

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**Meeting of 23rd June 1965****PRESENT**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)
SIR DAVID CLIVE CROSBIE TRENCH, KCMG, MC
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR DENIS STUART SCOTT
O'CONNOR, KBE, CB
COMMANDER BRITISH FORCES
THE HONOURABLE GEOFFREY CADZOW HAMILTON
ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY
THE HONOURABLE MAURICE HEENAN, QC
ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE HONOURABLE JOHN CRICHTON McDOUALL
SECRETARY FOR CHINESE AFFAIRS
THE HONOURABLE JOHN JAMES COWPERTHWAIT, CMG, OBE
FINANCIAL SECRETARY
THE HONOURABLE KENNETH STRATHMORE KINGHORN
DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE ALEC MICHAEL JOHN WRIGHT
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
DR THE HONOURABLE TENG PIN-HUI, OBE
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE WILLIAM DAVID GREGG
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
HONOURABLE PATRICK CARDINALL MASON SEDGWICK
COMMISSIONER OF LABOUR
THE HONOURABLE DAVID RONALD HOLMES, CBE, MC, ED
DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
THE HONOURABLE JOHN PHILIP ASERAPPA
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER NEW TERRITORIES
THE HONOURABLE DHUN JEHangIR RUTTONJEE, CBE
THE HONOURABLE FUNG PING-FAN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE KWAN CHO-YIU, CBE
THE HONOURABLE KAN YUET-KEUNG, OBE
THE HONOURABLE SIDNEY SAMUEL GORDON
THE HONOURABLE LI FOOK-SHU, OBE
THE HONOURABLE FUNG HON-CHU
THE HONOURABLE TSE YU-CHUEN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE KENNETH ALBERT WATSON, OBE
THE HONOURABLE WOO PAK-CHUEN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE GEORGE RONALD ROSS
THE HONOURABLE SZETO WAI
THE HONOURABLE MRS ELLEN LI SHU-PUI, OBE
MR ANDREW McDONALD CHAPMAN (*Deputy Clerk of Councils*)

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9th June 1965, were confirmed.

OATH

MRS ELLEN LI SHU-PUI took the Oath of Allegiance and assumed her seat as a Member of the Council.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR: —May I welcome Mrs LI to the Council and also welcome Mr SZETO Wai back in his new capacity.

PAPERS

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by Command of His Excellency the Governor, laid upon the table the following papers: —

	<i>Subject</i>	<i>LN No</i>
Sessional Paper, 1965:—		
	No 16—Annual Report by the Director of Audit for the year 1963-64.	
	No 17—Annual Report by the Custodian of Enemy Property for the year 1964-65.	
	No 18—Annual Report by the Administrator of Japanese Property for the year 1964-65.	
His Excellency the Governor's despatch to the Secretary of State on the Report of the Director of Audit		
Emergency Regulations Ordinance.		
	Emergency (Bank Control) (Revocation) Order 1965	81

EDUCATION POLICY

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR: —We shall now resume the debate on the resolution which is that the White Paper on Education Policy be adopted as a basis for future action, it being understood that this resolution does not imply the taking of any decision on salaries and terms of service or on any other matter on which Government has expressed reservations in Appendix I to this White Paper.

MR KWAN CHO-YIU: —Your Excellency, the subject matter of the motion now before Council is one of considerable importance and has been the topic of much comment by almost all sections of the community.

Subject to one reservation as to the proposed increase of the fees of the Chinese grammar schools and subject to certain observations which I shall make in due course, my view is that the motion as amended should be supported. The amendment makes it clear that the resolution does not imply the taking of any decision on salaries and terms of service or on any other matters Government has expressed reservations in Appendix I to the White Paper. With due respect I utterly disagree with any suggestion that the whole of the White Paper should be rejected. On the contrary I say the White Paper as a whole is reasonable and beneficial to the community generally, but in saying this I do not suggest for one moment that it should not be re-examined I from time to time with a view to improvement on it. The White Paper contains the following salient features which, in my view, are most I welcome:—

- (i) It commits Government for the first time to provide by 1970-1971 each and every child in the Colony of the primary school age who wants an aided education, with a subsidized place in a primary school, whether a Government or aided school or a private school. On the basis of the present estimate that 80% of all children in the Colony of primary school age will require such aid, this will mean that the present cost of primary education will be doubled from about 90 million dollars to about 180 million dollars per year. This surely is no mean step towards the ultimate aim of providing free primary education for every child.
- (ii) It plans to double the amount of fee remissions in the primary sector from 10% to 20%, thus providing greater relief to the parents of the less fortunate children.
- (iii) It is to provide an aided education to every child that needs it for a period not of 5 years but of 7 years, that is 5 years in the primary sector and 1 or 2 years in technical courses designed to give the child a vocational training in order to fit him for some industry.
- (iv) It establishes the principle of social justice and equality that the general level of subsidy will be the same for all sections of the community, irrespective of colour or creed.

With regard to the proposal to increase the fees in Government and aided urban Chinese grammar schools from \$320 to \$400, with responding suburban and rural fees of \$300 and \$200 and sixth form fees of \$450, the public opposition to it may be perhaps summed up, as follows: —

- (a) The increase will cause hardship to the parents of the pupils of such schools, particularly those who have a number of children to educate. I think this ground of opposition may

be met by the proposed plan of fee remissions, which provides for a remission of as much as up to 50% for matriculation classes and 45% for other Chinese grammar classes and 35% for secondary technical schools, in cases where the parents are not in a position to pay the full standard fee. If the public can have the assurance that genuine cases of hardship will have a fair and sympathetic hearing in their application for a remission, the fear of undue hardship to a parent who cannot afford the increase may be allayed. Of the pupils in such schools there are many whose parents are well-to-do and can afford to pay the increased fees, and I can see no reason why they should not pay the proposed increased fee, for even with the increase it is still far from being enough to cover the cost of the education provided. I believe the average subsidy from public funds for each pupil in a Chinese grammar school is in the neighbourhood of \$800 per year.

- (b) The second ground of opposition is that the proposed increase may bring about a general increase of fees in all private secondary schools, which cater for about 51% out of 70% of the pupils of the secondary schools. I think this opposition may to a very large extent be met, if my honourable Friend, the Director of Education, has control, as I believe he has, over the scale of fees of private schools and is ready to give a public assurance that any change in such scale will be subjected to very careful scrutiny by his department and that no increase will be permitted without full justification and that the mere fact that Government and aided schools have increased their fees as proposed will not be accepted as such justification.
- (c) The third ground of opposition is that having regard to the financial position of the Colony the increase is unjustified.

I am not in agreement with the proposal to increase the fees of the Government or aided Chinese grammar schools, if the reason underlying the suggestion is to get more revenue in order to help to finance the various programmes set out in the White Paper. With due respect I think the proposal is a retrograde step and is contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of the statement in the White Paper that Government's intermediate educational aim is up to the level of full secondary education, which is taken by me to mean that the ultimate aim is to grant aid for as many places as the economy of the Colony will from time to time permit up to the level of full secondary education. It is my submission that the Colony's present economy can bear the cost of carrying out the programmes set out in the White Paper without having to rely on the proposed increase of the fees in question. However, having regard to the scheme for generous fee remissions which I have

just mentioned, and which should take care of those who are unable to pay the proposed increase, I feel that Government has a case for increasing the fees as proposed, if and only if Government is prepared to agree to earmark and apply such money as will arise from such increase solely for the purpose of immediately providing more subsidized places in Chinese grammar schools, whether Government, aided or private schools, so that more primary school graduates than at present may have an opportunity of receiving an aided secondary education. Lest I should be misunderstood I wish to make it clear that the increased number of places to be provided with this money is to be over and above, and not included in, the number of places for the 15% to 20% of all the pupils who complete the primary courses which the White Paper plans to provide. This 15% to 20% is too inadequate and should be reviewed from time to time with a view to the percentage being increased gradually. I understand that about 70% of the primary school graduates proceed to secondary schools, and that of this 70% only about 19% are fortunate enough in getting into a Government or aided secondary school and enjoy a subsidy from public funds of about \$800 per child per year, and that the remaining 51% have to join private schools, where there is no subsidized place paid out of public funds and where the fees are much higher than those payable to Government or aided schools. This is hardly a satisfactory situation.

Sir, I would like to say a few words about the age of entry to primary school. I am glad that the proposed policy is to revert to the previous entry age of 6, but unfortunately the reduction from the age of 7 to that of 6 is by a progressive period of 4 years. This period is considered by the public to be unduly long, and I agree with them. I suggest that the reduction from the age of 7 to the age of 6 should be accelerated by at least 2 years.

Having expressed my view on the age of entry to primary school, I now turn to the subject of the age of entry to Junior English Schools. My honourable Friend, Mr Sidney GORDON, has kindly shown me what he proposes to say regarding that topic. For the reasons to be mentioned by him I fully support his contention that the age of entry to such Schools should remain 5 as at present, provided that the fundamental principle that the level of subsidy will be the same for all sections of the community will be strictly adhered to and that any extra cost for maintaining such age of entry in such schools will not be borne by the tax-payers.

In view of the increasing juvenile delinquency in the Colony in recent years I am glad to observe that the importance of moral, ethical and philosophical consideration and other aspects of education, apart from the mere acquisition of knowledge, has been recognized by both the Education Commission and the Working Party, and that they both

have agreed to a more comprehensive plan for teacher training which will pay greater attention than at present to the moral and the other aspects of education just mentioned. I cannot urge too strongly that Government should implement this part of the report of the Education Commission as soon as possible, and in the meantime make arrangement that the moral aspect of education will receive immediate attention in every school, and have a place in every school's curriculum, irrespective of and apart from any religious observance in the school.

Finally I wish to sound a note of caution. Before the implementation of the recommendation of the Education Commission that steps should be taken to reduce the private entry in aided schools to 10%, Government should have full consultation with, and, as far as possible, seek the concurrence of, all the schools affected thereby, with the view to finding the best means of attaining the object without damaging any principle of education. I do hope that such an important matter as the allocation of aided places in schools that are most beneficial to the candidates themselves will be fully gone into with the greatest care in conjunction with the schools concerned. To base the allocation merely on the result of the present Government Secondary School Entrance Examination is, I venture to say with respect, not entirely satisfactory. This examination as it is at present is not a proper test of the fitness of the candidates. To mention but one aspect of it I understand that in this examination a candidate is required to do as many as 96 sums in 45 minutes in an arithmetic paper. I suggest that the whole system governing the allocation of aided places may be reviewed in consultation with our educators, both inside and outside the Government, who are responsible for our primary and secondary education in this Colony.

MR S. S. GORDON:—Your Excellency, my first impression of this so-called White Paper was that it had been devised by an academic type who was under the impression that unofficial members of this Council have little to do but spend their days in cloistered seclusion enjoying the mental stimulation of solving puzzles. How else could I interpret paragraph 4 of the preface which reads—

“4. Any recommendations of the Working Party which are neither referred to in the first appendix nor covered in the main body of this paper can be assumed to be agreed.”

