

17/4/61

I would like to welcome you all here tonight, and also to thank Miss Winsome Munro for coming here to speak to us all.

As you no doubt know the Education Vigilance Committee was formed by a body of parents who were gravely concerned at the trend of education in this country and still more concerned after studying the Education Advisory Bill, and it was decided to get together and do something constructive about these ~~things~~ ^{maters}.

The Education Vigilance Committee has two main objectives:-

1. To mobilise public opinion to oppose the re-introduction of the Education Advisory Council Bill, and any other legislation affecting education until;
2. Public pressure has brought about the appointment of a special Commission which will investigate the basic problems of finance administration, instruction professional qualifications and responsibility in our educational system.

With these ends in view a most successful Educational Conference was held at the University in February, where certain Resolutions were put forward by the Public for presentation in the appropriate quarters, and this E.V.C. was asked to carry on as a Continuation Committee to further the interests of education. The Resolutions will be put before all M.P.C.'s in the Transvaal Provincial Council, and M.P.C.'s for other areas will be asked to receive delegations with the same object in view.

Tonight's forum and any future forums to be held will be for the purpose of furthering our objectives, with a view to collecting suggestions from a cross section of parents from various, Church, Private and Government Schools, which will in turn be correlated and used for a further Education Conference to be held this year, and also with the purpose of arousing and interesting an increased number of parents to aid us in our efforts.

I would appeal to all of you present here tonight to go back to your respective Governing Bodies, P.T.A.'s., and parents and tell them what we are doing and urge them to call meetings to tell others the necessity and urgency for a united effort to improve education in this country.

It is also necessary to refer to certain contentious statements which have been made by the Administrator of the Transvaal, and also to the recent nominations to the Transvaal School Boards, all these matters have already been taken up by this E.V.C., but we need your support and the more parents we have behind us, the more forceful and effective our efforts will be.

I would like to state publicly that the Education Vigilance Committee is non-political, in fact one of the strongest beliefs of this Committee is that Education should be controlled by educationalists and should be outside the influence of any party political atmosphere. I would also like it known that to date there are 50 Education Vigilance Committees operating in the Union, and more are in the process of being formed.

Various papers have been handed to you tonight for your information, and we would earnestly ask you to study them and where necessary complete the forms and return them to this Committee, especially the form asking if you are willing to help on any of the various Committees which have already been formed.

I now have great pleasure in introducing Miss Winsome Munro, who is the Organising Secretary of the Christian Education Movement, who I believe intends to speak about various Text Books used in our schools, and thereafter the meeting will be open for questions and discussion. Miss Winsome Munro:-

EDUCATION VIGILANCE COMMITTEE

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

SURVEY SUB-COMMITTEE

A small sub-committee of the Conference Committee is asking for a survey of schools in country districts to be undertaken.

The terms of reference of the survey will be:

- a) Do the schools in my neighbourhood contribute dynamically to harmony of relationships? If not, in what way have they failed?
- b) Are we proud of our standards of scholarship in all our schools?
- c) Is the school a focal point of cultural life?
- d) Do our children leave all our schools well equipped to cope with the twentieth century world, with broadened interests and open and courageous minds, and with properly acquired skills?
- e) What kind of schools will serve the community best?

This survey can be undertaken by town districts as well. Will you please send in your name as soon as possible if you wish to help in this scheme. Copies of your findings must be sent to : Mrs. Monro, 17 Chislehurst Drive, Auckland Park, Johannesburg. They will be of great value in compiling material for discussion at the next Conference.

HOSTESS SUB-COMMITTEE.

All members of the Education Vigilance Committee and any other people who are interested in its work will be asked to make their homes available for a meeting with at least TEN people who have not yet attended any of our meetings, who are representative, as far as possible of a cross section of the school-going community, i.e. Afrikaans, English, single medium, dual and parallel medium, private church and special schools. A speaker will be made available to speak on the difference between the Hofmeyr Advisory Bill and the Union Advisory Bill; and will discuss briefly the weaknesses in our present educational structure. After discussion, the new contacts are to be asked to help us in our aims and to join specific sub-committees as they are formed.

Please send in the names of those who will organise Hostess Sub-committees to : Mrs. D. Reader, 3 Kilkenny Rd., Parkview, Johannesburg. Reports on the findings of these groups must also be sent to Mrs. Reader.

RESOLUTIONS SUB-COMMITTEE.

Every Education Vigilance Committee will be sent the resolutions and recommendations taken at the Conference on 18th February. A sub-committee to deal with these should be formed. Its objects will be to make known in the appropriate quarters these recommendations and resolutions by:

- a) Organising a meeting with your M.P.C. and again with your M.P. to discuss with him the recommendations which he can promote, and to ask his assistance in so doing.

Please send in full details of interviews to Mrs. Lurie, 108 Clovelly Rd., Greenside, Johannesburg. This information will be of the utmost importance in discussions at our next Conference.

(ctd. on reverse)

CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Conference Committee will be planning a National Conference in Johannesburg some time in August or September. It will require information on the different Provincial systems of education in as short and simple memoranda as possible.

We would also like to encourage the idea of having a series of short one day conferences in each province to spotlight the advantages and shortcomings of each provincial system.

Comments and suggestions should be sent to Mrs. Richter, 3 Campbell Rd. Parktown West, Johannesburg.

EDUCATION CHARTER SUB-COMMITTEE.

