or pluralist society and the implications, if any, for social education. To this issue we now turn.

### SECTION 3—THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF QUEENSLAND SOCIETY

3.1. Much testimony has been presented to the Select Committee which asserts that we have become a multicultural society and/or a pluralist society. Some people have predicted the demise of the nuclear family. It has been asserted that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of one parent families. Other social changes which, it has been suggested, have significant implications for education in general, and for social education in particular, include increases in the divorce rate and increasing numbers of married women in the work force.

3.2. On closer examination, the Select Committee found little or no statistical information was presented to support these assertions or to quantify the extent of these alleged changes. It was also apparent that where surveys have been reported by the media, they have, in general, been based on the southern states and more particularly on Sydney or Melbourne. It is by no means self-evident that these results are equally representative of the Queensland situation. Whilst statistics can reveal only a part of the picture, the Select Committee felt that it would be appropriate to include selected "social indicators" in its report, in view of the many assertions that have been made regarding social change. The data which follows is based on information given by Australian Census tabulations unless otherwise indicated (data from the 1976 Census is provisional). We have also provided, where possible, the comparative data for Queensland and for Australia as a whole.

3.3. As indicators of the multicultural nature of our society, we have provided data on the birthplaces of the population, the birthplaces of parents of the population and the religious affiliations as stated at the census.

The percentage of Australian-born to total population rose from 63% in 1881 to a high of 90% at the 1947 Census and has since declined due to post 1947 immigration policies to approxi-

mately 80% in 1976. For Queensland, in 1947 the percentage of Australian-born population (89.7%) was marginally below that for Australia. However, by 1976 the percentage of Australian-born persons in Queensland was 7% higher than that for Australia as a whole. From 1954 to 1971, the average annual growth rate of population born in countries other than the major English speaking countries with a British cultural heritage was 5.3% for the whole of Australia but only 2.8% for Queensland. From 1971 to 1976, the average annual growth rates were 3.6% for Australia and 4.4% for Queensland. The higher growth rate for Queensland during the period 1971 to 1976 is almost certainly attributable to the high level of inter-state migration of population to Queensland which was revealed by the 1976 Census.

3.4. At the 1971 and 1976 Census, questions were asked designed to provide information regarding the birthplace of parents of the population. These have been consolidated to show those with parents of Australian origin, United Kingdom (including Eire) and those from other countries in Table 2 and to show the birthplaces of parents of the Australian-born population for 1976 in Table 3.

There appears to have been little significant change in the origins of the parents of the population between 1971 and 1976. However, the true position is obscured to some degree by the 4% "Not Stated" category included in the 1976 figures which have not yet been distributed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (A.B.S.). In 1976, the percentage of the total population born in Australia of Australian-born parents was 66.4% for Queensland, and 59.5% for Australia; or alternatively, at least 33.6% of the Queensland population and 40.5% of the total Australian population were either born overseas or had at least one parent born overseas.

TABLE 1: BIRTHPLACE OF POPULATION: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL AT CENSUS

Birthplace	1954		1971		1976	
	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia
Australia .. .. .	88.0	85.7	87.3	79.8	86.9	79.9
New Zealand .. .. .	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.7
U.K. and Eire .. .. .	7.1	7.4	6.6	8.5	6.6	8.2
Canada and USA .. .. .	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3
Other .. .. .	4.5	6.3	5.0	10.7	5.5	10.8

TABLE 2: BIRTHPLACE OF PARENTS OF POPULATION: PERCENTAGE

Birthplace of Parents	1971		1976p	
	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia
Both Australia .. .. .	66.6	60.5	66.8	59.7
One Australia 1 U.K. .. .. .	8.6	7.2	7.9	6.8
Both U.K. .. .. .	10.2	11.0	9.3	10.3
Both Other .. .. .	9.8	16.7	7.3	14.0
1 Australia 1 Other .. .. .	3.8	3.4	3.6	3.4
1 U.K. 1 Other .. .. .	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.0
Not Stated .. .. .	—	—	4.1	3.8

TABLE 3: BIRTHPLACE OF PARENTS OF AUSTRALIAN-BORN POPULATION: PERCENTAGE

Birthplace of Parents	1976p	
	Queensland	Australia
Both Australia .. .. .	76.4	74.4
1 Australia 1 U.K. .. .. .	8.8	8.2
Both U.K. .. .. .	3.5	3.2
Both Other .. .. .	2.5	5.5
1 Australia 1 Other .. .. .	3.8	4.0
1 U.K. 1 Other .. .. .	0.6	0.7
Not Stated .. .. .	4.3	3.9

3.5. The percentage of people who stated that they belonged to a religious denomination has declined in the period 1954 to 1976. Nevertheless, and despite low rates of church attendance, over 75% of our population still claim to belong to a Christian religious denomination. At the same time, the proportion admitting to having no religion or who did not answer the question has more than doubled in the period and is now in the region of 20%.

3.6. Australia has always been, in some sense, a multicultural society. However, since 1945, there has been a significant increase in the migrant population and, in particular, in migrants from non-English speaking countries. Furthermore, there appears to have been a shift in community attitudes regarding the contribution which various ethnic groups can make to an Australian culture and away from a previously more rigid approach to assimilation which required that traditions seen as "foreign"

be relinquished. To the extent that this has created problems for educational systems, it is clear that in quantitative terms at least Queensland has had fewer difficulties than other states. Nevertheless, whilst it may be argued that Queensland has a more ethnically homogeneous population than does Australia as a whole, the Select Committee believes that the educational implications of ethnic diversity neither can be, nor should be, ignored.

3.7. The Select Committee has also felt it appropriate to consider the extent and nature of social change in our community in so far as they seem to have significant implications for the education system. We have, therefore, included statistics on Marriage and Divorce, One-Parent Families, Female Workforce Participation Rates, and Ex-nuptial Birthrates. We have also included statistics on the Enrolments of Full-time Students at Various Educational Levels.

TABLE 4: STATED RELIGION: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION

Religion	1954		1971		1976	
	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia
Christian .. .. .	89.8	89.4	86.6	86.2	79.8	78.6
Non-Christian .. .. .	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.3	1.0
Indefinite .. .. .	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4
No Religion .. .. .	0.3	0.3	6.1	6.7	7.6	8.3
Not Stated .. .. .	9.5	9.5	6.9	6.1	12.0	11.7

3.8.— TABLE 5: MARITAL STATUS PERSONS 15 AND OVER: QUEENSLAND PERCENTAGE BY CENSUS YEARS

Year				Never Married	Now Married	Permanently Separated	Divorced	Widowed
1954	}	Male .. ..		32.7	61.2	1.8	0.8	3.5
		Female .. ..		22.5	64.1	2.1	0.8	10.5
		Persons .. ..		27.7	62.6	1.9	0.8	6.9
1966	}	Male .. ..		32.0	61.8	1.9	1.0	3.3
		Female .. ..		22.5	62.9	2.2	1.1	11.4
		Persons .. ..		27.3	62.4	2.0	1.0	7.3
1971	}	Male .. ..		30.0	63.5	2.0	1.2	3.2
		Female .. ..		20.8	64.1	2.2	1.3	11.7
		Persons .. ..		25.4	63.8	2.1	1.3	7.4
1976	}	Male .. ..		29.4	63.4	2.4	1.9	2.9
		Female .. ..		20.7	63.0	2.9	2.2	11.2
		Persons .. ..		24.4	63.2	2.6	2.1	7.1

TABLE 6: FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE\*

	1966				1976			
	Queensland		Australia		Queensland		Australia	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Father only .. .. .	5 504	2.5	33 378	2.1	5 782	2.1	36 585	1.9
Mother only .. .. .	22 247	10.0	129 533	8.2	29 940	10.8	185 142	9.9
Total one parent .. .. .	27 752	12.5	162 911	10.3	35 722	12.9	221 727	11.8
Father and Mother .. .. .	194 403	87.5	1 407 388	89.6	240 384	87.1	1 651 328	88.2
Total Families .. .. .	222 154	100.0	1 570 299	100.0	276 106	100.0	1 873 055	100.0

\* NOTE.—Comparable data is not available for the 1954 Census.

3.9. The number of one-parent families in Queensland increased by 28.7% in the period 1966 to 1975 which represents an average annual growth rate of 2.5%. The corresponding figures for Australia being 36.1% and 3.1%, although the proportion of one-parent families increased only marginally. A rising divorce rate has been accompanied by a rising marriage rate and, in particular, the Select Committee has noted a significant increase over the past few years in the numbers of divorced persons who re-marry. It has not been possible to relate the data to families, but it seems to us likely that a proportion will inevitably involve persons with children under 16 and hence to represent additional numbers of broken homes. For example, in Australia, the annual average proportion of brides who were divorced women was relatively stable at slightly over 6% per annum in the period 1956 to 1970. However, the proportions began to rise in the seventies and the percentages for 1975, 1976 and 1977 (calendar years) were 9.9%, 16.5% and 18.3%, respectively. The proportion of marriages in Queensland in which at least one of the partners had previously been divorced rose from 9.3% in 1971, to 28.2%

in 1977, whilst the number of marriages actually declined from 16 538 in 1971, to 15 737 in 1977. Nor do these figures reveal the number of "emotionally broken homes" in which the parents remain together but in which relations between them are such that emotional harmony is impossible or where despite emotional harmony, there is a general lack of interest in the children. It is also clear to us, that some areas have much higher concentrations of one-parent families than others and the special problems faced by teachers of classes with a high proportion of children from broken homes must be recognized when decisions are taken concerning resource allocations. In addition, whilst the statistical evidence does not support the view, sometimes expressed, that the nuclear family is under threat in Queensland, there is, nevertheless, considerable observable evidence of emotional instability in many family situations and the fact of more liberal attitudes to divorce and re-marriage cannot be ignored in the design of the social education curriculum. In addition, a breakdown in family structure often gives teachers the added responsibility of providing students with emotional support.

3.10.— TABLE 7: WORK-FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES: WOMEN 15 AND OVER, AS AT CENSUS

Marital Status	1954		1971		1976	
	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia
Never Married .. .. .	69.6	69.2	63.8	60.6	61.3	58.8
Now Married .. .. .	8.6	12.6	26.8	32.8	40.1	43.8
Permanently Separated .. .. .	42.4	47.8	44.3	50.4	44.8	48.1
Divorced .. .. .	53.8	58.0	49.3	54.8	50.7	53.3
Widowed .. .. .	13.5	14.9	12.0	13.7	12.0	12.9
All Females .. .. .	23.9	26.3	33.4	37.1	41.7	43.8

NOTE.—The work force participation rate is the number of each category who are in the work force at the census date expressed as a percentage of the total number of persons in that category in the population.

It should be noted that there were changes in the definition of the "work force" after the 1954 Census which resulted in a proportionate increase in the Australian work force of the order of 2%. The major factor in this has been the inclusion of females working part-time, some of whom did not consider themselves as being in the work force at the 1954 Census. Hence, the participation rate for married women of 8.6% in 1954 understates the position comparative to subsequent years. Nevertheless, there has been a

substantial increase in the participation rates of women, particularly married women, in the Australian work force. For example, in absolute terms, there were 110 057 married women in the Queensland work force on 30 June, 1971, which had risen to 185 188 by 30 June, 1976, an average annual growth rate of approximately 11% when the average annual growth rate of the total Queensland work force was only 3.8%.

3.11.— TABLE 8: EX-NUPTIAL LIVE BIRTHS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LIVE BIRTHS IN EACH STATE: ANNUAL PERCENTAGES

Year	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Australia
1972 .. .. .	10.25	6.96	13.21	8.25	11.87	8.88	13.08	5.44	9.68
1973 .. .. .	9.99	6.87	13.77	8.82	12.17	10.14	13.63	4.81	9.77
1974 .. .. .	9.72	6.64	13.09	9.31	11.64	10.65	16.31	4.83	9.55
1975 .. .. .	10.25	7.10	13.83	9.72	12.43	10.86	23.37	6.00	10.17
1976 .. .. .	10.18	7.30	13.23	9.44	12.68	10.53	23.55	5.64	10.12

Source: ABS Births 1976.



TABLE 9: EX-NUPTIAL CONFINEMENTS: PROPORTION TO TOTAL CONFINEMENTS BY AGE OF MOTHER

Year	Unit	Ex-Nuptial Confinements by Age of Mother						Total All Confinements	
		Under 15		15-19		20-24			
		Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia	Queensland	Australia
1972	No. %	35 0.09	146 0.06	2 032 5.2	10 366 4.0	1 630 4.2	7 908 3.0	38 904 100	262 366 100
1973	No. %	48 0.13	156 0.06	2 114 5.6	9 866 4.0	1 563 4.1	7 222 2.9	37 703 100	245 252 100
1974	No. %	45 0.12	148 0.06	1 887 5.0	9 408 3.9	1 548 4.1	7 068 2.9	37 504 100	242 829 100
1975	No. %	35 0.10	156 0.07	1 947 5.4	9 245 4.0	1 533 4.3	7 165 3.1	36 062 100	230 777 100
1976	No. %	45 0.13	165 0.07	1 744 5.0	8 547 3.8	1 437 4.1	7 143 3.2	34 885 100	225 565 100

Sources: ABS *Births* 1976.  
ABS Queensland *Demography* 1975 & 1976.

The number of ex-nuptial births in Queensland is a matter for concern. It is true that the position in Queensland has long been worse than that in the other mainland states. For example, in the period 1931-1935, the average annual percentage of ex-nuptial live births as a percentage of total live births was 5.02% in Queensland compared with 4.67% for Australia as a whole. The relative position of Queensland has further deteriorated in the last two decades. The position regarding pregnancy among young people in Queensland is equally alarming with the proportion of teenage ex-nuptial confinements relative to total confinements being more than 30% worse in Queensland at just over 5.5% than the Australia-wide average of approximately 4.0%.

3.12. The next table shows the broad pattern of students proceeding from Grade 10 to higher full-time education in Queensland.

It is clear, therefore, that of the order of 55% to 60% of those students who enrol in Year 10 leave school at or before the end of Year 11. Hence, broad social education programmes which are aimed at the majority of students must necessarily be offered in the years up to Year 10. Furthermore, our major social education effort ought properly to be directed towards

the 80% or more of students who do not proceed immediately to tertiary education and the additional percentage who will not pursue social studies beyond the secondary level.

3.13. In summary, it appears that the last twenty-five years have seen considerable social change and in many respects, it appears to us that society is less stable today than formerly. The Select Committee wishes to stress that recognition of changing social attitudes in no sense implies approval. However, we believe that the existence of such changes must be given explicit recognition in our social education programmes, which must, *inter alia*, allow for the misfortune that many children, and in our opinion far too many, do not receive adequate social and moral education in the home, either by example or precept. We do, however, wish to point out that our experience and observation suggest most strongly that in learning tolerance of those who choose to adopt "alternative life styles" the essential difference between "acceptance" and "approval" is being missed. Many children appear to be emerging from the education system unaware that social non-conformity, however well accepted in theory, may in practice carry social and economic penalties of a substantial and long-lasting kind. We wish, therefore, to remind teachers that in the desirable teaching of tolerance, it is important to make clear to students that passive social acceptance and active social approval are not necessarily, or even usually, the same thing.

TABLE 10: COMPARATIVE ENROLMENTS OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS AT VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL LEVELS, QUEENSLAND

Year 10		Year 12			Tertiary*			
Year	Students	Year	Students	% of Column 2	Year	First Year Students	% of Column 4	% of Column 2
1971	29 457	1973	10 640	36.1	1974	5 827	54.8	19.8
1972	30 807	1974	11 027	35.8	1975	6 183	56.1	20.1
1973	30 861	1975	13 511	43.8	1976	6 012	44.6	19.5
1974	32 713	1976	14 810	45.3	1977	6 260	42.3	19.2
1975	36 076	1977	16 024†	44.4	1978	6 277‡	39.2	17.4
1976	37 582	1978	14 818†	39.4				
1977	38 324							
1978	36 896							

Source: *Queensland Year Book* 1978  
and ABS (Queensland)

NOTES.—

\* Students who have recently left school and who have enrolled in a particular course at a particular educational establishment for the first time.

† In 1978, only those students enrolled at the secondary correspondence school in a complete secondary course are included. In previous years, students enrolled for only part of a secondary course were also included.

‡ 1978 tertiary enrolment is a provisional figure.

## SECTION 4—SOCIAL EDUCATION AND THE TEACHER

4.1. Various theories have been advanced over the years about the student and how he or she learns. Unfortunately, there is still no single coherent theory which deals consistently with all aspects of learning. However, there is general agreement that a variety of teaching approaches will be needed within a single course if the aims of social education are to be achieved. This view is by no means new, for example, the course statement for the Primary History, Civics and Morals course of 1930 included:—

“Encourage pupils to ask questions and to search for information in the library and reference books.”—  
and

“Introduce dramatisation as a means of exciting interest and of creating vivid impressions of characters, scenes and incidents.”

Hence, many of the teaching methods presently used are virtually identical with those used in earlier years, although perhaps used more widely now and in a more systematically organized manner. Others, however, are new techniques which have developed as a result of research by educational psychologists and others into the way in which children learn.

4.2. There are two commonsense propositions with regard to the process of education which are of themselves unexceptionable, namely: that a motivated learner acquires what he learns more readily than one who is not motivated; and, that active participation by a learner is preferable to passive reception. Attempts to promote these objectives have led to the formalization of a number of techniques frequently associated with the, so called, *discovery method* of teaching, in which the student is guided to *discover* problems and to think about solutions to them. Some theorists believe that this method of teaching has inherent advantages over what is sometimes known as the *expository method*, where the teacher plays a more dominant role in explaining material to the class. However, the research material we have examined does not, in our opinion, justify unqualified support for this belief and we note that discovery methods are often more time consuming than expository approaches. In particular, Brian Jacka, following a review of research evidence—reported in *Directions in Primary Education*, No. 10 in the Series, The Second Century in Australian Education, M.U.P., 1974, pp. 29–35—concluded that:—

“Despite the prevalent use of discovery methods in Australian primary schools, there is very little research evidence that supports their use over other methods. The following conclusions can be drawn:—

- (1) There is no evidence to show that discovery procedures produce better transfer of learning at primary school though there is some evidence of this at post-primary levels.
- (2) Tests of retention favour neither the discovery nor the expository method at primary level, though a little support exists for the effectiveness of expository methods for post-primary students.
- (3) There is evidence that discovery methods improve motivation to learn and skills of inquiry.
- (4) Though the evidence is conflicting, recent well-designed studies find discovery methods more effective for the child of higher ability, and expository methods for those of lower ability.”

4.3. There has been widespread public disquiet concerning the way in which some techniques such as simulation, role playing and dilemma stories have been used. It is a disquiet which members of the Select Committee share. We accept that some, at least, of the criticism stems from a lack of understanding as to how and why these techniques are used in the classroom situation. No doubt these techniques can be used to advantage in certain circumstances, but the evidence we have received leaves us in no doubt that there have been instances where some teachers have exceeded the bounds of prudence. We are reluctant to advocate a total ban on the use of such techniques; the difficulty of defining the boundaries of such a ban would inevitably lead to the discarding of much that is valuable. Nevertheless, when these techniques are used to generate emotionalism over sensitive and controversial issues they involve the risk that the more sensitive or emotional child will be disturbed. It is our view that, in the school situation, there is no educational end which could justify such a risk being taken, particularly since there will invariably be alternative means to the same end.

4.4. It has, for example, been reported that students have, in some instances, been asked to discuss details of their private lives and the private lives of their families with the class, to a point which some parents have regarded as an invasion of privacy. Others have reported cases of students being required to participate in activities akin to those used by psychologists and others in “group therapy” sessions for adults. These are examples

of the sort of practices which we believe should not happen in the classroom. We have no evidence to suggest that such practices have been widespread and we are confident of the common sense and professional integrity of the majority of teachers. Nevertheless, the fact that these sorts of activities have happened at all, however isolated the incidence, is a matter for concern, and suggests that there has been some over-reaction to the need for innovative teaching strategies.

4.5. The use of, so called, “dilemma stories” has also been the subject of much criticism. Department of Education officers, in a background paper prepared for the Select Committee, describe the dilemma story as an unfinished story that students try to complete by considering what actions the characters should take. Students are divided into groups of five or six to discuss possible courses of action and the possible consequences of each. The teacher's role is to listen to the discussion of each group and suggest alternatives not yet considered. A dilemma story, they say, is one means of attempting to address realities, and to guide students to appreciate that people's values influence their actions. The Select Committee accepts the educational value of the judicious use of this technique; examples which the Department quoted to us were stories with multiple possible outcomes which were clearly intended as mere “discussion starters”. Unfortunately, however, some of the stories in the syllabus material which we have examined have been of a nature which we regard as unacceptable for use in the school classroom. We note that the Oxford Dictionary defines a dilemma as an argument which forces a choice between only two alternatives, each of which is equally unwelcome.

4.6. Some of the “dilemma stories” which have been included in material approved for use in our schools have indeed suggested only two possible courses of action, both of which, in our opinion, would be likely to involve conflict with the moral code of many students. It has been reported to us that, in some cases, this has resulted in students being forced to defend moral positions based on deeply held religious convictions, and we support those parents who believe that this should not be required of any student in the classroom. The Select Committee, therefore, recommends that education authorities adopt more stringent procedures for reviewing dilemma stories before they are approved for use in Queensland schools. These procedures should aim to determine the possible outcomes of discussion, so that stories involving irreconcilable moral dilemmas are, as far as possible, avoided. Judging by the examples quoted to us, the use of the term “dilemma story” may have contributed to public misunderstanding of what is intended when this technique is used. We therefore suggest, that the Department of Education should reconsider its terminology in this area. We also recommend that the Department of Education issue guidelines to teachers which will assist them to select scenarios appropriate to the age and maturity of their students. In particular, such guidelines should remind teachers of the importance of taking account of the deep feelings of some of the ethnic and religious minorities represented in our schools.

4.7. It has been represented to us by the Department of Education that the diverse aims of a modern education programme require the deployment of a variety of teaching strategies and we support this view in principle. We are aware of the individualistic nature of teaching; clearly the most appropriate and successful balance of methods to be employed will vary with the personality of the teacher. Nevertheless, we have been disturbed by the number of submissions, including submissions from teachers, which have indicated an uncritical acceptance of the superiority of one or other teaching method, which is totally unwarranted in view of the conflicting results of published research. In our opinion, a balanced approach to teaching methods is at least as important as a balanced syllabus, and we recommend that departmental policy in this regard be continued and supported. However, it appears that this essential balance has not invariably been maintained in practice, which suggests that closer supervision of teaching methods by Inspectors and School Principals may be indicated. There are those who claim that the teaching methods to be employed in our classrooms should be entirely the prerogative of the individual teacher, and that any attempt to direct teachers in this regard is a reflection on their status as professionals. The Select Committee emphatically rejects this argument. We approve of the desire expressed by many teachers to establish machinery whereby the profession itself can monitor its own ethical and professional standards, and we recommend that any initiative which teachers may wish to take in this regard should receive the support of Parliament. However, where professional persons accept employment, whether in the public or the private sector, it is usual for their working methods to be subject to scrutiny and, where appropriate, direction by their senior colleagues and their employers, as well as by any professional standards committee which exists. We can conceive of no argument which would justify teachers claiming exemption from normal managerial practice. The arguments which we have received appear to be based on an invalid comparison between the position of teachers in schools and that of *self-employed* professionals.

4.8. Section 37 (1) (e) of The Education Regulations states that:—

"Subject to the Director-General a principal of a State School—... shall encourage the use of progressive teaching techniques and ensure that relevant information is disseminated to each member of the staff of such school; "

We recommend that this subparagraph be amended to read:—

"... shall encourage the use of a range of teaching techniques appropriate to the achievement of the objectives of the school curriculum and ensure that relevant information is disseminated to each member of the staff. The principal shall ensure that these teaching techniques conform to departmental policy."

We also wish to stress the importance of keeping the community adequately informed about teaching methods as well as about other educational matters and we recommend that education authorities and teachers re-examine their strategies in this regard. At the school level, it should be possible for teachers to write to parents explaining the purposes of innovative or other approaches to teaching which they may not understand. We should expect that such a letter would follow naturally from the teacher's own planning notes and would, therefore, involve little extra work. It is clear from the evidence we have received, that the educational value of, and the lessons to be learned from, for example, "carrying out a traffic survey", are not obvious to many parents who, as a consequence, believe that their children are wasting valuable time. In our view, much public disquiet could have been avoided had more positive efforts been made to keep the community better informed.

4.9. There has been a great deal of public debate and some disquiet concerning the handling of controversial issues in our schools. The Select Committee believes that even if it were possible to prevent the discussion of controversial issues—however defined—it would be undesirable to do so. The ability to handle the discussion of controversial topics rationally and with restraint and with due regard to the rights of others to freedom of speech is, we believe, one of the essential skills required by a citizen in our democratic society. Thus, it is a skill which our schools have a duty to develop. Nevertheless, it seems to us that in social education there has been, of recent years, an excessive thrust in the direction of controversy in social education. The evidence we have received and our own investigations, leave us in no doubt that, in some cases, this change of direction has been carried to the point where it has become detrimental to the descriptive and informative content in social studies syllabuses. Controversial issues will arise in the normal process of teaching without contriving to make every aspect of the curriculum controversial and we recommend that this point should be stressed in the head-notes to every social studies syllabus.

4.10. We believe that when controversial issues arise, as inevitably they will, there must be clear guidelines for handling them, particularly with respect to the role of the teacher. These guidelines should be based on a statement of basic principles and we recommend that the statement of the principles which teachers are to follow in handling controversial issues be promulgated in "Education Regulations" so that they will be subject to scrutiny by the Parliament. We further recommend that the following statement of principles which is based on a New South Wales' directive on the handling of controversial issues be considered for adoption:—

"The consideration of controversial issues in schools whether by way of view expressed by teachers or visiting speakers or by the study of printed material of a partisan nature should be in accord with the following basic principles:—

- (1) Schools are neutral grounds for rational discourse and objective study and should not become arenas for opposing political or other ideologies.
- (2) Schools are places where students are preparing for informed and reasoned involvement in community life, including its politics, by calm and co-operative study of social issues and not places for polarizing them into partisan political or other groups.
- (3) The school's educational programme framed in accordance with its aims, objectives and methods must determine all activity within it and discussion of political or other controversial issues is acceptable only when it is in harmony with these aims, objectives and methods and clearly serves the purpose of the school's programme. Such discussion is not intended to advance the interest of any political or pressure group.
- (4) The school has a privileged position, denied to many other concerned people, to influence students and it therefore has a special responsibility to maintain objectivity, to avoid distortion of discussions, to acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of parents and to preserve the right of students and parents to dissent.
- (5) The extent to which a school involves its students in discussion of controversial matters must be appropriate to their maturity and their readiness to appreciate the significance of the issues discussed.

- (6) The school alone is responsible for the educative process within it and cannot transfer its accountability, wholly or in part, to people from outside of it."

We also recommend that following on a statement of the basic principles, the Department of Education should issue detailed practical guidelines which will assist teachers in dealing with controversial issues in the classroom.

4.11. One of the more contentious issues which has arisen during the course of our Inquiry has been that of "values education". Some people have questioned whether values should be discussed in the classroom, and some witnesses appear to believe that values education is a new departure for teachers in Queensland schools. However, it is clear from the various statements of aims of our social science courses that such courses have, over the years, consistently addressed themselves to questions of values. The Select Committee recommends that, in principle, the teaching of values through the medium of formal education should be continued and supported. However, we also wish to point out that the primary responsibility for "values education" lies with the parents. A child's moral development is created in the home much earlier than some parents appear to think—probably well before the age of six. Unfortunately, there are some children whose social environment is not conducive to the development of acceptable social standards, some who are subjected to the adverse emotional pressures which frequently result from broken homes, others receive inadequate guidance due to the inexperience or disinterest of parents or because both parents are in the work force and find it difficult, in some cases, to devote adequate time to the training of their children. The Select Committee, therefore, believes that our schools cannot abrogate responsibility for teaching values. Furthermore, it appears from recent surveys, particularly the survey by Wren sponsored by the National Party, that it is the wish of a substantial majority that our schools will include in the curriculum, matters which involve discussions of, and education in, values. Nevertheless, the majority of parents are competent and responsible, and are entitled to serious guarantees that the role of the school will be supportive of their own approach to values education and that appropriate methods will be used to handle sensitive social issues in the classroom. The Select Committee, therefore, recommends that in laying down principles and guidelines to assist teachers in dealing with controversial issues in the classroom, the Department of Education should include guidelines for the handling of questions of values and sensitive social issues.

4.12. The Select Committee also wishes to draw attention to two phrases which appear to have been widely misunderstood, that is to say "Values Analysis" and "Values Clarification". Values analysis is intended to help students recognise statements which may at first seem to be merely descriptive but which actually imply a set of values. Hence, students are guided to an appreciation of the way in which values influence action. Values clarification processes attempt to help students identify clearly the values they demonstrate by their own actions. Hence, students are guided to an understanding of the different consequences which may result from different value stances. Some people have apparently believed that these processes imply that the teacher is attempting to teach particular values which may, in some instances, run counter to values taught in the home. Such is not the intention and again, it may be that the use of unfamiliar terminology has contributed to the misunderstanding. We have already pointed out that true morality involves the exercise of personal choice and that children need to learn to accept responsibility for the effects of the choices they make. It is the aim of values analysis and values clarification to assist children to use their own judgment and accept responsibility for their decisions so that they may develop into responsible citizens. Nevertheless, the Select Committee wishes to stress again the need for values education in our schools to be supportive of responsible parents. In particular, we believe that regardless of the degree of social pluralism in our society, there are still many common values which can be supported. Among these would be truth, kindness, compassion, social justice, respect, rationality, tolerance, impartiality, consideration, and responsibility.

4.13. Some people have suggested that, since we are a predominantly Christian society, it is not proper to discuss the practices and beliefs of other religions in our schools. Others have argued that State schools should avoid all reference to religion. The Committee rejects both these views. Teaching about religion as a social and cultural factor in the development of society does not imply that the school is attempting to initiate the student into a particular faith. There will be many instances when a knowledge of other religions will be essential to a proper understanding of a topic in social studies. For example, it would scarcely be possible for a teacher to present a balanced analysis of the present political situation in Iran without a discussion of Islamic religious beliefs. The "secular" approach to education is founded in the political and social climate of the past, and the controversies then engendered. In 1973, the Aims and Objectives Working Party of the Education Development Conference of New

Zealand, commenting on the subject of values, pointed out that the climate of opinion has changed considerably in the last 100 years. They went on to say:—

"A spirit of tolerance, emphasising unity rather than sectarian differences, has largely replaced the suspicions and misunderstandings that sometimes led to religious bigotry. Today, there should be no topic which cannot, or should not, be discussed rationally and tolerantly in our classrooms; this is the kind of openness which needs to be encouraged. We should no longer hold on to the 'secular clause' doctrine that morality should be based solely on a regard for the well-being of mankind without any discussion of the religious or philosophical bases from which people draw their inspiration."

The Select Committee endorses this view. We do not believe that teachers should avoid religious issues when these arise in the normal process of teaching. This is, of course, a different issue from the question of religious education which we discuss in a separate section.

4.14. The Committee has received recommendations that a special programme should be introduced into the curriculum to "combat sexism" in the schools. We do not approve of discrimination on the grounds of sex. However, we believe that equality should be based on opportunity rather than outcomes. We also believe that the wish of a majority of women to accept family and caring roles should not be discouraged or in any way denigrated. We reject the concept of "role reversal" featured in certain book and poster material and recommend that this material not be used.

4.15. The Committee has also been asked to consider proposals similar to those made in other states, to introduce a programme of "Death Education" or "Thanatology" into the school curriculum. It has been suggested that as part of such a programme, visits be made to funeral parlours by parties of students. The subject of death will inevitably arise in the classroom, particularly in areas of the curriculum dealing with history and literature. When the discussion of death arises in the normal course of teaching, teachers must be prepared to lead such discussion in a careful and sensitive manner. We would expect pre-service training to include some guidance in approaching what is clearly a sensitive subject, and we would regard some discussion of death from the religious standpoint as an appropriate topic to be covered

in religious education. However, we believe that the deliberate focusing on the subject of death which would be the inevitable result of a separate programme is unnecessary and could be harmful. The Select Committee therefore recommends that a separate programme of "Death Education" should not be considered for introduction into Queensland schools.

4.16. Social Studies courses aim to provide the child within the school environment with a range of experience which as far as possible simulates the range of experience he or she will meet in the world outside. Much of the recent controversy regarding social education has centred around attempts by educators to devise a curriculum which will focus more easily on the study of contemporary society, which will be more "interesting" and have more direct utility than traditional social science disciplines, particularly for those students who do not intend to undertake tertiary studies in the social sciences. Nevertheless, attempts to disseminate such a wide range of information may lead to a dangerously superficial understanding, and the price of failure can be students who walk away with "quick frozen" solutions to prefabricated questions, and lacking adequate skills or basic information on which to build future learning experience. In short, such programmes need very careful handling if they are not to become unwieldy and fragmented, and success is crucially dependent on the availability of teachers with the training and experience to undertake such a difficult task with confidence. Above all, however, a successful social education programme demands a co-operative effort between school and community and, more particularly, between teacher and parent. No matter how excellent the curriculum and regardless of the dedication of teachers and parents, our social education programmes will fail unless each complements and reinforces the teaching of the other. This demands a continuing mutual effort by the education system and the community to achieve understanding and congruence of aims. We do not question the sincerity of those charged with the difficult task of curriculum design, but we would remind them that the selection of material which is in questionable taste and which alienates public opinion is likely to defeat the aims of their programme. We do not question the sincerity of parents who are concerned for the future of their children and are critical of our schools, but we would remind them that a school can provide only part of the total educational experience of any individual. The greater part of it occurs outside the formal education system—in the community, in the various social groups to which the individual belongs, but above all, in the home.

## SECTION 5—SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

5.1. Until 1952, separate courses in history, geography, and civics and morals were studied at the primary school level. In 1952, these courses were replaced by a course in social studies. It was argued by the developers of the 1952 syllabus that the introduction of social studies reflected three trends. The first related to a concern that the subject matter be taught in a less academic way, and be related more to the child's own experiences. The second was the intention of the developers that the child be given the opportunity to participate in activities of the type he (or she) would be likely to meet during his (or her) lifetime. The third was a concern to depart from what the developers of the syllabus saw as the rigid, convenient, but artificial subject approach in formal education. Nevertheless, a comparison of the stated purposes of present social science courses with those of the separate courses offered in 1930, reveal broad similarities of purpose.

5.2. The aims of Primary History, Geography and Civics and Morals courses in 1930 were stated to be, *inter alia*:—

"Generally, the aim in history should be to so represent the past as to lead children to form ideals which will help to shape their lives in the future."

"... by the end of the (Geography) course the scholars should have formed the habit of mind which is not content with a bald statement of facts, but asks for reasons."

"Instruction in Civics and Morals deals with the social environment of the child, and is intended to promote the establishment of character, to introduce him to a conception of the right relations of the individual to the family, to society, and to the State."

5.3. The present Social Studies course for Queensland primary schools was introduced in 1970–71. The statement of aims reads:—

"The Social Studies syllabus has been designed to assist children in their social development. It focuses on human relationships and is concerned with the transmission of culture and the formation of attitudes and values. It aims to develop—

- understandings of human relationships between individuals and groups in society;

- understandings of the various patterns of interdependence in society, especially as they apply to our own way of life; and

- the social and academic skills, understandings, and attitudes that will enable the individual to evaluate his own social growth in a changing society and to accept the responsibility of active participation in the life of the community."

5.4. The evidence which we have received suggests that there are four major areas of contention regarding the teaching of social science courses in the Primary School. First, whether the content of primary social science courses accurately reflects the needs of our children and the wishes of the community; second, whether it is proper that the question of ethical and social values should be raised in the primary school classroom, and, if so, by what means and under what guidelines; third, whether the balance between time allotted to the teaching of social science courses and the teaching of other subjects, particularly mathematics and English, is a right one; and, finally, whether M.A.C.O.S. should be approved for use in State schools.

5.5. The Select Committee wishes to commend the Department of Education on the "Syllabus in Social Science for Primary Schools". In our opinion, it is well set out and provides a well integrated and progressive programme of social studies from Grade 1 to Grade 7. However, we are concerned that the factual content of the syllabus may be excessively flexible, and could lead to the omission of some material which could be regarded as essential. We therefore recommend that the Department of Education establish a central core of "essential facts" for each grade and publish this as supplementary teachers' notes. This core we would envisage as embracing a knowledge of the functions and processes of government, industry, transport, public services and the like; an outline of our laws and legal system; a knowledge of Australia's history, and some familiarity with the history and origins of the many ethnic groups which comprise our society; a knowledge of the recent history of our Asian neighbours; and, some familiarity with Australian and world geography. We also recommend that the syllabus and associated teachers' notes be made available for perusal by parents at each primary school and that copies also be made available for purchase by interested parents and others.

5.6. We believe that the community is entitled to serious guarantees that its views will be considered when important decisions are made concerning the content and implementation of primary school courses in general, and social science courses in particular. However, the lack of formal procedures for direct input from the public into the decision making process has, we believe, led some sections to question whether the views of the community are being adequately represented when these important decisions are made. The responsibility for approval of courses in primary schools is, at present, exercised by the Minister through the Director-General of Education, with the advice of the Primary Curriculum Committee, a departmental standing committee which the Director-General appoints. The Select Committee does not wish to imply any criticism of the way in which the present committee has discharged its responsibilities. Nevertheless, we are of the opinion that public accountability requires that Parliament accept responsibility for ensuring that the composition of this important Committee is appropriate to the task and balanced in its representation. To this end, the Select Committee recommends that a statutory committee be established to be known as the "Primary School Studies Committee" to assume responsibility, subject to the Minister, for approving all courses of study in State Primary Schools and to perform such other functions as the Parliament shall from time to time determine.