On the basis of this paragraph, to try to elicit what Government's views on Education Policy are, we, and members of the public, have had to spend a considerable amount of time chasing from Appendix II to Appendix I to see how, if at all, these affect “The New Proposals in

Outline” which presumably is the main body of the paper. Appendix I is peppered with such negative phrases as “This is acceptable in principle, but” and “This possibility will be borne in mind, but”, so that our research is frequently inconclusive.

The most serious reservation lies in the second part of the resolution before us today. How can a policy be assessed if we are given no indication of plans being made to recruit an adequate and properly qualified teaching staff to implement the proposals, and how can we make our own assessment of the likelihood of such staff being forthcoming if we are given no indication of the salary structure proposed? To my mind one thing is certain; if the policy depends on a salary structure lower than that at present in being, then it is doomed to failure and the sooner we start again the better.

These introductory remarks may have given the impression that the description “half-baked” was at the forefront of my thinking when examining the White Paper. This is not so because here we have the independent and unbiased views of two prominent educationalists which have been studied for a year and then reported on by a distinguished Working Party consisting of local people who are fully conversant with Hong Kong conditions. My honourable Friend Mr C. Y. KWAN has already spoken on the undoubtedly excellent features of the policy and I support him. It is unfortunate that the eighty odd per cent with which we all agree and applaud, has been obscured by the remainder. I am led to the conclusion that, at best, this White Paper is a Public Relations disaster.

Turning to points of detail, the one on which I have received the greatest number of protests is the proposal to raise the age of entry to Junior English Schools from 5 to 6. On the one hand the White Paper appears to accept the basic principle that these schools should be similar in content and method to State Schools in Britain; then, in complete contravention to this principle and without any attempt at educational justification, it goes on to recommend that the age of entry be raised to 6 merely to close the gap between Junior English Schools and Chinese Primary Schools. This casual suggestion would mean that some children could be as old as 6 years and 9 months when they enter I school and be nearly two years behind their U.K. counterparts.

I am not clear why the Working Party allowed this to pass as, right at the beginning of their report they state, in another context,

“We do not, however, consider that the recommendation implies that there should be uniformity in the content of educational courses merely for the sake of uniformity”.

It must also be borne in mind that when Marsh/Sampson made this recommendation, it was related to the age of entry to Chinese

Primary Schools being 7 and, as this abortive experiment has now been abandoned, so should any suggestion to raise the age of entry to Junior English Schools.

Some other points made by the various Parent-Teacher Associations are—

1. The average pupil (for whom, clearly, systems must be designed) cannot get six years' work done in five.
2. A high proportion (just over 60%) of children in these schools are from U. K. where competitive standards in all types of schools have risen dramatically in the past few years. The proposed change in policy would undoubtedly affect many children's chances for selective secondary schooling in U.K. and thereafter for post-secondary education and a career.
3. Children of parents who return to U.K. would be well behind their age group in that country. Similarly U.K. children arriving here would have their schooling seriously disrupted.
4. The children attending these schools come from many different countries. By no means all even have English as their first language when they come. The fact of having children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds all in the same school sharply increases the teaching problems. As we are constantly aiming at attracting foreign capital and know-how to our Colony, acceptable educational facilities are essential.
5. With the very high turnover in teachers in these schools, it is already difficult enough for children to make steady progress over the course.
6. As the shortened course is unlikely to prove practical, raising the age to six could present problems at point of entry to King George V and other secondary schools.

The Parent-Teacher Associations accept the principle that the extent of Government subsidy must be common to all and, if maintaining the age of entry to English Schools at 5 brings the cost of running these schools above the acceptable level, then it is recognized that still higher fees may be necessary, preferably spread over the whole course.

I, too, accept the principle and agree that the age of entry must be kept at 5 even if it does mean higher fees. I am not yet convinced, however, that increased fees in this case are appropriate. First, does a six year course starting at the age of five cost more than a six year course starting at the age of six? The six year course is a must if we are going to run parallel to U.K. Second, have the costings taken into account the fact that the major part of the capital cost of at least two Junior English Schools did not come from Government? And

third, while I expect my Chinese colleagues to speak on Chinese Primary Education, it seems to me that the aim, and a short term aim at that, should be to reduce the age of entry to Chinese Schools to five so that Chinese children would get the benefit of a full six years of primary education by the time they are eleven. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that any levelling process should be upwards to a higher standard and not the disgruntled approach of "pulling everybody down to our level". If five is the proper age of entry for English speaking children then surely there must be strong arguments in favour of starting Chinese Primary education at the age of 5.

Before leaving this subject I would like to draw particular attention to paragraph 79 of the Working Party's report which states—

"79. At this point, in view of what would appear to be widespread misinformation about the English schools, we wish to stress that there is no racial bar to admission to these schools which are open to all children with a sufficient command of the English language to profit from the education provided and which are the most truly international schools in Hong Kong."

At present there are only 133 children of local residents attending to Junior English Schools as compared with 1,206 from U.K., 208 from (other Commonwealth Countries, 226 Americans and 194 of other nationalities.

If our coming generations of local youngsters are to hold their own in world markets, I believe many of them must have the benefit of English type education, coupled of course with maintenance of their own traditions. I am strongly of the opinion that English type schools, both primary and secondary, should be provided to the point where there is a place available for every local child who can benefit therefrom, as well as catering for the children of expatriates.

There are quite a number of other points in the White Paper on which I have received representations, but as the majority of these will be dealt with by my colleagues, I will restrict myself to a brief comment on only three matters which I, personally, feel need re-examination.

The first is the provision of from 15% to 20% aided secondary place. As the present actual figure is 18½%, surely to even consider a lower limit of 15% is retrograde. To maintain an average of no more than the present 18½%, the spread should be 16 to 21, but it seems to me that a more realistic and acceptable target would be 17½ to 22½.

Secondly, in Appendix II, paragraph 64, it is proposed that private entry to aided secondary grammar schools should be reduced to 10%. Many arguments against this spring to mind, but I am particularly concerned with the problem of what I believe are known as "late

developers”. Reading of biographies would indicate that the late Sir Winston CHURCHILL might not have made the grade if such a system had been in force when he was young and it would seem a pity that such a man would perhaps have been debarred from the education of his parents' choice.

My third point is only on the fringe of today's debate and relates to the comment in paragraph 109 of Appendix II which states—

“We do not consider that the Education Department is the appropriate authority to enquire into, or deal with, problems of malnutrition”.

I fully appreciate that the Education Department is not the only Department concerned with this problem—there are also the Social Welfare and Medical and Health Departments to mention only two others. But surely malnutrition has a marked effect on a child's ability to absorb education, and I do not consider that the department can shrug off its share of the responsibility with a casual “it's not our job” or “it is not within our terms of reference”.

Finally, Sir, there is the problem of how we are to vote. As I said earlier, there is a lot of very good stuff in the paper and it would be irresponsible to reject it out of hand. Unfortunately, there are many points of detail where I, personally, do not know what the policy is intended to be, and of course, I could not accept a policy which raises the age of entry to Junior English Schools. It seems that the only course is to await the official replies before reaching a decision.

MR LI FOOK-SHU: —Your Excellency, the White Paper on Government's Education policy which we are debating in general terms this afternoon as I can see does not propose any drastic changes. Its underlying assumption is that the present system is based on sound principles and commands a broad acceptance by the people of Hong Kong and all that is necessary is to build on and improve the present structure. The White Paper has, however, aroused widespread comment and has been the subject of considerable debate in the Chinese and English press: nevertheless, on the whole, it seems to me that Government's assumption is justified. Education is a matter of the greatest interest to Hong Kong. This is not really surprising. Over many centuries, success in a highly developed system of examinations was the recognized avenue of promotion to the highest offices in the Chinese Government service. Perhaps something of this attitude of respect for the educated person still survives here, and I am sure that no people are more willing to make sacrifices for the education of their children than the people of Hong Kong.

But quite apart from any argument based on tradition, it is generally accepted that the incidence of juvenile delinquency in any community bears a direct relationship to the effectiveness of its educational policy. I believe that if we are short-sighted in this respect, or niggardly in our financial provision for our schools, we shall, in the long run, only find ourselves involved in greater difficulties and heavier expenditure.

One feature of Government's education policy which the White Paper brings out clearly is the partners flip between Government and private agency, similar in many ways to that operating in the field of Social Welfare which was the subject of a recent debate in this Council. I welcome this partnership between Government and community, and particularly the various religious bodies of all denominations, many of which have been conducting schools in Hong Kong since the last century. This partnership has stood the test of time: it meets the wishes of many sections of the community and provides a healthy stimulus for each partner and ensures that the ethical basis of education is not lost sight of. I also welcome, with some reservations, the continued existence of the purely private schools, both profit-making and non-profit-making. It was these schools which made available the bulk of the school places during the recent phenomenal growth of our school population and they have earned our gratitude for making a vital contribution at a critical time. Subject to safeguards, I think they still have a part to play, which I am glad to see that Government recognizes.

Turning first to the primary schools, I am sure we are all happy to see that the aim of primary school education for all is now virtually achieved. This must be the basis of any satisfactory education system. One of the main changes here is the less reliance to be placed in future on the private schools, and an expansion in the number of Government and subsidized primary schools to give places for all who wish to attend them. This is taken for planning purposes as being 80% of the primary school population. We are not told what proportion of these will be Government and what aided or subsidized, but presumably most of the increase will be in the latter category.

The private schools are being retained but will cater for only about 20% of the children as compared with approximately 47% at present. I support this change, subject to the over-riding condition that the general standard of education in the private schools must be shown to be comparable to that achieved in the Government and aided schools, and that the child in the private school must have equal opportunity to rise as far as his abilities will carry him. This means, if necessary, some degree of supervision and control over such matters as curriculum, qualifications of the staff, and choice of text-books as well as over the general standard of the building used. Apart from what is mentioned in the Education Ordinance, I do not find this matter of supervision adequately covered in the White Paper. Another point I would like to

raise is the system of assisted places that the White Paper suggests to be made available in private schools. This is a step in the right direction. But I am not clear whether it is intended that the children occupying these places should be equally eligible for remission of fees as their opposite numbers in the Government and aided schools.

Again on the matter of primary education, I welcome the decision to lower the age of entry to 6 instead of 7. Indeed, I should like to see the entry age lowered to 5 as is the case in the United Kingdom because I think children should be kept off the street at their most impressionable age. It is for this same reason that I hope we shall not accept the occupation of one building by two schools, in A. M. and P. M. sessions, as a permanent feature of our education system. In the effort to expand our school system to meet the needs of an enormous increase in our population, I agree that this expedient was unavoidable. But with the two-session system, I am afraid that some of the good gained in school in one part of the day, might be undone by less beneficial influences to which children are subjected, on the street, during the other part of the day. Besides, I believe that the word "school" means leisure and a school should give a child a place and an opportunity to cultivate more all-round interests and hobbies.