The first draft of an Education Charter for the Children of South Africa is being sent to you for your comments and recommendations. We believe that the time is ripe for such charter to come into existence. We hope to get wide support for it when it is finally drafted. Recommendations are to be sent to Mrs. Black, The Dean's Residence, Cottesloe, Johannesburg.

These questions should be given careful consideration.

1. How can we encourage unity of aims, and share information with:

- a. Parents and teachers,
- b. parents and teachers in different sorts of schools,
- c. parents and teachers in schools in town and country,
- d. interested people in different provinces?

2. Education is the concern of the Provincial Council. How can we:

- a. make the Council aware of our needs,
- b. galvanise the Council to carry our demands a further stage,
- c. induce the Council to press for a special Commission to examine our educational system and recommend reform?

3. Is it possible at this stage to start the nucleus of a Body which may have to act as a Commission to investigate the basic problems of finance, administration, instruction, professional qualifications, and responsibility in our educational system?

How could it be sponsored?

If it is formed, should it not start immediately to collect evidence for the Select Committee to be appointed by the Government?

Could it be the nucleus of a permanent Education Council on the lines of the Canadian Council of Education?

4. How can we involve the whole community in one educational programme? Through Church organisations? through Cultural organisations? How?

The Educational Vigilance Committee has two main objectives :-

1. To mobilise public opinion to oppose the re-introduction of the Union Education Advisory Council Bill, and any other legislation affecting education until :-

2. Public pressure has brought about the appointment of a special Commission which will investigate the basic problems of finance administration, instruction, professional qualifications and responsibility in our educational system.

The E.V.C. was formed by parents for parents, with the object of mobilising parent and public opinion.

On looking back over 10 month's work we can see a heartening increase in interest shown in education, and can say with gratification that we have already achieved much.

ASSESS YOUR RATING AS A PARENT.

Only the best in education is
good enough for our children.

YES. NO. DON'T KNOW.

The best can only be given by
the best teachers.

It follows that careful selection of
teachers, the best training, should
be given; the highest salary possible
offered.

It also follows that teachers should
be free to SERVE the children; that
loyalty should not be torn between
duty to child and duty to the department.

Parents should be RESPONSIBLE for
seeing that their children are properly
educated.

It follows that parents should be free
to chose any school that best suits
their child's particular needs.

There should be many kinds of schools
with one high standard of scholarship.

As all taxpayers are taxed for education
all school, private, church and state,
should be the FINANCIAL responsibility of
the state.

but that
the responsibility for a sound
EDUCATION should rest on the
teaching profession and the
Principals of schools.

and
these spheres of responsibility
should never overlap, but should be
kept entirely separate.

Mark yourself + 3 for every yes

- 3 for every no

and - 6 for every don't know.

Please send in to:

Mrs. Rankin,
72 Third Street,
Lower Houghton,

and join the E.V.C. if your rating is over 18

EDUCATION VIGILANCE COMMITTEE

For 10 years of his life your child is going to be influenced by his school and his teachers.

It is your DUTY to see that he gets what you, his parents want for him out of his years of schooling.

But the TEACHER is the key to sound education.

His sole duty and responsibility should be to the child.

As teams of scientists worked together to discover the truth of science and revolutionised knowledge in that field, so teams of educationalists should be free to organise, experiment and teach with the one great objective—to help the child to expand and flower to his utmost capacity, mentally, physically and spiritually. He should grow character, acquire moral values, be capable of reasoned judgment and be put in touch with the world's treasure house of knowledge.

If this be the ideal, ways and means will be found to achieve this.

If the ideal be less, ways and means will be found to achieve this.

If the ideal is to turn out an indoctrinated, rigid, narrow, regimental automaton, MEANS WILL BE FOUND TO ACHIEVE THIS.

JUST EXACTLY WHAT DO YOU WANT OUT OF THE COMPULSORY TEN YEARS SCHOOLING PERIOD?

If you are interested telephone 45-4094.

THE EDUCATION BILL
AND
WHAT IT MEANS

PRICE 3d.

*Issued by the Action Committee for Freedom in Education,
P.O. Box 962, Pietermaritzburg*

THE EDUCATION BILL—WHAT IT MEANS

At the end of this pamphlet you will find the full text of the Bill to create a Union Education Advisory Council. On the face of it, it seems a harmless and even useful measure. But this is what lies beneath the surface of the legal language used:

The Advisory Council will not be independent

It will consist of full-time members who will be paid for the job. They are to be appointed *by the Minister*. (Clause 5, Clause 2 (1) and Clause 2 (4).) They will serve as long as the Minister chooses but not for longer than five years unless re-appointed.

Advisory Councils in the United States and Britain are composed of distinguished educationists who have their own independent posts and are not dependent on the Advisory Council for their living.

Will the proposed Advisory Council insist on giving advice that the Minister does not want or does not like? Will it attract men of independent mind? Or will it become a body of docile ministerial creatures?

The Advisory Council will not be representative

There will be ONE representative only from each Province; but the Minister may create a Council of twelve members, so that the Minister's own nominees can outnumber the representatives of all the Provinces voting together. The Minister may also veto the nominations received from the Provinces. No qualifications of any kind are laid down for members of the Council, except those nominated by the Provinces, nor is any other limitation placed on the Minister's power of choice. (Clause 2 (1) and Clause 2 (2).)

