

117. *Mr. McCallum.*] There is in your statement one very strong sentence dealing with clause 13 which I wish to ask you about. You make a very strong animadversion against the Department: "Probably because it is anathema to the departmental officials its very name is to be wiped out." What is the trouble between your Board and the Department? Is the Department treating you badly?—I believe there has been no love lost between the Department and the Board. And then we have great rhetorical facility of expression in Wanganui.

118. Clause 86: do you not think, while Committees have the power of appointing members to the Board, as they still have in the country districts but not in the towns, they should be consulted and not have an intimation made to them? The power of consultation should remain rather than your suggested intimation while the Committees appoint the members of the Board? The Committees are the constituencies of the Board?—Yes, I admit that.

119. Wipe out the constituency, then, by all means; let the Committees go hang; but while the Committees appoint the Board should you not pay them the deference of consultation rather than intimation?—I admit that as a matter of form and courtesy, perhaps dignified procedure, the Committees should be consulted, but there is the other matter of business and expedition that perhaps would help the actual working of the machine.

120. What is your experience of the Appeal Board under the Act in Wanganui?—We just had one case since I went to Wanganui eight and a half years ago.

121. And you won it?—Yes, we won it. With regard to the District Councils, I think it is very desirable indeed that before any case goes to appeal there ought to be some form of consultation to see whether we cannot come to an agreement.

122. *Mr. Hanan.*] As an educationist of long standing, do you not think that from a national point of view the centralization of the inspectorate is desirable, apart altogether from your Board's views?—I may say that I was at the first Conference of Inspectors that took place in Wellington—I should not care to say how long ago. It was under Mr. Haben's regime. I then voted against centralization, and I have done so ever since consistently. There is much to be said on both sides, but the point I make is this: in intensity of interest in one's work it does not seem to me to be possible to make the same amount of sacrifice and to throw one's self so heartily into one's work if you are detached in a measure from your immediate employers. You work for the Board as you work for a person. I am not saying that if one were under the Department one would do the "Government stroke"—not for a moment. I do not believe there is an Inspector in the Dominion who, if taken under the wing of the Department, would not give of his best, but the personal interest seems to be in a measure gone. That is my attitude.

123. If the position would be as you state in New Zealand with regard to centralization, is that in accord with what obtains in the Old Country?—I think it holds entirely in the Old Country. But there is just this to be recollected, that in the Old Country the Boards have Inspectors of their own.

124. Do you think there is any lack of activity on the part of centralized Inspectors?—I do not think so. I think there is a formal element that comes in. I am sure that the inspectorate would be a little more formal in its ways. That is what I fear. I fear uniformity very greatly. It may be the best thing for the Dominion, but the same rule of uniformity seems to me to be a thing that one has to reckon with.

125. Now look at it from the national point of view of educational progress: do you not think that the centralization of the inspectorate will make for that?—I am willing to admit that you could transfer ability from one part of the Dominion to another, and in that way perhaps it would be an advantage from a national point of view. You see, some of us have been born and bred under the parochial system to some extent, and we will not readily part with the associations that we have formed with the Boards—which says a good deal for the Boards.

126. Would you not have more liberty of action and be less subject to parochial influences if you were centralized?—The influence certainly would not be parochial at all if we were centralized.

127. Is it not a fact that under present conditions there are local influences controlling an Inspector?—Yes, but some of these influences work entirely for good.

128. Does it not narrow a man in his views, in his activities?—No, I should say it rather acts in the opposite direction sometimes, and really is an incentive to originality and to educational activity all round. If you get a sympathetic Board you simply give them unconditionally of the best that you have to give.

129. On the other hand, if you get a dogmatic Board?—Then, of course, irreparable damage may be done.

130. How would you bring about a Dominion scheme of grading under the present conditions?—The Boards had the chance and they lost it. We met here in February and a scheme was evolved which was sent along to each of the Boards. I do not think one made a thorough examination of it or looked at it sympathetically. That I take to be the very reason why centralization has been suggested and hastened.

131. Forced upon you?—Yes, practically forced upon us. But in any case our Board will wash their hands of that matter, because we were the first Board to have a promotion scheme in operation. We have had it now, I think, for five or six years, and it has worked on the whole very well.

132. That is a local scheme?—Yes.

133. How about a Dominion scheme of grading?—The chance of the Boards doing it has been lost, and by the Boards themselves.

134. And to-day it is necessary, if we are to have a Dominion scheme of grading, to have the inspectorate centralized?—I must agree to that.