I should also like to see the primary school filled with children of primary school age, although we are assured that this situation will right itself in due course.

If primary education is to be available to all, and within the reach of all, then the question of fees is important. The Marsh-Sampson Commission's proposal to increase fees created some criticism, and I am glad to see that Government has decided to keep primary school fees in urban and rural areas unchanged. Further, because fees in the Government and subsidized schools are lower than those charged in the private schools, by increasing the former to cover 80% of the children, Government will be significantly lightening the burden of fees for most parents. At the same time, by increasing the amount of money available for fee remission to 20% of the total primary school fee income, a further significant step along the road to free primary education is now being taken. The only question is whether we are travelling along that road fast enough. I should like to see a definite date set for the attainment of this goal or at least a promise of progressive increases in the percentage of fee income devoted to fee remission.

One of the difficulties facing the private school has been rising rents over recent years. I do not agree that action should be taken against a landlord because he has a commercial tenant running a school on a commercial basis. The question of rent is important, and I am very sorry to see from the White Paper that Government has reserved its decision about what should be done in this matter. I suggest that it

should be an essential element of Government's land policy to earmark sufficient sites to meet all educational needs over a specified planning period. Twenty per cent of these sites should then be allocated for use as primary schools, this being Government's own figure. The offer of these sites to the private schools should be accompanied by adequate and attractive loan arrangements which would free the schools from the continuing fear of rising rents. There would have to be, of course, stringent safeguards concerning resale and the acceptance of a necessary degree of supervision.

If the private schools are to continue to play their part, they must offer salaries sufficient to attract good teachers. Salaries in some of the private schools have been far too low. Many of their teachers have received less than an office-boy in a commercial house, and many have received no pay at all, but have entered into a fee-sharing arrangement with the principals. If the private schools are to survive, then they must make their contribution as education institutions, and the temptation to sacrifice educational standards to the profit motive must be checked.

Turning to secondary education, I see that Government intends to cater for between 15% to 20% of the primary school leavers in Government and aided secondary schools. In practice, the number going on from the primary stage is much greater, amounting to a further 50% to 60% and here again the private schools will be expected to fill the gap. The figure 15% to 20% of places in the Government and aided schools seems to be a fairly arbitrary figure based on Fisher's original proposal in 1950, and does not show any clear intention to expand the Government and aided sector. It seems to me therefore that excessive reliance is being placed on the private schools. The remarks I made above regarding the position of the private schools in the primary sphere, apply with even greater force in the sphere of secondary education. This reliance on the private schools is acceptable only and only if steps are taken to see that they really are educational institutions aiming at, and generally achieving, at least the minimum of School Certificate standard.

The question of selection of children for entry into Government and aided secondary schools is also an important one. In the past the general feeling has been that secondary education was the prerogative of the well-to-do classes but this idea is rapidly dying, owing to the number of assisted places now being offered. We all want the able boy and girl given an opportunity of going on to the secondary school. If the number of places available in the Government and aided secondary schools is limited to some 15% to 20% then logically these places should be thrown open to competition and awarded to the most able children; and I am glad that the White Paper has made provision for this by filling 90% of Form I places on the results of the Secondary Schools

Entrance Examination. On the other hand, if all secondary schools could be of the same standard, then it would not matter which school a child attended provided there was a uniform scheme of fee remission. I want to see all able children given an opportunity of entering a secondary school where satisfactory standards exist, but I am not so sure that the White Paper has provided this.

The increase of fees in secondary schools has been criticized. This is indeed regrettable, but costs have been rising, and school expenditure has been inevitably increasing. I am sure many parents can afford an annual fee of \$400 and that, on the other hand, many cannot. I agree that it is preferable to charge a realistic fee, and then soften any harsh effects by a generous scheme of fee remission. The White Paper proposes that in the Government and aided schools, half the Matriculation classes should benefit from fee remission, 45% in other aided grammar school classes and 35 % for secondary technical schools and I hope these figures will be progressively increased in the future. I assume that the 1,500 to 2,000 places in the private secondary schools, which the White Paper says are to be subsidized, will be included in these arrangements for the remission of fees. I should like to ask if some arrangements for the remission of fees can also be considered for needy pupils in the private secondary schools, in view of the fact that these schools will be catering for over 50% of the secondary school population. Despite the general provision of fee remission, however, the general public seems to be unsympathetic towards any increase in school fees. In view of the insignificant increase in the Government revenue and the strong opposition from the public, perhaps, it may not be unwise for Government to reconsider the question of raising fees in public secondary schools.

I should like to put in a plea for better facilities for athletics and games in our secondary schools. There is no space in the crowded urban areas of course, but could not some playing-field accommodation be provided in the New Territories or by a special reclamation scheme devoted to this specific purpose? All big towns have this problem and make some efforts to overcome it; if such a scheme, including the necessary transport facilities, could be devised here, I am sure it would be a good investment from the gain in health to our children and the assistance to the schools in the training of character.

I am interested too, in the children who do not go on to the secondary schools either because of parents' inability to pay, or because the pupil is not bright enough to benefit by a more extended education. If such a boy or girl enters primary school at the age of 6, and completes a 6-year course, being 5 years primary and an additional year doing work of secondary Form I, he or she will still be only 12 or 13 years of age, and may have up to two years to wait before securing employment. For these people, I should like to see day and evening vocational training

centres established, conducting courses leading to the various skills demanded in industry and devised in conjunction with leading industrialists. I think these centres would be useful and popular, particularly if the possession of training gave the trainee better prospects of advancement.

I have searched the White Paper for evidence of the amount of statistical information that has been used in formulating the policy. When the 1961 census was taken the claim was made that all future social policy would be based on an accurate statistical basis. I am told that the secondary school population is at the beginning of a great increase and grave doubts have been expressed to me whether a qualified graduate staff will be available to staff the secondary schools to meet the anticipated numbers. I can find no information in the White Paper to confirm or remove these fears. But I should regard it as a backward step, and a threat to the high standard achieved by our best grammar schools, if the proportion of four graduate teachers out of five had to be diluted. I believe the children in our secondary schools are our best children and they deserve the best teachers.

I noted also, with some feeling of disappointment, that Government has reserved its decision on a number of the points raised by the recommendation of the Marsh-Sampson Report and of the Working Party set up to advise on those recommendations. Appendix I of the White Paper, which lists these Government's modifications and reservations, shows that there are no less than sixteen specific points on which a decision has yet to be taken. In addition, there is the more general reservation contained in paragraph 2, dealing with a number of points put up to Government by the Working Party. I cannot but feel that these reservations detract from the value of the White Paper as a statement of Government Policy, and place the Members of this Council in a difficulty in debating Government Policy on this important subject, because they cannot feel absolutely confident that they are fully informed of what that policy is.

Finally, I should like to ask if some simpler method can be devised for presenting Government's policies for debate. In the present case, I have found it difficult to grasp the main issues because they are to be found in a number of different documents. We have the Statement on Government's Policy on the Re-organization of the Structure of Primary and Secondary Education of January 1963, the Marsh-Sampson Report, The Report of the Working Party on the Marsh-Sampson Report, the White Paper and a List of Modifications and Reservations concerning the Recommendations of the Working Party. I found it difficult to thread my way through all this material and the amount of home-work I must say has been considerable. I felt at one point that Government was including the Members of this Council in its educational programme,

and exacting from them the same diligence which is expected from our children.

With the remarks I have made above, I am therefore not to say “yes or no” to the White Paper until I have the opportunity of hearing an official reply from the Government on all points raised by myself and my colleagues in this Council.

MR FUNG HON-CHU: —Your Excellency, the main recommendation in the White Paper on Education that Government should take a greater responsibility for the expansion of Government primary school and aided primary school places is most commendable and has my warm support. I am sure all the members of the Chinese community are looking forward to the day when Government can provide subsidized schooling for every child up to the age of 14.

Another popular recommendation in the White Paper is the reversion of the length of primary school course to six years and the age of entry to six, to which all the members of the Chinese community appear to have lent their support. It is a move in the right direction.

But I must express my reservations on the Government's proposal to require the first pupils studying under the existing system to undergo a further year of general education after completing Junior 5 before allowing them to sit for the Secondary School Entrance Examination. As the syllabus has been designed to cover primary education in 5 years with the age of entry at 7, the pupils should have acquired the full primary education in the course of 5 years and I can see no justification in delaying their entry to the secondary school by one year. As for the pupils joining primary 1 in the coming September term at the age of six or slightly above, it would appear that Government proposes to continue with the present 5-year syllabus, and devote the 6th year of the primary course to a syllabus equivalent to that at present in use in Form 1 of the secondary schools. Since this primary 5-year course syllabus was not designed for the age of entry at 6, it is unreasonable to expect the younger child to assimilate all this knowledge in the space of 5 years. Inasmuch as we are going back to the 6-year course, the obvious thing to do is to have a syllabus geared to the younger age of entry and a full 6-year genuine primary course.

On the length of course for the secondary school, any attempt to reduce the course to 4 years must be resisted. The academic standards are continuously rising, as evidenced by the raising of the standard of a pass with credit in the School Certificate Examination to that of a pass in the ordinary level of G.C.E. or the Hong Kong University Matriculation Examination. It is already difficult enough for the average pupil

to cope with his work as it is, and it will not need any stretch of the imagination to visualize how he would fare, were the course to be cut down to 4 years. It would put the clock back to the days of ancient China, when everyone studied by rote and all that the pupil learned was book knowledge. It is clearly desirable and indeed essential that time must be allowed for extra curricular activities, and to achieve this the least that the Government should do is to maintain the present course of 5 years and to issue a clear statement on this at the first opportunity.

Reading into the White Paper on the length of course, I cannot help but gain the impression that Government is aiming at shortening the combined Primary and Secondary course from 11 years to 10 by curtailing one year either from the Primary or the secondary, presumably to minimize the cost to Government of subsidized education. I urge Government in the strongest terms not to attempt such a venture, because among other things, education should receive a higher priority for public funds.