The Council will not only advise—it will also inspect, inquire into, and report on the work of schools

The Bill gives to the Council powers which are quite unprecedented for an Advisory Council. It may enter any school and demand any information or documents, and may do so "in connection with any matter affecting the basic principles of education"—a formulation which will permit of an inquisition into everybody and everything in any school. The only schools at present exempted are those—very few—which receive no financial aid whatever from the Provinces or the State. (Clauses 1 (v) and 4 (1), (2), (3), (4).)

The Bill interferes with the control of education by the Provinces.

In Clause 6 of the Bill, Provincial Councils are forbidden to legislate in matters concerning the education of white persons, without prior consultation with the Minister of Education.

The Bill envisages and provides for centralised education directed by the Government

In Clause 3 appear the following significant words:

“The Council shall advise *the Minister* generally in regard to the the policy to be adopted in connection with the education of white persons . . .”

“The policy to be adopted” in education is thus envisaged as a matter for determination by *the Minister* on the advice of his own nominees, and no longer as the responsibility of the Provincial Councils. Generally in regard to policy the Advisory Council is to advise only the Minister; and is to ignore the Administrators. Consultation between Advisory Council and Provincial Administrations is restricted to specific matters in regard to which Provinces ask for advice, or in regard to which the Council considers it necessary to offer unsolicited advice.

This assignment of policy generally to the Minister—to the exclusion of the Administrators—follows the lines of the second major policy statement of the Christian National Education movement (see below) which recommended that legislative powers over educational policy should be taken from the Provinces and vested in the central Government, with the Union Education Department “providing for legislation on the recommendation of the statutory advisory councils”.

The Bill has been planned for a long time

1948

Most South Africans interested in education know about the authoritative (and notorious) statement of Christian National Education principles published in 1948 by the Institute for Christian National Education with the full approval of the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge.*

1955

This “first great step towards the realisation of Christian National Education” was followed in 1955 by “a second event of great importance”, to quote Professor J. C. Coetzee, one of the signatories of the 1948 Policy Statement. This second event, writes Professor Coetzee (*Onderwys in Suid Afrika*, p. 329) “*was the intimate co-operation of the three Afrikaans churches in the formulation of an educational policy based on the Christian National Education principles—(’n onderwysbeleid gegrond op die C.N.O. beginsels). The fruit of this co-operation was the publication in the beginning of 1955 of the Memorandum on the Need for a Union Education Policy and for the Ending of Divided Control of Secondary Education. . . . The Churches gave their attention to the following question:*

the control of education, its spirit and direction (gees en rigting), religious education and the Christian basis, parental rights and especially the need for a national policy and a national council for education.”

*Those who do not should study the account of this document, which is itself not easily obtained, given in *Blackout*, published by the Education League, Box 1176, Johannesburg. Price 2/6.

For "early action by interim legislation" the Memorandum recommended the taking over by the State of the autonomous technical colleges. That take-over was at once announced and is now complete.

For legislative action they recommended the creation of a *Union Education Council* and the *central control of education policy*.

The Bill has thus been long and carefully planned. But the Provinces, the parents, and most educationists have had no share in the planning. The Bill is part of a larger design, worked out "in die stilte" for imposition by stages on all South Africa.

We have already seen :

The ending of parental option in Nationalist-controlled provinces.

The steady abolition of dual-medium and parallel-medium schools in favour of separate schools for English and Afrikaans-speaking children.

The undermining of the independence of private schools.

The taking over of the independent Technical Colleges by the State.

The violation of the autonomy of the Universities.

Dismissals of University teachers.

Attacks on the "conscience clause".

The campaign for "co-ordination" of secondary education, which means the imposition of State policy on all schools.

1960

THIS BILL IS AN IMPORTANT STEP TO THE CONTROL OF THE MINDS OF OUR CHILDREN. READ AND STUDY IT CAREFULLY. THEN JOIN YOUR LOCAL ORGANIZATION TO OPPOSE THE BILL AND ALL IT STANDS FOR:

INDOCTRINATION

INTOLERANCE

OBSCURANTISM

IGNORANCE

ASK THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, BY TELEGRAM,
TO WITHDRAW THE BILL

THE BILL

BILL

To provide for the establishment of a Union Education Advisory Council and to determine its functions and to provide for other incidental matters.

(Introduced by the MINISTER OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND SCIENCE)

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, the Senate and the House of Assembly of the Union of South Africa, as follows:—

Definitions.

1. In this Act, unless the context otherwise indicates—
 - (i) "Administrator" means an Administrator acting on the advice of the executive committee concerned; (i)
 - (ii) "council" means the Union Education Advisory Council appointed under section two; (iv)
 - (iii) "education" means education provided at a school; (iii)
 - (iv) "Minister" means the Minister of Education, Arts and Science; (ii)
 - (v) "school" means any establishment (other than a university or university college established by or under any law) at which education is provided, and which is under the control of the Union Government or a provincial administration or receives financial assistance out of public funds. (v)
2. (1) The Minister shall appoint a council to be known as the Union Education Advisory Council, to perform the functions entrusted to the council under this Act.

Appointment of Union Education Advisory Council.

(2) The Council shall consist of not less than seven and not more than twelve members, as the Minister may from time to time determine: Provided that in respect of each province there shall be appointed one person recommended by the Administrator concerned, who has special knowledge of education matters in that province.

