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## CABINET

SOCIAL INVESTMENT: EDUCATIONMemorandum by the Minister of Education

in his paper C. (58) 196 the Financial Secretary to the Treasury points out that, to make a cut of as much as £5.3 millions in the investment programme which I have proposed for 1960/61, it would be necessary to restrict starts in that year to the 1959/60 level for all major and minor projects except those for teacher training.

2. Such a restriction is quite incompatible with the policy of advance in education which we have been discussing for some months.

3. The 1959/60 programme of £46 millions starts for primary and secondary schools is already substantially below the level of starts in earlier years up to and including the current year. The figures are as follows:-

<u>£ millions work started</u>			
<u>1956/57</u>	<u>1957/58</u>	<u>1958/59</u> <sup>x</sup>	<u>1959/60</u> <sup>x</sup>
58.0	54.0	51.0	46.0

<sup>x</sup> authorised to start

4. In compiling the 1959/60 programme, I have had to reject a large volume of thoroughly justified projects. The diversion of resources from "bulge" to "improvements" projects which would be possible within a continuing programme of £46 millions would not have any significant effect in 1960/61; it would mainly take place in the latter part of the 4-5 year period ending in 1965. No Minister of Education could talk about an advance in education while restricting school building in 1960/61 as severely as I have had to do in drawing up the 1959/60 programme. To launch a convincing forward drive the size of the 1960/61 programme must be, and must be seen to be, significantly greater than the 1958/59 figure of £51 millions in terms of starts.

5. Minor works are just as important. In 1957/58 we had £16 millions, including school meals. This year, I have been cut to £12 millions (including £1 million specially allocated to ease unemployment). Next year, I am still authorised to approve only £12 millions' worth. Apart from £1 million for long overdue improvements in dining conditions in the schools (without which we should have trouble with the teachers as well as the local authorities) this allows nothing

for improvements as distinct from additional urgently needed places. It would be farcical to pretend to be launching a drive in education while restricting these minor works below last year's level of £16 millions.

6. If we are to present a forward policy in education, the only measure I can take to reduce investment in 1960/61 is to cut back the proposed level of starts for primary and secondary schools in 1960/61 from £60 millions to £55 millions. This would reduce work done by £1 million in 1960/61.

7. A programme of £55 millions of starts for primary and secondary schools in 1960/61 could form the basis of a reasonable forward policy, provided that it could be presented as the first year of a five year programme. As I showed in C. (58) 148, we need a five year school building programme of over £300 millions to sustain a policy of maximum effort in making a reality of secondary education for all.

8. Accordingly, I ask my colleagues:-

- (a) to confirm that we should launch this autumn, initially by means of a White Paper, a five year programme of educational advance;
- (b) to agree that total educational investment in 1960/61 in England and Wales should be £90.8 millions of work done. This will allow the start of £55 millions of work for primary and secondary schools in the same year;
- (c) to invite the Education Ministers to discuss with the Chancellor of the Exchequer the level of investment to be announced in the White Paper for the five year programme as a whole.

G.L.

Ministry of Education, W.1.

26th September, 1958.