Another glaring deficiency in the White Paper is that Government has failed to take cognizance of the fact that secondary school education is no longer a luxury. In this day and age, secondary school education, at least in the eyes of the Chinese community in Hong Kong, is as much a child's birthright as is primary education. By proposing increased school fees for Government, and aided secondary schools, it is clearly acting on the misguided belief that secondary school education is something that the young people of Hong Kong can go without or that the increases will impose no hardship on the average parent. Government has failed to convince the public of the necessity of the measure. There can be no justification, if it is intended just to reduce the marked disparity between fees at present collected at Government schools and those at Government aided schools. Surely there must be a better way of achieving this such as by increasing the element of subsidy for capital expenditure to aided schools, thereby narrowing the gap between the two sets of charges. If it is because of the nett proceeds of \$780,000— that this will bring to Government, surely it is not beyond its ingenuity to raise this measly amount by other less painful means. The original proposal was for raising both primary and secondary school fees, which jointly would have yielded quite a tidy sum of eleven million dollars nett to Government. The acceptance of the subsequent recommendation of the working party that primary school fees should not be raised would render whatever arguments for retaining the proposal for raising secondary school fees all the more untenable.

In a community where education is valued even more highly than food and shelter, secondary education should be made as easily attainable as possible. Even now, there must be many who are already experiencing hardship, particularly those who have several children to

educate. It is true that with the raising of fees, the level of fee remissions will also be brought up and Government hopes thereby that no pupil who has qualified for a place in Government and aided schools will be unable to take up the place because of the fee charged. To determine whether a child is entitled to remission, its parents' circumstances need to be investigated. But by what yardstick can Government measure a family's financial position that would ensure equity for all? What about the many border-line cases that would be left to fend for themselves and who would be forced to either stop their children's education or try to scrape enough to send them to school by cutting down their food budget, by foregoing other necessities or even resorting to loans? It is pathetic but nonetheless real. I feel that the increase of fee remission level is no consolation to most parents because of the element of uncertainty and the inequities that are bound to arise. It may be better to maintain the existing fees that will benefit one and all, even including the lot so needy than increase the level of remission, bearing in mind that there is no guarantee that the remissions will go to those who are in most need of them and that the level is to be increased by only 5%.

Another repercussion that we ought to consider is the possible effect of school fee increases on private school fees. While Government has, no doubt, the statutory power to regulate fees charged in private schools, so that they may remain within reasonable bounds, it is doubtful whether Government can effectively curb the increases in those schools which have received no Government assistance. At any rate, the White Paper gives no assurance that steps will indeed be taken to keep fees in check nor any indication as to how effective such steps will be. There is genuine fear that increases in the public sector will provide just the kind of excuse that the private sector needs to charge the highest fees permissible. In view of the preponderance of school children in private secondary schools over those in the public sector, any increase of school fees on the already high figures will be keenly felt far and wide. We can be pretty certain also that any general increase in fees will set off a chain of reactions culminating in a further rise of cost of living. It is a retrograde policy to lean too heavily on fee income to finance a nation's educational programme and Hong Kong must not allow the great forward step to provide eventually a free primary education to be marred by the proposal to increase secondary school fees. In view of the strong public opposition to fee increase, Sir, and the meagre yield to Government, I urge Government to reconsider this question in this light. If in the face of my objections and the strong opposition by the public, Government still wishes to press ahead with its proposal, then I would like to commend strongly my honourable Friend, Mr C. Y. KWAN's proposal to set aside the increased fee income for the expansion of education for Government's serious consideration.

The White Paper makes no detailed provisions for absorbing annually the tens of thousands of primary school leavers. The number of places in secondary schools is already inadequate as it is; with the proposed expansion of primary school places, we can expect a further worsening of the situation. In the absence of a definite programme for the expansion of secondary school education. Government should immediately institute an interim measure to encourage and help all deserving private schools. Because of the far reaching effects education has on a society, as opposed to the localized repercussions that may arise from an ordinary business failure. Government should make a distinction between the two undertakings and not leave the private schools to work out their own salvation. I am speaking not so much for the proprietors as for the pupils. As the majority of pupils, both primary and secondary, are in the private sector, it is imperative that Government evolve a practicable and comprehensive plan for the development and control of private schools. It is a pity that very little is said on this subject, evidently due to the limitations imposed by the terms of reference, and I would urge Government to appoint an *ad hoc* committee to study this question so as to bring about an early achievement of our aims.

Sir, in view of these reservations, I beg leave to defer voting on this paper until I have examined the official reply.

MR TSE YU-CHUEN: —Your Excellency, considering that there have been very considerable comments on the Education Policy as embodied in the White Paper, it behoves me to present three main points.

First I wish to speak about the necessity of subsidizing teachers in non-profit-making private primary schools in similar manner as those teaching in non-profit secondary schools. It must be conceded that the teaching profession is a laborious and not too remunerative occupation as these teachers have dedicated their life to impart light and truth to the coming generations. But I think men and women of this profession do not stop with mere teaching; they are trying to build up good moral characters, adopt decorous conduct and develop sound minds on the part of the pupils. Therefore, it is very important to determine whether these teachers can fully fulfil their duty in its multiple aspects, as their capability has a great bearing on the future of youth and the progressive advancement of social well being of the community.

The weighty responsibility in education together with its accompanying complexities outranks any other problem in society. Among the civilized nations in the world, education as a calling is deemed as an affair of the state itself, as this burden in primary and secondary

stages is assumed directly and entirely by governments of these countries. The more advanced the country, the weightier is its educational burden. Educational projects and policies in these nations have to be all the more comprehensive and practicable.

Turning to education in this Colony, I can see that the circumstances are such that the burden is borne in a large way by private schools. To make headway in solving educational problems, the best short cut is to lend support to non-profit-making private schools. And the best way to help these schools is to enable good teachers to concentrate on their work free from anxieties and harassment in order to fulfil the aims and purpose of education. To this end, it is advisable for the Government to subsidize direct the teachers concerned without going through their respective schools. I am happy to say that this scheme has already been envisaged in a way by the educational authorities here, as well qualified teachers in non-profit-making secondary schools have been receiving government subsidies with satisfactory results. However, nothing has yet been done with respect to teachers in non-profit-making primary schools, and exclusion of such teachers may have a serious effect not only on their morale but efficiency. We must bear in mind the fact that the number of private primary schools in Hong Kong exceeds that of other schools, that the number of primary schools pupils is necessarily the largest and that a good number of teachers in primary schools are painstaking and conscientious. In the light of these factors the educational authorities should forthwith assist these teachers in similar manner as those in secondary schools as a general support to these primary schools. This measure will in effect benefit the pupils and should be considered as a basic solution of one aspects in education.

My second point is related to the ratio of 1.1 teachers per class as proposed in the White Paper. Personally I believe the proper ratio should be 1.2 teachers per class for all primary school teachers. Mankind's contribution to the community is through flesh and blood. The spirit and physique can bear only a certain amount of work in order to attain the desired result. Although teaching work is largely mental labour, it is subject to the same limitation as in any other undertaking. Pedagogic work requires not only good education but high moral character, because apart from class room lessons teachers should know the home environments of the pupils and point out to them their weakness and deficiencies. Furthermore, the teachers should pay attention to the behavior and manner of their pupils, know their degree of receptivity of mind, observe the mutual relations among the pupils, correct exercises, set examination questions and determine the diligence of each pupil. Indeed a good teacher is always so overwhelmingly employed that he has very little time left to himself. It is unavoidable that teachers under such circumstances may fall ill at time or find themselves under other handicaps. Therefore, it is not advisable to overload

these primary school teachers with the maximum periods of teaching periods, otherwise their energy and enthusiasm in their work will be impaired. As I have already remarked, apart from giving lessons teachers have to pay attention to pupils outside of the classrooms. However, Chapter 15, page 57 of the White Paper called for the teaching ratio for primary schools of 1.1 teachers per class. I believe this is tantamount to an increase of the teaching load at great hardship, although this may mean a saving of some expenses. At present in all government and aided primary schools the teaching ratio is 1.2 teachers per class, and on this basis each person takes on 34 to 35 periods per week. This is indeed a heavy teaching load. If more periods were added as under the ratio 1.1, this would have an adverse effect on efficiency and morale. I strongly urge that the 1.2 ratio should be applied to all teachers in primary schools. And such a measure will in the long run benefit both teachers and pupils.

Sir, my third point is that students in Teacher Training Colleges should be required to pay tuition fees of \$400 a year. I believe the present arrangement of free tuition should be continued, because every inducement should be made to attract young men and women to join the teaching profession, which is a laborious work with less prospects of financial advancements. More people would prefer to join commercial firms and government services and do not relish to be tied down thirty or more lessons of teaching a week and lots and lots of papers to correct at night. Now is the time to train more teachers before the commercial firms take them away by giving better consideration.

I regret there is no consideration at all for the Chinese secondary schools, which have also undergone or are undergoing a basic change. This change has also brought about uncertainty and confusion to students and parents. Perhaps this question may be thrashed out thoroughly when the overall education problem comes up for fresh study.

MR K. A. WATSON:—Your Excellency, this has been described as an historic occasion, the first time there has been a full-scale debate on Education in the Legislative Council for very many years. In view of this, I welcome the decision of the official members not to reply to our speeches tomorrow, but in a week's time. Had they given themselves a little more opportunity for reflection in the recent Social Welfare debate, we might have been spared some hasty and ill-considered replies.

My honourable Friend, the Financial Secretary, might not have had to confess to so much difficulty in dealing with my arguments and, given more time, I'm sure he would have come up with something more persuasive than a somewhat obscure reference to Alice in Wonderland.

Fortunately, I don't think I have to argue with Mr COWPERTHWAITTE that education is a good thing. In fact, I'm pleasantly surprised at Government's liberality in accepting the ultimate aim of free education for all and what this would cost. Merely to match our growing population, we are already committed to a huge expansion of the cost of education and the new policies now proposed would not increase those commitments excessively. If applied to the 1963-64 Expenditure and Income figures, they would have increased the net cost by only 1.4%, so that any changes we might suggest are unlikely to have any serious financial ill-effects.

As my colleagues have indicated, there is a good deal in the White Paper which is very welcome; the intention to provide, by 1970-71, subsidized primary education for all who want it; the introduction of one or two years of vocational training between the ages of 12 and 14, an exciting venture which might prove of very great value to Hong Kong; the increase in the sums available for remission of fees in needy cases; the reversion from 7 years of age to 6 for entry into the Chinese primary schools, and the decision not to increase fees in those schools.

But there has also been a considerable amount of criticism. I suspect that much of it arises from the difficulty, remarked upon by both Mr GORDON and Mr LI, of deciding exactly what are the policies proposed. Many of the criticisms are, I think, based on misunderstandings, or are directed against proposals which have not been accepted by Government. There is, of course, opposition to the raising of fees, as there always is to any increase in costs. But little credit has been given to the Working Party for turning down the Marsh-Sampson recommendation to increase Chinese primary school fees, and the effect of doubling the amount of money available for remission of fees has been largely overlooked.

Apart from the question of fees, the greatest opposition has come from that cornerstone of education, the teachers, who protest vigorously against the proposed teaching service and salary structure. These are subjects on which Government has reserved its decision, pending discussions with the professional associations whose views, I'm sure, will receive careful consideration.