(3) The Minister shall designate one of the members of the council to be the chairman and one of such members to be the vice-chairman of the council.

(4) A member of the council shall be appointed for such period, not exceeding five years, as the Minister may in each case determine, and shall, save in so far as the Minister otherwise directs, devote all his time to the performance of his functions under this Act.

Functions of council.

3. The council shall advise the Minister generally in regard to the policy to be adopted in connection with the education of white persons, and shall further advise the Minister and any Administrator in regard to all matters affecting education which the Minister or such Administrator may refer to the council or in regard to which the council considers it necessary to advise the Minister or such Administrator.

Committees of council.

4. (1) The council may with the approval of the Minister appoint such standing and other committees as it may from time to time consider necessary to perform such functions as the council may deem fit.

(2) Any such committee shall be constituted in such manner as the Minister may determine, but the chairman thereof shall be a member of the council.

(3) The Minister may after consultation with the Administrator concerned and any Minister of State concerned, appoint any committee consisting of a member of the council as chairman and two other persons as members, to carry out such investigation at any school as the Minister may in writing direct in connection with any matter affecting the basic principles of education.

(4) A committee referred to in sub-section (3) shall have access to any school, and may demand from any person exercising any authority in relation to such school such information and documents and such other assistance as the committee may require for the purposes of the investigation.

Remuneration and allowances of members of council and committees.

5. The members of the council or of any committee referred to in section four who are not officers or employees in the public service, shall receive such remuneration and allowances as may be determined by the Minister in consultation with the Minister of Finance.

6. No proposed legislation relating to the education of white persons shall be introduced in either House of Parliament or in any provincial council, *except after prior consultation between the Minister and any other interested Minister of State or Administrator.*

Regulations.

7. The Minister may make regulations as to—

- (a) the calling and conduct of meetings of the council and the quorum for and procedure at such meetings; and
- (b) any other matter in regard to which the Minister considers it expedient to make regulations in order to give effect to the provisions of this Act.

Short Title.

8. This Act shall be called the Union Education Advisory Council Act, 1960.

1. The Council of Education

The Council of Education shall be established in terms of the provisions of the Education Act, 1975, and shall be responsible for the general supervision and control of the education system in the Republic of South Africa.

2. The Council of Education

The Council of Education shall consist of the Minister of Education and the members appointed by the President in terms of the Education Act, 1975.

The Minister may, after consulting the Council, appoint or remove any member of the Council, and may also appoint or remove any member of the Council who is not a member of the Council.

The Council of Education shall be responsible for the general supervision and control of the education system in the Republic of South Africa, and shall advise the Minister of Education on all matters relating to the education system.

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Dear

You will be interested to know that the Education Conference organised by the Education Vigilance Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand in February was a great success and was attended by more than 800 people. The implications arising from the Conference are so important that we would like you to know about our future plans.

First of all it has been found necessary to sub-divide the work of the Education Vigilance Committee between various sub-committees each doing their own independent job while co-ordinating with the central organising committee. As we do not have any subscriptions or membership cards any parent who has attended any meeting organised by the E.V.C. is ipso facto a member. We value your membership highly and hope that you will continue to support our work.

The aims of the Education Vigilance Committee are :-

1. To continue to oppose the re-introduction of the proposed Education Advisory Council Bill, or any legislation affecting education until a Special Commission has been appointed to hear evidence.
2. To continue to mobilise opinion against the introduction of the Bill in particular and to inform parents about educational trends in general.
3. To implement the resolutions of the Education Conference of Feb. 17th and 18th.
4. To collect evidence of dissatisfaction felt with our present educational system, to collate suggestions for improvements in the system, and to present a report on these to any Commission on Education which may sit.
5. To foster unity of aim in parents whose children attend different kinds of schools.

In order to promote these aims, the following activities are being organised for the next six months :-

1. Informal talks in private homes, where speakers will be provided to talk about our aims to small groups of people from different walks of life.
2. A Conference to be held in July to continue our "Vision of the Future" by discussing the system and content of Education.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Owing to the increasing ramifications of our work, it is now essential to form several sub-committees. Some of these are set out hereunder, and we earnestly ask you to indicate the committee on which you would like to assist. We stress that your offer of help is for a

limited period of four months. It is envisaged that a general monthly meeting of all E.V.C. members should take place on the third Tuesday of each month at 72, Third Street, Lower Houghton at 10.30 a.m. Sub-Committee meetings should precede the general meetings at 9.a.m.

We need the viewpoint of every parent of every child attending English, Afrikaans, Private, Church, Government or any other type of school. Only by a systematic collection of parental opinion can we guide the educational trends in this country, Our work affects YOUR child so please support us.

Yours sincerely,

PLEASE TEAR AND RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO: 72, THIRD STREET, LOWER HOUGHTON.

I am prepared to serve on the sub-committee/s ticked below:-

SECRETARIAT (Typing material, addressing envelopes etc).....

INFORMAL TALKS (making your home available for about a dozen people of different backgrounds who will listen to a Speaker to be provided:).....

CONFERENCE: (to help organise the July Conference)

SPEAKERS: (to organise speakers to address private and public meetings)

I WILL / WILL NOT be able to attend the Meeting on 18TH APRIL, 1961.

