

MINUTES OF CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF INSTITUTIONS
ACCOMMODATING MIGRANT CHILDREN HELD AT THE OFFICE OF THE
UNDER SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND IMMIGRATION - Friday, May 25th
at 10 A.M.,

PRESENT:-

The Under Secretary	(Chairman)
Rev. Father Stinson	(Catholic Migration Association)
Messrs R. Peterkin & A. Robertson	(Church of England)
Mr. J. Healey	(Fairbridge Farm School)
Mr. F. J. Huelin	(Methodist Homes)
Mr. A. L. Young	(Child Welfare Dept)
Mr. F. Mather	(State Immigration Department.)

The Under Secretary advised those present that Mr. John Moss, a member of the Curtiss Committee had arrived in Western Australia and would be visiting various Institutions about September next.

As the Commonwealth Immigration Department had requested information about Institutions in this State, it was decided to convene a meeting so that uniform answers could be given if possible to the various questions asked.

The Schedule of questions was then considered and it was agreed that they should be answered as follows:-

A. FROM OFFICIAL SOURCES.

- 1(a) No regulations are in force. As all the Institutions, with the exception of the Fairbridge Farm School, are approved by the Child Welfare Department of W.A., the requirements of that Department form the basis of standards required.
- (b) Before children are Boarded Out, a recommendation is made by the Society concerned. If Officers of the Child Welfare or the State Immigration Departments are satisfied with the home conditions and consider it to be in the child's interests to be boarded out, approval is granted by the legal guardian, the Under Secretary for Lands and Immigration. Regular visits are made to such homes and reports submitted.
2. (1) Power conferred by the Commonwealth Guardianship of Children Act and the State Child Welfare Act.
 - (a) By Regular Inspections by both Commonwealth and State Immigration Officers, or Inspectors of the Child Welfare Department.
 - (b) Children are placed on employment by Voluntary Organizations, subject to the approval of their legal Guardian.

Although some of the organizations have "After Care" Committees the welfare of the migrant children is closely watched by Departmental Officers.

The earnings of migrant children are subsidised, when necessary, so that after board and residence

has been paid each child has at least £1. per week to cover incidental expenses.

- (2) Private homes are visited quarterly and institutions approximately every six months.

B. FROM INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS CARING FOR THE CHILDREN

- (3)(a) Applications to foster children are submitted to the Voluntary organization for recommendation. Child Welfare Department Inspectors report on suitability of applicants and accommodation available.

(b) Subsidy is paid on the same basis as State Wards.

(c) Yes - adequate to cover the expense involved.

(d) When a child leaves an institution a clothing grant of £25 is made. Wages are subsidized so that each child has at least £1 per week for pocket money etc., after charges for board and residence have been met.

- (4) (a) Yes

(b) Advice from the Principal of the Institutions, and Career Officers of the Education Department. In the case of boys wishing to enter trades the advice of a member of the Arbitration Court Apprenticeship Committee is sometimes sought.

(c) Yes

(d) Varied - Mostly skilled trades.

(e) Reports on prospective employees are obtained before placement. Not less than the award rates are insisted upon.

Where children received board and residence in addition to wages, a proportion of such wage is held in trust until the person concerned attains the age of 21 years.

Regular inspections of the homes and places of employment are made by Departmental Officers.

(f) See 2(b) and 3(d)

(g) 21 years or until the child is self supporting.

(5) According to circumstances as known to Authorities.

(6) All institutions accommodating migrant children are approved by both the Commonwealth and State Governments.

(7) Certain institutions 2½ - 10 years. Others 5-10 years

C. FROM CHILDREN HOMES.

(8) Accommodation at each institution varies, all subject to approval by Commonwealth and State Governments

(9) Individual replies to be submitted by Voluntary Organizations

(10) (a) Mainly by loss of privileges

(b) Yes - according to facilities available. These are being extended.

(c) Yes

(d) Special Holiday Homes are attached to each institution.

- (11) Individual replies to be submitted by Voluntary Organiza-
tions
(12) " " " " " " "

GENERAL BUSINESS.

The Under Secretary informed the meeting that there were other matters which could profitably be discussed, but as soon as some of the persons present had other engagements, it was decided to convene meetings of representatives of institutions accommodating migrant children or State wards at quarterly intervals. The next meeting to be held at the Child Welfare Department on June 15th at 2.15 p.m.,

29th May 1951.
JBF

OFFICER IN CHARGE IMMIGRATION.