There does appear to be almost unanimous opposition to Burnham-type salary scales and to the idea of responsibility allowances. The big fear is that it would lead to favouritism and corruption. It is argued that one's salary should depend on qualifications, experience, and ability, and not on whether your headmistress likes your dimples. My honourable Friend, the Director of Education, has assured us that this is not a device for reducing teachers' salaries, pointing out that had the scheme been in operation in 1963-64, Government salaries would have been some \$12½ million higher than they were.

Now it's obvious that we cannot run an educational system with disgruntled teachers, and as they appear to be unanimously opposed to the changes. Government could gracefully bow to superior numbers, and save itself \$12½ million a year.

We have been assured that if the White Paper, suitably amended, is accepted by this Council next Wednesday, this will not be taken as an endorsement of any of the modifications and reservations listed in Appendix I. I hope sometime later we shall have an opportunity of discussing these.

Anything that lowers educational standards in our schools, such as the employment of cheaper, less qualified teachers, is to be deplored. Such reductions imply that present standards are too high, or that our financial resources are insufficient for the expansion desired. I find it difficult to accept either of these ideas.

Such a reduction is the proposed lowering of staffing ratios, the number of teachers per class, about which Mr TSE has spoken. One of the weaknesses of the White Paper is that recommendations are made and decisions taken without any clear indication of the reasons for them. I suspect that this one slipped in largely by mistake, that when the question was considered by the Marsh-Sampson Commission, two linked recommendations were made, (1) that the size of classes be reduced, and (2) the staffing ratio lowered, so that the number of children per teacher remained about the same. The Working Party, however, accepted the second, but rejected the first, so destroying the children to teacher balance. The financial balance is shown at the top of page 94, where the lowered staffing ratio just about covers the extra cost of reducing the size of classes, with figures of \$11 million on one side, and \$10[^] million on the other. Contrasted to this are the present proposals, showing a blank for expenditure due to smaller classes, but a saving of \$10.65 million, an economy effected by cutting the number of teachers by 748.

So we are left with a situation in which the size of classes remains the same, or in some cases are increased, to be taught by less teachers who will therefore have to work harder, many of them possibly for less pay. Now this sounds so absurd that I wonder if I have got it right. If I haven't, then blame the complexity and ambiguity of the White Paper. Given present conditions in Hong Kong, I do not think our schools are overstaffed. Comparisons with staffing ratios elsewhere are invalid if we ignore the existence of pools of spare teachers, who can take the place of those who are sick or overworked. I suggest that Government reconsiders this decision, for the murmur of mutinous teachers is almost deafening.

Like Mr KWAN and Mr GORDON, I am very doubtful about another proposed ratio, that of aided secondary school places to the total number

of pupils completing the primary course. For the Working Party to speak of "increasing" the percentage to between 15% and 20%, although it admits in paragraph 12 that the present figure is already 19.2% is, I submit, a misuse of the word "increase". Even if we accept the lesser figure of 18.3% given in the introduction, a reduction to 15% is not unlikely and this can only be regarded as a retrograde step. In the primary schools, the increase in the number of government and aided places to 80% is considered praiseworthy. It is explained that to have a certain percentage of pupils getting a sound education at comparatively low fees, while others in private, non-aided schools have to pay very much higher fees, is "inequitable and unsatisfactory".

Surely exactly the same argument applies to secondary education, and the only logical aim would seem to be a gradual increase in the number of subsidized places in this category, as well as in the primary section. Yet the new proposals give a range which, on average, is less than the present figure. The least we should do is to try to maintain this position.

Mr GORDON has suggested increasing the percentages to 17½% to 22½% but as these policies may well continue unchanged into the 1970s, I would prefer to see the range extended from the present 18½% to 25%, and that every effort be made to reach the latter figure as soon as possible. There may be too few secondary schools in the planning and building stages at present to allow any immediate advance, but this inability should not determine our future targets. A situation when 15% to 20% of pupils enjoy cheap, aided education, while the remaining 80% to 85% have to pay much higher fees for possibly inferior schooling is just as "inequitable", just as "unsatisfactory" in the secondary schools as in the primary.

So far I have been speaking mainly about the Chinese and Anglo-Chinese schools. When I turn to the Junior English schools, I do so as a grateful and appreciative parent who has found that they have given my three daughters an education which the White Paper describes as "similar in content and method to that available in state schools in Britain".

But although it is recommended that this standard be maintained, serious reductions in it are proposed for reasons which are by no means clear. What is even more unfortunate is that this is accompanied by substantial increases in fees, amounting to 100% in the Junior schools, and 200% at KGV. Most parents however are prepared to accept these increases, realizing that the cost of running these schools is higher, and that they cannot expect a greater subsidy per place than the Chinese schools are getting.

Having accepted this principle, it is difficult to see the justification for bigger classes, fewer teachers, longer school hours, and a possible

reduction in teachers' salaries. These have been dealt with in detail by my friend Mr GORDON, and I will try not to repeat what he has said. But I must point out that in paragraph 82, the Working Party clearly states that children in junior English schools would have six years of primary education, and I emphasize what Mr GORDON has already said, that it would cost Government no more if those six years were from the ages of 5 to 11, instead of from 6 to 12. If Government accepts the principle of allowing the English-language schools a different type of education, provided the amount of subsidy remains the same and any extra costs are reflected in higher fees, there can be no serious objection to the educational standards at these schools remaining no worse than they are at present. I go further and suggest that this principle might with advantage be applied to other types of schools.

In passing, I would like to suggest that the 200% increase in fees for KGV parents could cause real hardship. As the Junior school fees are to be raised by \$120 a year for two years, would it not be fairer for KGV fees to be increased by \$160 or \$170 a year for four years instead of doing it in two jumps.

This afternoon I have spoken about teachers' salaries, staffing ratios, the percentage of aided secondary places, and the educational standards of the English language schools. Other points on which I might have spoken are included in Government's list of reservations.

Now before I am accused of fiscal irresponsibility, of reasoning on a different plane and in a different world to Mr COWPERTHWAITTE, let me say that the changes I propose would not cost us very much money. According to Table 25, by not economizing in the staffing ratio, we would lose a saving of \$10½ million, but this would be more than balanced by the \$12½ million saved if the new teachers' scale is not introduced. We have agreed, I hope, that in the English language schools, any extra cost over the standard subsidy would be covered by the fees. So, with \$2 million in hand, the only extra expense would be the increase in the number of aided secondary places. Accurate figures are not available, but this sum would, in 1963-64, the year to which my other figures apply, have covered an increase of between ½% to 1%.

Once again, I shall abstain, not from voting this time, but from committing myself before hearing the official replies next Wednesday. In this I am not alone, for most of my colleagues are also unwilling to make up their minds before receiving convincing explanations of the many points that have been raised.

I have suggested that this is an historic occasion, and I would like to give three reasons for this view; first, the tremendous importance for the future of Hong Kong of the subject matter of this debate; second, the presence of our first Lady Member; and third, this is probably the

first time that so many Unofficial Members have not finished their speeches with the time-honoured phrase, "I beg to support the Motion before Council".

MR Woo PAK-CHUEN: —Your Excellency, I cannot but agree with the criticisms of the White Paper on Education Policy that it is not clear in its presentation in that it has not indicated with sufficient clarity the recommendations of Government which require this Council's approval.

Let us look at the White Paper. There are certain comments on the Preface. Some proposals, but not all, are probably intended to be an outline only in the Introduction; modifications and reservations concerning the recommendations of the Working Party on the Report of the Education Commission and the Working Party's Report on Education for English speaking children are contained in Appendix 1, and finally in Appendix 2 there is the Report of the Working Party on the Education Commission and on the Report of the Working Party on Education for English speaking children. No attempt has however been made to reduce this large mass of important materials into a simple and readable form. Indeed we are told that "any recommendations of the Working Party which are neither referred to in the first Appendix nor covered in the main body of this paper can be assumed to be agreed".

In order to understand what this statement actually means one has to run through the second Appendix side by side with the first Appendix with a pen and make the necessary changes in the second Appendix by adding the modifications and/or the reservations before we can actually see what in fact are the Government's proposals in this Paper. It is just like a jigsaw puzzle! We have to put all the pieces together, so to speak, before we know what exactly it represents.

I strongly deprecate this method of presentation of Government's policy to this Council. It is not difficult to state the objects and reasons in simple language, the proposals for discussion and the recommendations which Government seeks the approval of the Council.

The second observation I wish to make is that I understand that the Director of Education is pressed for time and he desires to know whether or not the recommendations in the White Paper would be approved by this Council before the next school term begins in order that he can make the necessary arrangements for the carrying out of the recommendations in the White Paper. I should have thought that it would be much better if the Director of Education instead of presenting the White Paper to this Council as a whole, only asks this Council to

consider those recommendations which he urgently requires for implementation before the next school term. As it is, despite two adjournments, we are in fact not given enough time to consider this Paper. It would certainly be derelict in my duty not to say anything against the method of presentation to this Council and I must confess that up to now I have not yet fully appreciated the implications contained in this White Paper.

I would certainly have voted against the resolution if the Council is asked to make any decision on salaries and terms of service of teachers. Fortunately they are now postponed for further consideration.

Despite some sound and useful recommendations in the White Paper yet there are still certain recommendations which I am personally not at all in agreement. First and foremost is the proposal to increase the fees for secondary Government and aided schools from \$320 to \$400 which I was authoritatively informed would not increase the nett revenue of Government by more than half a million dollars annually. On the other hand the proposal has encountered serious objections from the public. With the high cost of living mounting year after year and parents are faced with the natural increase of their children they are labouring under a great strain to find means to provide sufficient money for the education of their children. The increase to Government is small but the hardship to them is great. It is not enough to say that those who cannot afford to pay the increase will be protected by the provision for fee remission. But where is the means test to ascertain who can afford to pay the increase and those who cannot. Parents who can afford to pay the increase will certainly complain that they are in fact subsidizing the education of the less fortunate students. The fear in the mind of the parents is not only to have to balance the household budget to provide for the increase of \$80 per annum for each child but also the possibility that some day their children may not be so fortunate as to be able to get into Government schools and will be forced to attend private schools and they will have to pay much higher school fees. The fees in private schools are now already high enough. What will the plight of the parents be if the fees of the private schools in which their children are attending be further increased. Such increases will be bound to come if Government increases its secondary school fees because this will give the private schools a pretext to increase theirs. It is very well to say that under the regulations made under the Education Ordinance the approval of the Director of Education must first be obtained before any private schools can increase their fees, but I cannot see how the Director of Education can refuse his approval if all the private schools in Hong Kong decide to increase their fees on the ground that Government has seen fit to increase the secondary school fees and that their increases are legitimate as they require the increase for their expenditure such as provisions for free places, the increase of

teachers' salaries, etc. It is always easy for the private schools to advance valid reasons for such increase and I would like to remind this Council that all private schools are registered under the Business Registration Ordinance 1959 and they are carrying on legitimate businesses and as such are entitled to earn a living and make reasonable profits.