5.7. The Select Committee recommends that the Education Act be amended by inserting a new Part entitled *Primary Schools Studies Committee* with paragraphs as follows:—

*Constitution of the Committee.* (1) There shall be constituted a Committee to be called the "Primary School Studies Committee" which shall be administered by the Department of Education.

(2) The Committee shall consist of—

- (i) the Director-General of Education—*ex officio*, who shall be chairman;
- (ii) the Director of Primary Education—*ex officio*, who shall be deputy chairman and who shall act as chairman in the absence of the Director-General;
- (iii) the Staff Inspector, Primary Education, who shall be Secretary;
- (iv) six persons concerned with the administration of education, consisting of—
  - five nominees of the Director-General of Education, of whom one shall be a person concerned with the administration of Secondary Education, one concerned with the administration of Pre-School Education, one concerned with the administration of Special Education, one concerned with curriculum development, and one a principal of a State Primary School;
  - one nominee of the State Director of Catholic Education;
- (v) three persons nominated by the Minister, each of whom is on the staff of a primary school and one of whom shall be a principal;
- (vi) three persons nominated by the Minister who are on the staff of institutions engaged in teacher education, one of whom is a member of a country college of advanced education;
- (vii) two nominees of the Queensland Institute of Senior Education Officers who shall be Inspectors of Schools;
- (viii) two nominees of the Queensland Teachers Union; each of whom is on the staff of a primary school and one of whom shall be a principal;
- (ix) one nominee of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, being a primary teacher in a non-government school;
- (x) three persons nominated by the Minister who are representative of community interests, one of whom is to be concerned with commerce and industry, and two of whom are to be parents appointed as such.

(3) The Director-General shall have power to order the attendance of any member or members of his department at meetings of the Committee; persons directed to attend under this sub-section may take part in deliberations of the Committee but shall not have the right to vote.

(4) The provisions of Part VIII of this Act shall apply to the Committee as if it were a "Board" constituted under this Act.

(5) The members of the Committee, determined in accordance with this Act, shall be appointed by the Governor in Council by notification published in the *Gazette*.

5.8. The Select Committee recommends that the functions and powers of the Committee shall be as follows:—

*Functions and powers of Committee.* (1) The functions and powers of the Primary School Studies Committee shall be—

- (a) to advise the Minister on matters relating to primary education, having regard to the requirements of a sound and progressive elementary education and the needs of students taking into account their age, ability and aptitude.
- (b) Subject to the Minister—
  - (i) to approve courses of study for use in State Primary Schools;
  - (ii) to appoint syllabus committees and such other committees as it considers necessary to assist it in the performance of its functions;
  - (iii) to confer and collaborate with appropriate educational bodies in the performance of the Committee's functions and the exercise of its powers and authorities;
  - (iv) to promote the participation of teachers in the State in formulating and implementing, by such methods as the Committee determines, the policies of the committee;
  - (v) to frame regulations on matters concerning the functions of the Committee for submission to the Governor in Council;
  - (vi) to furnish to the Minister as soon as practicable but not more than three months after 31st December in each year a report on the operations of the Committee during that year;
- (c) to perform such other functions as the Governor in Council may from time to time determine.

(2) The Committee shall have and may exercise such powers and authorities as the Governor in Council by Order in Council prescribes and so far as not prescribed as are necessary for the performance by it of its functions under this Act.

5.9. It is clear from the various statements of aims that primary social science courses have, over the years, consistently addressed themselves to questions of values. The Select Committee recommends that the teaching of values in primary schools through the medium of the social education programme must be continued and supported. We have already pointed out that a child's moral development begins at an early age, and that the process of development from dependent child to responsible adult must be a gradual one. Our Primary schools have a responsibility to support parents in the teaching of values and we believe that the guidelines which we have recommended should be laid down for the assistance of teachers will allow this to be done in a sensitive and responsible manner.

5.10. The time allocations recommended by the Department of Education for subject-areas in the Primary School Curriculum, shown in hours per week, are as follows:—

Subject Area	Time
English/Language Arts	7½-8½
Mathematics	4½-5½
Social Studies (including Religious Education)	3½-4½
Science	1-1½
Music	1-1½
Art, Craft, Handwork	2½-3½
Physical and Health Education	2-3

The Select Committee does not think that this allocation places undue emphasis on social studies, however, we note that these allocations are advisory and that the responsibility for actual time allocations rests with primary school principals. We support this delegation of authority and believe that it provides an essential element of flexibility. Nevertheless, in view of widespread public concern, we recommend that the Department of Education review its procedures for monitoring actual time allocated to the various subject areas.

5.11. A great deal of controversy has arisen over the use of the unit *Man: A Course of Study* (M.A.C.O.S.) in Queensland Primary Schools; it has been objected to on a variety of grounds, both philosophical and educational. The Queensland Government resolved that, pending further investigation, M.A.C.O.S. should be withdrawn from Queensland State schools. Some other education authorities in the State, including the Catholic Education Council, also decided against using M.A.C.O.S. in their schools. The Select Committee has examined the M.A.C.O.S. course and in addition to the evidence submitted to it, has had access to a considerable amount of evidence from the United States—where the course was developed—from the United Kingdom and from other States of Australia. Based on this evidence, two things are abundantly clear. First, there is considerable disagreement among educators as to the educational merit of the course and their comments cover the whole range from "pretentious nonsense" to "very valuable". Second, wherever it has been introduced, M.A.C.O.S. has tended to provoke division and confrontation within the community.

5.12. In the U.S.A., the programme has been generally controversial, however, we observe that it has been most seriously questioned on educational grounds. It appears that there are widespread doubts amongst educators about its soundness as an educational programme. The Committee has received information from the National Science Foundation of the U.S.A. that, during the period from 1968, when M.A.C.O.S. was first introduced, until 1974, 1 700 school districts have adopted the M.A.C.O.S. programme in that country. There are a total of 107 000 public and private school districts in the U.S.A. We have received advice from the Curriculum Development Association in Washington, D.C., which agency provides the M.A.C.O.S. materials to schools, that since 1974, the number of school districts using the M.A.C.O.S. programme has remained unchanged. This programme especially developed in the United States, has, on this evidence, received little acceptance by that community generally and particularly its education community. The U.S.A. has had a decade to make up its mind on the merits of M.A.C.O.S. The fact that only 1.6% of school districts are using the programme after ten years does not suggest that the programme has been a successful one.

5.13. Considering all the controversy and the educational doubts about the value of the M.A.C.O.S. programme, the Select Committee sees no reason for recommending its reintroduction into Queensland. We have already pointed out that there is a well integrated and progressive programme of social studies for primary schools in Queensland, devised by our own Department of Education. The introduction of M.A.C.O.S. would interfere with this

programme and only a course of outstanding and unquestioned educational merit could, in our opinion, justify the necessary diversion of time and resources from the already crowded curriculum. The Committee also wishes to point out that M.A.C.O.S. is a most expensive package and, in our view, cannot be justified on the grounds of cost, at a time when there are many other important calls on our educational resources.

5.14. In conclusion, we wish it to be noted that in our opinion, there has been an over-reaction by sections of our community both to the limited introduction of M.A.C.O.S. and to the subsequent decision of the Government to have it withdrawn from State schools. In the resulting atmosphere of confrontation, rational discussion of the educational merits or otherwise of the course has been sadly lacking even in professional educational journals, and whilst we recognize the duty of the media to report the facts, they must, in our view, accept part of the blame for this unfortunate state of affairs. We trust that all sections of the education system, the media, and the community at large, will take due note of our opinion that controversy carried to the point of confrontation is almost invariably counter-productive and is particularly to be deprecated when it intrudes into matters concerning the education of our children. Our primary reason for rejecting M.A.C.O.S. has been our belief that the same ends can be achieved within primary schools with the present social studies programme and without the controversy, which has not been helpful and which we hope, therefore, will not be continued.

## SECTION 6—SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

6.1. There has been considerable debate in the submissions presented to the Select Committee concerning the relative merits of eclectic courses in social studies and courses based on the traditional academic disciplines. In secondary education, a major problem arises because social studies courses are required to cater for different groups of students who vary not only in aptitude but in needs and in special interests. One of the more obvious of the divisions which can be made is between those for whom social studies in the secondary school constitutes a preparation for more advanced studies at tertiary level and those whose formal education in social studies will, under present arrangements, terminate at the end of Year 10. The present policy of the Department of Education is to offer both types of courses and, in view of the diversity of needs of our secondary school students, we recommend that this policy be continued and supported.

6.2. The evidence presented to the Select Committee by the tertiary institutions suggests that the courses based on the traditional academic disciplines which are offered in Queensland schools, are adequate for those students who proceed to further study of those disciplines at the tertiary level. It is, however, difficult to assess the effectiveness of social studies courses for those students whose formal education in social studies terminates at the secondary level. In contrast to basic skills in English and mathematics, for example, the adequacy or otherwise of social education is not immediately apparent in the work force situation. Nevertheless, social studies are an essential ingredient of any educational programme which aims to help the young student to progress towards the full attainment of his potentiality as an individual and a member of society. The effectiveness of the social education programme which we offer to our secondary school students will be reflected in the quality of the society which those students will one day help to mould.

6.3. Concern has been expressed regarding the content of social education courses, particularly multistrand social studies courses such as Study of Society. It has been suggested that special and unusual procedures should be introduced for the approval of courses in the sensitive area of social education. In the case of "Board" and "Board-Approved" subjects, we believe that the recommendations we made in our "First Interim Report" regarding core syllabus and community representation on the Board of Secondary School Studies, together with parental involvement at the school level through the medium of "High School Advisory Councils" which we discuss later in this section, should do much to ensure that standards are maintained.

6.4. There remains, however, the question of the "School Subject". In the case of "School Subjects", our recommendations will apply solely to the State schools. We do not wish to preempt the right of non-government schools to introduce such courses as their own governing bodies may approve. We do not question the competence or good faith of the officers of the Department of Education, but we believe that in this sensitive area, the requirements of public accountability will best be served if the authority for the approval of all courses which come under the heading of "social education", as we have defined that

term in paragraph 2.3, of this report, is vested in the Minister, acting on the advice of a single advisory body. However, we do not believe that the establishment on an additional special advisory body with, inevitably, an increase in administrative overheads, is either necessary or justified at this time. We have already proposed increased community representation on the Board of Secondary School Studies and we propose that the Board accept responsibility for advising the Minister on all secondary school social education courses. We therefore recommend that no social education course be introduced into a State High School as a "School Subject" until such a course has been submitted to the Board of Secondary School Studies for their recommendation, and approved by the Minister, following a similar procedure to that already adopted for "Board-Approved" subjects. In order to resolve any question of doubt as to what is, and is not, a social education course, we further recommend that the Minister be empowered to refer any "School Subject" to the Board of Secondary School Studies for their recommendation.

6.5. We have already made mention of the public controversy surrounding the question of the teaching of values in our schools and our belief that teaching programmes cannot exclude questions of values. We believe that if our recommendations concerning the promulgation of appropriate guidelines for teachers are implemented, this will do much to allay public concern regarding this most sensitive issue. Nevertheless, we must restate our firm conviction that the only real solution to this and similar problems lies in improved communications between the education system and the community in general, and between schools and parents in particular. In addition, in the secondary schools we believe it to be important, keeping in mind that adulthood is now reached at 18 years, that students be encouraged to be fully involved in decisions which, through the educational experience, will influence their lives.

6.6. At the administrative level, we have made recommendations in our "First Interim Report" which will, if implemented, increase community involvement in secondary school education through representation on the "Board of Secondary School Studies". At the school level, we believe that communication of course content and curriculum change, could be resolved before they become contentious if Principals and Headmasters were encouraged to convene a permanent school advisory council. We wish to stress that we do not intend that this council should replace Parents and Citizens' Associations, nor are our recommendations intended to imply any criticism of the excellent work which these associations continue to perform in support of our education system; on the contrary, we would hope that such a council would complement the work of Parents and Citizens' Associations by providing a forum where representatives of the association, the students, and teachers, would meet to discuss problems of mutual concern.

6.7. The Select Committee therefore recommends that the Education Act be amended to include the following:—

*High School Advisory Councils.* (1) The Principal of each State High School is expected to convene an advisory committee to be known as "The (Name) High School Advisory Council".



## (2) The Council shall consist of—

- (i) the School Principal—*ex officio*, who shall be chairman;
- (ii) the Deputy Principal—*ex officio*, or where none is appointed, a senior teacher nominated by the Principal, who shall be deputy chairman;
- (iii) the Senior Mistress—*ex officio*, or where none is appointed, a senior female teacher nominated by the Principal;
- (iv) two members of the school staff nominated by the Principal;
- (v) two members of the teaching staff elected by the teachers;
- (vi) four parents of children currently enrolled in the school elected by the parents of children currently enrolled in the school, provided that both parents of any child shall not be eligible to serve on the council at any one time;
- (vii) two senior students of the school elected by the senior students of the school;

(3) The Principal may, with the prior concurrence of the Director of Secondary Education, vary the composition of the council to suit unusual local circumstances.

6.8. The Select Committee recommends that the functions of the Council be specified in the Education Act as follows:—

*Functions of the Council.* (1) The role of a council shall be purely advisory. A council shall not have the power to direct the Principal nor to over-ride the decisions of the Principal and his staff.

(2) The functions of a council shall be to discuss and to advise the Principal of its views with regard to—

- (i) the school curriculum and associated resource material;
- (ii) the textbook list for each year;
- (iii) innovations for the school;
- (iv) school rules;
- (v) school uniform;
- (vi) discipline problems referred to the council by the Principal;
- (vii) any other matters referred to the council by the Principal;
- (viii) any matter which a majority of the members present and voting shall determine should be placed on the agenda.

6.9. Although divided into Primary and Secondary levels of education, it is important that education in our schools should be seen as a continuous process. Concern has been expressed to the Select Committee that the essential continuity between Primary and Secondary curriculum is not invariably achieved. The Select Committee therefore recommends that the Director-General of Education initiate dialogue with the Board of Secondary School Studies, with a view to agreeing formal procedures for having appropriate Board of Secondary School Studies Advisory Committee representatives on each Primary Standing Syllabus Committee and vice versa. We also recommend that the Department of Education establishes formal procedures to facilitate discussion on curriculum matters between secondary schools and the primary schools in their catchment area. We are advised that the informal initiatives which have been taken by some schools to promote such dialogue have proved to be beneficial.

6.10. Following evidence of public disquiet concerning the *Social Education Materials Project* (S.E.M.P.) and in view of the sensitive nature of some areas of social education, the Queensland Government considered it to be advisable to issue a moratorium on the use of the material in Queensland schools, pending further investigation. The Select Committee received a considerable volume of evidence concerning S.E.M.P. and has also interviewed the Director of the Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra, the body responsible for the co-ordination of the project and the dissemination of the project material. There have been three major criticisms raised. First, that some of the material was unsuitable for use in Queensland schools either for some or for all age groups. Second, it has been questioned whether some or all the controversial social issues subsumed in the project material should be treated in the classroom situation. Third, that the materials presented an unbalanced and, in some cases, extreme view of the topic covered.

6.11. S.E.M.P. had its origins in a national survey conducted by the National Committee on Social Science Teaching (NCSST) which identified areas in which materials needed to be developed, either because none were available or because those which existed neither focused on recurring social issues nor adequately reflected contemporary teaching objectives. Eight topic areas were selected for materials development:—

- Consumer Study;
- The Consumer in Society;
- Decision-Making Processes and Government;
- Family;

People and Change;

- Race and Ethnic Relations;
- Social Control and Conflict;
- Urbanism.

The S.E.M.P. material, whilst primarily directed towards social science courses, can also be used in a range of other courses including English and the natural sciences. The education of children in matters concerning society is not restricted to particular subject areas.

6.12. In addition to the material sponsored by the Curriculum Development Centre, a series of ten films was produced by Film Australia, which are referred to in the units "Family" and "People and Change" as possible support material. Some of these films have been widely and strongly criticized. They are referred to in the Teachers Handbook for S.E.M.P., as having been produced "in consultation with SEMP", and the impression has been conveyed that the films are an integral part of S.E.M.P. However, the Director of the Curriculum Development Centre, Dr Skilbeck, when questioned on this point by the Select Committee, said:—

"... 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.... 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.... C.D.C. did not commission the making of the films."

6.13. The S.E.M.P. materials are not restricted or classified in any way by the Curriculum Development Centre. The decision on the suitability of particular material for various secondary school age groups or student groupings being left to the judgement of the individual school or classroom teacher. The Foreword to the Introductory Handbook for the unit "Family" includes the following statement:—

"Much of the SEMP material focuses on the study of social issues about which people hold strong and differing opinions. These studies may be justified on a number of grounds including those relating to the personal needs of students growing up in Australian society and those relating to the public 'good' of the community as a whole. Ways of studying and resolving certain issues may well differ between schools or individuals where there are different standards and values in operation and these differing positions must certainly be respected. It is also appreciated that there are some issues which a particular school for good reason may not wish to study at all."

The Select Committee is satisfied on the evidence, that the selection of appropriate materials for particular classes and schools, could, for the most part, safely be left to the judgment of teachers. Nevertheless, there remains the danger that some teachers through inexperience and in the absence of adequate guidelines, may introduce material into the classroom which is unsuitable. Recognizing this, the Director-General of Education appointed a Committee to carry out a detailed review of the S.E.M.P. material presently available and to make recommendations as to its suitability for use in Queensland schools and whether there should be any restriction on the school years—from 8 to 12—in which particular material could appropriately be introduced.

6.14. The Select Committee has examined the S.E.M.P. material in the light of the findings of the Director-General's Review Committee, and wishes to commend that Committee on the careful and responsible way in which it carried out its task. We append the text of the findings of the Review Committee as Appendix A to this report. We note, in passing, that of the ten films, four were classified as "Unsuitable for use in Queensland schools" and a further three were classified as "Suitable for years 11-12 only". Dr Skilbeck, Director of C.D.C., in his evidence before the Select Committee, stated that it was entirely consistent with the philosophy and approach of the Centre that selections of materials from the S.E.M.P. collection ought to be made by appropriate bodies. He continued:—

"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 Select Committee is in general agreement with Dr Skilbeck on this point and recommends that the findings of the *Report of the Review Committee of S.E.M.P. Materials* be accepted as an appropriate basis for selection of material by the classroom teacher. We also recommend that the restrictions on use which the Report recommends, be made mandatory for observance in State secondary schools and that all material classified as "Unsuitable for use in Queensland schools" and all material which the Review Committee recommended for deletion, be permanently withdrawn. The Select Committee also recommends that subject to these restrictions, and to some further recommendations which appear later in this section, the S.E.M.P. material reviewed and found



suitable by the Director-General's Committee, be approved for use in Queensland schools. We note, however, that parts of the S.E.M.P. material were not available for examination at the time the "Review Committee" made its report. Therefore, we further recommend that this additional material and any revised versions of S.E.M.P. material which may be produced from time to time, should not be permitted to be used in Queensland State secondary schools until they have been examined by a Review Committee and the recommendations of that Committee have been endorsed by the Minister acting on the advice of the Director-General of Education.

6.15. With regard to the treatment of controversial issues in the classroom, the Select Committee has already stated its views in Section 4. We believe that the ability to handle controversy in a rational adult way is, and should continue to be, an essential feature of the education programme in our schools.

We note the following statement from the Foreword to the Introductory Handbook for the S.E.M.P. unit "Family":—

"Whenever social issues are handled in a way which seeks to identify their 'controversial' character and to develop students' skills in dealing with controversy there may be difficulties. The teacher's guide for individual units should be read carefully in this connection. In addition, the rationale for handling controversial social issues, which was developed by the National Committee on Social Science Teaching (NCSST), and which has been widely endorsed by education authorities throughout Australia, provides a useful model for teachers."

The rationale for handling controversial social issues developed by the National Committee on Social Science Teaching reads as follows:—

"The study of controversial social issues in schools may be justified on a number of grounds. These can be placed under two broad categories; those relating to the personal needs of an individual, and those relating to the public 'good'."

With regard to the first category, it is noted that controversial issues exist in society, and play an important part in the way society functions; as the school has accepted the responsibility for teaching children about society they ought therefore to find a place in the school curriculum. To this it might be added that children are increasingly exposed to controversial social issues through the agency of the mass media which often highlights the emotional side; this situation gives some urgency to the need for schools to provide students with systematic help in rationally examining controversies and in clarifying conflicts of values.

It is suggested also that a study of controversial social issues benefits the student himself as he matures. It assists him to examine and clarify his own values, to appreciate the value positions of others, and to learn how to participate in the processes of decision making and conflict resolution. The extent to which responsible decision making is necessarily followed by commitment to social action is desirable. This is true for both teacher and student. The professional autonomy of the former is to be respected; while the position of the student who supports a minority view must be safeguarded. The resolving of situations like these may well differ between schools where there are different standards and values in operation; and, obviously, the resolving of the issues may differ between individuals. These differing positions must be respected.

In other words, the handling of controversial social issues will give students some experience for handling issues that affect them personally, in that certain cognitive skills will have been strengthened; such as distinguishing between fact and opinion, between relevant and irrelevant, between important and unimportant, and so on.

With regard to the public 'good', each member of society has to contribute to the social well-being of the community as a whole. Teachers and students share this responsibility; they are therefore obliged to discuss, investigate, understand, and arrive at their own responsible decisions on controversial social issues. This necessitates training students in discovering preferences, assessing clashing proposals, analysing disagreements, suggesting outcomes of alternative actions, and so on. This suggests the primacy, therefore, of handling issues in such a way as to bring out their 'controversial' character, and to enhance the skills implicit in the training mentioned above."

Whilst the Select Committee endorses this rationale in principle, we wish to take issue on the final conclusion which claims that the rationale "... suggests the primacy, therefore, of handling issues in such a way as to bring out their 'controversial' character, and to enhance the skills implicit in the training mentioned above." In our view, this conclusion in no way follows from the antecedent premises. We have already stated our opinion that there has been, of recent years, an excessive thrust in the direction of controversy in social education

and that controversial issues will arise in the normal process of teaching without contriving to make every aspect of the curriculum controversial. Accordingly, we restate our recommendation that this point should be stressed in the headnotes to every social studies syllabus. We also recommend that the principles for handling controversial issues in Queensland schools which, in Section 4, we have proposed for incorporation in Education Regulations, and the associated guidelines for teachers, be promulgated before the S.E.M.P. material is released for use in State secondary schools.

6.16. With regard to the lack of balance in the S.E.M.P. materials, it has frequently been stated that the S.E.M.P. collection does NOT constitute a new course and teachers are constantly advised to balance S.E.M.P. resources with a careful selection of materials from other sources. Again, we quote from the Foreword to the unit "Family":—

"The provision to students of a balance of views on particular issues is an important principle in teaching in the area of social education. It should be noted that some individual items of material in SEMP may be taken from primary sources which take an extreme view of an issue. However, a broad range of views is represented in each unit and in SEMP taken as a whole. It is crucial therefore that individual items and units of material should be seen within the context of all SEMP units, or alternatively within the range of materials (including SEMP) which a teacher uses when considering how to present a balanced approach to students."

Hence, an assessment of the S.E.M.P. material as to balance must take into account the wider context of all teaching resources. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that important statements of principle on this and other matters which we have referred to are not given greater prominence in the Teachers' Handbooks. In our view the above quoted statement and the other two statements which we have quoted are crucial to a proper use of all S.E.M.P. material by teachers. No doubt, the principles stated are well known to the experienced teacher, nevertheless, placed as they are in the "Foreword" to individual units, we believe that they may easily be overlooked by the busy teacher who is unfamiliar with the project. We recommend that the Department of Education prepare a separate Queensland Handbook to accompany the S.E.M.P. material, which all teachers are to be required to study before using the material and which all teachers should read regardless. This should be kept as brief as possible but should include as a minimum, the basic principles which we have referred to in this report, a statement of the principles and guidelines for teachers for handling controversial issues, which we have recommended should be issued, other pertinent extracts from the Handbooks regarding teaching methods with such additional directions and amendments as the Director-General of Education shall consider necessary to take account of local conditions and an appendix giving a summary of the mandatory instructions for use of the material based on the "Report of the Review Committee".

6.17. It has been represented to the Select Committee that a special permanent committee should be constituted to review all resource material for use in social education programmes. We have reviewed the evidence presented to us, and the arrangements in other States of Australia, and discussed this matter with senior education officers both in Queensland and elsewhere. We recognize the benefits of such an arrangement in avoiding public controversy and allaying public concern, but in our view, such benefits would be outweighed by the costs. Such a Committee would tend to reduce the flexibility which we believe to be a most desirable feature of our secondary education programme. It would, in our opinion, tend to discourage our many enthusiastic and responsible teachers from including appropriate local content in the elective section of a syllabus and would, in any case, be likely to cause unacceptable delays in the introduction of new material. We have already stated our reluctance to recommend the formation of additional permanent deliberative bodies with their attendant administrative overheads. Considerable effort is made by the Department of Education to ensure that resources, no matter how they are provided, match the courses. Committees involved in curriculum development produce lists of resources considered to be appropriate for the support of courses; and a similar service is offered by specialist branches within the Department, such as Curriculum, and Library and Resource Services. In recommending resources, careful attention is paid to such factors as the scope of the content, its selection and arrangement, and the sequence in which it is presented, to ensure that the material is compatible with the course in question. Attention is also directed to the appropriateness of the material to the age and ability levels of the students, the degree of difficulty involved in its reading and interpretation, and the quality of the content and its reproduction. There are already formal avenues for redress, where individual parents or groups may have significant concerns about a school's curriculum or resource material and we reaffirm our belief that resource materials must be freely available, at appropriate times, for examination by interested parents. Matters which cause concern can be discussed

in the first instance with the Principal, and if satisfaction is not achieved, it can be referred to the Regional Director of Education, the Director-General of Education, or the Minister. We, therefore, recommend that the formation of a special permanent committee to maintain an overview of resource material for use in Social Education programmes, should not be considered at this time. We are hopeful that the recommendations we have made to facilitate a more active dialogue between the community and the

education system will render it unnecessary to consider such a step in the future. However, we recommend that the principle of forming "special purpose" review committees—similar to that formed to review and report on the S.E.M.P. material—and which are formed to review specific resource packages intended for possible statewide use, should be continued and supported. We also suggest that community representation on future such committees would be helpful.

## SECTION 7—RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL EDUCATION

7.1. The Select Committee has, in all its deliberations, recognized that it is not a monolithic state system of education which is under discussion. We value the plurality of educational institutions in our society. In the matter of Religious Education, however, we have, in the main, restricted ourselves to a consideration of that which bears upon the state school system, in order not to pre-empt the right of non-state schools, and in particular those which are church-linked, to offer Religious Education which their governing bodies consider appropriate. At the same time, we believe that the recommendations that we have made will be found to be compatible with the needs of all denominations, and we hope that the church educational authorities will find them helpful when formulating their own teaching strategies.

7.2. Many submissions to the Select Committee have argued for greater emphasis on Christian Religious Education, either in a denominational or non-denominational sense. Others have argued that, in a state education system, it is inappropriate that "one of the great world religions" should be favoured to the exclusion of all others, and that some degree of familiarity with the basic philosophies and tenets of Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, as well as Christianity, would be of value in encouraging wider understanding and tolerance of others. Yet others have argued that in a state education system, religion, and even more so, denominational religion, has no place; that education in these areas should be the responsibility of the home, and the church or other religious body to which the child belongs.

7.3. In considering the religious dimension in education, it is convenient to divide it into three strands: that of the doctrine and practice of people as expressed through the various religious bodies; that of the specific, though generalized, influence of religion as a social and cultural factor in the development of our society; and, that of religious and moral issues as they bear upon questions arising in other subjects included in the curriculum.

7.4. In respect of the first of these areas of activity, Paragraph 20 of the Education Act provides:—

"20. *Religious instruction in school hours.* (1) Any minister of religion or accredited representative of a religious denomination which representative has been approved by the Minister for the purpose shall be entitled during school hours to give to the children in attendance at a State school who are members of the religious society or denomination of which he is a minister or the accredited representative religious instruction in accordance with regulations in that behalf during a period not exceeding one hour in each week on such day as the head teacher of that school approves."

The Select Committee considers that the right of entry thus guaranteed to accredited representatives of religious bodies should be continued and supported. In this context, we draw attention to the right guaranteed also in Paragraph 20 of the Education Act of any parent to withdraw a child from religious instruction:—

"(3) Notwithstanding anything in this section, any parent of a child in attendance at a State school may withdraw such child from all religious instruction in such school by notifying in writing the head teacher that he desires the child to be so withdrawn."

7.5. Evidence has been presented to the Select Committee which indicates that in some cases there is dissatisfaction with the standard of denominational religious instruction in schools viewed from an educational standpoint. The Committee in no way intends to imply any criticism of the commitment or devotion of the individual religious instructors, clerical and lay, nor of the bodies which they represent. We point out, however, that the value of denominational religious education programmes is much enhanced when the limited time available is utilized to the best possible advantage. We therefore urge that, in order to ensure that religious instruction is carried out as far as possible in accordance with sound educational principles and practice, full advantage be taken of the in-service training courses provided by the Department of Education Curriculum Branch.

7.6. It is not the business of the state education system to foster the sectional aims of any group within Queensland society, therefore, the Committee rejects any claim that the state school as such should initiate the student into a particular faith, or act as an agency of denominational evangelism. On the other hand, in view of the fact that a significant majority of Queensland residents claim adherence to a Christian religious body, Christianity is demonstrably the starting point for Religious Education in our schools, and would, of necessity, provide a major emphasis in core material for any Religious Education course. The Committee considers that Religious Education should focus its attention on the educational dimension rather than that of encouraging commitment to some particular doctrinal system.

7.7. The "Demack" Report, at page 24, points out that:—

"... it should be obvious that people who suggest that religion is not an adequate basis for morality have a responsibility to demonstrate what is the alternative basis for morality. Throughout the development of our cultural heritage, law has been the expression of moral concepts, and moral concepts have been the fruits of religious experience. To say this is not to make any claims about inerrancy but simply to point out an area of human experience which has to be taken into account."

It is also true that, even if a majority of Queenslanders are not "practising" Christians in the sense of regular attendance at Church services, the cultural framework of our society is directly influenced by the Bible, and by the legacy of 2000 years of Christian History. Therefore, the education of children in an important aspect of their cultural and literary heritage is neglected, if some insight into the Bible and the general Christian approach to morality and ethics is not encouraged. The Committee believes that this encouragement can be provided by a programme of Bible reading in the primary school as outlined in subparagraph (2), paragraph 20, of the Education Act:—

"(2) Instruction in accordance with regulations in that behalf shall be given in State primary and special schools during school hours in selected Bible lessons. A separate reading book shall be provided for such purpose.

Such instruction shall not include any teaching in the distinctive tenets or doctrines of any religious denomination, society or sect."

We therefore recommend that this provision be continued and supported.

7.8. In further support of the proposition advanced in the previous paragraph, the Select Committee recommends that consideration be given to introducing in the secondary school, a scripture-based course, e.g. "Biblical Studies", at least in the years 8 to 10. Such a course we would see as a "Board", or, where a particular school authority considers it more appropriate, a "Board-Approved" subject, under the same conditions as other subjects and assessable as such. We note that this strategy is already in existence in West Australian secondary schools. We wish to stress that courses of this nature are not seen as in any way prejudicing the right of entry of the accredited denominational religious educators already guaranteed. Such courses are not proposed as an alternative to denominational Religious Education but as a complementary and supportive feature of the Religious Education programme as a whole.

7.9. It has been argued that it is improper to make any reference to religions other than Christianity in our State schools. Those who adopt this stance support their claims by reference to the Education Act, the religious instruction section of which was inserted as a result of a referendum in Queensland in 1910. Neither the Education Act, however, nor the schedule to the *Religious Instruction in State Schools Referendum Act 1908*, which produced the 1910 referendum, refer specifically to Christianity at all, only to religious teaching. The Committee, therefore, does not accept the argument advanced on those grounds. It has been, moreover, accepted practice that children of non-Christian parents, notably Jewish children, have been given religious education by accredited representatives of their religion in school hours, subject to the school timetable and the availability of personnel. The Select Committee sees this right of access as available to members of any approved religious faith for the education of its own children.

7.10. The question of whether or not non-Christian religions have any place in a Christian religious education programme has been a contentious one, particularly in the context of the curriculum guides published by the Education Department's Religious Education Curriculum Project team. In passing, the Select Committee commends the team for the thoroughness and responsibility with which it has approached its task. The work of the R.E.C.P. team has been within three areas:—

- (a) the production of a series of curriculum guides in draft form for the use of religious educators;
- (b) the circulation of a "mini-library" of reference books and materials as a support facility for religious educators; and
- (c) the conducting of in-service training courses for religious education personnel accredited by their own denomination.

We point out that the work of the team in these three areas is intended not to provide a mandatory single approach to Religious Education in State schools, but to supply materials and support facilities in an area where a need was perceived. It is open to all religious groups, and indeed to all individuals involved in Religious Education, to use them in full, to use them selectively, or not to use them at all.

7.11. The Select Committee has examined the Curriculum Guides produced by the R.E.C.P. team, which are the subject of some public controversy. They contain nothing which, in our opinion, is unacceptable for use in Queensland State schools, particularly in view of the fact that they are provided for the use of teachers accredited by their denomination. The materials include references to the teaching of non-Christian religions and religious figures. We note, however, that, where such references are supplied, they are contained within a list of suggested examples of particular points which also, invariably, includes biblical and other Christian examples to illustrate the same point. The choice is open to the individual to make a selection from that list, or, indeed, to reject the list altogether, and produce other examples of equal value to the point under discussion. Such a decision would rest ultimately with the appropriate Church authority by which the individual religious educator is accredited. Neither the Select Committee nor, we believe, the Department of Education, should intrude into this area of detailed decision-making. It is properly the responsibility of the Churches, through their respective accrediting authorities.

7.12. The Religious Education "mini-library" has also been examined by the Select Committee. The "mini-library" was the first activity of the R.E.C.P. team, and was distributed

initially both to provide immediate assistance to Religious Education personnel, and to allow time for the development of the Curriculum materials previously discussed. Controversy has arisen over the inclusion of some non-Christian material in the "mini-library". The Committee has already expressed its view on this matter. Disquiet has also been expressed over the inclusion of two books by Laurie Brady, *Do We Dare—A Dilemma Approach to Moral Development* (Primary), and *Values; Taught or Caught—Personal Development for Secondary Schools*. Extensive reference has already been made (paragraphs 4.5., and 4.6.) to the use of so-called "dilemma stories" in the general social education programme, and we reiterate the argument there advanced, in the context of Religious Education. The Select Committee deems it entirely proper for religious educators to adopt the "dilemma story" as one amongst many of the teaching techniques at their disposal. The use of the "dilemma" situation as a teaching aid has a long and hallowed history in Christian tradition, not least in the Bible itself. We draw attention to the account of the judgment of Solomon (1 Kings 4: 16–28), and the parable of the Talents (Matthew 25: 14–30). We would again urge, however, that the selection and use of materials be approached with sensitivity, in order that they may be both balanced and appropriate to the age and level of maturity of the students.

7.13. We have already made reference (paragraph 7.5.) to the in-service training courses for Religious Educators conducted by the R.E.C.P. team under the auspices of the Department of Education's Curriculum Branch. Forty-seven full 30-hour courses have already been held in Queensland at 36 centres, and shorter courses to the number of 38 have taken place. Approximately 2 600 people have so far benefited from these initiatives, and the team has further in-service training courses in preparation. The Select Committee views these courses as a most valuable contribution to improving the quality of our Religious Education programme, and again urges support for them.

7.14. The Select Committee is aware of the constraints of school timetables and the availability of personnel, but believes that there are advantages when the Religious Education programme can be undertaken by trained teachers. This is particularly so when the teacher is an ordinary member of the school staff. We are advised that non-staff members, however competent, often have difficulty in establishing that rapport with the students which is essential for effective teaching. We therefore recommend that wherever possible, teachers who are willing to do so be encouraged to gain accreditation and to take their part in the Religious Education programme on behalf of their own Churches.

## SECTION 8—HEALTH AND SAFETY EDUCATION

8.1. Concern has been expressed in submissions to the Select Committee that various matters falling within the general areas of health and safety should be considered as an integral part of our social education programme. Amongst the many issues raised, items of major concern were; an understanding of the contribution of personal hygiene, balanced diet, and exercise according to age, to general health and physical fitness; sex education; dental hygiene; the use of medical services in an informed and sensible way; alcohol, drug, and smoking education; water safety; efficient and safe road behaviour, both as pedestrian and as driver; safety in using machinery and tools; consciousness of conditions which lead to accidents; and, first aid. Sex education, although it includes important considerations related to health, goes much further than a knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of sex; it covers a wide range of personal relationships, the attitudes of couples towards each other as persons, the family relationships and society in general. In view of this, the Select Committee intends to present a separate Interim Report on this subject in the near future.

8.2. Personal hygiene, diet, and exercise, are major components of the Health and Physical Education curriculum, particularly in the primary school. It is suggested in the curriculum guide that:—

"Attitudes and Practices for Healthy Living should result from participation in a program which is interesting, enjoyable and relevant to the daily lives of children. A foundation for good health can be developed by a Physical Education program which provides:—

- (a) knowledge and understanding of good health practices;

(b) interest and skill in recreative studies;

(c) opportunities to attain success and to derive enjoyment from active participation."

and, further that:—

"Health Education provides and utilizes a variety of experiences so that the child acquires attitudes, knowledge and practices favourable to personal and community health."

The importance of retaining health and hygiene in perspective is also stressed.

"Teachers should take advantage of the opportunities which occur in various subject areas of the primary school curriculum for the development of favourable attitudes and behaviour in relation to health."

Finally, the importance of health is set in the context of education for personal development and physical fitness in the following terms:—

"Physical Fitness involves efficient functioning of all bodily processes so that the individual may adequately meet the demands placed upon him by his environment. A person who is fit is better able to develop efficiency in skilled movement. To raise and maintain the fitness level of children, the teacher should conduct a program which develops:—

- (a) combined efficiency of the circulatory and respiratory systems;
- (b) muscular strength, power, and endurance;
- (c) flexibility in muscles and joints;
- (d) an appreciation of the body's needs for physical activity, correct diet and adequate rest."

