

Director-General of Security, one would imagine that the Government would take some further action to see that she did not remain a resident of Australia but if the Government attempted to send her out of Australia, obviously it would be obliged to reveal in the courts at least some of the grounds on which a certificate of naturalization has been refused.

I have only a few minutes left so I shall refer to only one other case which concerns a Portuguese gentleman also. He has been resident in Australia for many years. He was deported from Portugal as a young man. He has never been inside a police court in Australia or in his own country. According to him—and I have no reason to doubt him, and knowing what we do about the Government of Portugal it could be possible—he was seized and put on a ship because he was the secretary of his local municipal workers union. He was sent to Portuguese Timor, and after a number of years there he managed to come to Australia. For many years he has been working on the Sydney waterfront. This man applied for a certificate of naturalization and, on the basis of a security report, it was refused.

I think there should be some answer to the details of these cases that have been revealed to me. There should be some opportunity for these people to reply to some of the allegations and charges that are made against them. If this is the type of activity in which the security organization is engaged, how can any member of the Australian community have confidence in it? I ask the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General (Sir Garfield Barwick), who share the responsibility for this organization, to give some answer to this criticism.

**Mr. MENZIES** (Kooyong—Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs) [3.59].—I do not propose to detain the committee, but I want to say a few words about what has now become an annual feature of these Estimates—a discussion on education. Before I do that, I might perhaps relieve the mind of my friend who spoke about tourism by saying to him that if he looks in the estimates of the Department of Trade he will find that this year our subvention to the Australian National Travel

Association is £150,000, having risen to that amount by stages over a period of years.

I am not going to rehearse what I have frequently spoken about before—the attitude of the Government to the education problem—because that is quite well known, but I do think perhaps I might, in a very few words, bring up to date what I have said before. I first of all clear away one or two misconceptions. Several speakers have quoted figures—not always identical—representing the percentage of gross national product which Australian expenditure on education represents, and have compared that unfavorably with expenditure in other countries. It is very dangerous to make these comparisons too hastily because, in fact, in at least some of the countries which have been set up by way of comparison, 90 per cent. of the expenditure on primary and secondary schools and so on is government expenditure. In Australia, it happens that 75 per cent. of expenditure on education is government expenditure and the other 25 per cent. is the result of other causes, and comes from other sources. Therefore, a precise comparison cannot be made. If, in Australia, 90 per cent. were dealt with in what in effect would be government schools and institutions, then the percentage that educational expenditure would represent here would rise quite materially, as must be quite clear to honorable members.

Another honorable member had something to say about the pressure that immigration had put on the capacity of the States in this matter. Indeed, he and several others have sought to create an impression that we are in a critical condition, that the whole State educational structure is in effect in a state of crisis. There are two answers to that, and I shall just mention each of them quite briefly. In the first place, let me say that the increase in government school enrolments was about 7 per cent. in 1952. That percentage has diminished year by year, and by 1960 was only 3½ per cent. And that fall is expected to continue until the annual increase represents something of the order of 2 per cent. These figures do not demonstrate a crisis. On the contrary, they demonstrate that the pressure of demand is rising not at the rapid rate of which it was rising six or seven years ago, but at a very much more moderate one.

The second thing I want to say is that it has become quite the fashion now to say that the Commonwealth sits idly by. I have been accused of the most frightful indifference to the educational demands of the country, and I find that a rather odd allegation to be made against me, since I venture to say that no Prime Minister has been so active in this field as I have and that with the complete support of both sides of this Parliament. The fact that to-day the Commonwealth is spending fifteen times as much on universities as it was spending ten years ago is trifling to some, I suppose, but it is worth recalling. The fact that we have done so much in the university field has rather created a false impression in the public mind, an impression which is carefully fostered by some people, that we are making no contribution whatever to the State problem of primary and secondary education.

What are the facts? It is quite true that we do not make specific grants, but, before people become too steeped in gloom, let me say that our Commonwealth general revenue grants to the States have risen during my term—over this decade—from £102,000,000 to an estimated £302,000,000 this year. In other words, it has trebled in that time. The expenditure by the States from Consolidated Revenue on education, this field in which we are supposed indifferently to have starved them, was, in round figures, £38,000,000 in 1950-51, and £140,000,000 in 1960-61. So that, in spite of this beggarly treatment of which we are accused, the States were able to increase their expenditure on education from £38,000,000 to £140,000,000 over a period of time in which our revenue grants to the States were trebled. I venture to say that those are very remarkable figures.