I must say that socially, economically and even politically it is ill-advised for Government to increase the secondary school fees unless by so doing we can ensure universal primary education for all. My friend, Mr C. Y. KWAN, has suggested that half a million dollars extra revenue is not to fall back to the vote for education but is to be earmarked for the provision of more aided school places. I do not think this proviso answers the points I have just raised and I am therefore strongly against the increase of secondary school fees.

Another point on which I wish to make observation is the proposal to reduce the minimum age of entry into Primary 1 to the age of six years but it is said this cannot be done in one step and the proposal is to reduce the age of entry progressively by 2 months a year until an entry age of 6 is reached in 4 years' time. Personally I think to complete the change in 4 years' time is rather too long. It was only in 1963 that the entry age was raised from 6 to 7. It was then said that "it will be appreciated that this proposed re-organization will require several years to complete if the education of those already in school is not to be disrupted." If it takes several years to complete the change from 6 to 7 in 1963 it follows that it will not take another 4 years to revert from 7 years to 6 years of age as the first change must have not yet been completed. I would suggest that the change should be completed in 2 years' time.

Mr GORDON has made out a very strong case on behalf of the English speaking children in maintaining the entry age to 5 and I support his suggestion to have a minimum uniform entry age of 5 for all students in Hong Kong to Primary 1. This suggestion is worthy of serious consideration.

I cannot agree with the proposal of reducing the staffing ratios as this in effect is discriminating against the Chinese Middle Schools. Senior Middle III in the Chinese Middle Schools should equate with Form VI in English and Anglo-Chinese Schools and I suggest that the staffing ratios for Forms I to V in English and Anglo-Chinese Schools and Junior Middle I to Senior Middle II in Chinese Middle Schools should be 1.3 teachers per class and that for Forms Lower VI and Upper VI in English or Anglo-Chinese Schools and Senior Middle III in Chinese Middle Schools should be 2 teachers per class.

Finally I am in a quandary which may not be the case with my other unofficial colleagues in that whilst there are undoubtedly some

very useful and worthy recommendations in the White Paper which should be supported I cannot vote for the resolution in its present form because of my very strong objection to the increase of secondary school fees. Unless therefore, the Director of Education is able to give an assurance that the recommendation regarding the increase of secondary school fees will not be implemented I have no alternative but to vote against the resolution.

MR G R. Ross:—Your Excellency, my honourable Friend, Mr S. S. GORDON, has spoken at some length on the proposal to raise the age of entry to junior English schools from 5 years to 6. I warmly endorse all he has said in this connexion and I make the same reservation. I can see nothing to commend the proposal unless it be to make a neat and tidy parcel to conform with the other schools. Conformity in this respect can only serve to penalize the children who go home to school, and make the transition from primary to secondary an unnecessary hazard for them.

I welcome the move towards universal primary education and I agree that the level of subsidy should be the same for all. In accepting the principle that one pays for what one gets, which is only fair, it is manifestly unfair to get less than one pays for. I therefore urge that present standards in these schools are at least maintained, both in regard to the age of entry, the size of classes, hours of work and standards of teaching. In this connexion I believe that the teaching of English should be by English teachers and I feel that any reduction in teachers' salaries would be a retrograde step.

Here I wish to interject a special plea for Kowloon. There is a most urgent need for an additional primary school in Kowloon. Whether a Government or aided school seems to me immaterial. The Working Party recommended that a 12-classroom school should be built in Ho Man Tin by 1966. The Commissioners recommended deferment of all new schools and I quote “until the future need for additional schools for English speaking children can be more accurately assessed”. The White Paper, in noting the Commission's reservations on expansion, states that nothing has come to notice during the intervening 18 months to invalidate the Committee's assessment of the situation, and with particular reference to the primary side admits that in the intervening period the demand for places in Kowloon has so increased that Kowloon Junior School can no longer cope. It concludes, somewhat lamely, that extensions to this school now have as great a claim for immediate attention as the provision of another school on Hong Kong Island. In 1963 the Working Party accepted the British concept that the maximum acceptable enrolment in primary schools is 500. In

January of that year there were 566 pupils attending Kowloon Junior School. In January this year there were 680, and by September this year the number will grow to 710. Several children who were five years of age last January have had to wait until September this year for admission, whereas if they had lived in Hong Kong they could have been at school nine months earlier. The existing school is not only overcrowded but has reached an unmanageable size; it has an inadequate playground and a hall that was built for 200. An extension to improve its facilities is long overdue, but is not the answer to the overall lack of places now and in the future.

I should like to think that after this debate the Honourable Director of Education will be on the phone to PWD to find out where those plans are, and that by Monday morning a little army of men with picks and shovels will be on the job. This is not likely but I do urge that immediate priority be given to a new school in Kowloon — preferably, I suggest, somewhere near the new foothills road to avoid traffic congestion and to serve a developing area in Kowloon and the New Territories as well, but if this is not feasible then please let us get on with the new school in Ho Man Tin.

Sir, there is much in the White Paper which is sound and commendable, but I regret I am compelled to make a reservation in connexion with the age of entry for English-speaking children.

MR SZETO WAI:—Your Excellency, the present White Paper on Education Policy represents a great advance on anything similar which has gone before it despite its deficiencies. For the first time we have a declared policy to provide aided primary education for every child who wants it—a matter of elementary human rights; to provide aided secondary education for the most deserving pupils of the growing generation on whom our future will depend so much; to promote vocational training of our youth to cope with our changing economic role; and a promise of an increased development in technical education to meet the great challenge in industrial competition that we have to face. These are tremendous aims which will take no doubt many years to implement fully.

Notwithstanding my opening remarks, I do not wish to give the impression that I think the White Paper is perfect: it would indeed be remarkable if there were nothing to criticize in a document 100 pages long, itself founded on a report of 150 pages. Upon its deficiencies, my colleagues have already fully commented and have made constructive proposals for modifications. I will confine myself to some less controversial matters and also the very important physical aspects of planning.

We have heard much about fees and free places. I would like to see a wider distribution of remissions: for instance, 40% paying the full fee, 40% half fees and 20% free places instead of 40% free places and 60% paying the full fee. I make this suggestion regarding a wider distribution of remissions because I think schools must have great difficulties in determining who gets a free place and who must pay for the full fee. Such remissions should be subject to approval by a central authority to whom parents would be able to appeal. Nobody likes to see fees increased, but if they must be raised, I support the idea of a part of the proposed increase going towards the cost of new school buildings. However, I note that these capital elements of the fee increase are different in urban, suburban and rural schools. It is to be hoped that this does not imply a difference in capital assistance for school buildings in these different areas, and I would welcome clarification on this point.

Amongst the most important subjects raised in the White Paper are those of vocational training and technical education, both of which are obviously of vital importance to our economic future. Therefore, the appointment of a new Assistant Director of Education to take charge is welcomed. I disagree, however, with the recommendation that he should share responsibilities in this field with the Labour Department, as such division of duties will not make for efficiency. The duties of the new post should include close liaison with industry to help to bridge the gap between training and the realities of industrial production.

Whilst on this subject, I do not think that the Technical College should discontinue its pre-apprenticeship schemes, which I understand are proving successful, when the new Technical Institute on the Island is built, for the bulk of our industrial development is based on Kowloon and the need there is greatest. After all, in large industrial establishments, basic operation and advanced work go on side by side. Because the pupils taking these pre-apprenticeship courses will be mostly drawn from the children of the poorer section of the Community, I would like to see the tuition fees kept as low as possible.

My honourable Friend the Director of Education has paid justifiable tribute to the part played by the private schools in education in Hong Kong. They have carried much of the burden of Hong Kong's education in the past and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the future, particularly in the secondary sphere. In the current year they are responsible for the staggering numbers of 258,000 pupils at the primary level and as many as 102,000 at the secondary level. I trust that their needs will be kept continually in mind, and Government will give private school enterprises every assistance to encourage their growth.

The greatest difficulty that faces private schools is suitable accommodation because of our shortage of land and our tremendous population. This problem has been in my mind for some time and my thoughts have been given impetus by this debate. Most of the high-rise buildings built in recent years are unsuitable for schools in the light of the Education Ordinance, and in view of the present urgent and tremendous need for schools, perhaps the situation justifies a relaxation of the standards required by Government. The present regulations demand a classroom ceiling height of 11 ft. and an area of 10 sq. ft. per pupil in addition to a 5 ft. strip of teaching area in front of the blackboard. A reduction by, say, 20% of the area required per pupil would increase the number of places available considerably without lowering standards unduly. This should only be necessary in private schools which are housed in premises not specially designed for school purposes and therefore having rooms which accommodate less than 45 pupils under the requirements of the Ordinance. I am aware of the importance of upholding certain health standards in our classrooms, but in time of shortage, perhaps a policy of expediency is justified; such a policy has been for many years applied to housing in which the living area per person has been reduced from the statutory minimum of 35 sq. ft. to 24 sq. ft. in Resettlement Housing, a lowering of more than 30%. After all, the shortage of schools is no less acute than shortage of housing and the problem of their children's education is a matter of prime concern to all parents.

While on the question of school accommodation, I would like to deal with a recommendation made by the Education Commission but opposed by the Working Party. Physical inspection of school accommodation has long been the responsibility of the Education Inspectorate who have consulted the Public Works, Medical and Health Services and Fire Services Departments for technical and specialist advice. In recent years, private architects have been engaged to investigate on and certify the structural safety of existing premises for private schools. In connexion with these matters, I am inclined to agree with the Education Commission that the responsibilities for carrying out physical inspections should be transferred to a more appropriate department, such as the Public Works Department whose specialist experience and facilities surely are better equipped to conduct such inspections with regard to structural stability, fire risk and sanitary provisions.

I understand that many profit-making private schools have had their development hindered by lack of suitable accommodation, and that Government has in the past been rather reluctant to allocate sites for these schools to construct their own buildings, though sites have been sold to the public for housing, industry and other commercial purposes, whose needs are scarcely more pressing than those of education. I support the recommendation made by the Education Commission,

that sites should be reserved for development by private schools, but I am fully aware that among these schools, the standard of education is very diverse, and any Government assistance in the matter of sites must be accompanied by stricter control of their educational standards than is presently applied. Restriction of profit should be a condition of lease of the sites, and the qualifications and conditions of service of the teaching staff also require closer supervision for it is common knowledge that the salaries of teachers in some private schools are scandalously low.

The question of school sites is a thorny one in this land hungry island of ours, where such sites in the urban areas are without exception of postage-stamp size. Physical limitations in existing areas we must recognize, but it should not be impossible to provide bigger sites when development is planned for the rural areas and the new towns. Non-profit-making private school operators are wont to say that Government reserves all the good and easy sites for the construction of Government schools while the difficult and hilly ones are allocated to them. I think there is some truth in this, and consider it a poor policy: school bodies have limited funds and they should be enabled to use them to build schools, not to form difficult sites and construct the access to them.