It has been pointed out to the Select Committee that many young people have reacted against over-organized and adult-dominated sport due to an increased emphasis on commercialism and professionalism. It is explicit in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Guides that both organized sport and alternative forms of exercise are given prominence. We endorse that approach, and suggest that those responsible take steps to ensure that each of these aspects of physical exercise receive due emphasis. The Select Committee, therefore, recommends that the Health and Physical Education programme, with appropriate emphases, be continued and supported in both the primary and secondary schools.

8.3. Many experienced teachers, and many parents, have argued that an observation of the eating habits of school children indicates that education has been less than effective in encouraging a balanced approach to diet. We recognize the importance of balanced food intake for general physical fitness and health, and recommend that this area of the Health and Physical Education Syllabus be given due prominence. In this connection, the Select Committee reminds those responsible for the provision of meals and snacks through school "tuck-shops" of the importance of providing a wholesome and balanced, as well as attractive, range of foodstuffs for their consumers.

8.4. It has been pointed out that, essential to personal hygiene and a responsible approach to health care, are both dental hygiene, and an informed and sensible use of medical services. The Select Committee is aware that dental hygiene is already dealt with in the health and physical education programme, and recommends that it continue to receive appropriate emphasis in the curriculum. The Committee also recommends that, in future curriculum planning, the need for community awareness of, and a responsible approach to, medical and hospital services, be emphasized within the school health and physical education programme.

8.5. An important aspect of Health education—programmes dealing with drugs and toxic substances, alcohol, and tobacco—was canvassed extensively in submissions to the Select Committee. It was also argued that, in a drug education programme, distinction ought to be made between so-called "soft" and "hard" drugs. The Committee does not accept this argument, but considers that in the education programme, all addictive substances should be treated alike. Whilst the Committee supports the principle that the dangers to health which can arise from the improper use of drugs and toxic substances, should be brought to the attention of our children, a cautious approach to such matters is urged. It has been argued that an extensive programme of education in these matters will cause students to experiment with substances of which they were previously unaware. The Committee disagrees with this argument. Whilst the dangers of such an occurrence are fully appreciated, it is evident that the media coverage given to the use of drugs and toxic substances is so wide, that it would be rare to encounter a complete unawareness of their existence and misuse. Further, in some cases, media coverage implicitly minimises the very real dangers of drug abuse. We reiterate that great caution and sensitivity is needed in any drug, alcohol and smoking education unit, but, in principle, recommend that it form part of the school health and physical education programme.

8.6. Queensland is an area where climate, geographical features and population distribution combined to provide maximum opportunity and encouragement for bathing and water sports. Access to these activities, added to the well-known attraction which water has for small children, dictate that, in common prudence, all possible steps should be taken at the earliest stages to ensure that children are at least "drown-proof". Not only would this help to reduce the number of tragedies, but it would also maximise the benefit to be obtained from participation in swimming and water sports, both as physical exercise and as agreeable social pastimes. The Select Committee realizes that responsible parents already take this action, and is also aware that swimming and water safety are major components in the physical education programmes in our schools. We consider, however, that in view of the many schools which have installed swimming pools and the large number of other opportunities for participation in swimming and water sports, by students, it should be mandatory for all schools to ensure that all children have reached an acceptable standard of water safety by the end of Year 2. The Select Committee recognizes that those schools which lack their own swimming pools in most cases already make alternative arrangements for their swimming programmes, either by using other local facilities or by sharing with other schools in the area, and endorses that approach. We recommend that, where necessary, additional resources be made available to ensure that all children throughout the State receive

adequate training in water safety. We commend the certificates awarded by the Royal Life Saving Society, the Water Safety Certificate, the Safe Swimmer Certificate, and the Survival Certificate, and suggest that they encompass an acceptable minimum standard of water safety for our children.

8.7. The Select Committee has noted with concern that the number of persons, particularly young people, killed or injured in accidents, continues to remain unacceptably high. We believe that the school system has a definite part to play in reducing our accident toll and in promoting awareness of safety in the community. The Committee is aware that some schools already have extensive safety education programmes, and commends those who have taken that initiative. Of all types of accident, traffic accidents are the major cause of death and injury, particularly amongst young people. For example, in Queensland in 1976, of all accidental deaths, 53% of male deaths and 64% of female deaths were the result of traffic accidents. However, in the 10-19 age group, the corresponding figures were 72% for males and 79% for females. That is to say in one year (1976) 153 young people from 10-19 years of age were killed in motor vehicle accidents on Queensland roads. In view of these alarming statistics, the need for continuing and increasing driver and road safety education cannot be too strongly emphasized. Many high school students are eligible to apply for a Learner's Permit, having reached the legal driving age of 17 years, and a number of schools have organized practical learner driver training programmes for their students. The Select Committee wishes to commend those schools for their initiative. In addition, the Queensland Road Safety Council officers conduct an 8-hour theoretical Learner-Driver Course. This has been introduced into some high schools in the Brisbane area, where it is conducted by volunteer teachers trained by the Council. This course, which concentrates on the theory of driving—otherwise known as "Roadcraft"—is aimed at giving a high school student the necessary theoretical knowledge of driving techniques to be able to become a competent practical driver. The Select Committee understands that the Queensland Road Safety Council is currently engaged in a campaign to promote the introduction of this course into secondary schools where it is not yet in use, and supports that campaign. The Select Committee believes that ideally, completion of the theoretical course should be mandatory for all students before leaving secondary school and therefore recommends that the Department of Education and other Educational Authorities should progress towards this goal as soon as possible. The Select Committee is also aware that the Queensland Road Safety Council has already developed an extensive programme of road safety education for pre-school and primary school children, and recommends that urgent consideration be given to including in the curriculum for all levels of education up to and including year 10, a unit of road safety education, which would utilize the Teachers' guides and resource kits which are developed from time to time by the Queensland Road Safety Council.

8.8. Apart from traffic accidents, many other fatalities, and many cases of bodily injury, which could have been avoided by the exercise of a few commonsense precautions, occur year by year. Not least amongst these are non-fatal accidents affecting children which can inflict lasting damage or incapacity. The Committee believes that any Health and Safety Education programme should endeavour to promote awareness of conditions leading to accidents, the precautions to be taken to avoid them, and importantly, action to be taken, including first aid, when accidents do occur. We therefore recommend that, as part of this emphasis, consideration be given to including appropriate levels of training in first aid in the Health and Physical Education programmes, both in the primary and in the secondary schools. We wish to stress that opportunities for promoting safety-consciousness and safe behaviour occur throughout the curriculum, and urge that the fullest advantage be taken of them, whenever they occur, to encourage and extend the children's awareness of safety. This can, in its turn, be expected to contribute to a significant reduction in death and injury from accidental causes.

8.9. The Select Committee is aware that, in an already crowded curriculum, there are limits to what can be included in the school timetable. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that *Mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a sound body—is an appropriate aim for education in our State. Much can be achieved within the ambit of the general curriculum, and without special time allocations, by introducing and reinforcing the important lessons concerning health and safety as opportunities arise in the normal course of teaching. We recommend that education authorities regularly remind both teachers and curriculum designers of the importance of reinforcing health and safety lessons throughout the school programme. There will, however, still be a need to make time available for specific instruction in aspects of health and safety. It is the unanimous opinion of the Select Committee that the potential contribution of such instruction to the future well-being of the citizens of our State more than justifies the time which must be spent.

## SECTION 9—SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

(The numerals in brackets refer to the paragraph in which the recommendation occurs)

9.1. That the Parliament set out in the Education Act a general statement of the aims of education as follows:—

The principal aim of education in Queensland Primary and Secondary Schools is to help and guide children to progress towards the full attainment of their potentialities as individuals and as adult members of our society.

In particular, it is the duty and responsibility of our teachers and educational administrators—

- (i) to help children develop lively, enquiring minds giving them the ability to question and to argue rationally, and to apply themselves to tasks;
- (ii) to help children to the maximum development of their physical qualities, giving them an understanding of the means of achieving and the benefits of physical fitness, health and hygiene;
- (iii) to help children to use language effectively and imaginatively in reading, writing and speaking;
- (iv) to provide a basis of mathematical, scientific and technical knowledge, enabling boys and girls to learn the essential skills needed in a fast-changing world of work;
- (v) to instil respect for moral values, for other people and for oneself, and tolerance of other races, religions, and ways of life;
- (vi) to help children understand how our country is governed and to instil an awareness of the social, civic and political responsibilities and rights of adult citizenship;
- (vii) to teach children about human achievement and aspirations, and in particular to make them aware of the traditions and culture of Queensland and of Australia and of the heritage of our past;
- (viii) to help children understand the world in which we live, and the interdependence of nations;
- (ix) to help children to appreciate how the nation earns and maintains its standard of living and properly to esteem the essential role of agriculture, industry and commerce in this process;
- (x) to encourage and foster the development of the children whose social, physical or environmental disadvantages cripple their capacity to learn, if necessary by making additional resources available to them.

(2.4.)

9.2. That education authorities adopt more stringent procedures for reviewing dilemma stories before they are approved for use in Queensland schools. (4.6.)

9.3. That the Department of Education issue guidelines to teachers to enable them to select scenarios appropriate to the age and maturity of their students. In particular, such guidelines should remind teachers of the importance of taking account of the deep feelings of some of the ethnic and religious minorities represented in our schools. (4.6.)

9.4. That Education Department policies in respect of a balanced approach to teaching methods be continued and supported. (4.7.)

9.5. That any initiative which teachers may wish to take to establish machinery for the profession itself to monitor ethical and professional standards should receive the support of Parliament. (4.7.)

9.6. That section 37 (1) (c) of the Education Regulations be amended to read as follows:—

"... shall encourage the use of a range of teaching techniques appropriate to the achievement of the objectives of the school curriculum and ensure that relevant information is disseminated to each member of the staff. The principal shall ensure that these teaching techniques conform to departmental policy." (4.8.)

9.7. That education authorities and teachers re-examine their strategies in regard to keeping the community adequately informed about teaching methods as well as about other educational matters. (4.8.)

9.8. That, in the headnotes to every social studies, syllabus, it be stressed that controversial issues will arise in the normal process of teaching, without contriving to make every aspect of the curriculum controversial. (4.9.)

9.9. That a statement of basic principles for the handling of controversial issues be promulgated in "Education Regulations" and that the following statement of principles be considered for adoption:—

"The consideration of controversial issues in schools whether by way of views expressed by teachers

or visiting speakers or by the study of printed material of a partisan nature should be in accord with the following basic principles:—

- (1) Schools are neutral grounds for rational discourse and objective study and should not become arenas for opposing political or other ideologies.
- (2) Schools are places where students are preparing for informed and reasoned involvement in community life, including its politics, by calm and co-operative study of social issues and not places for polarising them into partisan political or other groups.
- (3) The school's educational programme framed in accordance with its aims, objectives and methods must determine all activity within it and discussion of political or other controversial issues is acceptable only when it is in harmony with these aims, objectives and methods and clearly serves the purpose of the school's programme. Such discussion is not intended to advance the interest of any political or pressure group.
- (4) The school has a privileged position, denied to many other concerned people, to influence students and it therefore has a special responsibility to maintain objectivity to avoid distortion of discussions, to acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of parents and to preserve the right of students and parents to dissent.
- (5) The extent to which a school involves its students in discussion of controversial matters must be appropriate to their maturity and their readiness to appreciate the significance of the issues discussed.
- (6) The school alone is responsible for the educative process within it and cannot transfer its accountability, wholly or in part, to people from outside of it."

(4.10.)

9.10. That, following on a statement of the basic principles, the Department of Education should issue detailed practical guidelines which will assist teachers in dealing with controversial issues in the classroom. (4.10.)

9.11. That, in principle, the teaching of values through the medium of formal education should be continued and supported. (4.11.)

9.12. That, in laying down principles and guidelines to assist teachers in dealing with controversial issues in the classroom, the Department of Education should include guidelines for the handling of questions of values and sensitive social issues. (4.11.)

9.13. That book and poster materials featuring the concept of "role reversal" not be used. (4.14.)

9.14. That a separate programme of "Death Education" should not be considered for introduction into Queensland schools. (4.15.)

9.15. That in the primary Social Studies syllabus, the Department of Education establish a central core of "essential facts" for each grade and publish this as supplementary teachers' notes. (5.5.)

9.16. That the Social Studies syllabus and associated teachers' notes be made available for perusal by parents at each primary school and that copies also be made available for purchase by interested parents and others. (5.5.)

9.17. That a statutory committee be established to be known as the 'Primary School Studies Committee' to assume responsibility, subject to the Minister, for approving all courses of study in State Primary Schools and to perform such other functions as the Parliament shall from time to time determine. (5.6.)

9.18. That the Education Act be amended by inserting a new Part entitled *Primary Schools Studies Committee* with paragraphs as follows:—

*Constitution of the Committee.* (1) There shall be constituted a Committee to be called the "Primary School Studies Committee" which shall be administered by the Department of Education.

(2) The Committee shall consist of—

- (i) the Director-General of Education—*ex officio*, who shall be chairman;
- (ii) the Director of Primary Education—*ex officio*, who shall be deputy chairman and who shall act as chairman in the absence of the Director-General;
- (iii) the Staff Inspector, Primary Education, who shall be Secretary;

- (iv) six persons concerned with the administration of education, consisting of—

five nominees of the Director-General of Education, of whom one shall be a person concerned with the administration of Secondary Education, one concerned with the administration of Pre-school Education, one concerned with the administration of Special Education, one concerned with curriculum development, and one a principal of a State Primary School; one nominee of the State Director of Catholic Education;

- (v) three persons nominated by the Minister, each of whom is on the staff of a primary school and one of whom shall be a principal;
- (vi) three persons nominated by the Minister who are on the staff of institutions engaged in teacher education, one of whom is a member of a country college of advanced education;
- (vii) two nominees of the Queensland Institute of Senior Education Officers who shall be Inspectors of Schools;
- (viii) two nominees of the Queensland Teachers Union, each of whom is on the staff of a primary school and one of whom shall be a principal;
- (ix) one nominee of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, being a primary teacher in a non-government school;
- (x) three persons nominated by the Minister who are representative of community interests, one of whom is to be concerned with commerce and industry, and two of whom are to be parents appointed as such.

(3) The Director-General shall have power to order the attendance of any member or members of his department at meetings of the Committee; persons directed to attend under this subsection may take part in deliberations of the Committee but shall not have the right to vote.

(4) The provisions of Part VIII of this Act shall apply to the Committee as if it were a "Board" constituted under this Act.

(5) The members of the Committee, determined in accordance with this Act, shall be appointed by the Governor in Council by notification published in the *Gazette*.

(5.7.)

9.19. That the functions and powers of the Committee be as follows:—

*Functions and powers of Committee.* (1) The functions and powers of the Primary School Studies Committee shall be—

- (a) to advise the Minister on matters relating to primary education, having regard to the requirements of a sound and progressive elementary education and the needs of students taking into account their age, ability and aptitude.
- (b) Subject to the Minister—
- (i) to approve courses of study for use in State Primary Schools;
  - (ii) to appoint syllabus committees and such other committees as it considers necessary to assist it in the performance of its functions;
  - (iii) to confer and collaborate with appropriate educational bodies in the performance of the Committee's functions and the exercise of its powers and authorities;
  - (iv) to promote the participation of teachers in the State in formulating and implementing, by such methods as the Committee determines, the policies of the Committee;
  - (v) to frame regulations on matters concerning the functions of the Committee for submission to the Governor-in-Council;
  - (vi) to furnish to the Minister as soon as practicable but not more than three months after 31st December in each year a report on the operations of the Committee during that year;
- (c) to perform such other functions as the Governor-in-Council may from time to time determine.

(2) The Committee shall have and may exercise such powers and authorities as the Governor in Council by Order in Council prescribes and so far as not prescribed as are necessary for the performance by it of its functions under this Act.

(5.8.)

9.20. That the Department of Education review its procedures for monitoring actual time allocated to the various subject areas. (5.10.)

9.21. That there is no reason to recommend the reintroduction of M.A.C.O.S. into Queensland Schools. (5.13.)

9.22. That the present policy of the Department of Education, to offer both eclectic courses in social studies and courses based on the traditional academic disciplines be continued and supported. (6.1.)

9.23. That no social education course be introduced into a State High School as a "School Subject" until such a course has been submitted to the Board of Secondary School Studies for their recommendation, and approved by the Minister. (6.4.)

9.24. That the Minister be empowered to refer to any "School Subject" to the Board of Secondary School Studies for their recommendation. (6.4.)

9.25. That the Education Act be amended to include the following:—

*High School Advisory Councils.* (1) The Principal of each State High School is expected to convene an advisory committee to be known as "The (Name) High School Advisory Council".

(2) The Council shall consist of—

- (i) The School Principal—*ex officio*, who shall be chairman;
- (ii) The Deputy Principal—*ex officio*, or where none is appointed, a senior teacher nominated by the Principal, who shall be deputy chairman;
- (iii) The Senior Mistress—*ex officio*, or where none is appointed, a senior female teacher nominated by the Principal;
- (iv) Two members of the school staff nominated by the Principal;
- (v) Two members of the teaching staff elected by the teachers;
- (vi) Four parents of children currently enrolled in the school elected by the parents of children currently enrolled in the school, provided that both parents of any child shall not be eligible to serve on the council at any one time;
- (vii) Two senior students of the school elected by the senior students of the school;

(3) The Principal may, with the prior concurrence of the Director of Secondary Education, vary the composition of the council to suit unusual local circumstances.

(6.7.)

9.26. That the functions of the Council be specified in the Education Act as follows:—

*Functions of the Council.* (1) The role of the council shall be purely advisory. A council shall not have the power to direct the Principal nor to over-ride the decisions of the Principal and his staff.

(2) The functions of a council shall be to discuss and to advise the Principal of its views with regard to—

- (i) the school curriculum and associated resource material;
- (ii) the textbook list for each year;
- (iii) innovations for the school;
- (iv) school rules;
- (v) school uniform;
- (vi) discipline problems referred to the council by the Principal;
- (vii) any other matters referred to the council by the Principal;
- (viii) any matter which a majority of the members present and voting shall determine should be placed on the agenda.

(6.8.)

9.27. That the Director-General of Education initiate dialogue with the Board of Secondary School Studies, with a view to agreeing formal procedures for having the appropriate Board of Secondary School Studies Subject Advisory Committee representatives on each Primary Standing Syllabus Committee and *vice versa*.

9.28. That the Department of Education establishes formal procedures to facilitate discussions on curriculum matters between secondary schools and primary schools in their catchment area. (6.9.)

9.29. That the findings of the *Report of the Review Committee of S.E.M.P. Materials* be accepted as an appropriate basis for selection of material by the classroom teacher. (6.14.)

9.30. That the restrictions on use which the Report recommends, be made mandatory for observance in State secondary schools and that all material classified as "Unsuitable for use in Queensland Schools" and all material which the Review Committee recommends for deletion, be permanently withdrawn.

9.31. That, subject to the stated restrictions, and to further recommendations, the S.E.M.P. material reviewed and found suitable by the Director-General's Committee, be approved for use in Queensland schools. (6.14.)

9.32. That additional material and any revised versions of S.E.M.P. material which may be produced from time to time, should not be permitted to be used in Queensland State secondary schools until they have been examined by a Review Committee and the recommendations of that Committee have been endorsed by the Minister acting on the advice of the Director-General of Education. (6.14.)

9.33. That the principles for handling controversial issues in Queensland schools which we have proposed for incorporation in Education Regulations, and the associated guidelines for teachers, be promulgated before the S.E.M.P. material is released for use in State secondary schools. (6.15.)

9.34. That the Department of Education prepares a separate Queensland Handbook to accompany the S.E.M.P. material, which all teachers are to be required to study before using the material and which all teachers should read regardless. (6.16.)

9.35. That the formation of a special permanent committee to maintain an overview of resource material for use in Social Education programmes, should not be considered at this time. (6.17.)

9.36. That the principle of forming "special purpose" review committees—similar to that formed to review and report on the S.E.M.P. material—and which are formed to review specific resource packages intended for possible state-wide use, should be continued and supported. (6.17.)

9.37. That the right of entry guaranteed to accredited representatives of religious bodies be continued and supported. (7.4.)

9.38. That the provision for Bible lessons in the primary school be continued and supported. (7.7.)

9.39. That consideration be given to introducing in the secondary school, a scripture-based course, e.g. "Biblical Studies", at least in the years 8 to 10. (7.8.)

9.40. That wherever possible, teachers who are willing to do so be encouraged to gain accreditation and to take their part in the Religious Education programme on behalf of their own Churches. (7.14.)

9.41. That the Health and Physical Education programme, with appropriate emphases, be continued and supported in both the primary and secondary schools. (8.2.)

9.42. That the importance of balanced diet be given due prominence in the Health and Physical Education Syllabus. (8.3.)

9.43. That, in future curriculum planning, the need for community awareness of, and a responsible approach to, medical and hospital services, be emphasized within the secondary school health and physical education programme. (8.4.)

9.44. That, in principle, drug, alcohol and smoking education form part of the secondary school health and physical education programme. (8.5.)

9.45. That in view of the many schools which have installed swimming pools and the large number of other opportunities for participation in swimming and water sports, by students, it should be mandatory for all schools to ensure that all children have reached an acceptable standards of water safety by the end of Year 2. (8.6.)

9.46. That, where necessary, additional resources be made available to ensure that all children throughout the State receive adequate training in water safety. (8.6.)

9.47. That the Department of Education and other Educational Authorities should progress towards mandatory completion by all students of the Queensland Road Safety Council theoretical Learner-Driver course prior to their leaving school. (8.7.)

9.48. That urgent consideration be given to including in the curriculum for all levels of education up to and including year 10, a unit of road safety education, which would utilize the Teachers' Guides and resource kits which are developed from time to time by the Queensland Road Safety Council. (8.7.)

9.49. That general domestic, electrical and industrial safety be given due emphasis at appropriate stages of the curriculum. (8.8.)

9.50. That, as part of this emphasis, consideration be given to including appropriate levels of training in first aid in the Health and Physical Education programmes, both in the primary and in the secondary schools. (8.8.)

M. J. AHERN, Chairman.

Queensland Legislative Assembly.  
15th March, 1979.



Pages 21-27  
were missing at  
time of Digitisation.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON MATERIALS REVIEWED

The following is an explanation of categories used.

- (1) *Suitable for all years*—used for material which is suitable for use with students from Years 8 to 12.
- (2) *Suitable for all years with certain deletions*—used for material most of which is suitable for use with students from Years 8 to 12 but which contains sections which are considered unsuitable.
- (3) *Suitable for Years 11 and 12 only*—used for material considered unsuitable for use with students in Years 8 to 10 but suitable for older students.
- (4) *Suitable for Years 11 and 12 only with certain deletions*—used for material most of which would be suitable for student use in Years 11 and 12. This material is considered unsuitable for student use in Years 8 to 10 and contains some sections which are considered to be unsuitable also for student use in Years 11 to 12.
- (5) *Unsuitable for use in Queensland schools*—used for material considered unsuitable for student use in any year.

	Suitable for all Years	Suitable for all Years with Certain Deletions	Suitable for Years 11 to 12 only	Suitable for Years 11 to 12 with Certain Deletions	Unsuitable for use in Queensland Schools
<b>A. Community Study—</b>					
1. Community Evolution .. .. .	●				
2. Community Growth .. .. .	●				
3. Decision .. .. .	●				
4. Noise .. .. .	●				
5. Community Health .. .. .	●				
6. Community Disaster .. .. .	●				
7. Newcomton .. .. .	●				
8. Views of Community .. .. .	●				
9. Road Toll .. .. .	●				
10. Social Survey .. .. .	●				
<b>B. The Consumer in Society—</b>					
1. Consumer in Society—Case Studies ..	●				
2. Alternatives to Consumerism .. ..			●		
3. Dollar Decisions .. .. .	●				
4. Poverty in Australia .. .. .	●				
<b>C. Decision-Making and Government—</b>					
1. Paradise Island .. .. .	●				
2. Decisions Decisions } Unavailable					
3. The Choice is Yours } for perusal					
<b>D. Family—</b>					
1. Case Studies .. .. .	●				
2. What is Family? .. .. .	●				
3. Friendship and Courtship .. ..					●
4. Marriage and Being Together .. ..			●		
5. Children .. .. .		●			
6. Work .. .. .		●			
7. Breakdown .. .. .					●
8. Alternatives .. .. .				●	
9. Family and the Media .. .. .		●			
<b>E. People and Change—</b> Materials from this section are still under revision prior to final publication					
<b>F. Race and Ethnic Relations—</b>					
1. Different Things to Different People ..		●			
2. Aborigines and Europeans .. ..				●	
3. Australia—A Multi-Cultural Society ..				●	

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON MATERIALS REVIEWED—continued

	Suitable for all Years	Suitable for all Years with Certain Deletions	Suitable for Years 11 to 12 only	Suitable for Years 11 to 12 with Certain Deletions	Unsuitable for use in Queensland Schools
<i>Social Control and Conflict—</i>					
1. For Starters .. .. .		•			
2. Gearing Up .. .. .	•				
3. It's on the House .. .. .	•				
All other materials in this section are still under revision prior to final publication					
<i>Urbanism—</i>					
1. People and the City .. .. .		•			
2. People and Shelter .. .. .	•				
3. People and Planning .. .. .	•				
<i>Films; Why Can't They Be Like We Were—</i>					
1. Susan .. .. .					•
2. Gary .. .. .					•
3. Greg .. .. .	•				
4. Amy .. .. .			•		
5. Kathy & Tracey .. .. .	•				
6. Craig & Steve .. .. .					•
7. Robin .. .. .			•		
8. Rui .. .. .	•				
9. Mick .. .. .					•
10. Niki .. .. .			•		

**FINAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**ON EDUCATION**  
**IN QUEENSLAND**

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# EXTRACTS FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION OF THE FORTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS No. 4—TUESDAY, 4th APRIL, 1978.

13. SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION—Mr. Ahern moved, pursuant to notice,—

- (1) That this House do appoint a Select Committee to inquire into, report upon and make recommendations in relation to the system of education in Queensland and the extent to which it meets the expectations of students, parents and the community and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, with particular reference to the following matters:—
  - (a) the efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education;
  - (b) appropriate emphasis in primary education between basic education and other activities;
  - (c) adequate technical and further education to meet today's industry needs;
  - (d) a review of the decision making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
  - (e) adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary students;
  - (f) the need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them and the administrative machinery for implementing them;
  - (g) the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organisations concerning any aspect of education; and
  - (h) any other matter pertaining to the matters for inquiry, report and recommendation as aforesaid;
- (2) That the Committee consist of Messrs. W. D. Hewitt, L. Powell, C. J. Miller, E. F. Shaw and the mover;
- (3) That the Committee have power to appoint persons possessing special expertise and experience in the field of education to assist it in an advisory capacity in its meetings and deliberations;
- (4) That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records unless otherwise determined by the House in any particular case, save, however, that a Minister of the Crown or any officer of the Public Service shall not be obliged to provide information, oral or written, which has been—
  - (a) certified by a Crown Law Officer to be information which, if it were sought in a Court, would be a proper matter in respect of which to claim Crown privilege; or
  - (b) certified by the responsible Minister, with the approval of the Ministers of the Crown in Cabinet assembled, to be information such that its disclosure would be against the public interest;
- (5) That the Committee have leave to sit during any adjournment of the House notwithstanding that such adjournment exceeds seven days;
- (6) That the Committee may sit during the sitting of the House;
- (7) That the Committee may sit outside the precincts of the House and may adjourn from place to place;
- (8) That the Committee report to the House at the conclusion of the work undertaken by it pursuant to the provisions of this motion;
- (9) That the foregoing provisions of this motion, so far as they may be inconsistent with the Standing Orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders.

# PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

## FINAL REPORT

### SECTION 1—INTRODUCTION

1.1. On Tuesday, 4th April, 1978, Mr M. J. Ahern, M.L.A., Member for Landsborough, moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into, report upon and make recommendations in relation to the system of education in Queensland and the extent to which it meets the expectations of students, parents and the community. The terms of reference for the Select Committee are set out as Item 13 in Votes and Proceedings No. 4 of the First Session of the Forty-Second Parliament, a copy of which forms the preface to this Report. A copy of the speech delivered by Mr Ahern introducing the motion to set up the Select Committee on Education, and setting out the background to the proposal to institute an inquiry, is re-printed as Appendix "A" to this Report. The debate which followed is recorded in Queensland Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) for Tuesday, 4th April, 1978. The motion received support from Members of all parties, and it was agreed that the Committee consist of Mr M. J. Ahern, National Party of Australia, Member for Landsborough; Mr W. D. Hewitt, Liberal Party of Australia, Member for Greenslopes; Mr C. J. Miller, Liberal Party of Australia, Member for Ithaca; Mr L. W. Powell, National Party of Australia, Member for Isis; and Mr E. F. Shaw, Australian Labor Party, Member for Wynnum.

1.2. The first meeting of the Select Committee was held in the Government Whip's Room, Parliament House, Brisbane, at 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 6th April, 1978, and elected Mr M. J. Ahern, M.L.A., as Chairman. Included in the terms of reference was a provision "That the Committee have power to appoint persons possessing special expertise and experience in the field of education to assist it in an advisory capacity in its meetings and deliberations;". At the first meeting, the Select Committee resolved that an Advisory Panel be appointed and that Dr Rupert Goodman, of the University of Queensland; Mr Peter Krebs, then Headmaster of St. Paul's School, Bald Hills, now retired; Mr Kevin O'Connor, then Principal of Wavelt State High School, now Inspector of Schools; and, Mrs Jan Herron, parent representative; be invited to serve. The qualifications and experience of the members proposed for the Advisory Panel were reported to the Parliament by Mr Ahern in his speech introducing the motion to set up the Inquiry, and the Committee is pleased to report that all these people accepted the invitation to serve on the Panel.

1.3. The appointment of an Advisory Panel to a Parliamentary Select Committee is an approach which has not previously been adopted in Queensland. However, it is a well established practice of Select Committees of other Parliaments operating within the Westminster system. Committees are frequently empowered to appoint persons with specialist knowledge to assist them in their enquiries, either to supply information which is readily available, or to elucidate matters of complexity within the Committee's order of reference. In modern practice, such advisors normally attend not only meetings of the Committee at which oral evidence is taken; but also meetings at which the Committee deliberates, although they do not examine witnesses or take part in voting. Our Advisory Panel sat with the Committee at the public hearings held in Brisbane and throughout the State, and during most of our deliberative sessions. This procedure has been an unqualified success, and we commend this approach to future Select Committees. Without the advice and guidance of the Panel, particularly on technical matters, the work of the Select Committee would have been immeasurably more difficult, and we wish to express our gratitude to all the members of the Panel for their continued support and advice throughout the Inquiry.

1.4. To assist the Select Committee in its work, Mr Speaker agreed to the appointment of a small staff drawn from the staff of Parliament House. Mr Ted Newton, an official of the Parliament, was appointed Secretary to the Committee. Mr John Barnes of the Parliamentary Library Research Staff was seconded to the Select Committee as Research Officer, and Mrs Annette Graham was appointed Committee Stenographer. In December, 1979, Mrs Graham left to take up other employment and her duties were carried out initially by Miss Claire Bauer, and later by Miss Gloria Cawthorne. The Chairman and Members of the Select Committee wish to place on record their appreciation of the hard work and dedication of the Committee staff who approached the task of organizing the very large volume of submissions and the drafting and re-drafting of

the Committee reports in a highly professional manner. The successful outcome of this Inquiry is due, in no small part, to their patient and untiring efforts. We also wish to thank Mrs Estelle Winkler and Miss Denise Howell for their assistance in the typing of the final report.

1.5. In the debate in the Legislative Assembly pursuant to the motion to establish the Select Committee, the Minister for Education, the Honourable V. J. Bird, M.L.A., welcomed the Inquiry on behalf of himself and his officers. The Committee gratefully acknowledges the assistance provided by the Minister and his officers who prepared a number of background papers for the Committee which proved to be invaluable. Their openness and helpfulness assisted us greatly. We also wish to place on record our appreciation of the contribution of the many organizations and individuals who made submissions to the Inquiry. The overwhelming response of the public at large to our request for submissions is indicative of the importance which the people of Queensland attach to education, which augurs well for the future. We also wish to express our appreciation of the help and co-operation we received from Mr S. R. Hampson, the Government Printer, Mr R. G. Giles, the Deputy Government Printer, and the staff of the Government Printing Office, in the printing and publication of our reports. They cheerfully coped with short notice and last-minute changes to produce quality publications on time.

1.6. The terms of reference given to the Select Committee were extremely broad and we were fortunate that the Parliament did not place a time constraint on our work. Had it done so, the task of planning our work would have been considerably more difficult, and a restricted time frame would have prevented us from thoroughly sifting the very large volume of evidence we received, and from meeting the wide cross-section of the Queensland population that we were in fact able to reach. The Select Committee received submissions from 823 organizations and groups, and 1 124 individuals whose names are listed in Appendix "B", and a number of other submissions from persons who requested and were granted anonymity. In addition, we received 1 398 pro-forma submissions; the groups and organizations sponsoring those submissions are also listed in Appendix "B". In addition, the Select Committee has read a considerable volume of correspondence from individuals and organizations throughout the currency of the Inquiry which was received after the official closing date for submissions, and has therefore not been formally classified as evidence, but which has been given careful consideration. The text of the advertisement which the Committee placed in all provincial newspapers in Queensland and major metropolitan newspapers throughout Australia, seeking submissions, was incorporated in Hansard and is included in the introductory speech by Mr M. J. Ahern, M.L.A., included as Appendix "A" to this Report.

1.7. A series of public hearings were held in the Legislative Assembly Chamber, Parliament House, Brisbane, during the period June to October, 1978. Those who appeared did so by invitation, and their names and the names of the groups or organizations which they represented are listed at Appendix "C" to this Report. There were 89 appearances, and a total of 178 persons gave evidence. It would not have been practicable to invite all those who expressed a willingness to appear to do so. Every effort was made, however, to interview a representative cross-section of those who made submissions, and the Select Committee wishes to express its appreciation to all those who volunteered to make a personal appearance before the Committee. A number of hearings and public meetings, both formal and informal, were held by the Committee at 28 centres outside Brisbane and, as far as possible, audio cassette recordings were made of the proceedings. The names of 52 organizations and 138 individuals who gave evidence at these hearings, and who could be identified from the tapes, are listed at Appendix "C". The Select Committee believes that the holding of hearings outside Brisbane was an important and valuable exercise, and a notable feature of these proceedings was a hearing conducted over the radio using the facilities of the School of the Air, Mount Isa. This enabled many individuals on isolated stations to discuss their educational needs with members of the Select Committee, and gave the members of the Committee a valuable insight into the problems of educating isolated children. The recordings made of the hearings outside Brisbane were taken by

members of the Committee on small, battery operated cassette recorders. With benefit of hindsight, and for the guidance of future Select Committees, we would suggest that in future, more powerful recording equipment be used, and that technical assistance be provided to operate the equipment, and make a written record of the details of those giving evidence. Individual members of the Select Committee also attended a number of public meetings organized by other agencies, and visited a wide cross-section of educational establishments throughout the State.

1.8. It was represented to us by the Minister for Education that there were certain matters on which he would appreciate an early expression of the views of the Select Committee, and it was therefore resolved to utilize the powers available to Select Committees under section 205 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly to present Interim Reports to the House on selected issues. It was initially our intention to produce only two Interim Reports on matters which had been referred to by the Minister and which the Select Committee believed required urgent consideration. However, following a strong positive response from the community to our first two reports, it was resolved to present further Interim Reports on key areas in education as the Committee progressively formulated its views, rather than the more common practice of accumulating all recommendations for inclusion in the Final Report. Our informal research strongly suggests that the issue of shorter reports, spread over a period of months, has resulted in those reports being read more thoroughly and by a far wider cross-section of the community than would have been the case had all matters been reserved for a larger, and hence less easily digestible, volume. The Select Committee also broke new ground in that the Committee staff posted copies of each report to the State Library, and to municipal libraries throughout the State

immediately it was tabled, so that it should be available to all sections of the community. This procedure has been appreciated by the public, and there is clear evidence that, as a result, our reports have been far more widely read than most parliamentary papers. We also despatched copies of the reports to country newspapers throughout the State, and we wish to express our appreciation to the editors of those newspapers as well as to the editors of the metropolitan dailies and the radio and television news media, for their co-operation in giving the work of the Committee widespread publicity.

1.9. Whilst the Select Committee reserved the right to make a more extensive reference to any matters discussed in its Interim Reports when presenting its Final Report to the Parliament, each Interim Report is, in itself, a definitive paper. Hence, our report to Parliament consists of this, the Final Report, together with our six Interim Reports which should be treated as a single entity. The Interim Reports published by the Select Committee are as follows:—

First Interim Report—Composition and Functions of the Board of Secondary School Studies and Secondary School Assessment—5th December, 1978;

Second Interim Report—The Aims of our Schools and the Future of Social Education—27th March, 1979;

Third Interim Report—Literacy and Numeracy—24th May, 1979;

Fourth Interim Report—Human Relationships—7th June, 1979;

Fifth Interim Report—Isolated Children and Isolated Schools—9th August, 1979;

Sixth Interim Report—Post-Secondary Education—4th October, 1979.

## SECTION 2—A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND AND THE BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT INQUIRY

2.1. The Select Committee has been invested by the Parliament with an extensive mandate to inquire into all aspects of education in Queensland. Such a wide-ranging investigation into the structure of education in all its aspects has not been attempted since the Royal Commission on Education in 1875. It is relevant, therefore, to sketch briefly the historical development of education in our State, to look briefly at the forces which have shaped its development, and to examine the major assumptions upon which the structure has been built, in order to place the present Inquiry into its proper historical context.

