

69. Speaking of the population of some of these districts, do you know what the population of Waimate is?—I think it is somewhere between two and three thousand.

70. I will give you the figures: South Canterbury—Mackenzie, 2,341; Geraldine, 8,157; Waimate, which is to be transferred to Otago, 8,492. You are going to have Waimate transferred to your district, representing 8,492, and you are going to lose Clutha, 7,266. So you see you are going to gain more than you will lose?—Yes, in population, but not in the number of schools nor in the school attendance.

71. Have you gone into that matter?—Yes.

72. You are going to gain 8,492 in population and lose 7,266. Now give us the schools?—I think the number of schools in Clutha is forty-two. The point is the relative numerical strength in Clutha and Waimate, not in population, but in the number of schools and the children in attendance.

73. There are more children in Waimate than there are in Clutha?—No, pardon me, not in Waimate County. We will lose twelve schools by the exchange, and 195 children in average attendance.

74. On what do you base that statement?—On a return made up to the 31st December, obtained from Mr. Valentine, the Secretary of the South Canterbury Board, who gave us the details of every school in the Waimate County.

75. Clutha comes into Southland. How many schools are payable there? Would you not be glad to get rid of it?—Some of it. I do not know whether I am correct in assuming—I think I am—that it is not proposed to transfer the Balclutha District High School to Southland. I reach that conclusion by taking the population given by the Inspector-General in his summary. To reach the figures he has there we have to exclude the Borough of Balclutha.

76. *Mr. Hogben.*] I took the figures from the Registrar-General. They are the population at the last census?—Remember this: the Balclutha School district is partly in the Clutha County and partly in the Bruce County, though the school itself is located within Clutha.

77. *Mr. Hanan.*] Are you not gaining more than you are losing?—No, we are losing more than we are gaining.

78. Take Tapanui: is it nearer Invercargill than Dunedin?—If you want readjustment I am prepared to meet you there. If it is proposed to readjust the boundaries, I say that you ought to abandon the idea of following closely the county boundaries and seek a natural boundary.

79. What do you suggest?—A natural boundary, and a boundary which provides you with the best means of access.

80. Do you not think that Tapanui ought to go into our district?—My suggestion regarding the boundary is this: All that portion of the Otago District including Waipahi, and bounded by a line running in a northerly direction to the Blue Mountains; thence on the east by the Blue Mountains and continuation ranges to the saddle between Edievale and Rae's Junction, including Moa Flat School district; thence by a line running west from the northern part of Moa Flat School district to the eastern boundary of the Southland Education District; thence on the west by the eastern boundary of the Southland Education District to the railway-line at Waipahi. I grant that all the schools that are tapped from the branch line from Waipahi will be better reached from Invercargill than from Dunedin.

81. Tapanui is nearer Invercargill, is it not?—It is, or you would not have had such a demand for the Lawrence-Roxburgh Railway.

82. Tapanui should come into Southland: you agree with that, do you not?—Yes, that you should take in the schools from Waipahi and right away up. Those are twelve schools, with an aggregate average attendance of five hundred.

83. Take the districts that are enlarged. Supposing Clutha comes into our district, a number of schools will require to be rebuilt, will they not, and the same with schools coming into your district?—There is no provision made in this Bill for the rebuilding of those schools as far as money is concerned.

*Mr. Hogben:* Yes, there is. All the money goes with the schools.

*Witness:* There is on paper, but there is not in substance.

84. *Mr. Hanan.*] Where are you going to get your money from to rebuild the schools you are going to take over?—Do exactly the same as we have been doing—ignoring the suggestion of the Education Committee that a certain sum of money should be accumulated, and spending the money as required in rebuilding. We have done that, and we claim that in Otago the condition of the schools will more than favourably compare with the condition of the schools in any other district in New Zealand, including even Southland.

85. With regard to the High School Boards, do you not think it would be better to have high schools under the administration of the Education Board?—No, certainly not. As a representative of the Waitaki High School I would not think of putting that school under the Otago Board of Education.

86. Have you anything to say with regard to relieving teachers?—We say that if you are going to insist upon the relieving teacher receiving the full salary of the position in which he is placed for the time being it will be necessary for a further allowance to be made.

*Mr. Hogben:* We pay that now.

*Witness:* We have been running £500 to the bad on our relieving fund in consequence largely of sickness. In Otago we have adopted this principle: we have a first-class man; we are paying to him a salary of £300 a year. He is available for temporary appointment as a relieving teacher to any school in Otago. He is capable of taking the headmastership of the largest school, and of taking any other position where required. It means that we should have to pay him, if he were sent to a school where the salary was £240, not at the rate of £240 but £300. Directly he went to a school with a