I AM / AM NOT interested in being kept informed of future developments of the E. V. C.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

As a parent of school going children I find myself deeply concerned at the trend shown by contentious clauses in the proposed Union Education Advisory Council Bill, and also by the bias shown in certain text books that are being used in Transvaal schools. Because of this I have become a member of the Education Vigilance Committee.

This Committee has three main objectives :-

1. To mobilise public opinion to oppose the reintroduction of the Education Advisory Council Bill, and any other legislation affecting education until;
2. Public pressure has brought about the appointment of a special Commission which will investigate the basic problems of finance administration, instruction, professional qualifications and responsibility in our educational system.
3. If this is not forthcoming, to encourage the formation of a private independent body to undertake that responsibility for us.

With these ends in view an Education Conference was held at the University of the Witwatersrand on 17th and 18th February which proved an unqualified success. The Conference asked the Education Vigilance to carry on the good work.

I would now appeal to the Governing Body of to support to the full this Education Vigilance Committee by calling a meeting of interested parents to listen to qualified speakers on this subject, with a view to mobilising the parents of both the Preparatory and High Schools to help in this effort which affects the welfare of our children so vitally.

I would like to state publicly that the Education Vigilance Committee is non-political, in fact one of the strongest beliefs of this Committee is that Education should be controlled by educationalists and should be outside the influence of party politics entirely. I would also like it known that to date there are 50 Education Vigilance Committees operating in the Union, and more are in process of being formed.

(to be used by "Hostess" Committees)

EDUCATION VIGILANCE COMMITTEE

45-4094

72, Third Street,
Lower Houghton,
Johannesburg.

9th February, 1961.

Dear

Our committee is trying to mobilise parents to oppose the introduction of any legislation affecting education until the whole subject has been examined on a national level.

With this in mind we are launching a nationwide petition to be heard at the Bar of the House.

I enclose a copy of a letter which we have been asking one resident in each constituency to send to his M.P. May we hope that either you, or some friend, will write in this vein to your M.P.? We are already receiving encouraging and sympathetic letters back in those constituencies already covered.

I also enclose a petition form in the hope that we shall be able to get some signatures from your area to swell the growing numbers. The closing date for return is February .

With all good wishes,

SUGGESTED LETTER TO M.P.

Dear Mr

On behalf of a steadily increasing number of constituents, I write to beg your assistance in making representations in the correct quarters for the Union Education Advisory Council Bill not to be reintroduced this session.

We believe that education is too important a matter to become the subject of party political wrangles, and that before any legislation whatsoever is introduced, dealing with education, a special commission should be appointed to take evidence in all the provinces of the Union on all matters pertaining to education; that this commission's findings should ultimately be made public for further comment by educationists and other interested bodies, and that only after all this has been done should laws affecting the education of South Africa's children be tabled.

We feel that in this way subsequent legislation dealing with education might have a chance of support by the majority of people in this country.

Yours faithfully,

EDUCATION VIGILANCE COMMITTEE

REPORT ON CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION

17th and 18th February at Witwatersrand University

This was the first conference of its kind to be held in S.A. but judging by the overwhelming response it will not be the last. There was a total of eight hundred and twenty four registrations.

A Continuation Committee was formed to follow up the resolutions passed at the conference, and plans are already being drawn up for a Follow-Up Conference later in the year, and also to inaugurate Study Groups for parents on Education.

Many resolutions were passed, the most urgent one being that the Union Education Advisory Bill should be withdrawn until the whole subject of education has been examined on a truly national basis, and secondly that the Minister of Education set up a Special Commission for this purpose.

SYLLABUSES In discussing syllabuses, the Conference felt that much more flexibility was needed to allow teachers to use their initiative and thereby get more satisfaction from their work, and also to allow them to range more widely in their teaching and so broaden the child's knowledge. Any form of rigidity in the educational process will leave our children completely unprepared to hold their place in the vanguard of civilization, as their minds must be elastic enough to move with the rapidly expanding areas of knowledge, and the need to be able to orient their thought and actions accordingly.

HISTORY In the same way the teaching of history should encourage the search for truth and stimulate thought and discussion about the conditions in which our Western Civilization can survive and develop in South Africa.

RACE STUDIES Its aim, to make the pupil aware of, and interested in, people of other races both in his environment and in the country as a whole was considered excellent. It was felt, however, that the method of presentation did not in fact achieve this aim. As our future existence in this country is to a great extent dependent on our learning how to live in a multiracial society the Conference took a very serious view of this situation.

LANGUAGE This subject, skilfully taught, could become a valuable instrument for unlocking the door which separates people of different cultures. Teachers need to create an atmosphere in which the children have a strong desire share in the thought and culture of the people using the language being taught. It was strongly recommended that schools be parallel-medium and that a Bantu language be introduced into High Schools as a third language.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION It was felt that this should be in accord with the spirit of the Scriptures rather than merely the literal words. It was feared that 'Guidance' might put fetters on the thinking of young people instead of guiding them into ever expanding horizons.

THE TEXT BOOKS These came under considerable criticism for not truly representing the pooled contributions of accepted modern knowledge from whatever source. It must be appreciated, though, that this is not an attack on teachers as such, but points the need for a full enquiry into our whole system of education.

MATHS AND SCIENCE The shortage of well-trained teachers in these subjects inevitably led to acute shortages of trained scientists. Suggestions were made that Commerce and Industry might release skilled personnel for short periods in order to train teachers.