2.2. In the period 1824 to 1842, Moreton Bay was a penal settlement for the worst of the convicts from the Colony of New South Wales. Governors of the New South Wales Colony had been ordered to make provision for education, but Moreton Bay was a long way from Sydney, and in the early days, the settlement had neither a clergyman nor a schoolmaster. It is probable that the first teacher was one Esther Roberts, wife of the Government storekeeper, who set up a school in a little bark hut for the education of eight boys and eight girls, children of the soldier guards. When Mrs Roberts moved on, there was a succession of teachers and by 1831, the school population had risen to 43—seven children of convicts, seven of the civil establishment, and 29 from the military. Even the Commandant's children joined the school. These years contributed little to Queensland's education system. At best, they are a reminder that even in the midst of degradation, there will always be a few people who believe that the education of children is important for the future of Society.

2.3. From free settlement in 1842 until separation in 1859, Queensland was a part of New South Wales and, consequently, the educational policies were determined in Sydney. There was a conflict between those who believed that education was a matter for the Churches, and those who considered it to be the responsibility of government. In June, 1844, Mr Robert Lowe, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke, carried a resolution in the Legislative Council appointing a Select Committee to inquire into and report upon the state of education in the Colony, and to devise means of placing the education of youth upon a basis suited to the wants and wishes of the community. The Select Committee reported that it was convinced of the superiority of a general over a denominational system, and recommended that one uniform system be established for the whole of the Colony. However, the ecclesiastical authorities were still strong enough to check any advance of the national system recommended by the Select Committee. Nevertheless, they agreed to accept a compromise whereby two separate boards were created, the Denominational Schools Board for the denominational schools and the National Board for the national schools. The compromise solution did little to solve the education problem. Each of these two educational bodies

was, of necessity, the rival of the other and, in numerous instances, competed for the same pupils. The progress of the one was secured at the expense of the other; and, instead of mutual help and co-operation in the important work of education, jealousy of each other's success, and division and consequent waste of means, were the inevitable results. In Queensland, the National Board made little progress and, at the time of separation, Queensland inherited only three national schools.

2.4. From the date of its separation from New South Wales on 10th December, 1859, up to 30th September, 1860, primary education in Queensland was under the control of a Board of National Education, appointed by the Governor in Council. "The Education Act of 1860" placed the control of primary education in the hands of a Board of General Education, and a further Act passed in the same year provided for the establishment of Grammar Schools which were to be under the control of trustees. The purpose of the Board of General Education, which consisted of five members presided over by a Minister of the Crown, was to superintend "... the formation and management of primary schools within the Colony of Queensland and for the purpose of administering such sums of money as may be voted by Parliament together with such other funds as may in any manner be or become disposable by them, on account of primary education ...".

The Board was given power to assist any primary school that was submitted to its supervision and inspection and which conformed to its rules and by-laws. The Act required the Board to "... cause all schools receiving aid under this Act to be periodically visited by paid inspectors ...". The Board was also authorized to grant exhibitions to scholars from primary schools tenable at one or other of the grammar schools of the Colony on the basis of competitive examination. However, the Royal Commission of 1875 was to report that little practical effect had been given to this provision of the Act until July, 1873, when competitive examinations were held in Brisbane and Ipswich for nominations to a grammar school for three years, at the expense of the Board. A further provision of the Act empowered the Board to devote a portion of the funds at its disposal to assistance of the establishment of normal or training schools (for the training of teachers) and industrial schools, either in connection with any other primary school or otherwise. The Royal Commission of 1875 also found that few teachers had been trained in the Queensland schools. Further, it recommended "... for the older children in attendance at the primary schools, a course of technical instruction having an elementary scientific basis ...". It would seem, therefore, that the Board of General Education had found itself unable to give significant effect to the latter two provisions.



2.5. The question of State aid to denominational schools continued to cause problems for the government of the day. Although the Education Act included provision for assistance to "any primary school", the regulations were such that the schools not owned by the Board (known as non-vested schools) could not be conducted as denominational schools. The Catholic schools decided to withdraw from the Board, renounce the government grant, and remain independent. However, the Anglican supporters of the denominational system petitioned the Parliament for continued assistance, and a Select Committee appointed in 1861 to investigate the matter, found that the "Board . . . had misconstrued the intentions and spirit of the Legislature in supposing that the . . . Act . . . precluded them from granting assistance to Primary Schools belonging to denominational bodies". The Board was persuaded to change its attitude, and in 1863, the Catholic schools also came into the scheme. Nevertheless, public pressure for the secularization of public education continued, and in 1875, the Royal Commission was to report that "So far as the evidence before us enables us to offer an opinion, the primary schools, both vested and non-vested, with the exception of the Roman Catholic non-vested schools, have been allowed by the clergy of the several denominations to become secular in the sense, that for the years past, little or no formal religious instruction has been given in them." They went on to express the opinion " . . . that the State is neither entitled nor required to undertake the teaching of the distinctive doctrines of any sect or to contribute funds for that purpose." Following this recommendation, "The State Education Act of 1875" provided that non-vested schools then receiving aid would continue to receive it until 31st December, 1880, but from then on, that no aid should be given from the moneys of the State " . . . to any primary school not being a state school or to the teachers in any such primary school."

2.6. The Board of General Education, in its Report for the year 1867, indicated that there was " . . . a growing idea that the education in the Primary School ought to be obtainable, as a matter of right, without any payment at all." They went on to say that " . . . the payment of a fee or the expectation of payment lessens the aggregate number of pupils and greatly increases irregularity in the attendance of those who do enter the schools." The early 1860's had been a period of economic depression in Queensland, but by 1868, when Charles Lilley became Premier, State finances had been boosted by recent gold discoveries, and he was able to announce that from the beginning of 1870, all fees in Board schools would be abolished, and that books and other school requisites would be supplied by the Government. Queensland thus became the first Australian State to introduce free education. The 1875 Royal Commission had a hard look at the question of free education. The Report stated that:—

"The evidence in regard to the consequences of making primary education free, fully satisfies us that the establishment of free education has been beneficial to the colony at large. Of the gentlemen engaged in the work of instruction, whom we have examined, a few have questioned the advisability of the system; but those of them that have been brought into direct contact with it, have unanimously pronounced in its favour. It has greatly added to the aggregate attendance in the schools, and has secured the presence at school of many children who would otherwise never have received any instruction at all . . .".

While the Commission endorsed the principle of free education and recommended that the State assume responsibility for additions and repairs to existing schools, it also reaffirmed the principle that the local community should contribute towards the cost of establishing any new schools. However, Commissioners Lilley and Douglas dissented from this recommendation. They argued that the poverty of a locality afforded cogent reasons for the foundation of schools of the best class and for greater urgency to reach such areas with the means of education. "Free education," they said, "is in no sense a gift to the people, it is the expenditure in a particular form by persons whom they authorise, of a portion of the public moneys for the common benefit of the people from which it is taken in the shape of taxation . . .".

2.7. Another fundamental principle of State education considered by the 1875 Royal Commission was that of compulsory attendance. The Commissioners found that education was valued by the great majority of the people of the Colony and that few children who were within reach of a school were allowed to grow up in ignorance. However, they also concluded on the evidence that " . . . as regards a small proportion of the parents, who will not voluntarily send their children to school, some system of compulsion is necessary . . .". The Commission, therefore, recommended that the principle of compulsion be embodied in the Education Act in respect of all children who lived within a distance of two miles by road from a State school. It was argued that even the existence of a compulsory law might be sufficient in some cases, but it would be very hard to police it in Queensland's widely scattered settlements. For this latter reason, it was further recommended " . . . that

the compulsory law shall not be operative in any district until after the proclamation of the District by the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, nor be enforced in any instance without the express direction of the Education Department; . . .". The Government accepted the advice of the Commissioners and inserted provision for compulsory education in the Act, but it was not proclaimed until 11th April, 1900, 25 years later.

2.8. As already noted, the 1875 Education Act discontinued aid to non-vested schools. It also endorsed the principle of secular education in State schools, but subsequent regulations of the Department permitted religious teaching on school premises out of school hours. This compromise was not acceptable to the Roman Catholic Church, nor to the Church of England, and there was continuing pressure from them to have the secular system amended. In 1890, The Bible in State Schools League was established to promote bible teaching in State schools during school hours. The League pressed for a referendum on the matter, and long public and political debates ensued until, in 1908, the Government passed The Religious Instruction in State Schools Referendum Act. The Referendum was held on 13th April, 1910, and although it resulted in only a 53 per cent majority vote for the inclusion of religious teaching in State schools during school hours, later that year the legislation was amended, "The State Education Acts Amendment Act of 1910" providing that " . . . instruction shall . . . be given in the primary schools during school hours in selected Bible lessons from a separate reading book to be provided for the purpose; but such instruction shall not include any teaching in the distinctive tenets or doctrine of any religious society or denomination." It also provided for access by ministers of religion to children in primary schools who were members of their denomination for the purpose of giving religious instruction during school hours. The Act also safeguarded the right of parents or guardians to withdraw their children from religious instruction.

2.9. A further important recommendation by the Royal Commission which was adopted concerned the control of education. The Commissioners believed that the total amount of money being allocated by Parliament for education had increased so much that the existing Board system should be abandoned. They recommended the formation of a State Department of Education under a Minister responsible to Parliament. It was argued that if the recommendation were to be adopted " . . . the educational work of the colony will be under the direct guidance of a single responsible head; and the administration of the department may be expected to be vigorous, systematic, and consistent." The Act of 1875 provided that "It shall be lawful for the Governor to appoint from time to time some one of the responsible Ministers of the Crown to be Secretary for Public Instruction." It further provided for the creation of a Department of the Public Service to be called the Department of Public Instruction. This established the important principle of ministerial control of publicly funded education. In view of current debate with respect to the appropriate level of government control over education, it is of interest to note the dissenting comments made by Commissioner Hockings in 1875. He said:—

"The administration of the Department of Education should be preserved as free as possible from political influence and religious bias, and I think that this result could be better secured by the appointment of a small Board of paid Commissioners presided over by a responsible Minister, than by the method recommended in the Report.

The political influences to which succeeding Ministers would be exposed under the latter system would in my opinion lead to an extravagant multiplication of school buildings in the electorates represented by them, and this, combined with the demands of political supporters in the House, would be likely to cause an embarrassing and wasteful expenditure; and I believe that a small Board of paid Commissioners, being non-political, would not only tend to protect the colony against this danger, but would strengthen the hands of the Minister; and materially assist him in the wise and economical administration of the Department."

2.10. Also of interest in the context of current controversies regarding what should be taught in schools, is the fact that "The State Education Act of 1875" laid down the subjects which were to be taught in primary schools. They were:—

Reading	Elementary Mechanics
Writing	Object Lessons
Arithmetic	Drill and Gymnastics
English Grammar	Vocal Music
Geography	And (in the case of girls) sewing and needlework
History	

It can be seen that the curriculum was broadly based and not confined merely to Reading, Writing and Arithmetic as some people submitting evidence to the present Select Committee appear to believe. The comments on the curriculum

by J. G. Anderson, a District Inspector for Brisbane, in the final report of the Board of General Education on ceasing its functions at the end of 1875, are of particular interest. He said:—

"The State Education Act of 1875 has cut Latin and Mathematics out of the old curriculum of studies. I see no reason to regret it; the other prescribed subjects will sufficiently occupy all the time of the pupils during their short stay at school; the attainments in these subjects have seldom been found to be more than an unimportant smattering; . . . But the omission of drawing from the course of lessons is a serious loss . . . drawing is of greater utility to lads and girls who are to earn their living by the labor of their hands than singing, which however has been made compulsory . . ."

2.11. "The State Education Act of 1875" was a major milestone in the history of Queensland education. It continued in being with comparatively minor amendments until 1964, and thus provided the framework around which our education system was to be developed for almost a century. The expansion in the education system which had taken place during the 16 years 1860 to 1875 under the direction of the Board of General Education had been dramatic. In 1860, the Board controlled four schools with 10 teachers and an aggregate attendance of 493 pupils. By the end of 1875, this had risen to 230 schools with 674 teachers and an aggregate attendance of 33 634 pupils. The next 34 years to 1909 was a period of consolidation during which administrators grappled with the problems of implementation of the Act throughout the vast areas of the State. The number of schools administered continued to rise throughout the period; it had reached 621 by 1890, and 1008 by 1902. At the close of the year 1909, the Department was to report 1141 in operation. Annual enrolments were 73 275 in 1890, reached a peak of 109 293 in 1901, and declined slightly to 106 772 in 1909, by which time there were 1991 teachers and 530 pupil-teachers employed. The provision of school buildings was a costly undertaking, and the regulations which required local contributions changed with every Ministry. The need for an adequate supply of trained teachers was met in part by the pupil-teacher system, supplemented by the recruitment of trained teachers from Great Britain. The need for a training college for teachers was frequently pressed, but successive Governments were unwilling to undertake the expense while overseas recruitment was so readily available. In 1888, the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the general working of the Civil Service, expressed sympathy with the reasons advanced as to the necessity of such an institution, but said that they were reluctantly unable to recommend such a scheme as they were of the opinion that existing circumstances did not warrant the expenditure.

2.12. The Department of Public Instruction, under the control of J. G. Anderson, Under Secretary, and D. Ewart, General Inspector, developed a highly centralized system of controlling education throughout the State. This led to widespread dissatisfaction among teachers, and resulted in very high staff turnover. The Royal Commission on the Civil Service in 1888 made a scathing attack on the administration of the Department and top administrators. They found:—

"That the Under Secretary takes upon himself minor details which ought to be attended to by subordinates. He is thus prevented from giving that close attention to the more important matters of the department which an officer occupying such a responsible position should perform. The work of the office should be so arranged as to enable him to freely devote his energies and experiences to studying the methods and results of educational institutions throughout the world, to directing the operations of the professional branch of the service, and to administering that branch of the department more in accordance with advanced modern ideas."

They went on to say that although the administration of the Department was vested in the Minister, it seemed practically to be in the hands of the Under Secretary and the General Inspector, and that those officers dispensed with all advice and assistance in the general administration of the professional branch of the Service, exercising their administration in an arbitrary, capricious, and often unfeeling manner, " . . . and all in the name of the Minister, who seems to be a convenient medium for the exercise of most autocratic management. . . ."

2.13. Under Secretary Anderson was supported in the House by the then newly appointed Minister for Public Instruction, the Honourable A. H. Barlow, and by previous Ministers under whom he had served. He continued as Under Secretary until his retirement in 1904, when he was awarded the Imperial Service Order for his services to Queensland education. His final duty as Under Secretary was the preparation of the 1905 primary school syllabus which gave specific recognition to the place of Civics and Morals

in the primary school curriculum, and added Nature Study to the subjects for study. The new syllabus, it was said, was designed to provide a progressive course of instruction, and to give practical application to the principle of correlation of the subjects of study to make the self-activity of the pupil the basis of school instruction, to bring the work of the pupil into closer touch with his home and social surroundings, and to increase the influence of the school as an agent in the intellectual, moral and social development of the child.

2.14. There were then, as now, considerable difficulties in bringing an adequate level of education to the more remote areas of the State. The system of itinerant teachers was introduced in 1901, when a teacher was appointed to travel throughout the south-western parts of the State. In 1907, two additional teachers were appointed, one for the centre and one for the north, to try to reach the children of people unable to pay for tutors or governesses, or to send their children to schools to be educated. The scheme was apparently successful and much appreciated, and nine additional teachers were appointed from 1st January, 1909 " . . . so that each family may be visited at least four times a year, and the visit be of longer duration than could be arranged heretofore . . .". The staffing of schools in remote areas was also a problem, and in view of current controversies, it is worth quoting the following from the Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of the Secretary for Public Instruction for the year ended 31st December, 1909.

"The staffing of small Bush schools is becoming very difficult. In the past country girls used to country life and conditions could be readily obtained for such schools. A sufficiency of these girls is not now forthcoming. The reasons seem to be twofold; the number of these schools is rapidly increasing, and, owing to the spread of the dairying industry and to the flourishing condition of farming generally, country girls find it easy to obtain employment in these directions. The well-to-do dairy farmer can find employment for his daughters on the farm, and he is not now so anxious as he once was for his daughters to become teachers. It has thus become necessary in many cases to appoint town girls to small country schools. These girls press for employment, and are willing to take any vacancy to gain entrance to the Department. But the system is not altogether successful. Before appointing a teacher to a school, the Department makes full inquiry regarding accommodation, and does not send a teacher until an assurance is received that suitable accommodation is available. But the bush idea as to what is suitable accommodation differs very widely from that of the town; the town girls often prove to be too delicate blooms for the country life; they find the conditions of living too rough for them; the loneliness and isolation too great; they become heart-sick and home-sick, and send pathetic appeals to the Department for transfer. Yet the other side has to be considered; the men are doing the pioneering work of the State in opening up new country; their women-folk are sharing with them the hardships usually met with by first settlers; children are being reared, and the Department has a duty to perform in having these children educated. It is a duty which cannot be shirked."

2.15. The first 15 years of the 20th Century was a period of remarkable reform and progress in education in Queensland. The introduction of itinerant teachers in 1901 has already been mentioned. A start was made on the introduction of the Kindergarten system of teaching, and in 1909, the Kindergarten Mistress, Miss Agnew, was granted extended leave of absence to visit the United Kingdom, to visit the best of the kindergarten institutions and to gain an insight into the latest developments of this system. In 1909 also, a scheme was inaugurated to cope with Ophthalmia, and the Department, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health, prepared a scheme for the medical inspection of school children. Perhaps the most momentous event of 1909 was the establishment of the University of Queensland. In 1912, the State High School system was commenced, the school leaving age was raised from 12 to 14 years, a High School entrance exam was introduced, and a super-annuation scheme was commenced for teachers. In 1914, a teacher's college was opened, the Scholarship examination became a qualifying rather than a competitive examination, and the Primary School syllabus was revised.

2.16. There had been a long struggle to bring the benefits of university education within reach of Queensland students. "The University Act of 1870" empowered the Governor in Council to obtain authority from any university in Great Britain or Ireland to institute examinations in the Colony for matriculation and degrees in the Arts and Sciences. A few candidates did, in fact, take advantage of the Governor in Council regulations issued under this Act,

The Education Commission of 1874 reported:—"Our secondary schools will never do the educational work of which they are capable until they become component parts of a system vitalised by the controlling influence of a University ... If the future teachers of Queensland be brought into contact with the professors of a University, and be required to become members of such an institution, its liberal training will eventually permeate the whole educational system of the colony ... We therefore recommend the immediate foundation of a University with a fixed annual endowment." However, in the face of competing priorities, the proposal failed to win parliamentary support. In 1890, a Royal Commission was appointed to "Inquire Into the Best Means to be Adopted for the Purpose of Establishing and Maintaining an University in the Colony". The Commission concluded that "On economic grounds alone, then, the University would be profitable to the country; the waste in mining work alone through ignorance shows the economic value of knowledge. The Technical College in Brisbane has done and is doing some useful work, but its range of instruction, by reason of its means being too meagre, is not equal to the needs of the time in the way of scientific and practical culture." However, it was not until 1906 that Parliament agreed to consider a Bill for the establishment of the university, and the Act was not finally passed until November, 1909. The Government arranged for the foundation stone to be laid on 10th December, 1909, the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of Queensland as a separate colony.

2.17. The University Commission of 1891 also reported that "The present system of grammar schools bids fair to become by its great costliness a serious burden if further extended, as it may be almost without limit under our existing law. We have not advised the discontinuance of the present schools, but we think that in future a system of secondary schools more directly controlled as to their foundation and management by the State would be less expensive, and quite as effective in the education of the youth of the Colony." There was considerable controversy as to whether the State ought properly to enter directly into the provision of secondary education, and Ewart, the General Inspector of the Department of Public Instruction, was strongly opposed to free secondary education. In 1906, the Honourable A. H. Barlow, then Secretary for Public Instruction, proposed a plan for an integrated system of primary and secondary education in all centres of population, and the introduction of State High Schools in those centres not served by grammar schools. In 1910, the Honourable W. H. Barnes, Secretary for Public Instruction, in his annual report for the year ending 31st December, 1909, said:—"Now that the University has been established, the time is ripe for the creation of District High Schools. The necessity for these schools has been repeatedly urged by the Department, but for various reasons effect has not yet been given to this part of the Departmental policy." Finally, on 20th October, 1911, the Secretary for Public Instruction, the Honourable K. McD. Grant, moved that funds be granted for secondary education. He indicated that the government was considering establishing High Schools in those towns where there were no grammar schools. These schools would be free, at least 20 to 25 pupils would be required to start a school, and the schools would be attached to the Primary Schools or the technical colleges. Entry to these schools would be by way of a qualifying, but not competitive, examination. The State system of High Schools was inaugurated in February, 1912, when High Schools were opened in Warwick, Gympie, Bundaberg, Mount Morgan, Mackay, and Charters Towers. The curriculum for the schools was prepared in consultation with the university staff, and three courses of study were provided, each of four years' duration, being General, Commercial, and Domestic. The first two years of study were to be sufficiently common to all the courses that students would be able to proceed to any of the courses for the third and fourth years, the General course being designed to enable students to matriculate and proceed on to the university. By 1915, it was reported that "In small centres, where the prospective attendance is not sufficient to warrant separate High schools, but where an average of not less than 25 qualified pupils can be permanently obtained, high education to University Junior standard is provided by adding a 'top' to the existing State school. Such an arrangement has been made at Brisbane Central (Boys), Brisbane Central (Girls and Infants), Childers, Dalby, Gatton, Herberton, Pittsworth, and Roma." The annual enrolment at High Schools was 835, and the average attendance was 631.

2.18. The problem of technical and trade education also came under scrutiny. "The Technical Instruction Act of 1908" brought technical colleges under the control of the Department of Public Instruction. By 1910, a start had been made on the standardization of courses, and the payment of teachers re-organized on a regular salary basis. The Act provided for the establishment of technical colleges in Brisbane and in other parts of the Colony. Of particular interest, in the light of contemporary discussions, is the proviso for

the joint use of buildings by technical colleges and other sectors of the education system. In the Annual Report of the Department for 1913, the institution of trade classes for the benefit of apprentices and the establishment of a day preparatory trade school was proposed, and it was stated that the school would be established early in 1915. The Report continued:—"The Department hopes to make arrangements with industrial boards whereby the period of apprenticeship will be reduced proportionately to the time spent by the student in the day school, and the degree of efficiency attained by him." The War retarded the introduction of the trade scheme, and in 1915, the Department appointed a small committee of experts to review the situation and submit recommendations. This committee regarded the establishment of day trade training schools as imperative. They said that "... by the continuation of the boy under school conditions, advantages other than the training in a craft will accrue—he remains under discipline at a most important period in his career; his general education can be continued in certain special directions, and a training in citizenship is possible." It was recommended that a day trade school be established in Brisbane where new buildings for the Central Technical College, which included provision for trade training, had already been completed. It was also recommended that a day trade school be established at Ipswich "... where the demand for trained operatives for the Government railway workshops is sufficient to ensure absorption of the trained product ...", and also, that day trade schools should be established in other places when circumstances were "favourable". In 1915, there were 15 technical colleges in operation, namely Bowen, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Charters Towers, Gympie, Ipswich, Mackay, Maryborough, Mount Morgan, Rockhampton, Sandgate, Toowoomba, Townsville, and Warwick. It was proposed progressively to extend trade training to all technical colleges, and to provide classes in technical education in other centres where the construction of a college could not yet be justified. It was also decided to introduce itinerant technical teachers to extend the benefits of technical education to more remote areas of the State.

2.19. In the Sixth Interim Report of the Select Committee on Education in Queensland 1979, we reported (paragraph 4.8.) that a persistent theme in evidence presented to the Select Committee has been the difficulty students experience when trying to transfer between colleges of technical and further education, colleges of advanced education and universities. Specifically, many complaints have centred around the difficulties which students have experienced in obtaining credit for work already performed when they attempt to gain entry to a higher level course. It is therefore of particular interest to note the following statement from the Fortieth Report of the Secretary for Public Instruction for the year 1915 referring to evening courses at technical colleges. The Secretary said:—

"If the University decides to establish a degree in Commerce, it might be arranged that the College evening courses should lead up to the University commercial course, and that the work done in the College should get adequate recognition for University purposes. Such an arrangement would depend almost wholly upon the Senate, inasmuch as the degree requirements would be determined by the Senate, and the extent to which University recognition would be given to the College work would also have to be determined by the Senate. An understanding of the kind already exists in connection with the degree of Bachelor of Engineering, and if, in due course, the details can be satisfactorily adjusted, a similar reciprocal arrangement may be possible in regard to Commerce."

2.20. In 1915 also, the Department of Public Instruction had started to consider what part it might play in strengthening the economy in the post-war period. The Fortieth Report suggested that "... public education should not be permitted to suffer if it can in any way be avoided, inasmuch as education will be one of the main agencies through which war losses, apart from the losses of life, will be made good. ...". The Department also made the following "critical and analytical survey" of its position. It found that:—

- (a) The Department controls Primary education.
- (b) The Department largely, but not wholly, controls Technical education.
- (c) The University really controls Secondary education, inasmuch as the Junior, the Senior, and the University scholarship standards are prescribed by the University, and the curricula of the Secondary schools are determined and governed by the standards prescribed by the University.
- (d) The University is controlled by the Senate, and the courses of study in the University must, perforce, be determined mainly by the University staff."

2.21. The next 40 years from 1915 to 1950 was primarily a period of consolidation, during which the major effort was directed towards extending the benefits of the existing system to the more distant parts of the State and to a wider cross-section of the population. The philosophy of the period is well expressed in the Forty-Fifth Report of the Secretary for Public Instruction for the Year 1920:—

"The interpretation of the term 'State Education' is no longer confined so as to include provision only for the elementary instruction and training of children. Educational authorities have come to recognise that education has a life-long relationship with the various aspects of citizenship—physical, social, industrial, and political—and this conception steadily widens. Administrative energies are, therefore, being directed to the education of adolescents and adults. In this connection may be instanced the varied provision which has been made in Queensland for wider opportunities for secondary academic education, the multiplication of technical colleges and other continuation schools, the establishment of vocational classes and apprentice schools, and the extension of University activities for the benefit of external and non-matriculated students."

In 1917, special attention was given to the problem of adapting country schools to the needs of the rural population, and in that year, the first Rural School was established at Nambour. By 1926, Rural Schools had been established at Boonah, Home Hill, Clifton, Gordonvale, Murgon, Gayndah, Imbil, Beenleigh and Stanthorpe. School Project Clubs were introduced to cover a wide variety of work with pigs, calves, poultry, bees, milk and cream testing, forestry, and pasture work. The Agricultural College at Gatton was transferred to the control of the Department in 1923, and worked both as an agricultural college and a High School. In 1922, the Primary Correspondence School was started, and by the end of 1926, had a staff of 45 teachers and over 3 000 pupils enrolled. It should be noted that, at that time, the Primary Correspondence School was seen as an alternative to the provision of itinerant teachers, and the number of itinerant teachers was progressively reduced as correspondence education was extended. In 1923, two travelling Domestic Science schools were constructed in railway cars, and full-time courses of seven weeks' duration were offered in a number of centres throughout the State. In 1924, a Manual Training school for boys was constructed in another railway car. During 1926, correspondence courses for electrical trade apprentices were inaugurated, and by 1938, there were courses for pharmacy students and printing and mechanical apprentices. A separate Brisbane Technical Correspondence School was established in 1945, initially to cope with the increased demands of ex-service-men.

2.22. From an educational standpoint, there were few dramatic changes during the period 1915 to 1950. Mothers and fathers found their sons and daughters doing much the same kind of schoolwork they themselves had done a generation before. The scholarship examination had been made qualifying, rather than competitive, in 1914, and by the 1920's, had become the most important event in the educational lives of all Queensland children. In the Primary Schools, cramming and coaching for the Scholarship examination was the be-all and end-all of the Primary School teacher's existence. Schools and teachers were judged by the public on their Scholarship results, and students were sorted out as successes or failures by the percentages they received in the Scholarship examination. In short, the Scholarship examination, together with the Junior and Senior examinations, completely dominated Queensland education despite periodic attempts by inspectors and by the Department to reduce the adverse effects of external examinations. In 1920, for example, Mr Smith, a school inspector, reported that "The objective of the State Secondary Schools seems to be forgotten by some teachers, who act as though the sole use of the State Secondary Schools is to prepare pupils to pass examinations. The main function of the schools is, however, character-building . . . The State Secondary schools inspected by me are doing better work than the external examination results may seem to indicate. They are steadily improving in efficiency, have fully justified their existence, and more parents desire to give their children the benefit of the High School training." With respect to Scholarship work in schools, the Department periodically attempted to persuade teachers that there were other aims for Primary Schools besides the Scholarship examination results. In the Education Office Gazette for 3rd June, 1936, the Department reported that some schools were holding Scholarship classes before and after school hours, and noted that this practice was considered to be undesirable. They went on:—". . . Any practice which sacrifices cultural and healthy subjects with a view to securing high percentages in the examination is not conceived in the best interests of pupils and is not viewed with favour by the Department." The following year, the Gazette for 3rd March requested head teachers to note ". . . that the systematic extension of school hours for the holding of scholarship classes is viewed with disapproval by this Department." Despite these

exhortations, and the fact that the syllabus of 1930 was intended to provide ". . . a broader and richer curriculum than its predecessors", it seems clear that practising teachers remained unconvinced, because in May, 1950, the Department found it necessary to repeat almost word for word, the strictures published in the Gazette in 1936 and 1937.

2.23. The syllabus of 1930 continued in use until the end of 1951. There had been amendments in 1938 and 1948, but the changes these involved were minor. In Appendix "A" to the Seventy-Fifth Report of the Secretary for Public Instruction for the Year 1950, the Director-General of Education, Mr L. D. Edwards, described the changes of 1948 as purely "palliative until the new syllabus could be issued". The new syllabus was completed in 1951, and schools commenced to operate under the new scheme from the beginning of 1952. In the Seventy-Fifth Report, Mr L. D. Edwards described the purpose of the new syllabus in the following terms:—

". . . It is generally agreed that the primary school—the only kind of school some children will know—should teach its pupils to speak, to read and to write, introduce them to what men think and do and to what men have thought and done, enable them to gain some general ideas of the natural world, give them practice in the art of calculation, train them in habits of observation, develop their manual dexterity, introduce them to the beauty of form, colour, and sound, and improve their physique—in short, it should develop a sound mind in a sound body. The subjects that are included in the curriculum are necessary, and they are necessary not because they serve some directly practical or material end, not because they are mere accomplishments or conventional ornaments, but because they are calculated to widen the outlook and to develop those qualities of body, heart, and mind that lead to the efficient and true fulfilment of function in life . . . The preparation for life provided by the school is, however, general rather than specific. It must supply a broad basis for any kind of specialised effort later on, and, consequently, the school must be regarded as a training ground rather than a mere source of information. 'How to think,' not 'what to think,' is the important thing. . . ."

2.24. The record of the period 1915 to 1950 would not be complete without some mention of the Opportunity School. Early in 1923, Mr W. D. Bevington, District Inspector of Schools, prepared a plan for the treatment of those children who were not making normal progress in school. He organized classes in that year, the first being formed at the South Brisbane Boys School, where two assistants, who had undergone special training in Sydney, were appointed to take charge. Other "Backward Classes" were formed at Fortitude Valley, New Farm, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Townsville and Toowoomba. In all, 15 teachers were employed in these classes which had an enrolment of 240 pupils, and by 1926, it was found that many parents disliked the idea of sending their children to "Backward Schools", so from 1st July in that year, they were re-named "Opportunity Schools". The unfavourable attitude of parents seems to have been due, in part, to teachers' threats to send children to the "Dunces' School", and it was necessary to publish a notice in the Education Office Gazette prohibiting this practice. By 1927, children were systematically recruited for the opportunity classes, head teachers recommended children to the Inspectors and those children were tested and their homes visited. In the period up to 1939, pupils were divided into two groups. Class A Opportunity Schools were intended to cater for those who were backward, but who, under special treatment, might be improved in the essential subjects of school work. Class B Opportunity Schools catered for those whose intelligence quotient indicated that they would be unable to succeed in grasping the subjects usually taught in the school. A greater proportion of their time was devoted to woodwork and other practical crafts. The last of the Class B Opportunity Classes at Buranda was closed in 1939. In 1935, Mr Bevington became Acting Chief Inspector of Schools and the unity of control and direction which marked the introduction of Opportunity Schools disappeared and, with it, the systematic recruitment policy, so that in 1950, the numbers enrolled had fallen below the peak of the early thirties. However, in 1950, Mr L. D. Edwards was able to report that:—

"The establishment of the Research and Guidance Branch to provide psychological services within the Department of Public Instruction has made it possible to exercise supervision and control over admissions to most of the Opportunity Classes. As from the beginning of 1950 all children for whom admission is sought to metropolitan Opportunity Classes are referred first to this Branch for a psychological examination. Following interviews with parents, recommendations are made regarding educational placement; individual reports are sent to the teachers in charge of Opportunity Classes in cases where recommendations are made for admission thereto."

2.25. Finally, some mention should be made of education and vocational guidance. According to Mr L. D. Edwards, the need for vocational guidance was realized in the late 1920's when the increase in apprenticeship and further technical training showed that, in many cases, students had not chosen their occupations wisely. In 1932, a pilot scheme was introduced in four large metropolitan schools. Parents and pupils completed questionnaires indicating choices of occupation and various aptitude tests were administered and the results entered on a special record card. Early in 1933, a guidance scheme administered by the Director of Secondary Education was introduced. It included a series of talks on guidance and occupations on radio station 4QG on Wednesday evenings. Occupational information and descriptions of the types of secondary course available were also prepared. In 1935, the Juvenile Employment Bureau was established to assist boys and girls to find employment and guidance activities in Primary Schools ceased. In 1941, an educational guidance officer was appointed whose duties included educational and vocational guidance and the supervision of work in Opportunity Schools. Later that year, a new guidance scheme was prepared, and teachers in more than 50 large schools were appointed guidance officers. Unfortunately, disruption of school organization due to wartime conditions led to the abandonment of the scheme early in 1942. In 1948, Mr W. Wood was appointed to organize a Research and Guidance Branch. In 1949, research and guidance officers were appointed, and the guidance officers of the Juvenile Employment Bureau augmented the staff of the Branch. From then on, guidance was provided on a continuous basis for State primary and secondary schools.

2.26. In 1960, two significant events occurred. The first School of the Air opened at Mount Isa, and the Minister appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr H. G. Watkin, Director-General of Education, "to inquire into secondary education in Queensland". The Watkin Committee recommended the abolition of the Scholarship examination, and the Minister accepted this recommendation. The last Scholarship exam was held in 1962, and from this point onward, students could proceed to the secondary school without passing a qualifying examination. The Committee also made the following recommendations which have proved significant in the light of subsequent events:—

"In view of the undue influence of university matriculation requirements on secondary studies, a complete review of the senior curriculum is necessary to liberalise the choice of subjects and to make the content of each subject consistent with modern educational concepts.

Consideration might also be given to the provision in the larger centres of fourth year intensive vocational studies for students who have successfully completed a three-year general course but who do not desire to proceed to a Senior Certificate Examination."

A review of education legislation was also put in hand, and in 1964, the Minister for Education, the Honourable J. C. A. Pizzey, introduced the present Education Act to the House. In doing so, he said:—

"It can be taken as a measure of the recent progress in education in Queensland that the Education Act passed in 1875, and since amended on only six occasions, is no longer deemed to be adequate for the task of providing the legislative cornerstone of the Government's activities in regard to education. Education has, in recent years, been brought up to date in practice; the Bill now proposed brings it up to date in law."

2.27. Among the important provisions of the 1964 Act was the statutory recognition given to Parents' and Citizens' Associations to replace the school committees which had operated since 1934 by regulation. "The term Parents' and Citizens' Association . . . emphasises the partnership between school and community in education . . .", Mr Pizzey said. The Act made explicit provision for the establishment and maintenance of Secondary and Special Schools as well as Primary Schools, and raised the school leaving age from 14 years to 15 years. The new Act also established a "Technical Education Advisory Council" to be representative of industry, commerce and education interests. In introducing this provision, Mr Pizzey said:—

"It is significant that 10 of the 16 members of the council are to be drawn from interests other than those directly concerned with education. It is anticipated that this balance in membership of the council will ensure that due regard is had to the needs of the community, industry and commerce. It is hoped that under the wise guidance of the Technical Education Advisory Council Queensland will shortly possess a system of technical education which will be the envy of all other States."

The Act also made important changes with respect to Secondary School examinations and courses of study. Previously, there had been a Board of Post-Primary Studies and

Examinations established under the University Act with the function of making recommendations concerning the arrangements for the conduct of the Junior and Senior public examinations. The 1964 Act established two Boards—a Board of Junior Secondary School Studies, and a Board of Senior Secondary School Studies. The University had only one representative on the Junior Board. The Minister said "the State and independent schools should have far greater control in regard to secondary education, particularly at the Junior level". The composition of the Senior Board was similar to that of the Board of Post-Primary Studies, the Senate of the University having seven nominees. The Act also made provision for the future establishment of other educational institutions which might become necessary as education continued to develop.

2.28. The abolition of the Scholarship Examination in 1962 and the raising of the school leaving age in 1964 meant that secondary school education became the normal expectation of all Queensland children. Furthermore, changing attitudes towards education resulted in an increasing proportion of students staying on beyond the compulsory stage of education. It soon became apparent that the Senior examination, which was geared to the matriculation requirements of the University, was inappropriate for many students. Events reached a crisis in 1968 following a very high failure rate in the 1967 Senior examination for Physics. W. J. and E. M. Campbell, in *School-Based Assessments—Aspirations and Achievements of the Radford Scheme in Queensland*, ERDC Report No. 7A, page 7, report that:—

"... the Chief Examiner of the Senior physics paper, Professor R. W. Parsons, failed 3,150 out of 4,400 candidates and expressed the opinion that the failure may have been due to poor teaching on the part of some teachers, and lack of intellectual ability in a very significant number of candidates. The teachers and school authorities reacted angrily, and made the public examinations the scape-goats for all of the alleged ills in Queensland's secondary education. ..."