Turning to the capital side, I say once more that although I think that on the whole the States have coped splendidly with their educational problem, they certainly could not have coped with the building demand, the capital establishment of their schools, if it had not been for the treatment provided by this Government for the first time in the history of the Commonwealth, because, beginning with 1951-52, this Government has found from taxation, from the Budget and from general Commonwealth resources, an average of about £80,000,000 a year by way of assistance

to State works programmes. In other words, the short fall of loan raisings for approved programmes has always been taken up by us and, over that period, that has in fact averaged no less than £80,000,000 a year. In one year it was up as high as £152,000,000, and in another year it was down to a relatively small figure, but, over the whole period, the amount provided was about £800,000,000. Quite plainly, without that assistance, the States could never have maintained their capital expenditure.

So, on the revenue side, and on the capital side, it must be perfectly clear to anybody that because of the way in which we have improved revenue grants to the States, because of the new formula that was devised to the unanimous satisfaction of the States, a formula which took into account increases in school population and things of that kind, the States have been enabled to do something of which they are, I think, very properly proud.

Somebody wanted to tell us that at the last conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers the Premiers unanimously wanted us to go into this field, that they wanted emergency grants, that they wanted a full-blooded inquiry. I will take one of them by way of type, because that will be sufficient for my purposes. I shall take Mr. Bolte. After Mr. Heffron had put forward his proposal very briefly, in a mild and disarming way, Mr. Bolte said—

I support their case on the general level, but I point out that in presenting a case for them we may be thought to be admitting in some way that we are not doing a very good job in the field of education. Such an inference would not be correct. I think that the position in other States is much the same as is that in Victoria. In the current financial year, we are spending close on £60,000,000 on education, and a lot of the departments other than that concerned with education are perhaps becoming Cinderellas for the benefit of education. I firmly believe that if we can continue to spend at the present rate we can handle the situation. I am perfectly frank about the matter. I am not here to admit in any way that Victoria is behind the door with respect to making provision for the educational requirements of the present generation and future generations.

Having said that he went on to say—

But I think that one aspect of education should have special attention. That is technical education.

That was his view, and it is an entirely intelligible one. But I have mentioned these figures in order to remind the House, which hears certain things from year to year with some regularity, that Commonwealth-State financial relations have been conducted, I believe, with such justice and liberality that the States have been able to achieve in the educational field the results that we all know of to-day.

**Mr. Reynolds.**—But they all want more money.

**Mr. MENZIES.**—Of course everybody will ask for money from the Commonwealth. That is the easiest thing in the world. You seem to think that we just say “abracadabra” and down comes £100,000,000. We have to be a bit responsible in handling the finances. We are not handling them theoretically. I said and I repeat—honorable members will appreciate the significance of it—that these figures demonstrate beyond doubt how false is the argument that we stand by indifferently. I have an old-fashioned prejudice in favour of doing one thing at a time.

We tackled this university problem—an enormous problem—and but for what we did, the universities would have been completely bankrupted and the development of universities would have been frustrated for a decade. I am very pleased that we were able to assist the universities and, I believe, to open up a new future for them. We then established the Universities Commission. You cannot provide for university development a month at a time. You must do it as the commission decided, and as we agreed, in three yearly terms, the triennium, as it is called, and we have just approved in this Parliament of the current triennium expenditure. At the same time as approving of it we told the Universities Commission, under Sir Leslie Martin, that we thought it very desirable to have an examination made of the whole future structure of tertiary education; not just taking for granted that what may be called the traditional type of university is the only answer to the problem, but letting our minds run on to consider whether we might not need special technological institutes of some kind or other. To meet the demands of the modern

world there may be a call for various grades or types of tertiary educational establishments. For that purpose we have appointed a special committee, and a very powerful one, I think. It is widely representative, containing in it not only high-quality expert opinion but business experience and financial experience. We anticipate—not in a month or two months, because this will be a long job—getting from that committee, which will sit under the chairmanship of Sir Leslie Martin, a report which we can then take up with the States in order to see whether, for the future, some other system of finance must be worked out.