THE EDUCATION VIGILANCE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

17th and 18th February, 1961.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY CONFERENCE

- - - - -

Social Studies and History.

1. That Conference, deploring the dangerous parochialism in the overemphasis on South African history in the Transvaal syllabus for Social Studies and History, up to Standard VIII,
 - a) that, in Social Studies, topics concerned with general history, which is the true repository of our Western heritage, should be introduced earlier in the Primary School, so that the content of the courses may accord more fully with the introduction to the syllabus, which stresses that the child should understand his relation to the world in general and the other human beings around him.
 - b) that, while bearing in mind the requirements of final public examinations, schools should be free to draw up their own syllabuses in history and social studies to suit the special needs of their pupils, the different geographical areas in which the schools are situated, and the special interests of the teachers.

Language.

2. That Conference urges a) that there should be compulsory study of one African language from the Primary school stage,
 - b) that this language should be taught by Africans who speak this language, or by teachers who have themselves been taught the language by such Africans.
3. That Conference, believing that the effective teaching of the official languages and the promotion of racial harmony, resulting from genuine bilingualism, is possible only in parallel-medium schools.
 - urges that a return to the system of parallel-medium schools in the Transvaal be made.
4. That Conference, believing that it is not possible to teach language effectively to large groups of pupils of unequal ability, and realising that the marking load on a teacher of language is heavier

than that imposed on teachers of other subjects,

urges that a) classes in language should not consist of more than twenty-five pupils, and

b) language teachers should be given fewer teaching periods a week than those who teach other subjects.

5. That Conference urges that there should be more flexibility in the syllabuses for the official languages so that the teachers can use their own initiative more frequently.

6. That Conference urges that more time should be allotted to the teaching of languages on school time-tables.

7. That Conference, deploring the increasing use of objective tests in examinations.

urges that the essay type question, despite the known difficulties of marking, should continue to be used as a test of the ability to select, use and organise knowledge.

Race Studies and Guidance.

8. That Conference, believing that education should help children to reason and assess for themselves, views with concern the provisions in Transvaal education for a one-sided treatment of the race question, which attempts to inculcate the so-called traditional views of race, and urges that the relevant clauses of the Guidance Syllabus and the Race studies syllabus be revised so that it is truly impartial, and

urges that the textbooks which are guilty of bias and one-sided presentation be withdrawn.

9. That Conference requests the University of the Witwatersrand to arrange short schools for interested parents and for teachers who teach Race Studies.

Mathematics and Science.

10. That Conference, while realising that the shortage of scientists is a worldwide problem,

urges that the Education Department gives financial aid to teachers to enable them to follow post-graduate scientific

courses,

and urges that Industry in the Transvaal be persuaded to give enough money to provide fifty bursaries for student teachers to do post-graduate courses in scientific subjects.

and requests the University of the Witwatersrand to continue its valuable refresher courses for Science and Mathematics teachers.

and, believing that the vicious circle of bad pupils, University failures, bad teachers and bad pupils can be broken in the Universities,

requests the University of the Witwatersrand to give special consideration to the teaching of prospective science teachers in the first year of the Bachelor Degree.

General.

11. That Conference, believing that education is essential to the prosperity of the nation, and that the shortage of funds is the basic cause of many defects in our educational system,

urges that Government and the Provinces increase the amounts spent on education at all levels, with immediate consideration being given to increases to the salaries paid to teachers.

12. That Conference, urges a) that married women teachers be employed by the Transvaal Education Department on the same basis as single women teachers,

and b) that provision be made for married women teachers to be employed on a part-time basis where necessary.

13. That Conference, believing that it is a fundamental concept of Western Civilisation that people may live according to their conscience and their religious convictions,

urges that the Conscience Clause in the Transvaal Education Department ordinances be strengthened and entrenched.

14. That Conference urges the Education Vigilance Committee to continue to oppose the Union Education Advisory Council Bill.

15. The Conference urges the Education Vigilance Committee to continue to ask for a Government Commission of Enquiry in educational reform.

16. That Conference appoint a Continuation Committee to implement as far as possible the resolutions taken at the conference.

"A Comparison Between the Recommendations of the Commissions on Education of 1924 and 1948 and the Terms of the Union Education Advisory Council Bill".

Apologists for the Union Education Advisory Council Bill contend that similar legislation was recommended by earlier Commissions on Education, notably the Education Administration Commission of 1924 under the Chairmanship of Mr. J.H. Hofmeyer, and the Commission on Technical & Vocational Education of 1948, appointed by Mr. Hofmeyer under the Chairmanship of Dr. F.J. de Villiers. It is claimed that the Bill largely embodies the recommendations of these Commissions and that - Mr. Hofmeyer's integrity in regard to education being beyond question - the alarm and suspicions aroused by the Bill are without foundation.

A comparison between the Commissions' recommendations and the principles embodied in the present Bill shows how ill-founded this contention is.

1. Both earlier Commissions recommended categorically that all academic and general education up to University standard should be controlled by the Provinces. The New Bill does not mention this. On the contrary, it provides that no legislation on education may be introduced in any provincial council "except after prior consultation between the Minister and any other interested Minister of State or Administrator", thus in fact bringing all such legislation under the control of the government of the day.

N.B. Under the "Republic of South Africa" Bill provincial councils may deal with education "until Parliament otherwise provides". In view of recent public utterances of the Administrator of the Transvaal and other supposedly responsible persons, provincial control of education appears to be seriously in jeopardy.