The Board of Senior Secondary School Studies established a committee under the Chairmanship of Professor G. W. Bassett to make recommendations concerning the introduction of a Leaving Certificate. The Committee found "... that the problem at present facing the schools is that the existing senior courses are too academic in spirit for many grade 12 students. Suitable alternatives to them are not necessarily vocational courses, but courses in which the relevance of the ideas and methods to practical affairs and issues is made clear." The Committee went on to recommend the introduction of yet another external examination with examiners different from those chosen for the "Senior" which would lead to the issue of a "Leaving Certificate". W. J. and E. M. Campbell (*ibid*) note that:—

"... enthusiasm for such a solution had waned, and the recommendation was eventually brushed aside by a resolution 'that the Board request the Minister to set up a committee to review the system of public examinations for Queensland secondary school students and make recommendations for the assessment of students' achievements'. Within a month, the Minister for Education had approved the setting up of a committee with the Board's proposed terms of reference, and had appointed Dr. W. C. Radford, Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research, to chair it. ..."

2.29. The Radford Committee recommended the replacement of the Junior and Senior examinations by school assessments. To administer the scheme, a Board of Secondary School Studies was to replace the existing Boards for Junior and Senior secondary studies. The Board was to award Junior and Senior certificates on the recommendation of schools, having first satisfied itself that the courses of study and the assessments given were appropriate. The Board was to be assisted in its task by a series of subject advisory committees and a moderation committee, and a number of chief moderators. The report was forwarded to the Minister for Education on 28th July, 1970, was adopted by the Queensland Government in December, 1970, and became operative through amendments to the Education Act the following month. The final public examinations for Junior and Senior certificates were conducted in December, 1970, and December, 1972, respectively. With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that the scheme was introduced rather too hastily. In the initial stages of the implementation of the scheme, insufficient attention appears to have been given to the preparation of teachers for their added responsibilities, and to the need to educate parents and the community at large. Undoubtedly, a major public relations campaign should have been mounted in the initial stages of the introduction of the scheme, and adequate funds made available for the purpose. The problem of public acceptance was compounded by two additional factors. The first was the introduction by the Board of Secondary School Studies of the Tertiary Entrance Score,



and second, the simultaneous introduction of quotas in tertiary courses. It should be noted that the Radford Report did not make any recommendations as to what procedure should be used to select students for entrance to tertiary institutions. Initially, the University of Queensland decided to base their entry on a summation of the points scored in 20 semester units over two years; other institutions followed suit. However, it was argued that a bad start in the first semester of a student's course in Year 11 could have the effect of jeopardizing his whole result, and that this would result in even greater pressure on the student than in the days of the external examination. The T.E. Score, which is essentially an exit assessment, was designed to try to ensure that students were not penalized unduly for failure in the early stages of a course, or for absence for limited periods due to medical factors beyond the student's control. Unfortunately, few people understand how the T.E. Score is derived, despite the efforts of the Board to inform the community. The Headmasters' Conference of Australia (Queensland Branch), in its submission to the Select Committee, said:—

"Many parents and students share the view that there is some secret manipulation which occurs which is likely to disadvantage one group or another. Thus it is argued by some that those disadvantaged are those who come from large schools, or those who come from small schools, those who do Mathematics and Science; the bright students or the average students or the dull students, the male students, the female students, members of an intelligent group, members of a non-intelligent group and so on ..."

It is a point of view which is amply supported by the content of many submissions which the Select Committee received. It is, perhaps, understandable if unfortunate, that when students qualify for the course of their choice on the basis of their T.E. Score, but fail to gain entry because of the quota, they and their parents should feel that they might have fared better in an external examination.

2.30. On 20th February, 1976, the Board of Secondary School Studies commissioned a committee under the chairmanship of Professor E. Scott of the Faculty of Education,

James Cook University of North Queensland, to review two reports on school-based assessment in Queensland schools, namely *Schools Under Radford* by K. Fairbairn *et al.*, and *Some Consequences of the Radford Scheme for Schools, Teachers and Students in Queensland*, by W. J. Campbell, *et al.* This Committee presented its final report on 14th April, 1978. In the meantime, there was a considerable downturn in the Australian economy and a dramatic increase in the unemployment rate in the 15 to 19 age groups. Employers were critical of the standards being achieved by some school leavers, and this led to widespread public disquiet about standards in basic skills. There was also a major public debate about the social studies programmes in Queensland schools and, in particular, over the suitability of a Primary School course developed in America entitled "Man: A Course of Study" (M.A.C.O.S.) and the suitability of some of the resource material produced by the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra under the "Social Education Materials Project" (S.E.M.P.), and whether the balance between Social Studies and the traditional Three R's was appropriate in terms of teaching time and emphasis. In his policy speech prior to the 1977 Queensland election, the Premier, the Honourable J. Bjelke-Petersen, said:—

"Parents and employers have the right to know that our children are being properly educated.

Queensland led the way in introducing the Radford Scheme of school assessments.

Experience has shown weaknesses in that scheme.

We will review it, and will ensure that parents are represented on the review committee."

Following upon this undertaking, the proposal to establish a Committee of Inquiry into education in Queensland was first mooted in a statement by the Premier in which he announced that a Committee comprising four Parliamentarians and three educationists would be appointed to inquire into the State's education system. However, subsequent legal advice by Crown Law Officers indicated that if such a Committee were appointed, the seats of those members who participated in it could be placed in jeopardy. It was concluded that a Select Committee of Parliamentarians would conduct the inquiry.

## SECTION 3—EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRIMARY EDUCATION

3.1. The Department of Education Pre-School Service has been operating in Queensland since 1973 in parallel with private pre-schools, kindergartens, and child care centres. The following table was prepared from data supplied by the Brisbane office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and represents the enrolments as at 1st August, 1978. It should be noted that kindergarten children are drawn primarily from the 3 to 4 years age group, and pre-school children from the 4 to 5 years age group.

TABLE 1—CHILDREN IN QUEENSLAND CHILD CARE CENTRES, KINDERGARTENS AND PRE-SCHOOLS—1ST AUGUST, 1978

Age	Category of Centre				Total
	Government	Government Assisted	Other Assisted	Private	
Under 3	341	1 331	175	775	2 622
3	412	5 525	1 708	3 070	10 715
4	11 981	8 036	1 665	2 661	24 343
5	10 662	2 729	592	878	14 861
6 and Over	126	73	1	26	227
TOTAL ..	23 523	17 694	4 141	7 410	52 768

Source: A.B.S. Brisbane (unpublished data)

On the basis of the estimated population of Queensland as at 30th June, 1978, approximately 30 per cent of 3-year-olds, 64 per cent of 4-year-olds, and 37 per cent of 5-year-olds are attending an early childhood educational establishment. It should be noted, of course, that many 5-year-olds will already be attending Primary School. It has been reported to us that there has been some conflict of interest between the community kindergartens and the State Pre-School centres. The Committee supports the view that there is a place for both organizations in the field of early childhood education and recommends that current policies in this regard should be continued.

3.2. The Select Committee has observed Pre-Schools in operation in several places in Queensland and has been impressed by the high standards being achieved. The commitment of the teachers to maintaining a high standard of communication with parents and the support which parents are giving to the schools are commendable. However, it is also important that a high level of communication is achieved and maintained between Pre-Schools and associated Primary Schools. Education within the school system must be a continuous, as well as a continuing process, and nowhere is this more important than at the interface between Pre-Schools and their associated Primary Schools. In the first place, very young children are especially likely to be affected adversely by this junction. It has also been pointed out to us that many teachers in Pre-School Centres are, as yet, relatively inexperienced and would benefit from closer professional contact with Infant Mistresses and other teachers in the Primary Schools who are skilled and experienced in early childhood education. As well, closer ties between the Pre-School Centre and its associated Primary School would contribute to the professional development of more experienced teachers.

3.3. Current arrangements generally make the Principal of an associated Primary School a "trouble shooter" in administration only. He is not formally responsible for giving professional support and counsel to teachers in the Pre-School Centre, and in particular has no means of supervising the progress of Pre-School teachers in their probationary year. No doubt there are many instances where the present informal arrangements work satisfactorily, but we are advised that in some cases they do not, and that this is detrimental both to the children and to the professional development of the teachers. We note with approval the establishment of early education classes at a number of Class 4 Primary Schools and recommend that this initiative should be continued and extended. We also recommend that each Pre-School Centre should be placed under the full control and tutelage of the Principal of its associated Primary School. We are mindful of the close relationships that have been established between Pre-School teachers and parents, but we see no reason to suppose that this relationship will be disturbed by this administrative change. On the contrary, we would expect Primary School Principals to encourage parents who have been closely involved with the Pre-School Centre to continue their support as their children move into Primary School, to the ultimate benefit of the Education Community as a whole.

3.4. It has been represented to the Select Committee that a Pre-School Year should be compulsory. We do not accept this view; compulsory education was introduced in the last century when illiteracy was a major problem for our society, and some parents did not appreciate the importance of education. Whilst we accept the need to retain the existing Legislative provisions for compulsory education, so that the State can protect the small minority of children whose parents might otherwise behave irresponsibly, we do not believe that these provisions should be extended. The educational benefits of a Pre-School year are now well established, and the overwhelming majority of the parents are anxious for their children to receive as much education as possible. The fact that approximately 64 per cent of four-year-olds are attending some form of Pre-School or Kindergarten Institution, speaks for itself, particularly when it is remembered that, as yet, by no means all young children have access. The Department of Education has recently developed a correspondence course for Pre-School children, and this has been greatly appreciated by parents in remote areas. That enrolments have exceeded 800 is further evidence of the importance which the people of Queensland attach to Pre-School education. We also believe that the very fact that Pre-School education is not compulsory has encouraged a special atmosphere of co-operation between parents and teachers. There has been some evidence to suggest that not all parents of young children are fully aware of the educational benefits of the Pre-School year, and that some action may be necessary to rectify this situation. The Select Committee therefore recommends that the benefits of Pre-School education should be widely publicized, but that Pre-School attendance should not be made compulsory.

3.5. We have received submissions suggesting that a more flexible approach should be adopted to the age of entry into the Primary School. There have in the past been problems caused by children being admitted to Year One of Primary School at too early an age. Well-intentioned parents sometimes misled the authorities as to the age of their children in order to gain early admission, and this resulted in educational problems in later years because of the relative lack of maturity of those children. We do not therefore recommend any change in policy in the case of those children whose first exposure to an educational institution will be Year One of Primary School. We note, however, that where early education classes have been established at Class 4 Primary Schools, a policy of vertical integration is being followed for Pre-School and lower Primary School children. Early reports by the Department suggest that these multi-age group classes are successful and are providing the sort of flexibility which many people believe is needed. We recommend that where a Pre-School is under the control of a Principal from an associated Primary School, the Principal of the Primary School, subject to the approval of the Regional Director, should be authorized to determine when, and at what age, his Pre-School children should commence Year One in those cases where Pre-School and Infant classes have not been vertically integrated.

3.6. We note that the present administrative organization for State education incorporates separate Directorates for Pre-School and Primary education. This has allowed a senior Departmental officer to give his undivided attention to the development of Pre-School education in Queensland with conspicuous success. We are concerned, however, lest this division of administrative responsibilities should, in the future, inhibit the drawing together of the Pre-School and Primary phases of education, which we believe to be essential. There appears to be a natural tendency for administrative structures to become self-justifying and self-perpetuating, and we recommend that the Minister and his Senior Officers should keep this matter under continuous review. Whilst separate directorates have served State Education well during the development phase, it is by no means obvious that this represents the best structure for the future.

3.7. The terms of reference for the Select Committee include the following items specifically related to Primary education:—

- (a) Appropriate emphasis in Primary education between basic education and other activities;
- (b) A review of the decision-making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
- (c) Adequacy of Social Science courses for Primary students;
- (d) The need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them and the administrative machinery for implementing them.

In our third Interim Report, we dealt with basic education, that is to say literacy and numeracy, at some length, and stressed the need to improve performance in these areas in line with the higher standards of achievement which the increasing use of technology demands. Contrary to what many people have believed, there has been no decline in emphasis in the teaching of basic English and Mathematics

in Primary Schools over the last 25 years. Queensland Primary Schools devote rather more time to the "basics" than is the case in other States, and this has been advanced as a reason for the better performance of our children in standard tests. We recommend that present policy on time allocations for subjects in the Primary School curriculum should be continued. We point out that education in the essential skills of literacy and numeracy is not confined merely to those subject areas specifically designated English/Language Arts and Mathematics, but extends throughout the whole curriculum, including that section devoted to the Arts.

3.8. With regard to the decision-making process at the Primary School level, we believe that in general the present administrative machinery is adequate. Many of the problems which have arisen have resulted from poor communication and a lack of understanding by parents and the community at large of the machinery which does exist. The need for increased community involvement in education, and the importance of the Department and of teachers taking a more positive approach to communication, has been a continuing theme throughout all our reports. At the Departmental level we have recommended in our Second Interim Report (Paragraph 5.7.), that the existing Primary Curriculum Committee should be given statutory recognition as a "Primary School Studies Committee", and that three persons representative of community interests, two of whom are to be parents, should form part of that Committee. The present policy of delegating responsibility to Regional Directors has made an important contribution to community involvement in the educational process, and we commend all Regional Directors on the many new initiatives they have introduced in the area of school/community involvement. We recommend that the Regional System should be continued, and that the level of decision-making which is delegated to Regional Officers be progressively extended. It has been represented to us that the "High School Advisory Councils", which we recommended in Paragraph 6.7. of our Second Interim Report, should be extended to the Primary Schools. Our investigations suggest that parents tend to be more closely involved with the activities of the Primary School than those of the Secondary School. The parents of many Primary School children visit the school daily to collect their children, and there is, perhaps, a greater opportunity for parents to become involved in the organization of social and sporting activities at the Primary School. At the Secondary School, students should have achieved a measure of maturity and independence, and indeed should be encouraged to organize many of these activities for themselves. Further, in Primary Schools, there is a greater standardization in curriculum, and the students are taught, for the most part, by a single class teacher throughout the school year. In the Secondary School, the curriculum is diverse and each subject is usually taught by a different teacher, making the problems of communication more difficult. For these reasons, we do not see the same need for Advisory Councils in the Primary School; however, we see no reason why Advisory Councils should not be convened for Primary Schools if the Principal believes that such an initiative would be beneficial. We therefore recommend that Primary School Principals, with the prior concurrence of the Regional Director, be given discretionary powers to convene advisory councils similar to those that we have proposed for Secondary Schools. Because of the much wider differences in size among Primary Schools, it would not be sensible to specify a single model for a Primary School Advisory Council, and we stress again that Advisory Councils are not to be seen as an alternative to Parents' and Citizens' Associations. Indeed, an active Parents' and Citizens' Association, through which all parents can make their views known, is, in our opinion, a necessary condition for a successful advisory council; however, we draw attention to the need for careful definition of their relative roles and of the membership and functions of the council.

3.9. We have discussed the question of social studies in the Primary School at some length in Section 5 of our Second Interim Report, where we expressed the view that the syllabus "... is well set out and provides a well integrated and progressive programme of social studies from Grade 1 to Grade 7". The time allocation for social studies in the Primary School curriculum is from 3½ to 4½ hours per week, and we believe that this is a satisfactory balance with the other subjects in the curriculum. The detail of time allocations for all subject areas we have set out in Paragraph 5.10. of the Second Interim Report. The need for new courses is less of a problem at the Primary School level, which is more concerned with making improvements to a fairly standard curriculum. The existing administrative machinery, together with the changes we have recommended to the Primary Curriculum Committee, will provide satisfactory procedures for assessing and implementing curriculum changes in the immediate future. Once again we see the Regional system as providing the necessary flexibility in the syllabus to cater for local needs and local interests. We have already stressed the need for increased communication between the Primary and Secondary levels of education. This is

important in relation to curriculum development if Primary and Secondary education are to be a continuous process. We referred in Paragraph 6.9. of our Second Interim Report to the concern which has been expressed to the Select Committee "... that the essential continuity between Primary and Secondary curriculum is not invariably achieved". We recommend that Secondary School Subject Advisory Committees be represented on Primary Standing Syllabus Committees, and *vice versa*, and that formal procedures should be established to facilitate discussions on curriculum matters between Secondary Schools and Primary Schools in their catchment area. However, we stress the crucial importance of informal lines of communication between teachers in Primary and Secondary schools.

3.10. The Committee notes that at present Queensland school children spend seven years in the Primary School and that in this respect, Queensland is out of step with most of the States of Australia where children move on to Secondary School at the end of Year 6. It has been represented to us that we should recommend a change in the model operating in Queensland. The Select Committee points out that this issue was considered in 1968 by a Committee under the chairmanship of Professor G. W. Bassett. The views of that Committee are set out in the *Report of the Committee set up to consider and make recommendations to the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies concerning the introduction of a Leaving Certificate*. The Committee found the educational advantages of such a change could be debatable and said:—

"... A modern primary school can, and should pursue objectives similar in spirit to those of the secondary school. Initiative and responsibility in learning, the arousal of interest, the development of intellectual skills, and so on, are not the preserve of any one stage of education. In a good primary school the students will be assisted in their studies as well as if they were in secondary school ...

If adequate attention is given by both primary and secondary schools to ensure continuity between them, the point of transition educationally becomes less important. Indeed, in some private schools having both primary and secondary students, this continuity already exists ..."

Professor Bassett's Committee was of the opinion that major practical problems would arise in providing accommodation and staff in the Secondary School to meet such a large expansion, and recommended against the change. The Select Committee believes that these views are still valid and therefore recommends that the present system, whereby children move into Secondary School at the end of Year 7, be continued for the time being. However, we further recommend that the Minister and his officers should keep the matter under review.

3.11. The Select Committee notes with particular approval the emphasis now being given to Drama, Vocal and Instrumental music, Arts and Crafts, and other items in the cultural dimension in Primary Schools. Especially commendable are

the efforts of an increasing number of our teachers, many of whom devote considerable time out of school hours and on a voluntary basis, to giving our young children an appreciation and understanding of the important role of the Arts in our society. All the indications are that advances in technology will provide our society with increasing amounts of leisure time, and in these circumstances it is absolutely essential that children receive a grounding in cultural pursuits which may encourage them to use that leisure time constructively in later life. We are convinced that many of the acts of vandalism and other manifestations of anti-social behaviour stem primarily from boredom, and our schools have an important responsibility to provide children with the means of occupying their leisure time in ways which will enrich rather than destroy their lives. We have already pointed out (paragraph 3.6) that the Arts can make an important contribution to the development of the essential skills of literacy and numeracy. We also wish to commend the work of the Field Studies Centres which are making an important contribution in teaching children about the environment and the flora and fauna of our State, as well as providing a wide range of interesting and challenging experiences designed to develop self-reliance.

3.12. The Select Committee notes with approval the development work which has been commenced at the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education with respect to the use of micro-computers in Primary Schools. With imaginative programming, micro-computers can become powerful teaching aids capable of providing drill routines, enrichment programmes and remedial teaching activities for individuals and small groups at all levels in the educational process. Of particular importance for Queensland education is the potential for micro-computers which can assist teachers in small and isolated schools to provide a wide range of diagnostic and remedial teaching for children of all ages.

Micro-computers will also become invaluable for children on correspondence schooling, particularly with the advent of the direct broadcast satellite facility. The Select Committee supports the view of the Capricornia Institute that the need for computer programs written specifically for the Queensland Primary School Syllabus is now urgent. Low-priced micro-computers, retailing at around \$700, are available now. A number of Parents' and Citizens' Associations have expressed interest in purchasing these computers for Primary Schools, and unless the development of the necessary software proceeds immediately, we will undoubtedly see the introduction of American programs which are unsuitable for the Queensland situation. The Select Committee therefore recommends that the Government take action to ensure that the full-time developmental work commenced in 1978 by Mr L. Partington, Principal of Glennie Heights State Primary School, at the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education, is continued and supported. The Chairman of the Select Committee was able to view some of the results of this work and notes that Mr Partington worked at the Capricornia Institute in an honorary capacity, utilizing his long service leave for the purpose. The Select Committee commends Mr Partington on his initiative in undertaking the task and the excellence of the results he has produced.

## SECTION 4—SECONDARY EDUCATION

4.1. The terms of reference of the Select Committee on Education included the following specific items in respect of secondary education:—

- (a) The efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education;
- (b) A review of the decision-making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
- (c) Adequacy of social science courses for secondary students; and
- (d) The need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them, and the administrative machinery for implementing them.

In April, 1978, when the terms of reference were presented to Parliament, these items appeared to reflect major community concerns. The terms of reference, however, did not limit the Select Committee in its inquiries, and as submissions were received, it became clear that there was widespread public interest in all aspects of secondary education. It also became clear that there were two major factors in the debate which contained the seeds of misunderstanding and even conflict. The first of these was a lack of agreement on aims and objectives of secondary education, and the second a failure, not only by the education system but by the community in general, to secure effective communication between various groups which are either involved in education, or which have an interest in educational outcomes. We have frequently stressed the continuous nature of schooling and both of these factors apply *mutatis mutandis* to primary education. However, they are potentially most damaging with

respect to secondary education because it is from the secondary system that children exit from school, and it is at that time that the results of schooling become most clearly visible.

4.2. Unfortunately, few of the submissions made explicit statements on aims and objectives of the system. Whilst it would be simplistic to assume that, in our society, an explicit statement of aims of secondary education would satisfy all shades of opinion, both in the aims themselves and their interpretation and implementation, nevertheless, it is certain that, unless secondary education is guided by a set of aims and objectives approved by a majority of citizens, disagreement and dissatisfaction with some aspects of the work of schools is inevitable. A growing number of individual Secondary Schools have developed explicit statements of their own school philosophy. This we approve: it is a natural extension of the greater school autonomy engendered by the changed structure of curriculum and evaluation following the abolition of the Junior and Senior external examinations in Queensland in 1970 and 1972, respectively. There is, however, a fine balance to be struck between two competing needs; that is to say, the need for schools to be sufficiently flexible to cater for the special needs of local communities, whilst at the same time maintaining sufficient similarity between schools to cater for the needs of a mobile work force whose children attend more than one school during the course of their educational experience. In its Second Interim Report (paragraph 2.4), the Select Committee proposed a statement of aims which, it is believed, represents a generally acceptable statement of community expectations with regard to Queensland schools, with



the intention that this should be used as a starting point and guide for schools to use in the development of their own philosophies.

4.3. The statement of aims proposed by the Select Committee is a general statement intended to cover both Primary and Secondary Schools. We note in passing that we have accepted a recommendation that those aims should include an explicit statement regarding the important role of the Arts in education, and our recommendation in this regard is included in a later section of this Report. The report to the Board of Secondary School Studies, *A Review of School-Based Assessment in Queensland Secondary Schools* (the "Scott" Report), includes a recommendation (recommendation P1) for a statement of the general aims of secondary education to be adopted as policy guidelines by the Board of Secondary School Studies. We have been informed that the Board has accepted this recommendation, and we support that decision. The aims proposed are consistent with, and complementary to, our own more general statement. They read as follows:—

"Bearing in mind that young people are being educated in, and for, life in a pluralistic society, a system of secondary education should provide a wide range of experiences for all youth of society, regard being had to the requirements of a sound general education and to the specific needs of students related to their age, cultural heritage, aptitude, ability and special interests. Thus through the curriculum and instructional processes, secondary school should provide opportunity for, and assistance in, the further development of:

- the student's physical well-being and mental health;
- the student's fundamental intellectual skills;
- the student's acquisition of knowledge and the related skills of validating, organizing, interrelating and utilizing such knowledge critically and constructively, in order that he/she might be culturally and scientifically informed and aware;
- the student's highest level of mastery of communication skills;
- the student's awareness of his/her abilities and his/her effective use of them for the betterment of himself/herself and society;
- the student's consciousness of his/her own values and value commitments and his/her understanding of the values of others and of the values and moral traditions of Australian society;
- the student's ability to relate his/her knowledge and values to the contemporary scene for the betterment of his/her own welfare and for the betterment of society;
- the student's ability to relate effectively to others and to find self-realization and self-expression through such relationships;
- the student's readiness to assume a mature adult role in society."

4.4. The problems of effective communication are complex, and we do not wish to minimize the difficulties. Although we have found clear evidence of communication failure, we do not apportion blame; indeed, all sections of the community have been culpable. We merely point out that some of the submissions to the Select Committee were based on misunderstandings that would not have arisen had more effective communication been operative, whether at Departmental, Board, school or teacher level. The Secondary Schools have, to some extent, become victims of their own success. They have placed increasing emphasis in their teaching on developing the critical faculties of their students and, in our complex modern world, this is clearly essential. In addition, the rapid expansion of the secondary system has meant that an increasing number of adults have been educated to a level which has given them confidence to ask searching questions about educational activities which the communication system has not been adequately equipped to handle. We have made a number of recommendations in our interim reports aimed at improving communication between the community and the education system at all levels, and a continuing theme in all our reports is embodied in the phrase "co-operation not confrontation". The Select Committee has maintained continuing contact with the community in general and teachers and parents in particular throughout the preparation of its reports. We are happy to report that the feedback we have received suggests an increasing awareness of the need to improve communication and shows encouraging signs of successful efforts to do so.

4.5. There is a continuing public concern regarding the role of Secondary Schools in preparing students to enter the work force. At a time when youth unemployment is running at abnormally high levels, such concern is understandable and must be addressed. However, it should be unnecessary to point out that schools cannot create jobs, and that there are

many complex factors beyond the control of the Queensland Education system which have produced the present high levels of unemployment. It should also be noted that abnormally high levels of unemployment among school leavers is a world-wide phenomenon at the present time, and is not confined to Queensland. There have been, and will no doubt continue to be some young people who have anti-social attitudes in general, and negative attitudes to work in particular. Unquestionably, society as a whole, including the education system, has a responsibility and a self-interest in training such young people to become useful members of society. At the same time, it should be remembered that they represent a very small minority of our young people who frequently come from a home background that has been insufficiently supportive of their education, or has been unsatisfactory in some other way. Unfortunately, media publicity sometimes creates in the minds of the public the impression that anti-social behaviour is a more widespread problem than is in fact the case. It is important to recognize that there are no simple solutions. In our Third Interim Report, we recorded evidence to suggest that there has been no decline in standards in the basic areas of literacy and numeracy. We also pointed out, however, that the minimum standard of education required for entry into the work force, and for coping with everyday living, has risen markedly over the past decade, and that a significant minority of students have not managed to lift their performance to the standard required. Education authorities and teachers are aware of the problem and are actively seeking solutions, but it is also important to stress again the need for parental co-operation. It is certain that there are still many parents who do not fully appreciate the critical role which the home plays in the educational standards achieved by children, and the need to provide a home environment which is conducive to, and supportive of, learning.

4.6. There was considerable concern expressed in a number of submissions regarding the suitability of Secondary School courses for those students who are not academically inclined. Proposed solutions reflected varied perceptions of the aims and purposes of secondary education. In some cases, it was suggested that vocationally oriented courses in which the academic content would be restricted to what has been traditionally termed the "three R's" should be introduced as early as Year 8. The Select Committee does not support this approach. Whilst this solution may appear to offer short-term benefits, it would be unwise to take action which would effectively restrict a child's future choice of career at such an early age. Furthermore, such a narrow approach would tend to restrict the ability of the student to live a full and satisfying adult life or to re-enter the educational stream as a mature student as many people now do. Nevertheless, within the ambit of a broadly based course, there is scope for increased emphasis on Manual Arts and Home Economics, particularly for those students who are less academically inclined. We are advised that lower achievers frequently improve their standards of literacy and numeracy when the relevance of these basic skills to practical situations can be demonstrated to them. There are still one or two country schools in which Manual Arts and Home Economics courses are not yet offered. The Select Committee recommends that the Manual Arts and Home Economics courses be introduced into those schools as a matter of urgency.

4.7. In the last decade, there has been a large increase in the percentage of Year 10 students who remain at school to complete all or part of Years 11 and 12. Schools are faced with the problem of providing suitable courses for students with an extremely wide range of academic ability, and an equally wide range of future interests. The problem has been compounded more recently by the number of students who would have preferred to enter the work force after completing Year 10 but, being unable to find work, returned to school, either voluntarily or under pressure from parents, but with little interest in further academic studies. There are many cases where students leave school before the end of Year 12, and later realize that they have made an unwise decision. We are advised that it is now possible for students to return to their Senior Education after a period away from school, without penalty. We recommend that this approach should be continued and should be given wider publicity. The Department of Education has procedures which allow the introduction of school-based subjects which are designed to cater for the less academically inclined Senior students, and which can be tailored to suit local needs. There has been a comparative lack of acceptance of school-based subjects by many parents, students and employers. This is probably due in part to lack of liaison between schools and employers, with respect to the content of school-based subjects, and in part because school-based subjects cannot, at present, be included in the Tertiary Entrance Score assessment. In our First Interim Report, we referred to the lack of information from employer groups concerning the standards they require for particular occupations, and the need for employers to communicate their needs to the Education system in precise terms and also recommended (paragraph 8.6) "That provision should be made

for including, by choice, in the T.E. Score, assessments totalling two semester units of certified School Subjects." We have been advised that the Board of Secondary School Studies has instituted discussions with a number of employers and employer groups in Queensland, with a view to determining in more precise terms, the educational requirements for entry into the work force, and to give employers a clearer understanding of what the Education system is trying to achieve. The Select Committee wishes to commend this initiative. We trust that the dialogue will become a regular feature of the Board's operation. It has been suggested to us that it would be beneficial if employer groups were represented on High School Advisory Councils, particularly in the smaller communities outside the Brisbane area. We believe that this suggestion has merit, and we recommend that the proposal concerning High School Advisory Councils in paragraph 6.7 of our Second Interim Report, be amended by the addition of a subparagraph (2) (VIII) "representatives of local industry and commerce at the discretion of the school principal".

4.8. In our First Interim Report, we recommended that provision should be made for including two semester units of certified school subjects in the T.E. Score. This recommendation was not favourably received by some tertiary institutions, and the Select Committee accordingly gave the matter further careful consideration. We are strongly of the opinion that our original recommendation should stand and wish to re-state our view that this added flexibility is in the best interests of students. We point out that the T.E. Score is based on 20 semester units, and since most Senior students undertake 24 semester units, we do not accept that this recommendation would adversely affect preparedness to undertake tertiary studies. We also recommend that when school-based courses are being developed, the active involvement of local employers should be sought in the preparation of the syllabus. We further recommend that a proposal by the Director's Committee on Secondary Education, that provision should be made for students to take longer than the present time to complete their Senior studies, should be accepted, formal procedures be introduced to implement the proposal, and the necessary publicity exercise be undertaken. This more flexible approach would permit a number of possibilities. For example, those students anxious to achieve tertiary entrance, whose Junior school results suggest a low probability of success, could be offered a general educational year with courses specially designed to upgrade their skills. At present the only option available is to repeat Year 11, a procedure which does not always commend itself to the student. Those students not immediately interested in pursuing academic studies in the Senior school might decide to study school-based subjects of immediate interest whilst investigating career possibilities, particularly if the option of taking up an academic Year 11 course at a later time was kept open.

4.9. The Department is currently offering pre-vocational courses in T.A.F.E. Colleges. The Select Committee recommends that a similar type of course be offered in Year 11 at Secondary Schools. The course we have in mind would be aimed at those students who have returned to school primarily because they have failed to gain employment at the conclusion of Year 10. Such a course should emphasize practical skills and education for living and stress functional English and Mathematical skills in contexts related to the local community and which are demonstrably relevant to the student's immediate future. Remedial assistance in literacy and numeracy should also be available as required. Where feasible, work experience opportunities should form a part of the course and assistance should be given to obtain employment either directly by the school or in co-operation with both Commonwealth and Private employment services. We have referred in our Sixth Interim Report (paragraph 4.6) to the need for more effective dissemination of labour market information to enable students to make sensible and informed choices. A persistent criticism voiced to the Select Committee has been that students have little access to people with first hand knowledge or experience of commerce and industry. We are aware of the excellent work being done by the Guidance and Special Education Branch in the delivery of support services to schools and in the development of career resource retrieval centres in high school libraries and guidance offices; however, there is an urgent need for guidance officers to establish direct lines of communication with employers and employment agencies, particularly those situated in the school catchment area. We therefore recommend that the Department pursue active policies in this regard. There is also an urgent need for practising teachers who have experience in working in industry, commerce and other branches of the Public Service. We note that it is government policy to arrange for Public Servants to broaden their experience by working for a time in the private sector, and we recommend that similar policies be followed with teachers. The necessary liaison should be established with the private sector and other Public Service Departments to allow teachers to spend some time working in one of these areas as a normal part of their service. We appreciate that there will be some

financial and administrative problems to be overcome, but such a procedure is clearly in the long-term interest of employers, and the Select Committee feels confident that they will offer their active co-operation. We also recommend that career policies be pursued particularly with respect to salary level at entry, which will actively encourage people with some years' experience in commerce or industry to enter the teaching service.

4.10. The Department of Education has been carrying out trials with "link courses". In the *Report to Schools* from the Directors' Committee on Secondary Education, of September, 1978, the link course was defined as follows:—

"A link course is a program of study involving students and/or staff of two or more separate institutions, and recognised by both institutions as an integral part of their program of studies. The purpose of link courses is to expand the curriculum base of one or both participating institutions, to provide more course flexibility and greater opportunity for accelerated learning in subjects such as music and art, and to maximise the use of scarce resources such as workshops. The institutions may, for example, be nearby schools and colleges of technical and further education."

The Select Committee strongly supports the link course concept which is consistent with our belief in the need to make the maximum possible use of the capital invested in our education system. We also support the view of the Director's Committee that link courses in Queensland offer a realistic way of providing opportunities in subjects which are at present not offered in schools, or which are uneconomical because of small class size. We therefore recommend that the development of link courses, particularly those involving Home Economics and Manual Arts and other courses designed to ease the transition from school to work, should be given a high priority. We wish to stress that whilst we regard these areas as the first priority in the present economic and social climate, we do not regard them as exclusive, and recommend that all options for maximizing the use of scarce resources be progressively investigated. There is a particular need to make pre-vocational and more practically oriented school courses available to students from remote areas, and in this context, we make two further recommendations: First, that the courses offered by the Rural Community Youth Extension Service be made available over a wider area; the possibility of enlisting the services of the Rural Training Schools for this purpose should be investigated; second, that the Department institute discussions with the private boarding schools with a view to offering link courses to their students on a similar basis to that proposed for the State Secondary Schools.

4.11. We have referred in paragraph 3.12 to the need to develop computer software suitable for the Queensland Primary School curriculum. There is an equal need for similar development programmes with respect to the Secondary School curriculum. Quality software takes time to develop, and in view of the fact that some schools already have computers, we recommend that the Department of Education in co-operation with other educational authorities and the Board of Secondary School studies take urgent action to promote the necessary development work. There is also an urgent need to introduce computer-related courses into our Secondary Schools. In recent years, computers have been introduced into industry and commerce at exponential rates and the number of jobs, including semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, in which some familiarity with computers is required, is also increasing rapidly. On 11th May, 1979, the Computer Policy Advisory Committee on Education reported on the requirements for computer courses in Secondary Schools and made the following recommendations:—

- (a) A Computer Awareness course be introduced into the Year 8-10 curriculum forthwith;
- (b) Three Computer Batch systems, similar to that installed at Brisbane State High School, be purchased and installed, during the financial year 1979-1980;
- (c)—
  - (i) A small computer (microcomputer system), suitable for interactive use in schools, be selected as suitable for Departmental purchase and support;
  - (ii) Eight (8) such microcomputers be purchased during the financial year 1979-1980;
- (d) A Supervisor of Computer Education, at the Inspector level, be appointed to co-ordinate these activities.

With regard to the provision of equipment and software, the Committee pointed out that "The establishment of standards for equipment and software is vital. Already, schools have or are looking to purchase their own small computer. Unless there is rationalization of equipment and software procurements, no matter how funded, the possibility of providing effective and low-cost support with standard teaching procedures

will be lost." The Select Committee supports the recommendations listed above. Failure now to recognize the growing importance of computers in the world of work is likely to have very severe consequences for the employability of many young people in the future.

4.12. In view of the already heavy pressure on the Secondary School curriculum, we concur with the view of the Computer Policy Advisory Committee that "... it is not feasible for secondary schools to provide pre-vocational training in this area ...". However, we also agree with them that it should be possible to provide computer awareness courses that will make students familiar with the advantages and limitations of computers. The widespread use of computers is already a fact of life, and it is important for all citizens to understand what computers can and cannot do; it seems certain that in the future, persons with no understanding of computers are likely to be disadvantaged both socially and economically. We therefore strongly recommend that training in computer awareness be introduced into the Year 8-10 curriculum as a matter of urgency. The course should include elementary instruction in the skills necessary to seek, isolate and use reference material through computer terminals. Whilst some specialist instruction will be necessary, we strongly recommend that computer instruction in Years 8-10 should form an integral part of existing school subjects and not be introduced as yet another special subject in an already crowded curriculum. We also point out that although the possession of a computer will clearly be beneficial, basic training in computer awareness and interaction with computers can and should be carried out in all schools, regardless of whether they have a computer or not. It seems inevitable that "computer literacy" as it was described in one submission to the Select Committee, is destined to become one of the basic skills. The keyboard skill necessary to interact with the computer can be taught on a standard typewriter, and we believe that ideally, every high school student should be taught to type. In practice, it will almost certainly not be possible to achieve the ideal, but we believe that every high school student should have sufficient familiarity with the standard keyboard to enable him or her to develop reasonable competence by practising in their own time should they be motivated to do so. A speed of 20 words per minute on simple exercises would seem to be a reasonable standard to aim at. Many schools offer typing as an extra-curricular activity. This practice should be continued and supported, and positive action taken to ensure that students are aware of the likely future importance of acquiring keyboard skills with a view to achieving maximum participation.

