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3rd DECEMBER, 1943.

WAR CABINET.

EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education.

At the meeting of the War Cabinet held on December 2nd (W.M.(43) 165th Conclusions), I undertook to give further consideration to the following points :

1. Title of the Minister.

Provision will be included in Part I of the Bill whereby the Ministry of Education will continue to have the title of "Board of Education" and the Minister will continue to have the title of "President of the Board of Education". This will not necessitate redrafting the rest of the Bill, where it will be legitimate to use the expression "Minister".

2. Recovery of cost of meals.

I have examined the suggestion made by the War Cabinet that the most satisfactory course would be to omit from the present Bill all provisions in regard to school meals. There are obvious advantages in this course. In any case, the present legal basis for the administration of school meals and milk continues until 1st April, 1945. It will be understood, however, that unless the future of school meals and milk has been settled in connection with the Government's scheme for children's allowances by that date, there will need to be an amending Bill providing for the continuation of these services.

On the other hand, the White Paper stated that the present power of local education authorities of providing meals

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WAR CABINET

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Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education

At the meeting of the War Cabinet held on December 2nd (W.M. (4) 200) I undertook to consider the matter in connection to the following points:

1. Title of the Minister

Provision will be included in Part I of the Bill whereby the Ministry of Education will continue to be known as the "Board of Education", and the Minister will continue to be known as the "President of the Board of Education". This will be in accordance with the title of the Minister of Education in the Bill.

2. Recovery of cost of meals

I have examined the proposals in the Bill which provide that the most satisfactory course would be to give the present Bill all provisions in regard to school meals. There are obvious advantages in this course. In any case, the present Bill provides for the reimbursement of school meals and milk.

continues until the Bill is passed. It will be understood, however, that unless the return of school meals has been settled in connection with the Government's proposals for children's allowances by that date, there will be an amount of money provided for the operation of the Bill.

On the other hand, the White Paper stated that the present power of local education authorities of providing meals

local education authorities

and milk would be converted into a duty, and it has been suggested that the position could be satisfactorily met by the insertion of a clause on the following lines:

"It shall be the duty of the local education authority to make provision for the supply to children and young persons in attendance at county schools, auxiliary schools, nursery schools, special schools and young people's colleges, of meals and milk to such extent and subject to such conditions (including directions as to the recovery or non-recovery of the cost) as may be directed by order of the Minister."

Parliamentary Counsel advises that, having regard to the specific reference to the recovery of cost in respect of the provision of boarding accommodation and clothing, the absence of any reference to recovery of cost in respect of meals and milk would create a presumption that the Minister's powers to make conditions did not extend to the recovery of the cost.

A clause on these lines would be in substitution for Clause 48. Clause 50 would remain because the provision of clothing is not on all-fours with the provision of meals and milk and is, moreover, only a power and not a duty.

Parliamentary Counsel has undertaken to redraft Clause 51 to cover recovery of cost in respect of boarding accommodation and clothing only.

Whether provisions regarding milk and meals are included in the Bill or not, it will be necessary, in any memorandum accompanying the Bill, to explain that the position in regard to the provision of meals and milk will have to be adapted in conformity with such decision as the Government may take about children's allowances under the Social Security scheme.

and which would be converted into a duty, and it has been suggested that the position could be satisfactorily met by the insertion of a clause in the following lines:

"It shall be the duty of the local education authority to make provision for the supply of children and young persons in attendance at county schools, secondary schools, primary schools, special schools and youth people's colleges, at such times and to such extent and subject to such conditions (including restrictions as to the amount of the recovery of the cost as may be determined by the Secretary of State) as may be determined by the Secretary of State."

The provision of secondary education for children and young persons in attendance at county schools, secondary schools, primary schools, special schools and youth people's colleges, at such times and to such extent and subject to such conditions (including restrictions as to the amount of the recovery of the cost as may be determined by the Secretary of State) as may be determined by the Secretary of State."

A clause in these lines would be in substitution for clause 48, clause 50 would remain because the provision of secondary education for children and young persons in attendance at county schools, secondary schools, primary schools, special schools and youth people's colleges, at such times and to such extent and subject to such conditions (including restrictions as to the amount of the recovery of the cost as may be determined by the Secretary of State) as may be determined by the Secretary of State."

Clause 51 to cover recovery of cost in respect of boarding accommodation and catering only.

Whether provision regarding milk and meals are included in the Bill depends on the Bill as necessary, in any memorandum accompanying the Bill, and within that the position in regard to the provision of milk and meals will have to be adopted in conformity with the Government's policy about children's allowances under the Social Security scheme.

3. Duties of teachers in relation to school meals

If there were no reference to milk and meals in the Bill, sub-section (2) of Clause 49 would automatically disappear. If, however, a clause on the lines suggested in paragraph 2 were adopted, it would be necessary to define the position of teachers in relation to school meals.

My colleagues asked me to reconsider the wording of Clause 49(2). This clause gives the local education authority new powers enabling them to require teachers to exercise supervisory functions in relation to school meals, but not to require them to undertake other duties in relation thereto.

The present position is governed by Section 85 of the Education Act, 1921, which reads as follows:-

"No teacher seeking employment or employed in a public elementary school shall be required as part of his duties to supervise or assist, or to abstain from supervising or assisting, in the provision of meals, or in the collection of the cost thereof".

(There is no similar provision in the Scottish Education Acts.)

Teachers have shown themselves very ready to participate in this work on a voluntary basis, a fact to which the success of the School Meals Service is very largely due. Some Authorities have taken advantage of the readiness of teachers to help by requiring them to undertake the duties of kitchen-hands. Such a use of teaching power is an unwarrantably extravagant way of carrying out this service, since in peace-time far cheaper labour is locally available for carrying out the preparation and serving of the meals.

I would, therefore, prefer to leave Clause 49(2) as it stands.

R.A.B.

Board of Education,
S.W.1.

3rd December, 1943.

It is not necessary to state that the principles of management in education are not new. They have been known since the beginning of time.

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