2. The two Commissions laid down in detail the functions, to be defined by statute, of a proposed Union Board or Council. These were: to advise the Government on finance, to prepare legislation for Parliament, to co-ordinate the various educational services, to conduct enquiries when necessary, to keep records and statistics, to report on matters referred to it by Parliament, to co-ordinate the training, conditions of service etc., of teachers, and (recommended by the Commission of 1948 but not that of 1924) the determination of the broad principles of a general educational policy for the Union.

In the Union Education Advisory Council Bill the Council's functions are not defined in detail, but its powers would be almost unlimited as it would be entitled to advise not only on policy, but on "all matters affecting education", and not only on request but when the Council itself should see fit. Further, the Council could maintain complete and rigid control over education through sub-committees "to carry out investigations in any school - - - in connection with any matters affecting the basic principles of education" which would "have access to any school" and be entitled to "such information and documents and other assistance" as the sub-committee should demand.

Could there be a greater contrast to the Board envisaged by the Hofmeyer Commission as NOT a body "whose functions could be defined for it at the pleasure of the Minister or in any other way except by authority of Parliament"?

3. In regard to the appointment of members of the recommended Board or Council, both Commissions laid down what these qualifications should be. Members would be appointed as having special knowledge and experience in regard to industry, commerce, etc.

as representing the Universities, Teachers' Associations or other educational or child welfare organisations, thus ensuring breadth of outlook and experience in the Council. The Commission of 1924 laid down a definite period of service for members (four years).

In complete contrast to this, in the terms of the Union Advisory Council Bill no educational or other qualifications are required of Council members, with the exception of one person from each province "recommended by the Administrator concerned, who has special knowledge of educational matters in that province. The other members would be appointed by the Minister, who would determine the length of service (up to five years) and remuneration of members. It is obvious that all opposition to the Minister's wishes could therefore readily be eliminated.

TO SUMMARISE

In the terms of the Union Education Advisory Council Bill no provision is made for provincial control of education as clearly recommended by the Commissions of 1924 and 1948, the powers of the Council would be unlimited instead of defined by statute, while its personnel, instead of representing the broad interests of the community and of youth as envisaged by the two Commissions, might well be appointed on a party political basis with all dissident opinion eliminated.

The Commissions regarded the Educational Board or Council which they recommended as a purely advisory body. Under the Bill and in spite of its name, the function of the Council would not be to advise but to control.

COMMENT ON A PROPOSED CHARTER

STATE RIGHTS:

- 1) Parents, having voluntarily handed over their rights for the sake of the child, accept the ten years' period of compulsory education. They feel that during these ten important years when their influence is necessarily lessened, the child should be protected from any undue pressure of victimisation.

With this aim in view, they submit that the State is entitled to enforce a period of education on all children, and that it is its duty to provide competent teachers, good school buildings and an education designed to promote the growth of the whole person as well as to fit him to earn a living.

As the needs of the child are so varied, we submit that the duties of the State can be best carried out by local authorities, and that more powers should be granted to Provincial Councils, School Boards, and Parent-Teacher Associations to carry out these duties.

We believe that the sole right of the State is to ensure that our children are educated, and its duty is to supply the money and means for that purpose.

PARENTS' RIGHTS:

Parents should be free to choose both the school and the language medium. A "popular" school will soon have no vacancies and the parents will have to look elsewhere. This will provide a healthy rivalry, and a school without good teaching staff and a progressive and up-to-date outlook will not, as now, find reluctant pupils 'forced' to attend. There is nothing more deadly than the present system which not only forces rigid segregation between Afrikaans and English speaking children, but ensures the continuing existence of mediocre and indifferent schools.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS:

Freedom from persecution because of one's religious beliefs, has been the cornerstone of western civilisation. It is strange that in South Africa in 1960 we have to restate that right for the child. Events in the Free State recently, the removal of the Conscience Clause at Potchefstroom University --- these are straws in the wind which make parents feel that their children must be protected by a restatement of the principle that religious beliefs must remain inviolate.

- 2) The new and educationally sound policy of differentiated education means that children will in future be graded into different "streams" according to ability. Parents feel that while this is in the best interests of the child, no child should be forced against strong inclinations to become a scholar in a grade which he objects to. If, for argument's sake, a child is graded into the D stream, which caters for children incapable of any scholarship, he should, if he feels so inclined, be allowed to stay in C, and struggle to attain the unobtainable.

- 3) Parents declare forthrightly that the business of the school is to bring to the child the abundance of knowledge which is now available for all who care to learn; and that teachers should, at the same time, encourage honesty and diligence, reasoned thought and wisdom; and help the whole personality to develop to its highest extent.

This can not be done without adequate staff. The sole duty of the State in Education is to ensure that our children are properly educated, and the parents have a right to demand that an adequate supply of teachers, fully qualified and of highest character, should be made available for that purpose. No stone should be left unturned to ensure that there shall be enough teachers to deal with classes small enough to guarantee that every child will receive the maximum necessary attention.

4) Parents, having relinquished the control and protection of their children for the school, insist that no party political pressures, no prejudices or bitteresses, or victimisation of any kind because of parents' political or religious beliefs, shall find their way into the classroom. In the event of any breaking of this rule, they demand the dismissal of any teacher concerned, or in the case of a child, the withdrawal of that child from the school. Parents consider the protection of the child from such influences of the utmost importance. If any books are in use which perpetuate bitterness and strife, they demand that such books be withdrawn. No nation can be considered healthy which encourages prejudice and teaches its children to remember past wrongs.