4.13. The Board of Secondary School Studies currently offers a syllabus in Computer Mathematics, an element of "social application of the computer" as part of the Social Mathematics syllabus, and a data processing element in Accounting. Some schools are offering Computer Science as a school subject. The Select Committee recommends that a board subject in Computer Science should be developed as a matter of urgency. The course should emphasize the sensible application of computers, and not concentrate solely on programming and operation. We note with concern that Computer Science is not yet recognized as a teaching subject, and we point out that if, for example, Computer Science were to be recognized as a teaching subject from 1981 onwards, it will be 1985 before trained teachers become available in any significant numbers. We therefore recommend that the Board of Teacher Education acts immediately to secure the provision of an adequate number of teachers of Computer Science trained in Queensland. Unless urgent action is taken, the Education Department may be forced to recruit teachers from overseas or interstate as teachers and advisors in Computer Science, and in view of the present employment situation, we would regard this alternative as completely unacceptable. Furthermore, in view of the widespread applications for computers, prospective teachers in all disciplines should be offered the opportunity to "major" in Computer Science as their second teaching subject. In addition to the need for teachers of Computer Science, there will also be a need for teachers in all disciplines with the skills necessary to write basic computer programmes if the potential of the computer as a teaching aid is to be fully exploited.

4.14. The Select Committee has received a number of submissions advocating the establishment of separate Senior Schools to cater for Years 11 and 12, and also a proposal for the addition of a Year 13 to the school programme. As

well, we have received a number of proposals concerning the compulsory school leaving age, some advocating that it should be extended, and some advocating that it be reduced. In the matter of the need for Senior Schools, the Director's Committee on Secondary Education have investigated this and made recommendations to the Director of Secondary Education. There are three major issues to be considered. First, the establishment of separate Senior Schools drawing their students from a number of Junior Schools would make viable a wider range of curriculum offerings. Second, it would facilitate a more flexible approach to timetabling, and thus simplify the introduction of work experience programs and link courses with other institutions. Third, it would allow Senior students to be given greater responsibility in such matters as attendance at the school and permit a more adult approach to matters of discipline than is possible when the rules must cater for a full range of students from Year 8 to 12. This, in turn, would facilitate the return to the school of more mature students who, having left the school system to enter the work force, wish to return to complete their Senior secondary studies. The Director's Committee on Secondary Education has made the following recommendations:—

- (1) Schools be encouraged to create a separate identity for their Senior sections, in which students have greater opportunity to experience adult responsibility;
- (2) Trials of the alternative organizations patterns—
  - (a) separate Senior School;
  - (b) Senior annexe; and
  - (c) Junior/Senior Schools with separate identities, be supported and evaluated in selected schools where there is appropriate teacher and community support;
- (3) A rationalization of the subjects offered by the Senior Schools in a given community be undertaken, in order to maximize the effective use of staff and resources, and hence to improve the available range of student offerings;
- (4) Appropriate committees be established at State and regional levels, to become involved in policy development, detailed planning, supervision and support.

The Select Committee supports these recommendations in principle, and recommends that trials of alternative organizational structures for the Senior Secondary School be undertaken. With regard to the introduction of a Year 13, we have already recommended that a more flexible approach be adopted to the time taken to complete Senior studies. We also recognize the pressures to extend the curriculum, which have resulted in part from the more widespread use of technology in our world. The Director's Committee on Secondary Education, in a *Report to Schools*, dated March, 1977, noted that:—

"... It is a matter of considerable concern, for instance, that we presently find large numbers of our future scientists and technologists who are not being confronted with the ethical and sociological implications of an advancing technology. Conversely, it is equally disturbing to find the majority of our students of the humanities who ignore, through their subject selections, studies which would give them an insight into science and technology."

Whilst we recognize the desirability of broadening the educational experience, we believe that a majority of young people have "outgrown" school at or before the end of Year 12, and that given the present organizational structure, it would be preferable that any extension of the educational experience should take place in a post-secondary institution. If and when Senior schools become widespread in Queensland, it may then be desirable to review the situation. With regard to the school leaving age, the number of students staying on voluntarily, beyond the end of Year 10, suggests that compulsory extension of the school leaving age is unnecessary, and we recommend that it not be extended. We also do not recommend that the present compulsory school leaving age be reduced. The need now in our society is for more and not less education. However, we do recommend that Regional Directors be given discretion to allow any student over 14 years of age to leave school, if the student (a) has been recommended for early release by the School Principal or Head Teacher and (b) has either completed Year 10 or can produce evidence of a firm offer of an apprenticeship or other secure employment.

## SECTION 5—QUEENSLAND SCHOOLS

5.1. A number of issues have arisen during the course of the enquiry which pertain to both Primary and Secondary schools. These include accountability in education, school discipline, the community use of school facilities, special education, and the needs of gifted children. In addition the Select Committee is required by its terms of reference to enquire into and report upon "the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organizations concerning any aspect of education". It is clear from the evidence which the Select Committee has received, that there is a wide variety of opinions on the precise nature of public accountability in education, and how that accountability is to be demonstrated. Certainly the concept of accountability is multi-dimensional and can be variously defined. The evidence suggests, however, that in Queensland the public requires two major forms of accountability. First, it requires formal accountability through educational authorities to the Minister and ultimately to Parliament and the people. This is demonstrated by published reports and formal and informal presentations to the public by the Minister, his officers, and by non-Government educational authorities. Second, there is an informal accountability to students, their parents and the local community, which teachers demonstrate through their interest in children, through sharpening their professional knowledge and insight, through their commitment to education, and through personal integrity. There have been those who have tried to suggest that there has been a significant lack of accountability particularly within the State School system, and that as a result teachers generally have behaved irresponsibly. The Select Committee emphatically rejects this point of view. It is not supported by the evidence which we have received nor by our own investigations. There have, we believe, been two major problems. One is that neither the formal nor the informal channels of accountability have been as visible as they should have been; that is to say, there has been inadequate communication between the education system and the public at large. The other is that the few cases where individual teachers have behaved irresponsibly have been magnified out of proportion in the public mind by widespread and often excessive publicity. We have continually stressed that the involvement of the whole community is essential to the development of good schools, and in particular that it is essential that children, teachers and parents work together co-operatively and harmoniously towards the optimum development of each child.

5.2. It has been suggested that public accountability can be much improved by a devolution of the responsibility for decision-making. We support this view and have made a number of recommendations, such as the introduction of school advisory councils, with this end in mind. Inevitably, there have been those who have argued that our proposals have been too conservative. We make no apology for this. Experience suggests that sudden and radical change invariably creates more problems than it solves. However, we recommend that the devolution of responsibility to regions and schools should be an on-going process aimed eventually at giving schools significant autonomy. A problem arises in a large education system because inevitably, regions and schools develop at differential rates and communities vary widely in their ability, and indeed their willingness, to accept the increased levels of responsibility which devolution of responsibility and autonomy imply. We reject the point of view which suggests that the process of devolution must be geared to the pace of the slowest, as appears frequently to have been the policy in the past, and we recommend that a more flexible approach be adopted to organization and administration, with a view to allowing delegation of responsibility to proceed at different rates according to differing circumstances. School boards or councils have been set up by Legislation in the Australian Capital Territory, and in the Northern Territory. A preliminary assessment of their effectiveness suggests that they have generally projected the school well in the community, have reacted more readily to the immediate and particular needs of the school, and have been better able to interpret the needs of the community in the administration of schools compared to more centralized systems of administration. However, it has been argued that School Boards have tended to slow down decision-making in areas previously handled by the administration of the school, and that a number of problems have arisen because of incompatibility of members of the Boards. The Select Committee supports the concept of the School Board in principle, and believes that potentially this system could solve many of the problems which arise because different communities from different parts of the State have different expectations of their schools. However, experience in other parts of Australia, and indeed overseas, suggests the need for definite terms of reference for such Boards, and careful thought to the composition of membership and the manner of selection or election. The position of Parents' and Citizens' Associations and their satellite bodies, would also need to be examined in relation to School Boards, as would the method of financing. We are advised that in the United Kingdom the practice of political parties nominating candidates for membership on School Boards, even to the Board of the local

infant school, has developed, and that School Boards have become in some places, the first step in the career of aspiring politicians. The Select Committee is unanimous in condemning this practice, which is quite different in principle and in effect from the practice of elected representatives at the various levels of Government becoming more closely involved with the community life of our schools—a process which we regard as highly desirable. We recommend that the development of School Boards in other parts of Australia be kept under continuing review by the Minister and his Officers, with a view to their possible introduction in Queensland as the end product of a continuing process of devolution of responsibility.

5.3. Education regions have been operating in Queensland for nearly 30 years and have been successful because they have brought educational administration closer to the people concerned. A recent policy has been to extend the authority of Regional Directors, and the Select Committee recommends that this policy be continued and accelerated. There is still considerable scope for regions to be given much more responsibility and autonomy in decision-making. We particularly wish to commend the establishment of the Brisbane North Regional Education Council. The membership of the Council consists of the Regional Director as Chairman, members of the inspectorate, principals of Primary and Secondary Schools, administrators, classroom teachers, and several members of the community. It is conducting a "Community Education Project" divided progressively into five stages, which are:—

- Stage 1—programmes, from pre-school through to Year 12, which reach into the community, e.g. community resource personnel; face to face reporting
- Stage 2—programmes related to the use of school facilities by the community
- Stage 3—programmes set up for adults as well as children
- Stage 4—structures whereby the community can negotiate in some aspects of school decision-making
- Stage 5—co-ordination of community resources by the school for the education of its clientele.

We are advised that a major initiative of this programme, "Community Outreach", conducted in July, 1978, with the slogan "Our Schools are your Schools", which set out to encourage people into the schools of the region, was highly successful and created interest throughout Australia. The Select Committee sees the establishment of Regional Councils as a highly desirable means of improving school-community relations, and recommends that they be introduced into all education regions. There is a wide diversity between regions, and there seem to be several areas of decisionmaking which could and should be given over to the region. The various climatic areas of the State have differing needs in terms of buildings and furniture and decentralization of the administration of works would ensure that cognisance is taken of those differences. From an educational standpoint some regions have larger numbers of recent migrants, others have relatively large numbers of Aboriginal children, yet others have the problems which result from remoteness and low population density. These problems, together with different economic characteristics of the regions, have a considerable impact on the interpretation of curricula at the regional and school levels, and we believe that it would be beneficial for regions to have the assistance of their own curriculum sections. Other support services should also be further decentralized. The decentralization of the Correspondence Schools which we recommended in paragraph 4.5 of our Fifth Interim Report *Isolated Children and Isolated Schools*, should be co-ordinated with this programme and the Regional Correspondence School placed under the control of the appropriate Regional Director.

5.4. Considerable concern has been expressed regarding indiscipline in schools which in some instances is having a harmful effect on the education of the majority of students who wish to learn. We recommend that the existing regulations with respect to detention and corporal punishment should therefore be continued. It is also of critical importance that a school Principal who takes disciplinary action in good faith, and believing it to be in the best interests of the student and the school, should be confident of receiving full Departmental support for his actions. Similarly, it is essential that teachers who take disciplinary action in good faith should receive the support of their Principal and the Department. We have been advised that some school Principals and teachers are not confident that they will receive such support. We therefore recommend that statements to the effect that school Principals who act in good faith in disciplinary matters will be supported by the Department and the Minister, and that teachers will receive similar support, including the support of their Principals, should be inserted into the regulations. Whilst the disciplinary problem appears

to be more serious in Secondary Schools, some of the problems which are likely to lead to deviant behaviour in adolescence will already be apparent in the Primary School. It is essential that the foundations of self-discipline are laid in the Primary School, and that professional assistance is available to assist with the counselling of "problem children". We wish to make it clear that notwithstanding legislative provisions for compulsory education, attendance at a State School is a right which should not be extended indefinitely to students who continually behave in a manner which makes it impossible for teachers to create a classroom environment conducive to learning, and thus deny to other students the opportunity to learn. The Select Committee notes with approval, the report *Discipline In Secondary Schools* completed in November, 1978, by a joint committee of the Queensland Teachers Union and the Queensland Department of Education. The opening paragraph of that report points out that:—

"A major factor hindering the academic progress of students is an increasing problem of indiscipline in schools. While not all schools or sections of schools are affected to the same extent, the problem is so damaging to the educational opportunities of our students, and so detrimental to the well-being of those who work in schools, that there is a responsibility on all those involved in the educational system to seek means of remedying the situation."

5.5. There are no simple solutions to the problems of indiscipline, and whilst schools may reasonably be expected to make a significant contribution to discipline, they are unlikely to succeed when acting alone. The report of the joint Union-Departmental Committee, points out that:—

"The problems of deviant school behaviour, with which the teacher is confronted, are often the tip of the iceberg of maladjustment, the bulk of which is centred in the home. While the school, with its guidance system, has the potential to identify students who are mal-adjusted, its attempts to treat the students are frustrated by the fact that the roots of the problem are not located in the school. Any remedial action adopted by the school should be supplemented by corresponding programmes within the home and community."

This view is amply supported by evidence which the Select Committee has received from a number of other sources. We are hopeful that the initiatives we have proposed in our reports to improve communication between our schools and the community at large will make a significant contribution to the solution of the difficult problem of school discipline. However, it is also clear that cases arise which require professional assistance which the school community and the Department of Education cannot provide. The Education Department has been expanding guidance services as rapidly as resources have permitted; however, there is still a shortage of Guidance Officers, particularly in provincial and rural areas. Guidance Officers are expected to attend to a wide variety of functions and duties, the most important of which are those directed towards improving the educational and vocational decisions made by students. Guidance Officers also undertake personal counselling and advise classroom teachers on pastoral care matters, and their contribution to the welfare of students who are suffering transient difficulties is clearly invaluable. The time which Guidance Officers can spend with each individual student is, however, limited, and they cannot be expected to treat students who are seriously maladjusted. Furthermore, we do not believe that the Education Department should attempt to duplicate the services provided by the Queensland Department of Children's Services.

5.6. The Union-Departmental Committee on Discipline in Secondary Schools advised that "schools should have ready accessibility to the services of trained social workers to provide a liaison between the home, the school and other welfare agencies", and also that "feasibility of experienced social workers being attached to or at least identified with, individual schools, should be investigated." The Select Committee recommends that both the proposals be accepted, and that to this end closer liaison be developed at all levels between the Department of Education and the Department of Children's Services. Officers of the Department of Children's Services are frequently in contact with families in conflict, and with children in trouble, and could provide vital input to the school about a child's background. We are advised that seldom, if ever, are formal approaches for information made to officers of the Department of Children's Services, and we regard this as a matter for concern. It has been suggested that one reason for this may be Section 144 of the Children's Services Act, "Secrecy provisions", which makes the supply of information by the Children's Services Department a somewhat cumbersome procedure requiring the approval of the Minister. We therefore recommend that Legislative action be taken which will more easily permit the interchange of information between officers of the Department of Children's Services and school Principals, head teachers and guidance officers, under the same oath of fidelity and secrecy which is required of officers of the Children's Services Department.

We also recommend that formal administrative procedures be established and published for the exchange of such information, and that school Principals and guidance officers be actively encouraged to solicit the assistance of trained social workers from the Department of Children's Services in appropriate cases.

5.7. In its recommendations on policy, the Union-Departmental Committee on Discipline in Secondary Schools has proposed that "each school should have clearly thought through its aims and objectives and proclaimed them for students, parents, staff and the community". This is clearly in conformity with the view of the Select Committee expressed in paragraph 2.3 of our Second Interim Report in which we said, "We believe that schools must have aims against which to judge the effectiveness of their work and hence the kinds of improvements that they need to make from time to time." The development of such a statement of aims by each school would be complementary to the general statement of aims for Queensland Primary and Secondary Schools which we have proposed. The Union-Departmental Committee went on to say that "there should be a regular review of rules and procedures, which have been determined by the Principal in consultation with teachers, parents and students", and that "the rules should be carefully explained to students not only at the start of each year but also at regular intervals. New students and their parents should be carefully oriented to the school. These rules should be in written form." The Select Committee recommends that both these proposals should be adopted. When a child's behaviour is not satisfactory, it is essential that parents or guardians are notified immediately, and, ideally, should be invited to have a direct personal interview with the Principal. In some cases, however, this will not be possible, either because parents refuse to attend such an interview, or are prevented from doing so by family circumstances. The Select Committee recommends, therefore, that a system of confidential reports be introduced which will allow school Principals to communicate frankly with parents in writing when attempts to arrange face to face interviews have not succeeded. We further recommend that such reports should be prepared personally by the Principal, should bear the personal signature of the Principal, and should be prepared in only two copies, the file copy to be kept under lock and key personally by the Principal. These reports should not be transferrable between schools, and the file copy should be sent to parents for their disposal when the child leaves the school. Subject to these restrictions, Legislation should be introduced protecting teachers and education authorities from the possibility that such reports might be used against them in legal proceedings. We recommend the insertion in the Education Act of a paragraph similar to section 144 (2) of the Children's Services Act which states that:—

"A person appointed for the purposes of this Act or a person assisting such an appointee in carrying this Act into effect who inserts or publishes in the records of the Department or makes or gives any allegation, comment or opinion in respect of any matter touching or concerned with the history, family background or welfare of any child shall not thereby incur any liability if he has acted in good faith and without malice and with reasonable care."

In any proceeding taken against any such person on account of such an insertion or publication the burden of proof that such person has acted otherwise than in good faith or with malice or without reasonable care shall lie upon the plaintiff."

We further recommend that Principals be authorized to initiate similar reports in cases where the educational progress of the child is not satisfactory, but serious breaches of discipline are not involved. We also recommend that the Legislation authorize school Principals to make these reports and any other school records available to officers of the Children's Services Department in appropriate cases.

5.8. Truancy, which for the purposes of this Report we define as persistent absence from school, as opposed to the child who, as an isolated incident, decides to take an unauthorized day or half-day off school, is also a matter for concern, and we are advised that it is on the increase. At present, school Principals are required to report truancy to the Police with a view to action being taken through the Courts. The Select Committee believes that this approach is outdated and inappropriate in the majority of cases. We are advised that the majority of cases of truancy arise because the child is emotionally disturbed, and that this disturbance frequently is associated with stresses within the family. The Select Committee recommends that in future, cases of truancy should be referred to the Department of Children's Services with a view to treating the basic cause of the problem. We further recommend that the section of the Education Act which imposes penalties on parents who fail to ensure a child's attendance at school, be retained, but that the onus for commencing proceedings for such an offence should rest with officers of the Department of Children's Services in the first instance, and not with the Police Force.



5.9. It has also been argued that there is a relationship between school size and disciplinary problems, and indeed, between school size and other aspects of education. Whilst common sense would suggest that large schools are more difficult to manage, the research evidence with respect to school size is unfortunately indeterminate. We have already commented on the size of Secondary Schools in Section 4, and there are benefits which accrue to large Secondary Schools which include the possibility of offering a wider range of courses which must be offset against the managerial difficulties. In the case of the Primary School, the best evidence and advice we have suggests that the ideal size may lie between 350 and 450 students. There are economies of scale in large schools which must be considered when resources are limited; however, these must be offset against educational considerations, and there appears at present to be little clear evidence concerning the point at which economies of scale are substantially exhausted. We therefore recommend that the Department of Education initiate studies aimed at establishing an optimum range for the size of schools, having regard to both educational and economic factors.

5.10. Whilst there are clearly many factors that influence school discipline and educational achievement, the evidence strongly suggests, and the Select Committee is firmly convinced, that the most important factors are the professional competence, attitudes and influence of the school Principal and his teaching staff. The primary role of the school Principal should be executive, rather than administrative. It is the Principal who is responsible for setting and maintaining the standards for all aspects of school activity. We have received complaints that the requirements of Departmental administration have become so demanding that school Principals have little time to devote to other duties. Some school Principals, however, have assured us that this need not be the case, and that many routine matters can be delegated to other staff members. Unfortunately, some school Principals apparently believe that their effectiveness—and hence their prospects for further advancement—is measured primarily by the efficiency with which they handle the Departmental paper work. There are also those who find it difficult to delegate their administrative responsibilities. The Select Committee recognizes the need for effective administration in our schools, but we are unanimous that the first, and overwhelmingly the most important duty of a school Principal, is the supervision of the educational activities of the school. In our view, any school Principal who permits himself to become so overwhelmed by the minutiae of routine administration that he is unable to perform his managerial functions effectively, is falling well below the standard required. We would regard any attempt by the Department to lay down a blue-print for school management as highly undesirable, but we believe that many school Principals need, and that most would welcome, more in-service training in managerial skills than they appear to be receiving at present. The knowledge born of experience is gained more quickly, understood more clearly and absorbed more deeply, when it is supplemented by formal management education. We therefore recommend that the Department of Education develop a programme of management education for Principals, Deputy Principals and experienced teachers, and that courses and seminars be offered both at an introductory level, and as continuation training. We also recommend that the Department initiate discussions with education authorities and schools in the non-Government sector, with a view to offering such courses on a co-operative basis to all sectors of the Queensland education system.

5.11. Important though the influence of the school Principal may be, it is the classroom teacher who has daily contact with the students, and who therefore influences directly the development of their attitudes, values and behaviour. The Tasmanian Teachers' Federation prepared a report on discipline in schools which formed part of its submission to the Select Committee. In that report, the Federation noted that the quality of the attitudes and values which the teacher brings into the classroom situation "... is a highly important factor bearing on the level of student discipline within the school. Teacher behaviour or attitude is at times a root cause of indiscipline ...". The report went on to say that "The performance of the teacher in the classroom is very closely related to the disciplinary problem." The Joint Committee of the Queensland Teachers' Union and the Queensland Department of Education drew attention to the importance of supervision by teachers. They said:—

"Teachers should supervise out of their classrooms. Sporting and cultural activities are a positive and desirable form of supervision. They should supervise before classes, between classes, and after school. Schools teach values, attitudes, skills. Supervision is a form of teaching values and attitudes. Supervision demonstrates a caring attitude."

The Select Committee endorses this opinion. We are confident that it is the opinion of the majority of teachers in Queensland; indeed, we have been impressed by the willingness of teachers to devote their time with enthusiasm to the supervision and promotion of extra-curricular activities.

Unfortunately, there are still a few teachers who apparently believe that their responsibilities start and finish at the door of the classroom. Such teachers reflect little credit upon themselves and throw an additional burden on their more dedicated colleagues. We recommend that it be made clear to all teachers that the supervision of sporting, cultural or other extra-curricular activities is an essential part of their official duties.

5.12. The importance of the competence of classroom teachers in relation to both discipline and educational achievement is self-evident and raises the question of the adequacy of methods of teacher selection and the procedures for handling unsatisfactory teachers. Both these issues have been the subject of public concern expressed in submissions to the Select Committee. The Tasmanian Teachers' Federation, commenting on teacher selection, said that "The training institutions should undertake more screening of students during their course ..." and pointed out "... that there are many sincere and dedicated young people who are anxious to undertake the profession but are unsuited to it, and it is unfair both to them and their future pupils that they should be permitted to enter teaching." The Select Committee agrees with this view and with the view widely expressed in evidence to us that the teacher training institutions have tended to place too much emphasis on academic success and too little on the personal qualities which will make for a successful teacher. The Select Committee recommends that the Board of Teacher Education opens discussions with the teacher training institutions regarding the introduction of a positive process of continuous screening of teacher trainees with a view to directing those who are clearly unsuitable as teachers into other fields of study as early as possible during their training period and with appropriate credit for studies already completed. It is clearly in the best interests of students that their suitability or otherwise for the teaching profession should be determined as early as possible and should not be deferred until they have completed three or four years of training, only to find that their efforts have been wasted.

5.13. There will inevitably be those whose unsuitability for teaching is not discovered until they have commenced their teaching careers. The Queensland Joint Union/Department Committee on Discipline, in Secondary Schools pointed out that "... there are in the service a few teachers who, for one reason or another, have gained little with experience and remain incapable of controlling a class. Their influence is disastrous." The Select Committee has investigated the procedures of the Department of Education for dealing with unsatisfactory teachers and for dispensing with the services of those who it is determined cannot overcome their difficulties and believes them to be adequate. The Select Committee is sympathetic to the problems of those who, after extensive training, are found to be unsuitable to their chosen profession, but points out that this problem is by no means confined to the teaching service. Nevertheless, we note the comment by the Union/Departmental Committee that "Since the disability is particularly relative to the teacher-student relationship, and in no way indicates incompetence in other areas, it may be possible to consider the transfer of such a person to another branch of the public service" and recommends that transfer should be considered in appropriate cases and as staffing levels permit. There has also been concern expressed regarding the possibility that a teacher, who has been dismissed or invited to resign for lack of professional competence or for disciplinary reasons by one employing authority, may be re-employed as a teacher by another authority to the subsequent detriment of students. The Select Committee does not believe the problem to be widespread, but we believe that there are occasions when teachers who resign or are dismissed should be invited to show cause why their registration as teachers should not be terminated. We therefore recommend that Legislation be enacted requiring all teacher-employing authorities to furnish a report to the Board of Teacher Education on any teacher who is dismissed or who is invited to resign as an alternative to dismissal, or who resigns in circumstances which that authority considers raise questions as to the person's suitability for continued employment as a teacher, and that the Board of Teacher Education be required to determine whether or not the circumstances warrant the teacher's name being removed from the register, and to remove teachers from the register in appropriate cases. We further recommend that the Board of Teacher Education re-examine its registration procedures with a view to ensuring that teachers who have terminated their employment as teachers in other parts of Australia and overseas under circumstances which would lead to their names being removed from the register, had that termination taken place in Queensland, are not placed on the Queensland register as teachers.

5.14. We have placed a heavy emphasis on the role of the Principal, the teacher and the counsellor in the solution of disciplinary problems. Inevitably, however, there will be a small minority of students who persist in disruptive behaviour and who do not respond to counselling or to the application of disciplinary sanctions. We have already noted that attendance at a State School is a right which should not be extended indefinitely to those who persist in disrupting the

life of the school and the classroom, to the detriment of other students. There are already provisions in the Education Regulations for the exclusion of pupils, but these do not appear to be well understood by teachers and are, in our view, less than adequate. We therefore recommend that Regulation 7 of the Education Regulations be amended to read as follows:—

"7. (1) A Principal may temporarily exclude a student from attendance at a State School for any school day or such lesser period as may seem appropriate under the circumstances for—

- (a) want of cleanliness;
- (b) want of respectable dress.

The Principal shall notify a parent or guardian of his action and of his reasons therefor and shall record the temporary exclusion in a register maintained for that purpose:

Provided that where any pupil or student repeatedly fails to maintain a satisfactory standard of cleanliness and dress, the Principal may determine that such failure constitutes incorrigible disobedience.

(2) The Principal may temporarily exclude from attendance at a State School any pupil or student suffering from an infectious or contagious disease and may require the submission of a medical certificate before readmission.

A Principal, in determining whether a pupil may be temporarily excluded for suffering from an infectious or contagious disease, shall be guided by the Exclusion Table published from time to time in the Education Office Gazette.

The Principal shall notify the parent of his action and of his reasons therefor and shall forward a copy of such notification to the Director-General.

(3) A Principal may temporarily exclude a pupil or student from attendance at a State School for—

- (a) incorrigible disobedience or insolence;
- (b) persistently disruptive behaviour which, in his judgement, is interfering with the rights of the staff or of other students; or
- (c) gross misconduct at school or when travelling to and from school that is in the opinion of the Principal likely to prejudice the good order and discipline of the school.

Provided that—

- (a) in all cases where the Principal proposes to temporarily exclude a pupil or student for incorrigible disobedience, insolence or persistently disruptive behaviour, the Principal shall satisfy himself that all alternative avenues of approach, including counselling of the student and where possible the parents and the application of other disciplinary sanctions from time to time prescribed, have been exhausted, or are inappropriate, having regard to the particular circumstances of the case;
  - (b) the purpose of exclusion under this sub-section is to be the protection of the rights of the staff or of other students, rather than a disciplinary measure in itself, and no student shall be excluded as a punishment for an isolated act of indiscipline other than gross misconduct likely to prejudice the good order and discipline of the school, for example vandalism or assault;
  - (c) exclusion is invariably to be associated with follow-up action by the Children's Services Department or other welfare authority or by the Police.
- (4) When it has been determined that a student is to be excluded under Regulation 7 (3), the Principal shall—
- (a) notify a parent or guardian of the student in writing of the action proposed and of the reasons therefor and of the procedures for appeal and shall, where possible, notify a parent or guardian verbally before the order for exclusion is put into effect;
  - (b) notify the Regional Director of Education and the Director-General of Education of the facts surrounding the case;
  - (c) notify the Children's Services Department, setting out the facts of the case and requesting a meeting with an officer of that Department to determine appropriate follow-up action;
  - (d) in consultation with the Children's Services Department or other relevant authority notify a parent or guardian of the student of the follow-up action that is proposed.

(5) The powers of exclusion under Regulation 7 (3) shall be as follows—

- (a) the Principal may exclude any student for a period not exceeding one (1) week (five school days), on his own initiative;
- (b) the Regional Director of Education may order the exclusion of any student for a period of up to two (2) weeks (ten school days), and
- (c) the Director-General, with the approval of the Minister, may direct that a student be excluded for any period as shall appear necessary under the circumstances, including an indefinite period or permanently and may direct that such exclusion shall apply to any or to all State schools.

Provided that the person authorized to issue an order for exclusion may discontinue such exclusion at any time and at any time discontinue any period of temporary exclusion and in such case shall immediately advise all parties who were notified of the exclusion as to its discontinuance and his reasons therefor.

(6) In all cases of exclusion under Regulation 7 (3), the Director-General shall cause an investigation to be made which should include, where possible, an investigation by the Department of Children's Services and/or any other agency as he shall deem appropriate in the circumstances and shall determine what further action, if any, is to be taken and shall satisfy himself that a parent or guardian of the student has been given reasonable opportunity to present a case opposing the exclusion. Parents or guardians are to be advised that their appeal should be forwarded to the Regional Director of Education in the first instance. The Regional Director shall forward such an appeal to the Director-General without delay and may append comment on the appeal by himself and by the Principal. The Director-General shall include the appeal with a recommendation that he makes to the Minister, or shall inform the Minister if the parents or guardians have signified that they do not intend to appeal. Parents and guardians are also to be informed of their right to make a separate approach to the Minister through their Member of the Legislative Assembly, in addition or as an alternative to a formal appeal under this sub-section.

(7) Where the Principal and the Regional Director of Education consider that a student should be transferred to another school, the agreement of the parents or guardians shall be sought. If the parents will not agree, the circumstances are to be reported to the Director-General of Education, who, with the approval of the Minister, may direct that the student be so transferred. Before presenting a recommendation to the Minister for a compulsory transfer, the Director-General shall notify the parents or guardians of the student who shall be given reasonable opportunity to present a case to the Minister, setting out their reasons, if any, for opposing the transfer.

(8) Where the Minister determines that the student shall be excluded from attendance at any State school for a period exceeding two (2) weeks (ten school days), the Director-General of Education shall cause the Director of the Department of Children's Services to be notified. The Director of the Department of Children's Services—

- (i) in all cases where the student is subject to compulsory education under the Act, and the period of exclusion extends beyond the end of the semester in which the exclusion is effected, shall take the necessary action to have the student committed to care and control and to be educated at an institution administered by the Department of Children's Services;
- (ii) where the exclusion exceeds two (2) weeks (ten school days), but does not extend beyond the end of the semester in which the exclusion is effected, and the student is subject to compulsory education under the Act, shall institute such action as he deems appropriate, having regard to the circumstances;
- (iii) in all cases where the exclusion exceeds two (2) weeks (ten school days), and the student, being a minor, is above the age at which compulsory education is required by the Act, shall take such action, if any, which he deems to be appropriate.

(9) It is further provided that where any student is excluded from any or all state schools, and the parents or guardians are able to secure the enrolment of that student in an alternative approved educational

institution, the Director-General of Education, with the concurrence of the Director of the Department of Children's Services, may determine that no further action shall be taken."

5.15. The Select Committee stresses that it regards the decision to exclude any student, and particularly a student undergoing compulsory education, as an extremely grave one, and we therefore believe it to be essential that the regulations for exclusion should be specified in much greater detail than is the case at present. However, the decision to exclude a student is one which should only be made when those empowered to make that decision are fully satisfied that no other alternative remains, for it is, in some sense, a tacit admission that the education system has failed in its prime objective, that of educating the student.

5.16. In parallel with concern regarding the behaviour of students, there is also some concern in the community regarding the behaviour of teachers. Our investigations have shown that the community expects teachers to maintain higher personal standards than any other group or profession. The Select Committee wishes to place on record that the standards it has observed to be maintained by the vast majority of Queensland teachers are good and reflect credit on themselves and their profession. Inevitably, there have been a few teachers whose dress and behaviour have fallen short of the standards which the community expects of professional people, and these exceptions have sometimes received a disproportionate amount of publicity. In some cases, failure to meet standards acceptable to the local community has been inadvertent. As one parent expressed it "... dress and behaviour which may pass unnoticed in the city or which may, at any rate, be tolerated as only mildly eccentric, may be viewed with alarm in a small and essentially conservative community ...". In our Fifth Interim Report, *Isolated Children and Isolated Schools*, paragraph 4.8, we recommended "... that the pre-service training of teachers should include an element designed to introduce beginning teachers to the educational problems of isolation and social aspects of service in isolated schools ...". Some teachers, particularly young teachers, appear not to understand that in a State as large as Queensland, community expectations with respect to dress and behaviour can vary widely. We therefore recommend that the Principal of every school should, as part of the induction of every new teacher, include an element designed to inform the new teacher of the expectations of the community, with respect to the school and its teachers. If teachers are to maintain discipline among the students, it goes without saying that their own standards of self-discipline, dress and behaviour must be exemplary, and as we have already stated, we have for the most part found it to be so. However, we state emphatically that the responsibility for ensuring that all teachers conform to acceptable standards rests firmly with the school Principal. The present Regulations require a Principal of a State school to "... report to the Director-General misconduct, incompetence or insubordination on the part of a member of the staff of such State school". We recommend that the direct responsibility of school Principals, for the personal and professional conduct of their teachers, should be made explicit in the regulations, and that their disciplinary powers should be strengthened. In particular, we recommend that Regulation 37 (1) (c), be amended to read as follows:—

- "(c) shall be responsible for ensuring that the teachers of such State school maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct, and shall forthwith report to the Director-General and to the Regional Director of Education misconduct, incompetence or insubordination on the part of a member of the staff of such State school, and in the event of such misconduct, incompetence or insubordination, may—
- (i) relieve a member of the staff of such State school from teaching duties for a period not exceeding two school days pending a determination by the Regional Director or the Director-General of Education;
  - (ii) with the prior concurrence of the Regional Director, extend the period during which a member of his staff is relieved from teaching duties to any period not exceeding five school days;
  - (iii) with the prior concurrence of the Director-General of Education, relieve from teaching duties or suspend a member of the staff of any such State school for such period including an indefinite period as the Director-General shall determine, pending the outcome of a departmental enquiry or disciplinary action and subject to the appeal procedures laid down by regulation: Provided that where a member of staff is relieved from teaching duties the Director-General of Education may prescribe what alternate duties that member of staff is to perform and at what location."

5.17. The Select Committee wishes to record a special commendation of the many voluntary associations who work to further the education of children who suffer from mental or physical handicaps. The Select Committee also notes the Report to the Minister for Education, *The Roles of Government and the Voluntary Association in the Education of Handicapped Children in Queensland*, prepared by the Advisory Council for Special Education under the Chairmanship of Professor B. H. Watts, O.B.E., and presented to the Minister in March, 1979. In particular, we support the recommendation in that Report:—

"That the Minister for Education seek amendment to the *Education Act* 1964-1974 whereby the provision of education for all handicapped children up to 18 years of age is made the statutory responsibility of the Minister."

Of recent times, the emphasis in Special Education has been directed towards fostering the education of handicapped children in the normal classroom, and has moved away from completely separate provision. The Select Committee has been impressed by the extent to which quite seriously handicapped children have been enabled to join their peer group in the mainstream of education as a result of special training. We also note with approval the continuing trend towards decentralization of Special Education services, and recommend that the process be continued and accelerated. In Section 4 of our Third Interim Report, we drew attention to the need for early identification of children who are educationally "at risk", so that remedial action could be taken. It is therefore pleasing to record that, since the publication of that Report, the Federal Government has announced its intention of making additional funds available to the States to assist with the development of appropriate programmes for the purpose.

5.18. Whilst the systematic effort is being made to upgrade the provision of education for the physically and intellectually handicapped, a number of people have expressed their concern that there appears to be no systematic provision for the needs of exceptionally gifted and talented children. Many people have believed, and indeed still believe, that gifted and talented children will invariably succeed on the basis of natural ability. Unfortunately, the evidence we have examined does not support this view. In 1972, the United States Commissioner of Education in *Education of The Gifted And Talented: Report To The Congress Of The United States*, said:—

"We know that gifted children can be identified as early as the pre-school grades and that these children in later life often make outstanding contributions to our society in the arts, politics, business, and the sciences. But disturbingly, research has confirmed that many talented children underachieve, performing far less than their intellectual potential might suggest. We are increasingly being stripped of the comfortable notion that a bright mind will make its own way. On the contrary, intellectual and creative talent cannot survive educational neglect and apathy."

More recently, the New South Wales Minister for Education established a Committee under the chairmanship of Mr C. L. Macdonald, a Staff Inspector of his Department, to report on the education of the talented child. The Committee reported in April, 1977. The title of the Report is *The Education of the Talented Child*, and in its letter of transmittal to the Minister, the Committee said:—

"The talented are possibly the most disadvantaged group in our schools for they generally have not received sufficient stimulation to achieve their full potential. Often they are easy to ignore or are considered a threat rather than a valuable resource ..."

It goes without saying that our education system should be designed to allow all individuals to develop to their full capacity, but in addition the exceptionally gifted and talented children represent an important national resource which, on the grounds of self-interest alone, the community cannot afford to neglect.