We do not decide whether there is going to be a new university at, say, Shortland. It is not a political decision by us. This is one of the problems, first of all, for the State Government, because it establishes universities and the Commonwealth does not, and, secondly, for the Universities Commission, which will discuss the requirements and the appropriateness of what is proposed to be done and then make recommendations to us. When all that is added to by the report of this committee on tertiary education generally, which will include technological education, then we will be to that extent further forward.

I do not beguile myself into believing that this is not going to cost more money, because every investigation into a problem of this kind comes up with recommendations which cost money to implement. But having tackled the problem of universities in the broad we did not pause there. We turned to that important branch of medical training, the teaching hospitals and clinical instruction generally. We set up a committee to examine that. I have not seen its report yet, but it came near me one day and it sounded, even at that distance, pretty costly. But, anyhow, it is either in or on the way in, because we realize that the work done by teaching hospitals in the training of medical practitioners is a branch of tertiary education that cannot be excluded simply because it is not conducted actually within the four walls of a university.

I mention these matters to show that, so far from being indifferent, we have had a lively and imaginative mind on these problems. We have pursued these matters

as and when we could, and pursued them at great outlay, while, at the same time, our financial arrangements with the States have put the States, to use a homely phrase, "in funds" as they never were before, to carry out their educational activities, with the result—I conclude by repeating it—that the educational expenditure of the States on their own purposes has gone up from £38,000,000 to £140,000,000 over the period of office of this Government.

**Mr. CAIRNS (Yarra)** [4.17].—I think it is very significant that the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) has chosen the subject of education on which to speak in relation to the estimates for his own department. This I think correctly and rightly bears the assumption that he considers that of all the subjects he could have spoken about in this debate, education is the most important. He began by saying that he intended to clear away a number of misconceptions and in order to make his speech more effective he started by stating one himself. He stated that the Opposition and other critics had said that his Government had stood idly by and had been indifferent to the needs of education. This was not the position taken by the Opposition or by the other critics. Our view is that during the last ten years the Government has provided substantially for education but that it has not treated the matter with the urgency that it needs and that it deserves and demands. In order to make his answer to our criticisms more effective the right honorable gentleman overstated them. He created his own case so as to be able to demolish it more easily. He had practically nothing to say about our case. But in the course of doing this the Prime Minister attempted to show that there is not any urgency about the problem of education and that there is not a crisis in the present situation. One need not overstate the present deficiencies of education to know that that attitude is not consistent with answering quickly enough the needs of education.

The Prime Minister began by saying that it is dangerous to make comparisons between the proportions of the gross national product spent by different countries upon education. He said that whereas in Australia about 90 per cent. of expenditure on education is by governments, in

some other countries the position is very different. All this is true, but it still remains true also that the 1.9 per cent. of the gross national product spent on education in Australia is not any more than half of the amount that is spent by other countries in a comparable position. When one allows for the different significance of the types of expenditure there is still a very great deal in Australia to be concerned about in this respect.

The Prime Minister contended that the proportion of new enrolments had reached the highest point in 1952 and had then commenced to diminish. This is also not strictly true. There has been a variation in the level of enrolments. However, assuming for the sake of argument that the statement is true, the position is that the main case for improvements in education in Australia has not been based upon an increase in the proportion of students each year, but on the existing deficiencies. The various inquiries and reports made by educationists in Australia have been concerned primarily with the large classes, with the insufficient number of teachers, with the insufficiency of buildings and with the large capital requirements, in existing circumstances, without any question of increasing numbers of students. Any one who knows anything of primary education, particularly in this country, knows that the case put forward by the educationists about inadequacies on present standards, leaving aside entirely any increases in numbers of students, has been proved up to the hilt. I suggest that it is not satisfactory or pleasing to those concerned with education in Australia to know that the Prime Minister comes into the Parliament and attempts to make a case, claiming that records have been created and that there is no urgent need to improve the situation.

The Prime Minister has said that the Commonwealth is spending fifteen times as much on universities as it did ten years ago. It is not, however, spending fifteen times as much on secondary schools or on primary schools. Certainly the amount spent on universities has increased, and if the Commonwealth record in respect of primary schools and secondary schools was as good as it is in regard to universities, we would have much less cause to criticize.

**Mr. Reynolds.**—The problem is not solved as to universities, either.