SCHOOL RIGHTS:

Parents hand over their responsibilities and duties to the school for long periods. This is why they prefer to deal with Principals of Schools rather than State officials. The interests of both school and parents and of the child will be best served if Heads of Schools have increased powers over syllabuses, books and administration.

PRIVATE AND CHURCH SCHOOLS:

These schools serve a need in the community and are frequently pioneers in education.

Their right to manage their affairs, subject only to the inspectorial powers of the State, should be entrenched.

SOCIAL STUDIES AND HISTORY.

Eleanor Hawarden

The Transvaal Education Department has recently adopted a new syllabus for history in the high schools, and has introduced the new subject of Social Studies in the primary schools.

Social Studies combines geography, history, and civics. It is designed to work outwards from the experience and knowledge of the child, and to provide generous opportunities for the children's own activities. In this aspect it is excellent. Unfortunately, the syllabus as it stands at present gives an entirely disproportionate amount of time to detailed study of South Africa, and of a large number of unknown and unimportant individuals who lived in South Africa in the past. This is done by reducing the amount of time available for a wider study of the past, and of the people and characteristics of the world outside South Africa.

Similarly, in the new high school history syllabus for Forms I, II, and III, the amount of time available for the study of the history of the Western world is reduced by half, in order to spend increased time on a detailed and repetitive study of South African history.

We in South Africa can ill afford to allow the next generation to reduce their hold on the knowledge and values of the Western world in this way.

Neither can we afford to allow our young people to grow up with the one-sided and almost propagandist type of history that is contained in many of the text-books used at present in the schools. This kind of history is effective only in increasing the hostility and suspicion which is already far too prevalent between the various groups in our country today.

One of the most valuable parts of the heritage of Western civilization is the high value that it places on the search for truth, and the methods that have been worked out to achieve it. History should be taught so that young people understand these methods, and get practice in using them ; in other words, they should learn to have a scientific, rather than a propagandist approach to history, including the history of their own group or nation. South African history offers valuable opportunities for this kind of scientific history. But history as it is taught today, in English as well as Afrikaans medium schools, in private as well as government schools, does not do this. The emphasis is on the memorising of large quantities of facts. If we wish our children to learn to think, rather than merely to memorise, we must alter our teaching methods, as well as the syllabuses, examinations and marking systems.

Parents...../

Parents must do everything possible to persuade the Transvaal Education Department to alter its present policy. They should also take independent steps, through existing organisations or through new ones, to make the treasures of Western civilization available to young people, teachers, and the general public, and to stimulate thought and discussion about the conditions in which Western civilization can survive and develop in South Africa.

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Race Studies, Guidance and Religious Instruction

A. Race Studies (mainly) and Guidance (brief reference)

by M. G. Marwick, Professor of Social Anthropology,
University of the Witwatersrand

The syllabus for Race Studies (which is an unfortunate translation of "Volkekunde") states that this subject aims at making the pupil aware of, and interested in, people of other races both in his environment and in the country as a whole. Over the three years during which it is taught (Standards 6 to 8), it covers general topics such as the appearance and distribution of races in the world, in Africa and in the Union, the history of contact between races in South Africa and the present-day administration and control of non-whites; and it includes more specific studies of the racial groups constituting the Union's population. The first two years are devoted almost entirely to the past, and it is not until Standard 8 that present-day problems are handled.

As a means of making pupils aware of non-white South Africans as people and of giving them an appreciation of the value of cultural diversity and a corresponding tolerance of foreign ways of life, the syllabus has much to commend it. On the other hand, it has some serious defects, e.g. its emphasis on differences between groups, its neglect of the biological unity and common origin of all mankind and its playing down of the possibility of cultural change. And though its preamble insists on an objective presentation, some of its contents, e.g. the section on "The Traditional Standpoint with Respect to the Control and Administration of Non-Europeans (Historical)", imply that contentious issues are best avoided by the vigorous presentation of one side, i.e., the official one.

Here the Race Studies syllabus has much in common with the Guidance one, which has a recurring reference to "the legal and traditional South African point of view" on race relations, which is apparently one of the environmental conditions to which the pupil is to be adjusted. This has led some of the text-book writers to identify such a viewpoint with the one expressed in recent contentious legislation, such as the Suppression of Communism Act and the Industrial Conciliation Act.

How easy it is for these two syllabuses—Race Studies and Guidance—to be used for propagating a particular viewpoint, and thus betraying some of the fundamental values of Western civilization in regard to fairness and objectivity, is best illustrated by a few citations from some of the officially approved text-books (many more than these could be given) :-

1. "The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, now accepted by many tribes, has honourably re-established the power of the chiefs".
2. In five pages, thirty-five references are made to the richness of Indians and only five to their poverty.
3. "One of the most important advantages that the Industrial Conciliation Act holds for the white worker is job reservation. Particularly during the Second World War the non-whites gradually forced the whites out of certain forms of employment".
4. One of the Guidance books advocates insuring with companies whose head offices are in South Africa rather than overseas, and reproduces, as an illustration, a cheque drawn on a local commercial bank.

In general/.....

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