5.19. There are indications that the community is starting to recognize the need to make special provision within the education system for children of exceptional ability; for example, an Association for Gifted and Talented Children has been formed in Brisbane. In addition, some schools, mainly primary schools, have introduced special enrichment programmes for gifted and talented children. The Department of Education follows a policy of including special material in the curriculum for each subject which is directed specifically at gifted and talented children. However, it must be realized that a "mainstream" class which contains gifted children and children with learning difficulties will have such a range of abilities that it is an overwhelming task for the teacher to provide the gifted child with the necessary challenge in all aspects of the curriculum. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that without such a challenge, gifted children may become bored and develop behavioural problems, frequently leading to under-achievement, particularly at the secondary



level. In our Third Interim Report, *Literacy and Numeracy*, paragraph 4.15, we recommend "that the Department of Education and other education authorities re-examine their strategies with regard to 'streaming' . . .". This recommendation was made in the context of assisting students of lower ability, but it may also offer a partial solution to the problem of making special provision for the gifted. It should be noted that by "streaming", we have in mind only that the ability range among students under the control of a single teacher should be reduced and that we are not advocating that the small number of exceptionally gifted and talented students should be brought together into special classes for a full-time programme. On the contrary, we do not recommend the segregation of gifted children into special schools or into full-time special classes. The evidence which we have examined strongly suggests that regardless of the benefits that such a solution might bring, in terms of measurable educational outcomes, that such segregation involves a significant risk that the development of the personality of the child may be seriously distorted, and the ability to relate to the wider community may be impaired.

5.20. An essential first step in the development of any programme for the gifted and talented is to develop appropriate definitions and systematic identification procedures. The foundation of any identification programme must of course be teacher observation, which should be carried out against an appropriate check list of identifying characteristics. However, this is a complex area, and teacher observation alone is not enough and needs to be supplemented by input from parents and by tests. Early identification should be the ideal, but identification should be an on-going process and not a final step. The Select Committee therefore recommends that the Department of Education, in consultation with other educational authorities, develops the necessary definitions and procedures to enable gifted and talented students to be identified, and their teachers made aware of their special gifts so that they may provide appropriate individualized instruction. As in all areas of education, teacher training is of paramount importance, and we also recommend that the Board of Teacher Education approaches teacher training institutions, with a view to having courses introduced for all trainee teachers dealing with the education of the talented, and the development of suitable short courses for in-service training. We further recommend that the Minister appoint an advisory committee which should include members from outside the Department, with special knowledge in the area, to advise him on the education of gifted and talented children in Queensland.

5.21. Queensland has a larger population of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders than any other State or Territory in Australia. The range of backgrounds of these people extends from those who live in communities in Cape York and islands in the Torres Strait to those who have moved into the wider Australian society. The wide range of backgrounds and experiences of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders implies an equally wide range of educational needs and, in particular, the normal curriculum is in many respects unsuitable for those who have not yet moved into the wider Australian society. In 1976, the Department of Education established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee in order to provide the Director-General of Education with a reliable expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views on the educational needs of their children. In addition, two positions of Inspector, Indigenous Students, have been created, one for Primary education and one for Secondary education, to be responsible for the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. There are also advisory teachers to assist the Inspector. The Select Committee commends these initiatives which are designed to make the education system more responsive to the special needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and recommends that they be continued and supported.

5.22. The Select Committee has noted with approval the increasing use of school grounds and facilities by outside organizations. School buildings and facilities represent a substantial capital investment, and we believe that they should be seen as community centres that everyone in the community relates to. In recent years, many schools have been used during the evening for adult education classes. We note these activities with approval and recommend that they should be encouraged and expanded. We believe, also, that there should be greater co-operation between sporting organizations and schools. For too long, schools and the grounds were declared out of bounds to children during week-ends and holidays. Sporting facilities are installed, often at heavy cost, and they should be utilized to the full. Subject to the proviso that at all times the interests of the students and their physical education needs shall have an overriding priority, we recommend that Parents' and Citizens' Associations should be authorized to enter into contractual arrangements with sporting groups under which the outside sporting body would agree to install such items as fencing, lighting, grandstands, ablution blocks or other capital improvements, in return for the use of the sports ovals for fixture events. There are many benefits

from such a policy; the schools have capital improvements vested in them without an enormous drain on school funds, sporting organizations have first-grade fields at their disposal, and local authorities are freed of the dilemma of having to decide whether or not to alienate public parklands. We note with approval that some local authorities are now entering into joint funding arrangements with Parents' and Citizens' Associations to provide halls for both school and community use, and we recommend that these initiatives should be encouraged. There is a clear need to ensure that when new schools are to be constructed, the maximum flexibility is achieved in design in order to facilitate multi-purpose use. To this end, we recommend that Parents' and Citizens' Associations, community and business organizations and the local authority be involved at the planning stage, to ensure that the design and orientation of the school conform to future plans for local development and encourage maximum community use.

5.23. The Select Committee wishes to make special mention of the important role that non-State schools play in the education system in Queensland. Approximately 18 per cent of primary enrolments and 27 per cent of secondary enrolments in Queensland are in non-State schools; the contribution by non-State schools, in terms of teaching effort and the investment of capital in lands and buildings, has assisted greatly in the provision of education in our State. We are pleased to report that a high level of liaison and co-operation has been developed between the Department of Education and non-State education authorities. The Queensland Catholic Education Commission in its submission to the Select Committee said:—

"We are pleased to place on record our genuine belief that the level of co-operation between the Catholic school sector and the Education Department in Queensland surpasses that in all other Australian States. Without reservation, we pay tribute to the policies of the Department and the attitudes of its senior officers insofar as they affect the relationships between the two major school systems in this State."

Such a tribute reflects great credit, both on the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and the Queensland Department of Education, and augurs well for the future of education in Queensland. The Select Committee recommends that co-operation between the State and non-State education systems be continued and extended. In particular, there is still scope for the development of co-operative ventures in the area of special education, in career guidance, and in the provision of support services in general, and we recommend that such developments be supported. In paragraph 4.10, we recommend that the Department institute discussions with private boarding schools with a view to offering link courses to their students. This recommendation is regarded as extremely important by the parents of isolated children who wish their children to have the benefits of the close supervision that the private boarding schools can provide, but who wish their children to undertake, in Years 11 and 12, more vocationally oriented courses, many of which are beyond the resources of the schools, but which are already provided by the colleges of technical and further education. We feel confident that the co-operation of non-State schools will be extended in this area also.

5.24. The Select Committee, as part of its terms of reference, was required to enquire into, report upon, and make recommendations in relation to—

"the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organisations concerning any aspects of education."

It has been argued in some submissions that there is a need for an Educational Ombudsman. We have examined the Departmental procedures for investigating complaints and reporting to the Minister, and we are satisfied that they are adequate. We note that the Minister for Education has appointed a Special Duties Officer who is a senior officer of his Department, whom the Minister can call upon to make a special investigation of any matter which in his judgement requires it. In addition, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman), has extensive powers to investigate public complaints. Furthermore, members of the public who are dissatisfied with any explanation provided by the Department of Education, or other Public Service Departments, can and should bring the matter to the attention of their Member of Parliament, for further investigation. We therefore do not recommend the appointment of an Educational Ombudsman. However, we do recommend that the advisability of appointing a senior officer, with special knowledge and experience in the field of education, to the staff of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, be investigated.

5.25. The Select Committee received some submissions which argued that education in Queensland should be placed under the control of an independent statutory authority as an alternative to, or in addition to, the present Department of Education. Whilst an independent statutory authority may

appear superficially attractive, we do not believe it to be appropriate to the Queensland situation. In our system of government, the Cabinet, the Minister and the Parliament are severally and collectively responsible to the public, through procedures which are well established in practice and by tradition. We believe that in education, direct responsibility and accountability to the electorate should be continued. Independent statutory authorities are widely used in the United States, and may well have been successful in that country. However, the method of funding and the chain of

accountability in the United States is quite different from that which obtains in Queensland, and our observations of the workings of such independent authorities in other places which operate under the Westminster system of government, have convinced us that the resulting division of responsibility between the Minister and the authority often creates more problems than it solves. The Select Committee therefore recommends that an independent statutory authority to administer and control education should not be established in Queensland.

## SECTION 6—THE INTERIM REPORTS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE

6.1. It is apparent that there has been some confusion in the public mind concerning the use of the term "interim" in describing the earlier Reports of the Select Committee. Some people have apparently believed that these Reports were intended as discussion papers; such is not the case. The Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly include a provision for Select Committees to make special reports to Parliament during the course of their proceedings, but it is necessary clearly to distinguish these reports from the Final Report because, on presentation of the Final Report, a Select Committee automatically ceases to exist. The Select Committee chose to use the term "Interim Report" for this purpose but, as we have already pointed out in paragraph 1.9, each Interim Report is, in itself, a definitive paper to be read in conjunction with this, the Final Report. The Select Committee reserved the right to make a more extensive reference to any matters discussed in its Interim Reports when presenting its Final Report to the Parliament. As a result of feedback received following publication of our six Interim Reports, we wish to make the following comments in clarification of the recommendations contained in those Reports.

### First Interim Report

6.2. There has been considerable confusion in some quarters concerning the philosophy behind our selection of representatives who we recommend should constitute the Board of Secondary School Studies. Some interest groups have indicated that they believe that the number of their nominees appointed to the Board should be weighted in proportion to the numbers that they represent. The Select Committee does not accept this argument, nor was it the philosophy which it adopted in framing its recommendations. We wish to achieve the widest possible representation of views whilst restricting the Board to workable size. Were we to adopt the proportional representation approach, the size of the Board would expand to a point where it would be unable to function effectively. Furthermore, implicit in the proportional representation philosophy is the assumption that Board members are appointed to represent narrow sectional interests, rather than to bring their special knowledge and expertise to bear upon the problems of educating our children. The Select Committee rejects this view; the visible results of the Board's activities suggest that Board members have never taken what, in our view, would be a narrow and irresponsible attitude to their duties, nor can we conceive that Board members would do so in the future. It is also convenient at this point to state that the same remarks apply *mutatis mutandis* to the membership of other boards, committees and sub-committees which have been the subject of recommendations in our reports.

6.3. The Select Committee supported the findings of the Report *A Review of School-Based Assessment in Queensland Secondary Schools* (R.O.S.B.A.) in principle, but expressed some reservations about the terminology proposed for the reporting system, and made some tentative suggestions for an alternative approach. The Board of Secondary School Studies accepted our reservations and has now proposed an alternative system to be known as "Achievement-based assessment", with the following categories:—

- Very High Achievement;
- High Achievement;
- Moderate Achievement;
- Limited Achievement;
- Very Limited Achievement.

The Select Committee recommends that this alternative proposal be accepted in principle, with the reservation that we would have preferred to see six categories of reporting rather than the five proposed by the Board of Secondary School Studies. There is some evidence to suggest that where a "middle" category exists, too many students tend to be placed in that category, and the value of the reporting system is reduced as a consequence. We therefore recommend that the Board and the Department monitor this possibility.

6.4. It is also apparent that some misunderstanding still exists concerning the use of the Australian Scholastic Aptitude Test (A.S.A.T.) in the determination of the Queensland Tertiary Entrance Score. It has been argued, for example,

that because the use of A.S.A.T. does not improve the predictive power of exit assessment in relation to first year university performance on a statistical basis, that its use should be discontinued. It should be pointed out that A.S.A.T. is a scaling device which attempts to generate comparability in standards of assessment. What is modified by A.S.A.T. is not the student's academic performance, but the teacher's standard of assessment. Many of the arguments advanced for discontinuing the use of A.S.A.T. have been based on the assumption that teacher assessments, given that A.S.A.T. will be used, are invariably the same as those which would be made in the absence of A.S.A.T. as a moderating instrument. The Select Committee does not accept that this assumption is valid.

### Second Interim Report

6.5. There has been some concern expressed that our proposal for a statement of aims for Queensland Primary and Secondary Schools contains no explicit reference to the importance of the Arts in education. We have referred elsewhere in our reports to our belief in the importance of the Arts, and whilst we believe that this is implicit in the aims we have proposed, we accept that a more explicit statement is desirable. We therefore recommend that the aims which we proposed in paragraph 2.4 of our Second Interim Report be amended by the inclusion of the following additional sub-paragraph:—

"to help children develop an understanding of and sensitivity to the arts, and to become aware of the value of the arts in their own lives and in the lives of others."

6.6. In paragraph 4.14 of the Second Interim Report, the Select Committee stated that "we reject the concept of 'role reversal' featured in certain book and poster material and recommend that this material not be used." This has apparently created some confusion in the minds of some teachers for whom the term "role reversal" has a technical connotation, which is rather wider than we had appreciated. Our intention was, and is, to discourage the use of material which portrays women who elect to remain at home and devote their time exclusively to household duties, as being of lesser value in the community than those who enter the work force. We have seen material, particularly cartoons, in use in some schools, which portrays the housewife as frumpish and stupid, and is contrasted with the working woman who is portrayed as elegant and intelligent. It is this sort of material which we recommend should not be used in Queensland schools.

### Third Interim Report

6.7. In paragraph 5.4 of our Third Interim Report, we recommend that from 1st January, 1985, successful completion of a full semester course in Mathematics in Years 11 and 12 should be a prerequisite for registration as a teacher under the Queensland Education Act. We further recommend that General Mathematics, but not Social Mathematics, be considered an acceptable standard for those students who do not complete Maths I, pending the introduction of a specially designed course. We wish to acknowledge that we were inaccurately informed concerning the content of the present social mathematics course, and we wish to amend recommendation 6.21 in our Third Interim Report, to read as follows:—

"6.21. That, as an interim measure, Social Mathematics be considered an acceptable standard for those students who do not complete Maths I."

Since the publication of our Third Interim Report, some people have tried to argue that completion of mathematics to the end of Year 10 is an adequate standard for teachers and, in particular, for Secondary School teachers whose areas of speciality do not include the natural sciences. We do not accept these arguments, and wish to re-state our conviction that some exposure to mathematics beyond Year 10 is essential for all teachers, regardless of their speciality. In particular, we would regard some knowledge of statistical techniques, and the limitations of statistics, as an essential part of this education in an age when virtually all disciplines use statistics in some form, and in which the citizen is constantly bombarded with statistics through advertising in the media, many of which are of doubtful validity, or at any rate, require careful interpretation.

#### Fourth Interim Report

6.8. It was perhaps predictable that the Select Committee's recommendations with respect to the teaching of human relationships in our schools, and in particular our recommendation that such a course must include a component on sex education, should receive a disproportionate share of publicity. It was perhaps equally predictable that the Select Committee's recommendations and intentions should be misinterpreted by some sections of the community. All we have recommended is that the Minister establish a Committee, widely representative of community interests, to develop a programme of human relationships, including sex education for use in Queensland schools. We have stated quite clearly in the report, the need for those who teach such a course to conform to the highest moral standards in their approach to the subject, and that the Committee should work closely with the Task Force of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, which is presently developing a similar course. The public response to the publication of our Fourth Interim Report has amply confirmed our confidence expressed in paragraph 3.6 of that Report, that "... the approach which we have recommended will be welcomed by a majority of the parents of school age children". Those who are opposed to our recommendation have given widespread publicity to material published by an organization known as S.I.E.C.U.S. (Sex Information and Education Council of the United States), and the negative effects of sex education programmes in Sweden. The Select Committee freely acknowledges that the approach advocated by S.I.E.C.U.S., and the approach adopted in Sweden, are totally unacceptable for Queensland. However, our critics have failed to point out that there are countries, Holland and Norway are but two examples, where such programmes are widely accepted and appear to have been extremely successful. The reason is that these countries have introduced courses which emphasize social responsibility, self discipline, awareness of the needs of others and the importance of the family, and it is precisely this sort of course which we recommend should be developed for Queensland schools. We also wish to point out, yet again, that whilst courses for parents which would assist them to discharge their responsibilities in this sensitive area may be highly desirable, common sense and experience suggests that such courses will be attended by those least in need of them and ignored by those for whom they are primarily intended. Since there appears to be no way in which parents who either cannot, or will not, discharge their responsibilities for the moral education of their children in general, and for their education in human relationships in particular, can be compelled to do so, we believe that it would be irresponsible were we not to recommend that our education system should attempt to fill the gap.

6.9. There are those who believe sincerely that sex education should be kept out of State Schools. We sympathise with their point of view, but believe it to be incredibly naive. If the Select Committee could accept that it is possible to keep sex education out of State Schools, our recommendations might have been different. In the House of Lords debate of January, 1976, which we have referred to in our Fourth Interim Report, Lord Crowther-Hunt, then the Minister of State of the Department of Education and Science, said, "Sex education evokes strong passions and strong prejudices: it challenges us to remember honestly our own childhood and adolescence and to have sympathy for young people of today, in their very different circumstances." The majority in the Queensland community, who have accepted the challenge to remember honestly their own childhood and adolescence, are well aware that sex education has always taken place in State Schools. It is still taking place. It is "peer group" sex education, and it is almost invariably characterized by sketchy descriptions of the physical aspects of the sexual relationship, supplemented by half-understood myths, fertile imagination, and the graffiti which abounds on the walls of public lavatories. It makes a major contribution to the worst form of ignorance—the ignorance of misinformation. It debases the sexual relationship in the minds of our young people, and encourages promiscuity. In the House of Lords debate, to which we have referred, the Earl of Longford, who is known internationally for his campaign to raise public morality, had this to say:—

"I am appealing to all—they are still the great majority in this country—who believe that if we destroy the family we destroy the country itself. There are forms of sex education which will bring this disaster close; some of them may be bringing it close already. There are other forms of sex education which can strengthen the family. We have a grave responsibility for seeing that these latter beneficial forms of sex education are employed much more generally than at the present time."

The Select Committee believes that in Queensland also, the great majority believe that if we destroy the family, we destroy the country itself. We also believe that the Parliament has a responsibility to ensure that forms of sex education which can strengthen the family are introduced into

Queensland State schools so that our teachers may have the means and the training to combat the misinformed, and frequently vulgar, misrepresentations of the physical relationships between men and women, which are characteristic of the sex education which now takes place in our schools "in the toilets" and "behind the bicycle sheds", and the insidious sexual propaganda which is unfortunately now widespread in the less reputable sections of the media.

6.10. In 1974, the Parliament of Queensland appointed a Select Committee to enquire into, and to report, and to make recommendations, in relation to the punishment of crimes of violence in Queensland. The Chairman of the Committee was Mr Charles Porter, M.L.A. (now The Hon. Charles Porter, M.L.A., Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs), and the members were Messrs M. J. Ahern, R. J. Hinze (now The Hon. R. J. Hinze, M.L.A., Minister for Local Government and Main Roads), K. B. Tomkins (now The Hon. K. B. Tomkins, M.L.A., Minister for Transport), W. D. Hewitt, H. F. Newton, K. W. Wright, B. J. Davis and T. Aikens. In its report (Queensland Parliamentary Paper A. 6-1974-75), this Select Committee considered the question of rape, both as regards effective prevention and adequate punishment. It noted that part of the pattern of this crime "... is an inadequate family influence leading to anti-social attitudes and youthful promiscuity." It was the unanimous recommendation of this Select Committee that:—

"There should be opportunity provided within the school scene for young people to be informed, in appropriate terms and at an appropriate age, what constitutes in law both sexual assault and rape and also the penalties these crimes can earn."

It would clearly not be possible to give effect to this recommendation to explain the meaning of sexual assault and rape to young people, unless those young people had first received some sex education. This Select Committee clearly recognized this when they also recommended unanimously that—

"Parents and teachers must accept an obligation to impress on girls a need for reasonable prudence at all times."

and that:—

"Any form of sex education considered for introduction to Queensland schools should clearly place much more emphasis on the paramountcy of self-respect and mutual respect between men and women, than on physical facts and techniques."

The Select Committee on Education endorses the views and recommendations of the Select Committee on Punishment of Crimes of Violence in Queensland, which we have quoted, and which were passed unanimously. They are in conformity with, and give added weight to, the views and recommendations contained in our Fourth Interim Report.

6.11. One member of the Select Committee, Mr L. W. Powell, was absent on special leave when the Committee met to consider the draft Fourth Interim Report in detail. Select Committees are a part of the Parliament and conform to Parliamentary practice; therefore, members who are not present when a vote is taken, do not have the right to have their vote recorded at a later time. However, Mr. Powell finds himself in disagreement with the Fourth Interim Report, and in particular with the recommendations contained in paragraph 3.3 of that Report. As a matter of courtesy to Mr Powell, the Select Committee has resolved that he be permitted to record his disagreement, and in accordance with Standing Orders, his reasons for so doing are attached as Appendix "D" of this Report.

#### Fifth Interim Report

6.12. The Isolated Children's Parents' Association (Queensland) has expressed concern regarding the difficulty which isolated children experience in undertaking more vocationally oriented courses. In paragraph 4.6 of this Report, we have recommended that Manual Arts and Home Economics courses should be introduced into all country schools. However, the major difficulty apparently occurs in Years 11 and 12. In paragraph 4.10 of this Report, we have recommended that the development of link courses with other institutions, such as the Colleges of Technical and Further Education, be developed, and that this facility should be extended to students attending private boarding schools. We note that a number of technical courses are now offered by correspondence by the Directorate of Technical and Further Education, and recommend that this valuable correspondence training be continued, supported and, where possible, extended. We also recommend that these courses should, in appropriate cases, be available to Secondary School students in Years 11 and 12, with a view to having the correspondence courses worked upon under supervision in the schools as alternatives to elective academic subjects. We further recommend that the possibility of extending this facility to the non-State boarding schools, be investigated. It has also been pointed out to us

that financial assistance, which is available to students attending Years 11 and 12 in a Secondary School, both from State and Federal sources, is not available if the student elects to leave school after Year 10, and attend another institution such as a college of technical and further education. The Select Committee recommends that financial assistance currently available to students to complete Years 11 and 12 in a Secondary School, be extended to all students for an 11th and 12th Year of full-time education, at any approved educational institution. A number of country people have drawn our attention to the need for pre-vocational courses which relate to the principal rural industries of various areas in the State. The Select Committee has acknowledged the need for the curriculum in general, and pre-vocational courses in particular, to cater for local needs, and we believe that the recommendations we have made in paragraph 5.3 of this Report, concerning the further devolution of decision-making to the Education Regions, would make a positive contribution to the achievement of this aim.

### Sixth Interim Report

6.13. Concern has been expressed by the members of staff of some post-secondary institutions, regarding the interpretation of our recommendations with respect to regional community colleges. We wish to make it clear that we do not propose any rigid organizational model to be imposed in any region. Indeed, we specifically recommended, in paragraph 5.5 of our Sixth Interim Report, that each regional community college should be created by a separate Act of Parliament, so that the legislation could be tailored to suit particular regional requirements. Certainly, we recommend that no community college should be established without full consultation with all the post-secondary institutions which would be affected. The organizational models which could be subsumed under the regional community college concept are effectively infinite, but might for example range from a very loose confederation in which individual institutions maintain their separate identities, and appoint a "top level management

committee" to facilitate co-operative planning of capital works and the sharing of support services, to a situation where some or all of the institutions amalgamate to their mutual benefit. Much of the co-operation which we believe would be facilitated by the establishment of regional community colleges, already takes place on an *ad hoc* basis between individual institutions. Nevertheless, we believe that many additional benefits would accrue if more formal co-operative arrangements were established. We also believe that there are a number of benefits which could accrue to a large multi-campus institution, which could present a consensus view of regional needs in negotiations with outside bodies, which are not necessarily available to individual institutions acting alone. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we believe that a regional community college would have the potential to provide a better service to students in terms of the range and location of courses offered, and the regulation of transfer between the various levels of the post-secondary education system. In conclusion, we have been asked to clarify the position of the rural training schools in relation to the regional community college concept. We recognize the close association between rural training schools and the primary industries which they serve. We also recognize that rural training schools are single purpose institutions, and it was made clear in Section 5 of our Sixth Interim Report that we are aware that it may be inappropriate to include some single-purpose institutions within the regional community college concept. We do not propose to make any recommendations with respect to the inclusion of any individual institution or group of institutions within the regional community college concept, because we believe that this ought more properly to be a matter for negotiation, when the establishment of a regional community college is proposed. It might be, for example, that the boards of different rural training schools would take different views of the advisability or otherwise of joining a regional community college, when the detailed proposals for their own region were presented to them.

## SECTION 7—CONCLUDING STATEMENT

7.1. The Select Committee has undertaken the first inquiry into the whole of the education system in Queensland since the Royal Commission of 1875. We wish to report that it has, in our view, been a most important and valuable exercise. It has given the ordinary people of Queensland—the so-called "silent majority"—an opportunity to express their views, and they have done so to an extent which experience suggests would not have been the case had this inquiry been conducted by a commission of "experts". The widespread community interest in education is reflected in the very large number of submissions received by the Select Committee, which far exceeds the number usually reported by professional committees and commissions of inquiry, and in the attendance at the public meetings which we organized. We are most grateful for the advice, assistance and support we have received throughout the currency of this inquiry, both from the Queensland community as a whole, and from many individuals and organizations in other States. Our Interim Reports have been widely read, and we wish also to thank the many people who have communicated to us their support and given us the benefit of their opinions on our findings and recommendations.

7.2. We have found there to be a great deal of public support for the efforts of those who have accepted the responsibility for the schooling of our children and the continuing education of our citizens. The Select Committee invited criticism of our education system, and we are pleased to record that the criticisms we received were, for the most part, constructive, which is in itself reason for optimism. There has inevitably been a minority at one end of the political spectrum who want to change the system entirely; we have not found their gloomy view of the present system to be justified. There are those at the other end of the political spectrum who resist all change; indeed, there are those who apparently wish to move the system backwards. The Select Committee has rejected these views also; it is simply not possible, nor is it sensible, to attempt "to march backwards into the future". We have been fortunate in that the majority of quiet and sensible Queenslanders, who are the strength of our society, have come forward and made their views known to the Select Committee. They have made it abundantly clear that they resent the extremist positions adopted by minorities at both ends of the political spectrum.

7.3. In its reports, the Select Committee has endeavoured to present guidelines for education in Queensland for the next decade, whilst at the same time bringing down recommendations which we believe should be implemented immediately. We have not seen it as part of our mandate to "cost"

these recommendations, nor would it have been possible for us to do so and still bring down our report within the lifetime of the present Parliament. However, we have been mindful of cost considerations in formulating our recommendations, and we point out that only a minority of those recommendations will involve additional expenditure. We have also not seen it as part of our mandate to comment on the funding of education; this involves decisions concerning the allocation of scarce resources, which are properly the responsibility of the Government of the day. We note in passing, however, that surveys have shown widespread and significant public support for increased spending on education as additional resources become available.

7.4. The terms of reference established by the Parliament for this Select Committee were extremely broad and have allowed us to examine all aspects of our education system. Given such broad terms of reference and the great complexity of a modern education system, it would have been neither possible nor sensible to attempt to include in our reports all matters which have been brought to our attention. We have therefore concentrated on those areas which, on the basis of the evidence we have received, have been major sources of public concern and which, in our view, require some remedial action. This inquiry has come at a time when the education system is attempting to consolidate after a period of expansion which is unprecedented in this century. The last 30 years has been a period of continuing change during which the demands on the education system, and public expectations with respect to our schools, colleges and universities, have progressively increased. Not unnaturally, many problems have arisen, but we have found that many of those problems have resulted from lack of communication and by individuals fighting each other, rather than working together as a community. A continuing theme throughout all our reports has been "communication not confrontation", and the response to our Interim Reports leads us to believe that we have generated a new awareness of the need for consultation and a new determination on the part of educators and public alike, to work together for the betterment of education in Queensland.

7.5. A committee of Parliamentarians is uniquely placed to obtain the views of ordinary people as well as those of professionals in the field, and to interpret the results of research, to the Parliament and to the public. Mechanisms which will allow the voice of ordinary people to be heard are an essential part of our democratic system, and are becoming more important in an age when we are increasingly in the hands of the "expert" and the "machine". During the next 20 years, the rate of social, and therefore of educa-

tional change will certainly not diminish, and may even accelerate, and we believe that education is of such central importance to our future prosperity and social well-being, that the Parliament should maintain a continuing overview of the education system, and a continuing special forum for the determination of public opinion in this field. We therefore recommend that the Parliament establish a Standing

Committee for Education and the Arts, with a mandate to institute inquiries on any matters which touch upon education in Queensland, and to make regular reports to the House. The establishment of a Standing Committee will require an amendment to the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, and we recommend to the House that this amendment be proceeded with forthwith.

## SECTION 8—SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

(The numerals in brackets refer to the paragraph in which the recommendation occurs.)

8.1. That current policies with respect to the operation of both community Kindergartens and State Pre-School centres be continued. (3.1.)

8.2. That the establishment of early education classes at Class 4 Primary Schools should be continued and extended. (3.3.)

8.3. That each Pre-School centre should be placed under the full control and tutelage of the Principal of its associated Primary School. (3.3.)

8.4. That the benefits of Pre-School education should be widely publicized, but that Pre-School attendance should not be made compulsory. (3.4.)

8.5. That there be no change in policy on age of entry into Primary School in the case of those children for whom Year 1 of Primary School will be their first exposure to an educational institution. (3.5.)

8.6. That where a Pre-School is under the control of a Principal from an associated Primary School, the Principal of the Primary School, subject to the approval of the Regional Director, should be authorized to determine when, and at what age, his Pre-School children should commence Year 1, in those cases where Pre-School and Infant classes have not been vertically integrated. (3.5.)

8.7. That the Minister and his senior officers should keep under continuous review the question of whether separate directorates for Pre-School and Primary education should be continued. (3.6.)

8.8. That present policy on time allocations for subjects in the Primary School curriculum should be continued. (3.7.)

8.9. That the Regional system should be continued, and that the level of decision-making which is delegated to Regional Officers be progressively extended. (3.8.)

8.10. That Primary School Principals, with the prior concurrence of their Regional Director, be given discretionary powers to convene advisory committees similar to those that we have proposed for Secondary Schools. (3.8.)

8.11. That the present system whereby children move into Secondary Schools at the end of Year 7, be continued for the time being, but that the Minister and his officers keep the matter under review. (3.10.)

8.12. That the Government take action to ensure that the full-time developmental work, with respect to the use of micro-computers in Primary Schools, be continued and supported. (3.12.)

8.13. That, as a matter of urgency, Manual Arts and Home Economics courses be introduced into those schools where they are not yet offered. (4.6.)

8.14. That the approach whereby students may return to their senior education after a period away from school, without penalty, should be continued and should be given wider publicity. (4.7.)

8.15. That the proposal concerning High School Advisory Councils in paragraph 6.7 of our Second Interim Report, be amended by the addition of a subparagraph (2) (viii) "representatives of local industry and commerce at the discretion of the school Principal". (4.7.)

8.16. That when school-based courses are being developed, the active involvement of local employers should be sought in the preparation of the syllabus. (4.8.)

8.17. That a proposal by the Director's Committee on Secondary Education, that provision be made for students to take longer than the present time to complete their Senior studies, should be accepted, formal procedures introduced to implement the proposal, and the necessary publicity exercise be undertaken. (4.8.)

8.18. That the Department pursue active policies in regard to the work being done by the Guidance and Special Education Branch in the delivery of support services to schools and in

the development of career resource retrieval centres in high school libraries and guidance offices, and particularly, the urgent need for guidance officers to establish direct lines of communication with employers and employment agencies, particularly those situated in the school catchment area. (4.9.)

8.19. That Government policy, whereby Public Servants are able to broaden their experience by working for a time in the private sector, be followed with teachers. (4.9.)

8.20. That career policies be pursued particularly with respect to salary level at entry, which will actively encourage people with some years experience in commerce or industry to enter the teaching service. (4.9.)

8.21. That the development of link courses, particularly those involving Home Economics and Manual Arts and other courses designed to ease the transition from school to work, should be given a high priority. (4.10.)

8.22. That the courses offered by the Rural Community Youth Extension Service be made available over a wider area. The possibility of enlisting the services of the Rural Training Schools for this purpose should be investigated. (4.10.)

8.23. That the Department institute discussions with the private boarding schools with a view to offering link courses to their students on a similar basis to that proposed for the State Secondary Schools. (4.10.)

8.24. That the recommendations of the Computer Policy Advisory Committee of Education, as listed hereunder, be supported:—

- (a) A Computer Awareness course be introduced into the Year 8–10 curriculum forthwith;
- (b) Three Computer Batch systems, similar to that installed at Brisbane State High School, be purchased and installed, during the financial year 1970–1980;
- (c) (i) A small computer (micro-computer system), suitable for interactive use in schools, be selected as suitable for Departmental purchase and support;  
(ii) Eight (8) such micro-computers be purchased during the financial year 1979–1980.
- (d) A Supervisor of Computer Education, at the Inspector level, be appointed to co-ordinate these activities. (4.11.)

8.25. That training in computer awareness be introduced into the Year 8–10 curriculum as a matter of urgency. (4.12.)

8.26. That computer instruction in Years 8–10 should form an integral part of existing school subjects and not be introduced as yet another special subject in an already crowded curriculum. (4.12.)

8.27. That, ideally, every High School student should be taught to type, and as a minimum should have sufficient familiarity with the standard keyboard to enable him or her to develop reasonable competency by practising in his or her own time. (4.12.)

8.28. That the practice of schools offering typing as an extra curricular activity should be continued and supported, and positive action taken to ensure that students are aware of the likely future importance of acquiring keyboard skills. (4.12.)

8.29. That a Board subject in Computer Science, which emphasizes the sensible application of computers and does not concentrate solely on programming and operation, should be developed as a matter of urgency. (4.13.)

8.30. That the Board of Teacher Education act immediately to secure the provision of an adequate number of teachers of Computer Science trained in Queensland. (4.13.)

8.31. That in view of the widespread applications for computers, prospective teachers in all disciplines should be offered the opportunity to major in Computer Science as their second teaching subject. (4.13.)

8.32. That trials of alternative organizational structures for the Senior Secondary School be undertaken. (4.14.)

8.33. That the age at which compulsory education ceases should not be extended. (4.14.)

8.34. That Regional Directors be given discretion to allow any student over 14 years of age to leave school, if the student (a) has been recommended for early release by the School Principal or Head Teacher and (b) has either completed Year 10 or can produce evidence of a firm offer of an apprenticeship or other secure employment. (4.14.)

8.35. That the devolution of responsibility to regions and schools should be an on-going process aimed eventually at giving schools significant autonomy. (5.2.)

8.36. That a more flexible approach be adopted to organization and administration, with a view to allowing delegation of responsibility to proceed at different rates according to differing circumstances. (5.2.)

8.37. That the development of School Boards in other parts of Australia be kept under continuing review by the Minister and his Officers, with a view to their possible introduction in Queensland as the end product of a continuing process of devolution of responsibility. (5.2.)

8.38. That the recent policy, to extend the authority of Regional Directors, be continued and accelerated. (5.3.)

8.39. That Regional Councils be introduced into all education regions. (5.3.)

8.40. That the existing Regulations with respect to detention and corporal punishment should be continued. (5.4.)

8.41. That statements to the effect that school Principals who act in good faith in disciplinary matters will be supported by the Department and the Minister, and that teachers will receive similar support, including the support of their Principals, should be inserted into the Regulations. (5.4.)

8.42. That the proposals that "schools should have ready accessibility to the services of trained social workers to provide a liaison between the home, the school and other welfare agencies", and that "the feasibility of experienced social workers being attached to or at least identified with, individual schools, should be investigated", be accepted, and that to this end closer liaison be developed at all levels between the Department of Education and the Department of Children's Services. (5.6.)

8.43. That Legislative action be taken which will more easily permit the interchange of information between officers of the Department of Children's Services and school Principals, head teachers and guidance officers, under the same oath of fidelity and secrecy which is required of officers of the Children's Services Department. (5.6.)

8.44. That formal administrative procedures be established and published for the exchange of such information, and that school Principals and guidance officers be actively encouraged to solicit the assistance of trained social workers from the Department of Children's Services in appropriate cases. (5.6.)

8.45. That the proposals, that "there should be a regular review of rules and procedures, which have been determined by the Principal in consultation with teachers, parents and students", and that "the rules should be carefully explained to students not only at the start of each year but also at regular intervals. New students and their parents should be carefully oriented to the school. These rules should be in written form", be adopted. (5.7.)

8.46. That a system of confidential reports be introduced which will allow school Principals to communicate frankly with parents in writing when attempts to arrange face-to-face interviews have not succeeded. (5.7.)

8.47. That such reports should be prepared personally by the Principal and should bear the personal signature of the Principal and should be prepared in only two copies, the file copy to be kept under lock and key personally by the Principal. These reports should not be transferable between schools, and the file copy should be sent to parents for their disposal when the child leaves the school. Subject to these restrictions, Legislation should be introduced protecting teachers and education authorities from the possibility that such reports might be used against them in legal proceedings. (5.7.)

8.48. That there be inserted in the Education Act a paragraph similar to section 144 (2) of the Children's Services Act which states that:—

"A person appointed for the purposes of this Act or a person assisting such an appointee in carrying this Act into effect who inserts or publishes in the records of the Department or makes or gives any allegation, comment or opinion in respect of any matter touching or concerned with the history, family background or welfare of any child shall not thereby incur any liability if he has acted in good faith and without malice and with reasonable care.

In any proceeding taken against any such person on account of such an insertion or publication the burden of proof that such person has acted otherwise than in good faith or with malice or without reasonable care shall lie upon the plaintiff." (5.7.)

8.49. That Principals be authorized to initiate similar reports in cases where the educational progress of the child is not satisfactory, but serious breaches of discipline are not involved. (5.7.)

8.50. That the Legislation authorize school Principals to make these reports and any other school records available to officers of the Children's Services Department in appropriate cases. (5.7.)

8.51. That in future, cases of truancy should be referred to the Department of Children's Services with a view to treating the basic cause of the problem. (5.8.)