Furthermore, Government conditions of the sites are often unrealistic, and unreasonable requirements are set for the parking of vehicles within the site areas, so much so that one is apt to think that such sites are created more for the convenience of car owners than for the education of children. Motor approaches have often to be built on multiple-tiered stilts and large areas have to be provided for the parking and turning of cars at the sacrifice of much needed play areas.

Sir, the Education Commission has recommended the use of rural areas in the New Territories for recreation and field studies and that generous provision should be made for playing fields in the planning of newly developing areas. I heartily agree. It is often said that education in Hong Kong presently concerns itself only with learning in the classroom and there is little importance attached to recreation for the pupils. The scarcity of play areas and facilities coupled with the requirements of examinations and pressure of school work have compelled our children to live between classroom and homework, resulting in a forced and unnatural development of their minds and depriving them of the opportunities for creative expression, not to mention the harmful effect on their health. This is especially noticeable in many private schools, which are only stacks of classrooms, no more than asphalt and concrete jungles to imprison the mind as well as the body.

We all realize the physical limitations of our land but for the well being of our younger generation, we must endeavour to provide recreation space in the rural areas for the common use of our schools. In

planning our new towns, active urban development is limited by a green belt which though it often comprises steep and broken terrain, could be successfully planned and utilized for organized out-door curricula activities by our urban schools to provide opportunities for our youth to regain that contact with nature which they have been deprived of through intensive urbanization and high-density living. Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body; it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity. It is, therefore, of great importance to include out-door activities in our school curricula as a means to ensure that every young pupil is given the opportunity to keep himself physically fit—fit to learn, fit to understand and fit to live.

MRS ELLEN LI SHU-PUI:—Your Excellency, in rising to speak on the White Paper on Education Policy, I wish to first express my appreciation for this honour and opportunity to be here this afternoon to present my woman's view on this important issue.

Nearly all the points of any significance in this Paper have been eloquently and thoroughly commented on by many senior Honourable Unofficial Members of this Council. What remains to be said may well be just some unnecessary additions, or another approach from a different angle to the same problems, and I shall therefore confine my remarks to a few topics of special interest which I feel should be given serious attention and further consideration.

SCHOOL FEES. Any proposal to raise school fees at any time is an unwise and objectionable move. It is, in principle, retrogressive and contrary to any education policy. Although no increase of fees is recommended for primary schools, I feel that the proposal for the increase of fees for secondary schools is also not advisable. Secondary education is generally considered to be just as much a vital necessity in any progressive society as primary, so much so that it is also provided free in many countries. At present, Government can only provide 15-20% of the needed secondary education, leaving the remaining 80 - 85% to private schools. As it is, children in secondary schools are already paying a fee many of their families can ill afford. To increase it further in Government schools would provide an excuse for a general increase of fees in profit-making private schools, thus adding further burden to the poorer section of the community. Besides, the net income from such an increase, after remissions, is almost negligible, making the proposal unworthy of acceptance. The cumbersome system of remission of fees is not considered the best method of relieving the hardship on parents of large families, as it involves additional work for the schools and great inconvenience to the parents. In principle, secondary education should not be regarded as a luxury for the affluent

few, but should be made available at a fee within the reach of every successful primary school leaver who wants it.

AGE OF ENTRY. The reversion of the age of entry from 7 back to 6 is a welcome move. But the confusion in school classes caused by this to-and-fro changes of policy will continue for another few years and the sooner we put it right the better, at once if possible, 2 years at the most but certainly not 4 years.

SCHOOL SYSTEM. The idea behind the attempt to provide education for our children up to 14—the legal age of employment—is admirable, but the method of implementation introduced in 1963 proves to be a "mistake" because of the unpopularity of the new special Form 1 which more or less branded the children as "failures". From my point of view, the obvious solution to this predicament is the re-establishment of the original 6-year primary system, as recommended, and to offer a 2-year vocational training course to those who do not or can not be absorbed into formal secondary schools, so as to fit them for employment. This will also prevent the large number of drop-outs at Junior 2 or 3 in Chinese secondary schools. In 1963, the Chinese secondary school education was reduced from the usual 6 years to 5. To compress it again to 4 years will certainly lower the standard unless students resort to excessive cramming, making the system fit for only the brilliant few and not for the benefit of the majority who are but average students.

TEACHERS. (a) Staff Ratio. I do not agree with the recommendation to lower the staff ratio which I feel is detrimental to the quality and efficiency of teaching. The reduction may be considered justifiable in the bi-sessional schools with different sets of teachers. My concern is for the Anglo-Chinese full-day schools. Chinese is already a very difficult language by itself and when the children have to learn English and Chinese at the same time, the teachers as well as the students have to exert extra effort and time to keep up the standard for both languages. Teachers in full-day secondary schools must also be given free periods to organize and encourage our teen-agers to participate in extra-curricula activities as part of our education programme for training in leadership, good citizenship and good sportsmanship.

(b) Teachers Training. I think the time has come for our young men and women to pick and choose their professions according to their special interest and ability. By lengthening the years of training, we hope to produce teachers of higher quality—more matured, more dedicated, better suited and better trained. It is a reasonable suggestion to charge a small fee for teachers training as it is done in other places and for other types of professional training. Teaching will now become a noble profession by choice rather than by inducement. The proposal of an interest-free loan scheme to assist promising and intending

teachers is worthy of mention. I hope that in due course, this scheme would also be extended to technical colleges as well.

(c) *Teachers salaries.* I would like to quote one sentence from the White Paper on p. 9 section 25 of the Education Policy which says: "The impact of salaries is of critical importance to the development of education", and it is on these words that I base my remarks. It may not be relevant, or timely or even popular this afternoon to bring up the question of equal pay for equal work for teachers in aided schools, and women in education and other branches of the Civil Service. But since we are discussing the policy for the development of education, I would like to remind Members of the importance of women's contribution to the various fields of service in Government and the community in industries and commerce, social welfare, medical and health services and education, especially education. It is gratifying to know that Government is already leading the movement of establishing equal pay for women on the higher grades. It is hoped that Government would eventually abolish this social injustice entirely as soon as possible, and immediately, to establish complete equality for women in institutions of higher education. I am depending on the chivalry and conscientious sense of justice of my honourable Friends and Colleagues in this Council to support the principle of equal pay for equal work between men and women when the issue comes up for deliberation at a later date, because I may not be here to plead the cause in person.

During the past weeks, many people and organizations have commented on the pros and cons of the White Paper, many with constructive and valuable suggestions for improvement worthy of attention. In my opinion, the White Paper as a whole presents a workable and practical policy within the frame work of our present day economic structure. Except for the few points brought up this afternoon, I think the Paper should be accepted for action, so that the school building expansion programme, the 80% aided school places, the 20% fee remission, the reversion of entry age and many other improvements can go forward without delay. We must not lose sight of the fact that under the present circumstances, with our population growing at both ends, from natural increase and immigration, with our limited land space and financial resources, the clothes must be cut according to the cloth. However, we must continue to strive unceasingly for a more satisfying policy by keeping the present one in constant review. We are still a long way from achieving our final aim, and it is imperative that Government should place Education on a higher priority in our Annual Budget. It remains for our financial experts to explore and discover additional avenues of income and financial resources to implement the furtherance of education.

MR DHUN J. RUTTONJEE:—Your Excellency, this afternoon we have seen and heard history made in this chamber. Our Council has been graced for the first time by the presence of a Lady Member— a presence which, I am sure all would agree, has brought an air of charm to this Chamber and to our deliberations. And, if there were any die-hards among us who felt any qualms about this invasion, albeit a “provisional” invasion, of one of the last bastions of all male supremacy, then surely their doubts have been assuaged by the able, penetrating and business-like maiden speech of my honourable Friend Mrs Ellen Li Shu-pui.

As Senior Unofficial Member of Council it is my privilege on this occasion to wind up the debate. We have heard a great deal of eloquence and good sense from my unofficial colleagues. I trust that the points they have made will be given the most careful consideration—for this is one of the most important subjects ever to be debated in this Council.

If being a signatory to the Working Party Report means that I have some special interest in this debate, then I must at the outset declare it. Having done that I must, with such modesty as I can command, confess that when all is said and done, I do not think we did at all a bad job. However, it is a long report and on further reflection, there are some points that worry me and I should be less than frank if I were not to comment on them. Lest members should find something strange in this, I would suggest that even though the barons signed Magna Carta this did not prevent some of them from having second thoughts afterwards.

It has been calculated that the end result of the financial proposals now before Council will be that the Treasury will benefit to the extent of about half a million dollars a year. I do not think I would be letting any fiscal cats out of the bag if I were to comment that at one time, it seemed likely that this figure would have been considerably higher. However, you yourself, Sir, well know what anxious consideration the Working Party gave to the question of fees generally and, even if it has taken longer than had been anticipated before this subject could be debated here, I trust all members will agree that the wait was worthwhile, certainly from the point of view of those parents who now, and will, pay primary school fees. Be that as it may, I would in passing ask Government for an assurance that this half million dollars will not be irretrievably lost to education. I would like to see it used to increase the proposed rate of school fee remission.

I turn now to something that, although outside the actual terms of the motion now before Council, I regard as being so important that it must be raised. I refer to the question of fees in secondary schools. The Working Party has recommended increases in these insofar as they

concern government schools. There are however many thousands of pupils who attend private secondary schools and it is these who give me concern. I would deprecate any attempt to raise fees in these schools unless the schools concerned could first establish the need to do so. It is common knowledge that substantial fortunes have been made over the years from the running of schools. It might be suggested that, provided the education is good, who should object? To me there is something distasteful in seeing what is essentially, in the widest sense of the word, a social service used primarily as a means to make money. Make money by all means but remember always that the stock in trade one is dealing in is "people", their future and indeed the future of the whole community. I therefore want an assurance from Government that, before any approval for an increase in private secondary school fees is given, the schools concerned must establish a definite economic need. I go further and ask that those concerned should not take every balance sheet and trading account that is produced at their face value but should inquire into the basis upon which they were drawn up. Regulation 64 of the Regulations made under the Education Ordinance, requires the written approval of the Director of Education before any change is made in the inclusive fee. It occurs to me. Your Excellency, that, as this is a matter which is likely to raise knotty problems, that you may care to consider the advisability of setting up a small Committee, drawn perhaps from the Board of Education, specifically to advise the Director on such matters. Insofar as rent increases may be given as a justification for fee increases I would suggest, and I ask for Government's views on this, that if at a future date rents do begin to rise once more, then a landlord of any school must establish that the rent he is demanding is a fair one, taking all factors into account. Whatever is found to be justified increases should then be borne by Government. In other words the public generally should bear any increases after whatever is decided to be an appropriate date—and of necessity this must be a date that has passed.