8.52. That the section of the Education Act which imposes penalties on parents who fail to ensure a child's attendance at school, be retained, but that the onus for commencing proceedings for such an offence should rest with officers of the Department of Children's Services in the first instance, and not with the Police Force. (5.8.)

8.53. That the Department of Education initiate studies aimed at establishing an optimum range for the size of schools, having regard to both educational and economic factors. (5.9.)

8.54. That the Department of Education develop a programme of management education for Principals, Deputy Principals and experienced teachers, and that courses and seminars be offered both at an introductory level, and as continuation training. (5.10.)

8.55. That the Department initiate discussions with education authorities and schools in the new Government sector, with a view to offering such courses on a co-operative basis to all sectors of the Queensland education system. (5.10.)

8.56. That it be made clear to all teachers that the supervision of sporting, cultural or other extra-curricular activities is an essential part of their official duties. (5.11.)

8.57. That the Board of Teacher Education opens discussions with the teacher training institutions regarding the introduction of a positive process of continuous screening of teacher trainees with a view to directing those who are clearly unsuitable as teachers into other fields of study as early as possible during their training period and with appropriate credit for studies already completed. (5.12.)

8.58. That teachers employed by the Department of Education who are found to be unsatisfactory in the classroom, but competent in other respects, be considered for transfer to another branch of the Public Service as staffing levels permit. (5.13.)

8.59. That Legislation be enacted requiring all teacher employing authorities to furnish a report to the Board of Teacher Education on any teacher who is dismissed or who is invited to resign as an alternative to dismissal, or who resigns in circumstances which that authority considers raise questions as to the person's suitability for continued employment as a teacher, and that the Board of Teacher Education be required to determine whether or not the circumstances warrant the teacher's name being removed from the register, and to remove teachers from the register in appropriate cases. (5.13.)

8.60. That the Board of Teacher Education re-examine its registration procedure with a view to ensuring that teachers who have terminated their employment as teachers in other parts of Australia and overseas under circumstances which would lead to their names being removed from the register, had that termination taken place in Queensland, are not placed on the Queensland register as teachers. (5.13.)

8.61. That Regulation 7 of the Education Regulations be amended to read as follows:—

"7. (1) A Principal may temporarily exclude a student from attendance at a State School for any school day or such lesser period as may seem appropriate under the circumstances for—

(a) want of cleanliness;

(b) want of respectable dress.

The Principal shall notify a parent or guardian of his action and of his reasons therefor and shall record the temporary exclusion in a register maintained for that purpose:

Provided that where any pupil or student repeatedly fails to maintain a satisfactory standard of cleanliness and dress, the Principal may determine that such failure constitutes incorrigible disobedience.



(2) The Principal may temporarily exclude from attendance at a State School any pupil or student suffering from an infectious or contagious disease and may require the submission of a medical certificate before readmission.

A Principal, in determining whether a pupil may be temporarily excluded for suffering from an infectious or contagious disease, shall be guided by the Exclusion Table published from time to time in the Education Office Gazette.

The Principal shall notify the parent of his action and of his reasons therefor and shall forward a copy of such notification to the Director-General.

(3) A Principal may temporarily exclude a pupil or student from attendance at a State School for—

- (a) incorrigible disobedience or insolence;
- (b) persistently disruptive behaviour which, in his judgement, is interfering with the rights of the staff or of other students; or
- (c) gross misconduct at school or when travelling to and from school that is in the opinion of the Principal likely to prejudice the good order and discipline of the school:

Provided that—

- (a) in all cases where the Principal proposes to temporarily exclude a pupil or student for incorrigible disobedience, insolence or persistently disruptive behaviour, the Principal shall satisfy himself that all alternative avenues of approach, including counselling of the student and where possible the parents, and the application of other disciplinary sanctions from time to time prescribed, have been exhausted, or are inappropriate, having regard to the particular circumstances of the case.
  - (b) the purpose of exclusion under this subsection is to be the protection of the rights of the staff or of other students, rather than a disciplinary measure in itself, and no student shall be excluded as a punishment for an isolated act of indiscipline other than gross misconduct likely to prejudice the good order and discipline of the school, for example vandalism or assault;
  - (c) exclusion is invariably to be associated with follow-up action by the Children's Services Department or other welfare authority or by the Police.
- (4) When it has been determined that a student is to be excluded under Regulation 7 (3), the Principal shall—
- (a) notify a parent or guardian of the student in writing of the action proposed and of the reasons therefor and of the procedures for appeal and shall, where possible, notify a parent or guardian verbally before the order for exclusion is put into effect;
  - (b) notify the Regional Director of Education and the Director-General of Education of the facts surrounding the case;
  - (c) notify the Children's Services Department, setting out the facts of the case and requesting a meeting with an officer of that Department to determine appropriate follow-up action;
  - (d) in consultation with the Children's Services Department or other relevant authority notify a parent or guardian of the student of the follow-up action that is proposed.

(5) The powers of exclusion under Regulation 7 (3) shall be as follows:—

- (a) The Principal may exclude any student for a period not exceeding one (1) week (five school days), on his own initiative.
- (b) The Regional Director of Education may order the exclusion of any student for a period of up to two (2) weeks (ten school days), and
- (c) The Director-General, with the approval of the Minister, may direct that a student be excluded for any period as shall appear necessary under the circumstances, including an indefinite period or permanently and may direct that such exclusion shall apply to any or to all State Schools:

Provided that the person authorized to issue an order for exclusion may discontinue such exclusion at any time and at any time discontinue any period of temporary exclusion and in such case shall immediately

advise all parties who were notified of the exclusion as to its discontinuance and his reasons therefor.

(6) In all cases of exclusion under Regulation 7 (3), the Director-General shall cause an investigation to be made which should include, where possible, an investigation by the Department of Children's Services and/or any other agency as he shall deem appropriate in the circumstances and shall determine what further action, if any, is to be taken, and shall satisfy himself that a parent or guardian of the student has been given reasonable opportunity to present a case opposing the exclusion. Parents or guardians are to be advised that their appeal should be forwarded to the Regional Director of Education in the first instance. The Regional Director shall forward such an appeal to the Director-General without delay and may append comment on the appeal by himself and by the Principal. The Director-General shall include the appeal with a recommendation that he makes to the Minister, or shall inform the Minister if the parents or guardians have signified that they do not intend to appeal. Parents and guardians are also to be informed of their right to make a separate approach to the Minister through their Member of the Legislative Assembly, in addition or as an alternative to a formal appeal under this subsection.

(7) Where the Principal and the Regional Director of Education consider that a student should be transferred to another school, the agreement of the parents or guardians shall be sought. If the parents will not agree, the circumstances are to be reported to the Director-General of Education, who, with the approval of the Minister, may direct that the student be so transferred. Before presenting a recommendation to the Minister for a compulsory transfer, the Director-General shall notify the parents or guardians of the student who shall be given reasonable opportunity to present a case to the Minister, setting out their reasons, if any, for opposing the transfer.

(8) Where the Minister determines that the student shall be excluded from attendance at any State school for a period exceeding two (2) weeks (ten school days), the Director-General of Education shall cause the Director of the Department of Children's Services to be notified. The Director of the Department of Children's Services—

- (i) in all cases where the student is subject to compulsory education under the Act, and the period of exclusion extends beyond the end of the semester in which the exclusion is effected, shall take the necessary action to have the student committed to care and control and to be educated at an institution administered by the Department of Children's Services.
- (ii) where the exclusion exceeds two (2) weeks (ten school days), but does not extend beyond the end of the semester in which the exclusion is effected, and the student is subject to compulsory education under the Act, shall institute such action as he deems appropriate, having regard to the circumstances.
- (iii) in all cases where the exclusion exceeds two (2) weeks (ten school days), and the student, being a minor, is above the age at which compulsory education is required by the Act, shall take such action, if any, which he deems to be appropriate.

(9) It is further provided that where any student is excluded from any or all State schools, and the parents or guardians are able to secure the enrolment of that student in an alternative approved educational institution, the Director-General of Education, with the concurrence of the Director of the Department of Children's Services, may determine that no further action shall be taken." (5.14.)

8.62. That the Principal of every school should, as part of the induction of every new teacher, include an element designed to inform the new teacher of the expectations of the community, with respect to the school and its teachers. (5.16.)

8.63. That the direct responsibility of school Principals, for the personal and professional conduct of their teachers, should be made explicit in the regulations, and that their disciplinary powers should be strengthened. (5.16.)

8.64. That Regulation 37 (1) (c) of the Education Regulations be amended to read as follows:—

- (c) shall be responsible for ensuring that the teachers of such State school maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct, and shall forthwith report to the Director-General and to the Regional Director of Education misconduct, incompetence or insubordination on the part of a member



of the staff of such State school, and in the event of such misconduct, incompetence or insubordination, may—

- (i) relieve a member of the staff of such State school from teaching duties for a period not exceeding two school days pending a determination by the Regional Director or the Director-General of Education;
  - (ii) with the prior concurrence of the Regional Director, extend the period during which a member of his staff is relieved from teaching duties to any period not exceeding five school days;
  - (iii) with the prior concurrence of the Director-General of Education, relieve from teaching duties or suspend a member of the staff of any such State school for such period including an indefinite period as the Director-General shall determine, pending the outcome of a departmental enquiry or disciplinary action and subject to the appeal procedures laid down by regulation: Provided that where a member of staff is relieved from teaching duties the Director-General of Education may prescribe what alternate duties that member of staff is to perform and at what location. (5.16.)
- 8.65. That the recommendation of the Advisory Council for Special Education,  
 "That the Minister for Education seek amendment to the *Education Act* 1964-1974 whereby the provision of education for all handicapped children up to 18 years of age is made the statutory responsibility of the Minister",  
 be supported. (5.17.)
- 8.66. That the continuing trend towards decentralization of Special Education services be continued and accelerated. (5.17.)
- 8.67. That gifted children not be segregated into special schools, or into full-time special classes. (5.19.)
- 8.68. That the Department of Education, in consultation with other educational authorities, develops the necessary definitions and procedures to enable gifted and talented students to be identified, and their teachers made aware of their special gifts so that they may provide appropriate individualized instruction. (5.20.)
- 8.69. That the Board of Teacher Education approach teacher training institutions, with a view to having courses introduced for all trainee teachers dealing with the education of the talented, and the development of suitable short courses for in-service training. (5.20.)
- 8.70. That the Minister appoint an advisory committee which should include members from outside the Department, with special knowledge in the area, to advise him on the education of gifted and talented children in Queensland (5.20.)
- 8.71. That initiatives taken by the Department of Education designed to make the education system more responsive to the special needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students be continued and supported. (5.21.)
- 8.72. That the increasing use of school grounds and facilities by outside organizations, the view of schools as community centres that everyone in the community relates to, and their use during the evening for adult education classes, be encouraged and expanded. (5.22.)
- 8.73. That, subject to the proviso that at all times the interests of the students and their physical education needs shall have an over-riding priority, Parents' and Citizens' Associations should be authorized to enter into contractual arrangements with sporting groups under which the outside sporting body would agree to install such items as fencing, lighting, grandstands, ablution blocks or other capital improvements, in return for the use of the sports ovals for fixture events. (5.22.)
- 8.74. That the initiatives taken by some local authorities who are now entering into joint funding arrangements with Parents' and Citizens' Associations to provide halls for both school and community use, be encouraged. (5.22.)

8.75. That when new schools are to be constructed, Parents' and Citizens' Associations, community and business organizations and the local authority be involved at the planning stage, to ensure that the design and orientation of the school conform to future plans for local development and encourage maximum community use. (5.22.)

8.76. That co-operation between the State and non-State education system be continued and extended. (5.23.)

8.77. That the development of co-operative ventures in the area of Special Education, in career guidance, and the provision of support services in general, be supported. (5.23.)

8.78. That an Educational Ombudsman should not be appointed. (5.24.)

8.79. That the advisability of appointing a senior officer, with special knowledge and experience in the field of education, to the staff of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, be investigated. (5.24.)

8.80. That an independent statutory authority to administer and control education should not be established in Queensland. (5.25.)

8.81. That the alternative "Achievement-based assessment" proposal, made by the Board of Secondary School Studies, be accepted in principle, with the reservation that we would have preferred to see six categories of reporting rather than the five proposed by the Board. (6.3.)

8.82. That the Board and the Department monitor the possibility that too many students will tend to be placed in the middle category of assessment and that the value of the reporting system will be reduced as a consequence. (6.3.)

8.83. That the aims which we proposed in paragraph 2.4 of our Second Interim Report, be amended by the inclusion of the following additional subparagraph:—

"to help children develop an understanding of and sensitivity to the arts, and to become aware of the value of the arts in their own lives and in the lives of others". (6.5.)

8.84. That recommendation 6.21 in our Third Interim Report be amended to read as follows:—

"6.21. That, as an interim measure, Social Mathematics be considered an acceptable standard for those students who do not complete Maths 1." (6.7.)

8.85. That technical correspondence courses offered by the Directorate of Technical and Further Education be continued, supported and, where possible, extended. (6.12.)

8.86. That these courses should, in appropriate cases, be available to Secondary School students in Years 11 and 12, with a view to having the correspondence courses worked upon under supervision in the schools as alternatives to elective academic subjects. (6.12.)

8.87. That the possibility of extending this facility to the non-State boarding schools be investigated. (6.12.)

8.88. That financial assistance currently available to students to complete Years 11 and 12 in a Secondary School, be extended to all students for an 11th and 12th Year of full-time education, at any approved educational institution. (6.12.)

8.89. That no community college should be established without full consultation with all the post-secondary institutions which would be affected. (6.13.)

8.90. That the Parliament establish a Standing Committee for Education and the Arts, with a mandate to institute inquiries on any matters which touch upon education in Queensland, and to make regular reports to the House. (7.5.)

8.91. That the necessary amendments to the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland to enable the foregoing recommendations to be implemented, be proceeded with forthwith. (7.5.)

M. J. AHERN, Chairman.

Queensland Legislative Assembly,  
 31st January, 1980.

**APPENDIX A**  
**to the**  
**FINAL REPORT**  
**of the**  
**SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND**

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR M. J. AHERN, M.L.A., MEMBER FOR LANDSBOROUGH AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, INTRODUCING THE MOTION TO SET UP THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, 4th APRIL, 1978**

I move—

"(1) That this House do appoint a select committee to inquire into, report upon and make recommendations in relation to the system of education in Queensland and the extent to which it meets the expectations of students, parents and the community, and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, with particular reference to the following matters:—

- "(a) the efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education;
- "(b) appropriate emphasis in primary education between basic education and other activities;
- "(c) adequate technical and further education to meet today's industry needs;
- "(d) a review of the decision-making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
- "(e) adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary students;
- "(f) the need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them and the administrative machinery for implementing them;
- "(g) the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organisations concerning any aspect of education; and
- "(h) any other matter pertaining to the matters for inquiry, report and recommendation as aforesaid;

"(2) That the committee consist of Messrs W. D. Hewitt, L. Powell, C. J. Miller, E. F. Shaw and the mover;

"(3) That the committee have power to appoint persons possessing special expertise and experience in the field of education to assist it in an advisory capacity in its meetings and deliberations;

"(4) That the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records unless otherwise determined by the House in any particular case, save, however, that a Minister of the Crown or an officer of the Public Service shall not be obliged to provide information, oral or written, which has been—

- "(a) certified by a Crown Law officer to be information which, if it were sought in a court, would be a proper matter in respect of which to claim Crown privilege; or
- "(b) certified by the responsible Minister, with the approval of the Ministers of the Crown in Cabinet assembled, to be information such that its disclosure would be against the public interest;

"(5) That the committee have leave to sit during any adjournment of the House notwithstanding that such adjournment exceeds seven days;

"(6) That the committee may sit during the sitting of the House;

"(7) That the committee may sit outside the precincts of the House and may adjourn from place to place;

"(8) That the committee report to the House at the conclusion of the work undertaken by it pursuant to the provisions of this motion;

"(9) That the foregoing provisions of this motion so far as they may be inconsistent with the Standing Orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders."

Approximately a fortnight ago I circularised all members of Parliament with the form of the motion that is now before

the House. To my knowledge, this is the first time that this type of action has been taken, and I hope that all honourable members appreciate it. The idea was that this would give honourable members as much time as possible to examine the form of motion and to consult on it.

The proposal to establish a committee of inquiry into education in Queensland was first mooted in a statement by the Premier in which he announced that a committee comprising four parliamentarians and three educationists would be appointed to inquire into the State's education system. However, subsequent legal advice by Crown Law officers indicated that if such a committee were appointed the seats of those honourable members who participated in it could be placed in jeopardy. I think those honourable members who were in the last Parliament would remember, and remember very well, the amendments to the Constitution Act that gave rise to that very inflexible situation. I am sure they would be familiar with the decisions that were reached and would agree with them.

Frankly, I was more than happy when the Premier told me that it was concluded that a select committee of parliamentarians would conduct the inquiry. In this regard I was asked to enter into discussions with the Premier's officers on the details of such an inquiry.

Select committees have not been used enough in our Parliament in recent times. In fact this is only the fourth occasion during my 10 years in this place on which we have had the pleasure of speaking to a motion to establish a select committee. There is a lot of ignorance, of course, about select committees, their powers, their privileges, and so on. I believe that a select committee of parliamentarians is the most competent body to carry out such an inquiry. It is, in any event, the most competent type of inquiry for any parliamentarian to serve on. The select committee is a portion of the Parliament itself, and the rights and immunities that append to members of Parliament in this place append, therefore, to members of Parliament in their service on a select committee of the House.

The Standing Orders of our Parliament devote much of their content to the procedural matters associated with the conduct of select committees of the House. Many of the procedures that have been established are written down for the express purpose of advising parliamentary select committees in their actions.

As I said, I have been associated with three of the four committees of inquiry appointed by the Parliament in recent times. I was a member of the Select Committee on Punishment of Crimes of Violence; I had the honour of chairing the Select Committee of Privileges; and I will have the honour to chair the Select Committee on Education. I want to emphasise that, in my opinion, the appointment of a select committee is the most appropriate way of tackling the education inquiry currently, and I hope that the Government will see fit to use this device more in the future than it has done in the past.

Members of Parliament should know that I was closely involved in the drafting of the terms of reference of the committee and that the detail of the terms of reference was not altered by Cabinet when, subsequent to the Premier's original announcement, he submitted the amended proposals for the appointment of a select committee with certain powers.

The terms of reference are very wide and they should not be criticised on that basis. Honourable members can peruse the document before them now. At the start it says that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the system of education in Queensland, and none of the consequent matters in the terms of reference limit that basic premise. It has a very wide brief. It needs it. The committee will be able to inquire into absolutely any area of concern in the education area that is expressed to it.

The select committee will be clothed with the powers relating to select committees that have been usual to our Legislature. However, in this particular instance, to enable it to carry out its particular task, some extra and different powers have been scheduled in the formal motion that I have just presented to the House. The committee will have the power to sit from place to place, as indeed it intends to do, rather than to sit at Parliament House, which has been the normal procedure for parliamentary select committees. It will have the power to appoint an advisory panel, which is most unusual but I believe appropriate in the professional matters that will be under discussion before the committee.

This procedure is well settled by recent practice in parliamentary committees operating within the Westminster system. I draw the attention of honourable members to the latest edition of "Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice" at page 655 under the heading "Expert Assistance and Consultation". For the record, I would like to have it written into the report—

"In the past select committees of both Houses have been given unusual powers to secure assistance when it appeared necessary for them to consider and evaluate complex technical or professional evidence. These sometimes took the form of powers to employ qualified individuals who should conduct their own investigations and report to the committee. More frequently orders made by the House of Commons have envisaged the committee's consultation with persons of professional capacity and expertise. As a recent development of this practice committees are now frequently empowered to appoint persons with specialist or scientific or technical knowledge for the purposes of their inquiries, either to supply information which is not readily available or to elucidate matters of complexity within the committee's order of reference. In modern practice, such advisers normally attend not only meetings of the committee at which oral evidence is taken but also meetings at which the committee deliberates. They do not examine witnesses or take part in voting."

The committee will have the power to sit during any sitting of the House. It is not intended that the committee take oral evidence during the sitting of the House, but it is intended to sit from time to time to consult on matters of detail suddenly arising so that the inquiry can be quickly completed and a report made to the Parliament as expeditiously as possible. However, it will be the rarity rather than the norm.

There has been some recent discussion about the specific provisions in the motion relating to Crown privilege. On that point, I draw to the attention of honourable members the other three forms of select committee that have been used in this Parliament in recent years. In fact, the detail of this particular provision is exactly the same as that which has applied recently. Actually, the Government has had no hand in this matter. This particular clause was recommended by me, and I assisted the Crown Law officers and Parliamentary Counsel in the drafting of the motion now before the House. Much of the criticism on this matter has been directed by members who do not know of its necessity and the law relating to Crown privilege. I believe—and I think all honourable members who are reasonable would agree—that it is necessary to preserve the absolute confidentiality of advice from departmental heads to a Minister of the Crown. I want to assure honourable members that it is not the intention of this committee to intrude into this area. It will not be necessary to do so to get at the matters under the terms of reference.

Incidentally, it would be covered by Crown privilege anyway, should it arise. In any event, it is my understanding that the law in relation to Crown privilege is well settled. I speak now as a former chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee of Privileges with some knowledge of the law in this respect. My advice is that if the Crown wishes to claim privilege, whether or not these clauses are contained in this particular motion, it would in fact be able to do so. However, the fact that it is there for all to see is useful and appropriate so that, if the matter does arise, honourable members will be able to see the particular machinery that will be used to deal with it. I am confident that it will not.

The committee has already had some informal meetings. I hope that honourable members will not consider the holding of those meetings in any way contemptuous of them or of Parliament. They happened for a particular reason. We have been advised by those assisting us that it was necessary to give as much time as possible—in fact more than we are giving—to organisations that want to present matter to the committee, and that is reasonable. It was suggested to us that the organisations should be given until, say, September to prepare their submissions, consult with their committees and reach their decisions democratically. Of course we were not able to do that.

The spirit of select committees is that they meet during the recesses of the Parliament. The biggest recess for this Parliament is between May and August. We want to use that particular time to conduct most of the hearings and the examination of submissions which will come before us.

Our advisers told us to have all of the machinery matters ready to proceed immediately this motion is passed by Parliament. So the date we have set for the receipt for submissions—4 July—is a compromise between what is advisable and what is indicated by the exigencies of time. Also, there has been considerable Press speculation regarding the constitution of the advisory panel and the terms of reference. It seemed sensible to resolve those matters so that organisations can commence submissions to the committee. We have endeavoured to settle most of those arguments.

At this stage I seek leave to incorporate in "Hansard" a copy of an advertisement which the committee proposes to lodge in all provincial newspapers in Queensland and major metropolitan newspapers throughout Australia seeking submissions. (Leave granted.)

#### "SELECT COMMITTEE OF EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND"

"The Queensland Parliament has by Resolution appointed an all-party Select Committee to inquire into, to report upon and to make recommendations in relation to the system of education in Queensland and the extent to which it meets the expectations of students, parents and the community and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, with particular reference to the following matters:

- "(a) the efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education;
- "(b) appropriate emphasis in primary education between basic education and other activities;
- "(c) adequate technical and further education to meet today's industry needs;
- "(d) a review of the decision making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
- "(e) adequacy of social science courses for primary and secondary students;
- "(f) the need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them and the administrative machinery for implementing them;
- "(g) the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organisations concerning any aspect of education; and
- "(h) any other matter pertaining to the matters for inquiry, report and recommendation as aforesaid.

"Submissions, observations and other material relevant to the terms of reference are invited from members of the public and interested bodies and organisations. These should

- "• be in writing—ten (10) copies from organisations; individuals may provide single copies in writing or typed.
- "• be forwarded to Mr E. S. Newton, Secretary of the Committee, Parliament House, George Street, Brisbane 4000, telephone 221 2477.
- "• be forwarded as soon as compiled but, if possible, so as to reach the Secretary by Tuesday, 4th July, 1978. Late submissions will be allowed providing written intention is given before 4th July.
- "• indicate whether, in addition to making a written submission, the author wishes to appear in person before the Committee.

"The Select Committee will commence public hearings at Parliament House, Brisbane in June, 1978. Appearance before the Committee will be by invitation.

"Submissions already to hand will be considered by the Committee.

M. J. AHERN, M.L.A.,  
"Chairman."

Mr. AHERN: An inspection of the advertisement will show that it is proposed that submissions should be received in writing and, where organisations are concerned, it will obviously greatly assist the panel if all members of the committee and of the advisory panel have a copy initially. So it is asked that 10 copies be forwarded. The bulk of material coming forward could severely strain the resources of Parliament if it had to do the necessary photocopying. I can see, by your expression, Mr Speaker, that you agree with me on that. It is sensible that organisations be asked to provide 10 copies. However, special consideration will be given to those people who write in as individuals. This will be encouraged. It will not be necessary that their submissions be type-written, although that is desirable. It is proposed that all submissions currently in hand—and there are literally hundreds of them—will be considered by the committee.

It would not be safe to assume, either, from a reading of the advertisement that the committee will not commence public hearings before 4 July, the cut-off date for submissions. In fact, we hope to receive early submissions which would enable us to commence the substance of the inquiry in June. However, this will depend upon the individual submissions that we receive.

It is proposed that the committee should visit some regional centres. This is specifically provided for in the motion before the House and it is a matter that will be under review by the committee in the near future.

The committee also proposes to write to all members of Parliament inviting submissions from them and from any organisation or person with whom they have contact. Members will receive those letters within the next few days. It is proposed also to write to all Ministers of the Crown inviting submissions from their departments. Interested organisations will be written to and invited to make submissions to the inquiry. I propose to have this speech copied so that any honourable member who wishes to obtain copies of it for presentation to any interested parties within his electorate can do so.

No specific time frame is envisaged for the inquiry but it is hoped that some particular matters will be resolved in time for the next curricular year. Obviously the committee members and the panel would want to see the inquiry completed as expeditiously as possible.

Consideration has already been given informally to the constitution of the advisory panel. At present it is proposed that it consist of four persons, namely: Dr Rupert Goodman, of the Queensland University; Mr Peter Krebs, principal of St. Paul's School, Bald Hills; Mr Kevin O'Connor, principal of Wavell State High School; and Mrs Jan Herron, parent representative. Members of the advisory panel were recommended informally to the committee by me after very wide consultation with interested organisations, members of the Government and other individuals. It should be clearly understood that they are not delegates representing any organisation. They are to be there in the capacity of helpful professional representatives. It is critical in this professional area that a committee such as the one proposed be afforded professional advice on a continuing basis. These persons will, I believe, be able to provide adequately that continuing advice.

I want to assure honourable members that a lot of discussion and consideration preceded the appointment of these persons to the advisory panel, and I would now like to detail some further background information on the proposed appointees.

Dr Rupert Goodman, has a B.A. B.Ed., Ph.D., F.A.C.E., and he is a Reader in Education at the Department of External Studies of the University of Queensland. He has been a primary and secondary teacher in private and State schools. He has been a headmaster, university lecturer and administrator. He is a Fellow of the Australian College of Education. He has had wide experience in education at all levels. He was formerly chairman of the council of the Kindergarten Teachers' College, a member of the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Council and the Board of Adult Education. He is currently a member of the Board of Teacher Education, a member of the University of Queensland Senate, and Queensland commissioner for the A.B.C. He is a member of other committees of inquiry, including the UNESCO Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education in Indonesia and Ethiopia and the Royal Australian Nursing Federation Committee of Inquiry into Nursing Education. His other community appointments include member of the board of governors of St. Andrew's Hospital and chairman of the Queensland Council for Children's Films and Television.

Mr Peter Krebs was educated at Barker College, Sydney, and the University of Sydney, receiving a B.A. in 1949. His teacher training was with the Teachers' Guild of New South Wales in 1949. He taught at St. Andrew's School and Barker College in Sydney and then at the Church of England Grammar School in Brisbane from 1950 to 1954 and from 1956 to 1960. He spent 1955 touring Europe. He has been the headmaster at St. Paul's school at Bald Hills since 1960 and in 1970 he visited Europe in order to inspect the schools in England, take a linguistics course and visit schools in France, and to teach English for four months at Frederiksberg LEA, Copenhagen, Denmark. He is a past president of the Independent Schools Association of Queensland.

Mr Kevin O'Connor is the principal of the Wavell State High School in Brisbane. He was educated at the Christian Brothers' College in Rockhampton and the University of Queensland, where he received a B.A. and M.Ed. He has taught at one-teacher and public schools in the Mackay and Rockhampton areas. He was a deputy principal at the Rockhampton High School and the Mt. Morgan High School. He is now in his 16th year as a principal, having been the principal of Newmarket, Everton Park and Pimlico High Schools before coming to Wavell. He was a foundation member of the Board of Secondary School Studies and served on

that board for four years. He is currently vice-president of the Queensland State High School Principals' Association. He is a member of the Queensland Teachers' Union.

There has been some criticism of the appointment of Dr Goodman to the panel inasmuch as he is on record as making certain reference to certain social education programmes in Queensland that are the subject of recent controversy. It is difficult to find any educationist who has not expressed a view on this, but in this respect his presence on the panel is balanced by the two other educationists who are professional men and were chosen on the basis of their professionalism. I do not know what their attitude is to SEMP and MACOS; I have not asked them.

Mrs Jan Herron is a parent of 10 children. She is not representing any parent organisation; she is simply a parent with a lot of knowledge of parent problems. She is a past president of the Mater Hospital's Women's Auxiliary and has had a lot of experience in public life as well, and I am quite certain she will make an excellent contribution to the committee.

It would be possible to detail another 20 and, some would say, 50 people who could adequately fill this role. However, it was decided that to be at all workable the panel should be kept reasonably small. It may be added to for particular purposes or generally as the committee proceeds in its work.

Mr Ted Newton is the secretary of the proposed committee. He is an official of the Parliament and I am very happy to have him associated with us. In this regard, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you and your officers for the immense amount of help you have given to us in relation to this inquiry so far. It has been greatly appreciated.

It is possible that a committee such as this will require a research person as well, and that is something that will be considered by the committee as time goes by. It is important that Parliament and the public understand that this inquiry is not an inquiry into SEMP and MACOS. An inspection of the terms of reference of the inquiry would very clearly, I think, indicate that it is an investigation into education in the broad in our State. However, the areas of social education, literacy and numeracy and their effect on employment, and the Radford scheme, will certainly be the subjects of detailed examination.

Initially, the decision has been taken to commence the inquiry with a general look at education in an endeavour to isolate areas of concern and then these particular matters can be considered at a later time in the context of the education system as a whole and the direction in which we feel it should be heading in 1978.

This inquiry will be but one facet of the information and inquiry system that goes to Government—a parliamentary inquiry. The Government has professional inquiries continuing at the moment. It also has a wealth of senior departmental advice. In this respect our committee's contribution and report will be only one facet of the information going to Government. However, a Parliamentary Committee has a particular value, I believe, that no other form of inquiry can adequately serve. I refer particularly to the ability, by contact through members of Parliament, through organisations out in the field, to detail and crystallize views of average ordinary persons in the community—the mums and dads, the children, the employers and employees, the electors, the interested parties, whoever they are. So I ask for the co-operation of honourable members in this respect, in assisting our inquiry to see that we get information of that type.

Education must be accountable to Parliament, and this issue is central to the debate which has been raging in recent times. It has always been the bane of some people involved in public administration that they have to account to elected representatives for their recommendations. But that is at the core of parliamentary democracy, and that is the central issue in relation to the appointment of this committee. The qualification of the members of the inquiry cannot be argued; they are elected representatives of the people of Queensland.

Mr Speaker, some have said—and it has generated a lot of comment—that the action to appoint this inquiry was prompted by one or two groups in the community. However, I think it is fair to say that during the 1970s increasing concern has been expressed by many sections of the community about aspects of education in our State. While it has been acknowledged that more money than ever has been spent on education, more modern buildings have been erected with very sophisticated teaching aids, more teachers have been appointed with longer and more specialised training, and overall there are smaller classes, there has been—and it is not possible to deny it—a constant questioning about the quality of education. Whether or not it is justified is another matter, but for more than a decade there has been widespread criticism in the community of, for instance, the behaviour of adolescents—their dress, their manners, their habits, their indiscipline. This, it is stated has been associated with a decline in the quality of secondary and post-secondary education. In this context, the Radford scheme of continuous assessment instead

of the external public examination system which previously has been a constant target, despite several reviews of the scheme which have been carried out by the Board of Secondary School Studies and educationists appointed by it. Although more and more students were remaining at school to complete year 12 and continuing on to tertiary studies, the trend to emphasise the liberal arts courses rather than practical courses has been criticised by, for example, employer organisations. Employers were critical of the vocational emphasis in education from apprenticeship through to technical and further education.

The downturn in the economy in recent years and the very large increase in the number of people unemployed, even among those who have stayed on for higher qualifications, accentuated public concern that somehow the schools were to blame, at least in part. Moreover, uneasiness was expressed at the quality of some teacher graduates from colleges of advanced education, over which the Government had little control. Some parents have been complaining of their philosophical attitudes indicated by the setting of textbooks and the development of courses.

In March 1977 the Minister for Education, following complaints from parents, saw fit to withdraw a secondary school English text "Messageways on a Small Planet. Book One", on the ground that it over-emphasised violence. A major public debate has waged throughout Queensland over social studies programme MACOS being trialled in 17 primary schools. There was widespread discussion in the media, an active campaign against it by some community organisations, and much concern expressed by parents in many country areas. The Minister for Education halted further development of the course, cancelled a special seminar for MACOS teachers and called for a special report on the matter from the Education Department. Subsequently Cabinet decided to scrap the course. In primary education questions have been raised about the adequacy of literacy and numeracy studies, and there has been fairly widespread public disquiet about standards in basic skills. There has been concern at the political level over the intrusion of the Commonwealth Government and Commonwealth agencies into the field of education, traditionally and constitutionally a State responsibility. Some of these enterprises appeared to have a philosophical basis different from that underlying State activities in education.

Controversy developed over the SEMP programme produced by the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra as resource material for use by teachers and students in a wide range of secondary school subjects. Following numerous community complaints, Cabinet investigated this material and decided that it should be prohibited from use in State schools.

This great education debate is not unique to Queensland; it is not unique to Australia; it has been going on in the United Kingdom for a number of years. In the United States parents are suing the schools. In Missouri 23 public school districts have been sued by a group of taxpayers who charge that schools do teach religion in the form of secular humanism. The plaintiffs have asked for a refund of their education taxes. Pending the litigation tax funds have been placed in escrow by the courts.

On the other hand, while these Government decisions on education were welcomed by some sections, serious objections were raised by the Queensland Teachers' Union, the Queensland Council of State School Organisations, by many academics, by education associations and many others. They have asserted that there is nothing wrong with the system at the moment, that an immense amount of effort has gone into establishing a system that is serving our State very well, that there is a lot that is good and right in the schools in Queensland, and that the only cause for concern is the shortage of money to rectify the errors.

Some teachers have been affronted by Government interference in this area. They feel somehow that their professionalism is affronted. Others believe that the problems which are the subject of public concern have been created outside the school. One could go on. We have a very

excellent Department of Education that is somewhat bewildered about it. With the best of intentions it has been endeavouring to provide the best advice to Government, and so, who is right? Is there cause for concern? What ought to be State education in 1978 and into the '80s? This is the time to appraise. I want to tell all honourable members and the people of Queensland that we will rest only on rational argument.

Claims have been made to the effect that statements made by senior Government members have in some way pre-empted the inquiry. On the contrary, I am very happy that there is controversy. I ask, though, that it be a controversy of quality from which some good ideas will come. No statements can be made that will in any way pre-empt this parliamentary inquiry, and I am very hopeful that all honourable members will feel free to express themselves as fully and frankly as they can, wherever they can. I think it will be useful. The suggestion that this inquiry is in some way a witch-hunt is not really worthy of comment. It is a ridiculous proposition to suggest an all-party committee to carry out such a task. It is ridiculous in the extreme. I can assure all honourable members that that will not be the case. It has not been suggested to me by anyone, by any member of the committee or by any member of the panel. No rational person could make that comment about the committee. Knowing the personalities that are involved, I say it will not happen.

The M.L.A.s who are serving on the committee have been carefully chosen—not, incidentally, by me. I served on Sir Alan Fletcher's education committee when many of the boards that are at present a feature of our education system were introduced and when the Radford scheme was introduced. I have served on three select committees of the Parliament and I know how committees operate.

The member for Isis, Mr Powell, is a former teacher and a former member of the council of the Teachers Union in this State. The Chairman of Committees, Mr Bill Hewitt, has been a member of the Minister's parliamentary education committee since he came into the House. He is a man of considerable committee experience and he will be a great asset to this committee. I am very happy to welcome my friend and colleague from Ithaca, Mr Miller, who has had more than 15 years of parliamentary experience. As honourable members who have been here for some time would know, he has always been a keen advocate for industry and apprenticeship matters. His expertise will be invaluable to the committee. The Labor Party has, of course, nominated its shadow Education Minister.

It has been suggested in the newspapers that some organisations, probably well-meaning, have publicised the fact that it is their intention to act as a clearing-house in some way for matters coming to the committee. Whilst recognising that they are acting with the best intentions, I want to discourage that. The integrity of this inquiry requires that all submissions come direct to it, and I think that as chairman of the committee I can offer the privileges of the House to anybody who appears before the committee. To anyone who indicates confidentiality I say that it will be observed.

All the machinery associated with the inquiry is well in motion, so that on the passing of this motion the committee will be able to move quickly into the investigative stage. I thank all those who have been associated with bringing this about.

I look forward to some constructive debate on the subject tonight. As it is a parliamentary inquiry I will be looking for thoughtful and helpful co-operation of all members of Parliament irrespective of their party. I want to assure everybody that we will do our job thoroughly and impartially. We need opinions, but we will be relying on facts.

One-third of this Government's Budget goes into education. The appointment of this education inquiry is the most important business of the Government this session. All who are associated with it are deeply conscious of the responsibility that has been given to us and I want to assure everyone that we will discharge that responsibility in the best and fairest way that we can.



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