My honourable Friend, Mr Sidney GORDON, has already argued ably and convincingly against the proposal in the White Paper to raise the entry age for Junior English Schools from 5 to 6. This proposal has been strongly criticized by the Parent-Teacher Associations of these schools. This proposal stems from para. 82 of the Working Party's Report, but it needs to be remembered that the Working Party's recommendation was made on the basis of a starting age of 7 for Chinese Primary Schools, and was aimed at maintaining the long-standing difference of one year in the entry ages for these two categories of primary school. A new situation has developed since then, with Government's subsequent decision, recorded in para. 11 of the White Paper, to revert to 6 as the entry age for Chinese Primary Schools. Is a change in the entry age for Junior English Schools still justifiable? I suggest it is not. The Working Party itself said that the education provided in

these schools should be similar in content and method to that available in State schools in Britain, and the Parent-Teacher Associations claim, in my opinion justifiably, that the starting age is a most relevant consideration, since many children at these schools have to attend State Schools in Britain while on leave, and many may leave Hong Kong to continue their schooling in Britain on a permanent basis from the age of 9 or 10 onwards. It is highly desirable that they should be able to fit into their own age group in these circumstances but this will be impossible if they start at 6. In addition, the broken nature of their schooling, due to home leave, is a further handicap, as is the fact that children attending these schools are of many nationalities, with varying commands of English when they join. All this points to the need for the earliest possible start in primary education and this is, of course, why the starting age has always been 5.

It is not as if children attending these Junior English Schools are going to gain some additional subsidy from the public purse by continuing to start at the age of 5. Both they and the children at Chinese Primary Schools are to get six years of primary education, and the increased fees for Junior English Schools ensure that the parents meet the extra cost of each of these years, whether the course runs from 5 to 11, or from 6 to 12. It does seem hard to link this sort of change to an increase in fees from \$240 to \$480 a year.

It seems to me then that very cogent arguments must be produced to justify changing the present arrangements, and that we should not tinker with them unless we are sure of our grounds. Our recent experiment with the entry age for Chinese Primary schools (on which we are now back-tracking) is not encouraging.

I do not intend to make further detailed observations on any of the specific recommendations contained in the White Paper; in most cases I would be merely repeating, albeit less eloquently, the remarks of my colleagues. There is however one matter that must be mentioned. There is a danger that consideration of education in Hong Kong will become an art in itself. We have had working parties, commissions, and statements galore—so much so that the whole question promises to match the longevity associated with Dicken's cases of Jarndyce versus Jarndyce. I have a feeling—and this after 45 meetings in the Working Party of some 2 hours duration each—I have a feeling that there has never been a clear appreciation in anyone's mind of what exactly has been needed—and in such a situation this Government is by no means unique in stepping from expediency to palliative. When in doubt appoint a Commission or a Working Party would seem to be the motto. This I trust is the last time that an already involved subject is made even more so by the inch by inch attitude of Government. I get the impression that, just occasionally, we in Hong Kong spend too much of our time putting off decisions because they are uncomfortable.

It has been said—perhaps a little unkindly, but with some justification—that this Government works to a policy of “Government by crisis”: in some instances this is justified and we must always be flexible, able to recognize and meet problems and crisis as they arise—but there are many areas of Government where long-term planning is essential. In the field of Education, procrastination and the piece-meal approach are to be avoided like the plague.

Hong Kong's industrial development over the past 15 years has been a story of success, admired the World over, and one in which we can take some justifiable pride. There are several factors underlying this success, but of supreme importance, in the past, has been the availability of a plentiful supply of productive, cheap labour. I say “in the past” advisedly: in recent years, labour has become less and less cheap—and it looks as though this trend will continue. Well, what of the future? In the face of continued and increasing restrictions on our external trade and in the face of rising costs of production, our future—our future economic development—must surely give cause for grave concern. What is the answer? This is a complex matter involving many factors and considerations outside of today's debate, but I believe that a partial answer—an important part of the answer—lies in increased productivity: but this, in time, will depend largely, and increasingly, on the quality of our industrial labour force at all levels, from management to the shop floor. As in the developed countries of the West, our industrial labour force of the future must be educated and trained so that full and proper advantage may be taken of the technical and technological advances which are continually being developed and achieved in the Industrial World. The first sentence of the first paragraph to the Introduction of the White Paper reads as follows: “The final aim of any educational policy must always be to provide every child with the best education he or she is capable of absorbing, at a cost that the parent and the community can afford.” What the community, what Government, can afford is, of course, a debatable point. For my part, I have *no* doubt that we cannot afford not to afford a very substantial expansion and improvement in Education—particularly in technical and vocational education: an investment, as it were, in the future—“An investment in Man”.

This leads to my last point. If we wish to see Hong Kong children getting a better education, it will be necessary to attract more higher qualified recruits to the teaching profession: and we shall not do this by pinch-pennying on teachers' salaries. It is impossible to dissociate the subject of teachers' salaries from the overall educational picture and we in the Working Party did not attempt to do so. It was indeed part of our task. This point is also recognized at para. 25 of the White Paper. I quote, “the impact of salaries is of *critical importance* to the development of education”, unquote. But then, incredibly,

the White Paper goes on to say—and again I quote, “it is realized that there will be much disappointment that authoritative statement on salaries at the present time is impossible”. From the reactions of the public, the press and the various interested associations, this, surely, is the understatement of the year: it is also, in my opinion, double-talk—and I wonder how we can seriously consider so comprehensive and so important a subject as the one before Council today when a factor of admitted *critical importance* to the consideration of such subject is virtually placed out of bounds. I wonder also, Sir, what the effect of this procrastination, this unwillingness to face up to facts on such a crucial point as salaries, will have on the young men and women who may have been thinking of joining the teaching profession—pretty disastrous, I should think. The amendment to the Resolution before Council, if anything, makes matters even more bewildering. Apart from the fact that it puts the Salaries Commission in a straight-jacket as far as teachers' pay is concerned, I regard the whole matter with considerable misgiving.

In addition to the assurances and answers I have already asked for, I must further ask for a full explanation as to why this amendment was introduced before I can decide whether I can support the motion now before Council.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the debate on the resolution before Council be adjourned until the next meeting of the Council.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

TELEVISION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1965

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the First reading of a Bill intituled “An Ordinance to amend the Television Ordinance 1964.”

He said:—Your Excellency, section 11(1)(d) of the Television Ordinance 1964, in its present form, provides that no “disqualified person”—this term includes competitors, suppliers of broadcasting material and advertising agents—may exercise control in a company licensed to operate wireless television. This section consequently prevents the Governor in Council from awarding a licence to a company which is subject to such control.

On the 16th June the Television Authority announced that, in order to ensure that the Governor in Council, when considering applications for a television licence, should have complete freedom to select the best and most suitable applicant, it had been decided in principle

that the provisions of this Section should become effective only *after* the grant of a licence.

The Television (Amendment) Bill 1965 seeks to give this intention legal force by conferring on the Governor in Council an express power to grant a licence to a company

- (a) which is a disqualified person; or
- (b) in which a disqualified person exercises control; or
- (c) which is a disqualified person in which another disqualified person exercises control.

I am sorry, Sir, if this sounds rather complicated. It becomes simpler if one remembers the intention stated above of giving the Governor in Council complete freedom to select the best and most suitable applicant.

The Governor in Council, when considering applications, would not of course overlook the “disqualification” factor, but “disqualification” in itself would not be an absolute bar to the issue of a licence. Moreover, the Governor in Council would be able to stipulate the degree of control by a “disqualified person” which is acceptable.

Once the licence has been issued, no disqualified person, other than a person whose disqualification was disclosed in the application for the licence, may exercise control in the company; and by a new paragraph (e) to Section 11(1) a disqualified person is prevented from increasing the degree of control which was considered acceptable by the Governor in Council when granting the licence.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a First time.

Objects and Reasons

The “Objects and Reasons” for the Bill were stated as follows:—

Section 8 of the Ordinance provides that a licence granted under it shall be subject to the conditions set out in section 11, which include the condition that no disqualified person may exercise control in a licensee company. Subsection (2) of section 11 makes it clear that this condition does not prevent a grant of a licence to a company which is itself a disqualified person, being, for example, a company which transmits sound material or operates a wired service.

2. It is now considered desirable to give the Governor in Council complete freedom in this matter when granting a licence under section 8, and so enable him to select a company notwithstanding that a disqualified person may be exercising control in it. The new subsection (4), which this Bill seeks to insert in section 8, is designed to confer this wider power, while making it clear that the Governor in Council may impose conditions concerning the disqualified person and the control which he exercises. Clause 3 makes a consequential amendment to section 11(1)(d), and at the same time adds to this subsection a new paragraph (e) which seeks to ensure that no disqualified person increases the degree of control which was considered acceptable when the licence was granted.

IMMIGRATION (CONTROL AND OFFENCES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1965

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the First reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Immigration (Control and Offences) Ordinance 1958."

He said: —Your Excellency, at present, under section 39(4) of the 1958 Ordinance, the Governor is empowered to expel an immigrant after his conviction for contravention of a condition subject to which his entry has been permitted. Some doubt has arisen whether an immigrant can be expelled upon conviction for the breach of a condition imposed subsequent to entry for the purpose of renewing or extending an originally limited stay. Clause 2 of this Bill seeks to amend section 39(4) of the principal Ordinance so as to make it clear that the power to expel is applicable in both cases.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a First time.

Objects and Reasons

The "Objects and Reasons" for the Bill were stated as follows: —

At present the Immigration (Control and Offences) Ordinance 1958 allows the Governor to expel an immigrant for contravention of a condition subject to which his entry has been permitted, and some doubt has arisen whether an immigrant can be expelled for breach of a condition imposed subsequent to entry, for the purpose of renewing or extending an originally limited stay. This Bill seeks to remove the doubt by making express provision therefor.

**RENT INCREASES (DOMESTIC PREMISES) CONTROL
(AMENDMENT) BILL 1965**

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Rent Increases (Domestic Premises) Control Ordinance 1963."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Second time.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY reported that the Rent Increase (Domestic Premises) Control (Amendment) Bill 1965 had passed through Council without amendment and moved the Third reading.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Third time and passed into law.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR:—Before we conclude these proceedings, I would like to thank Mr FUNG Ping-fan, and Mr R. C. LEE, although he has already left us, very sincerely for their long and valuable services to this Council. I am sure I speak not only for myself but for the whole Council when I say how much we have appreciated their advice and assistance both in Council itself and in Committee. I am most grateful to them for the contribution they have made to the orderly progress of the Council's business.

ADJOURNMENT

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR:—Well, that concludes the business for today. The next meeting of the Council will be held on the 30th June.