



<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz>

ResearchSpace@Auckland

Copyright Statement

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

This thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of this thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from their thesis.

To request permissions please use the Feedback form on our webpage.

<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/feedback>

General copyright and disclaimer

In addition to the above conditions, authors give their consent for the digital copy of their work to be used subject to the conditions specified on the Library Thesis Consent Form.

THE CURRIE COMMISSION AND REPORT ON
EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND
1960-1962

by

DAVID JOHN SCOTT

*A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy*

The University of Auckland
1996

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates and analyses the Report of the Commission on Education in New Zealand, 1962, also known as the 'Currie Report', paying particular attention to the policy process surrounding the written and oral submissions. Views expressed during the submissions and their ideological basis are related to wider power relationships within society. The submissions emanating from outside the Department of Education are revisited as well as the departmental submissions to establish whether there are any grounds to challenge the consensual, liberal interpretations that have been attached to this important New Zealand historical educational document.

The issues raised and avoided in the submissions coalesce around specific themes, which are related to the broader issues of the development of New Zealand educational history.

Attempts to counteract, mute and marginalise dissent and to encourage optimal social control are witnessed in the organizational structure of the commission and in its methods. The interaction and networking of key participants is studied and the important inter-relationship between central bureaucratic interventions and powerful educational pressure group activity points to the continuing operational success of central government processes.

The often competing forces of provincialism and centralism in New Zealand education underlie many of the conflicts surrounding educational change. Religion, race, gender and class are forces that continually interact to create legitimization crises. The governmental attempt to minimise or at least rationalize these socially contested differences in education from 1960-1962 is the subject of this thesis.

An analysis is made of the process by which public dissatisfaction regarding education in the fifties and sixties was mediated and largely marginalised by the educational bureaucracy. This is done by a thorough examination of the interaction of pressure groups, unions, media and governmental agencies during the two year submissions to the Commission on Education 1962.

The distinction between the commission's report and the submissions and interrogations leading up to the report is important, as the primary data extracted from the primary resource material in the submissions, at times, contradicts the departmental view as expressed in the report itself. In this way it is hoped to move beyond the rhetoric that informs previous commentaries and move closer to an interpretation based upon the primary data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to:

Professor Gary McCulloch, University of Sheffield, who was the thesis supervisor for three years and Professor Roger Dale of Auckland University who supervised the final five years of the thesis. The great perception and understanding of both is recognised and appreciated. I am grateful for their time-consuming efforts to read earlier drafts of the thesis. I should also like to mention other academics and educationalists with whom I have shared ideas and who were formative in the generation of my own conceptions about education which developed over many years both in teaching and in the academic study of the policy process. Clem Hill, Roy Shuker, Rollo Arnold, Roy Nash, Sue Middleton, Graeme Kennedy, David Battersby, Eric Archer, Jack Shallcrass, Jim Marshall, Graham Smith.

The author also expresses thanks to those educationalists who gave of their time during three months research in the U.K. in 1991.

Stephen Ball, Rosemary Deem, Jack Demaine, Jenny Ozga, Brian Simon, Charlie Raab, Michael Adler, Stewart Ransom, Mairead Dunne, Barry Troyna and Jill Duffield.

Interviews with Professor Gerald Grace, Professor David McKenzie, Drs. Greg and Howard Lee, Professor Hugh Lauder, and Professor Colin Bailey were all highly informative and appreciated

Also, in respect of the Scottish connections of Sir George Currie, thanks are due to the Currie family of Banffshire, and the Moray District Council, Department of Libraries and Museums (Elgin Library). The staff of 'Currie Hostel', University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia, were also of assistance during the author's visit.

Margaret Niven, Director of Policy and Advisory, Department of Education, 1989, for authorising access to departmental records before the department was disbanded and the archivist Karen Philips at National Archives, who assisted with the fruitless search for closed session records. The Department of Education Regional Office Auckland Records Officer also gave access to files and W. Renwick, ex-Director of Education, who officially un-embargoed the archival records of the commission that were held in the Department of Education.

Keith Pickens information officer NZCER, Wellington, provided a list of theses in New Zealand education.

The officers of the outgoing Department of Education records section, who were most helpful considering the pressures that they were working under at the time. Important media records were obtained from this source.

I thank the staff and librarian of Auckland Public Library for access to the Oral and Written Submissions of the 'Commission on Education', which entailed frequent sorties into the store rooms of the library to extract many heavy volumes of submissions in supermarket trolleys. This library was also the major source of newspapers from the time of the commission.

The NZEI, Wellington head office, who allowed access to their AGM minute books 1954-1962 and 1962-1970, and executive comments. Thanks to Jenny Perrott and David Zwartz.

The staff of the Auckland Institute and Museum Library for access to the Auckland Branch Records of the NZEI, 1956-64, Minute Book 4. M.S. 1304 (17).

Mrs Nancy Campbell for access to her husband's educational documents and records, including his speeches throughout the fifties and sixties to educational groups and organizations, which she kindly donated to me.

Mrs Dorothy Horlor of Nelson gave valuable information on her husband's role as a commissioner, and passed on important information to the author.

Thanks also to those associated with the Commission on Education who graciously gave of their time for interviews. These are listed in the appendices. The informative letters from Professor C. Bailey and Dr. C. Beeby as well as personal interviews were much appreciated and added a personal touch to some of the impersonal archival material.

Thanks to the staff of Weir House, Victoria University, Wellington (Jane Fulcher), who arranged my accommodation on my several trips to Wellington, and the staff of Otago University hostel. The University of Auckland provided a grant which assisted with the travel costs.

Most importantly, thanks are due to my family, my wife Lynda and my son Nathan, (invaluable computer analyst), for empathy and endless encouragement.

ABBREVIATIONS

The written submissions which number up to 409 are referred to in the text and footnotes by a capital S. followed by the number it was given in the original archival material (e.g. S. 263 would refer to the written submission of the Associated Chambers of Commerce). A letter after the number indicates further submissions. A capital letter after the S indicated a rebuttal. Hence SC 18 B would refer to the third rebuttal to the second submission numbered 18.

The oral verbatim submissions were called 'interrogations' in the archive retrieval system and are numbered 1 - 48, according to the day recorded. There were 119 oral submissions. In the text of this thesis they are referred to as Int. or Interros, with their sequential number. For example, an oral presentation at one of the hearings (which were held in the main population centres of New Zealand), would be recorded as Interro. 39 X 1. A full explanation of the coding in relation to the departmental content coding can be found in the National Archives (M, 1. 595/A)

AJHR. Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives.

ATL. Alexander Turnbull Library.

NZPD. New Zealand Parliamentary Debates.

PPTA New Zealand Post Primary Teachers Association and their Journal is abbreviated to P. J.

E1 Report of the Minister (Later Department) of Education, presented to the House of Representatives.

Com. on. Educ. - Commission on Education. 1960-1962. N.Z. more commonly known as 'The Currie Report'.

Interim Report. The Interim Report on Post-Primary Staffing and Recruitment Wellington. July 1960, conducted as part of the Commission on Education. No public who were not teachers or educationalists submitted to this report.

NZEI New Zealand Educational Institute. The Primary teachers professional association.

Education Bulletins, were departmental publications designed for distribution to teachers.

The Education Gazette is the official governmental publication on education matters, issued through the department (now the ministry). It is also primarily for the information of teachers.

The references to academic journals are standard.

<u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u>	<u>Page</u>
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABBREVIATIONS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

Themes and Processes: An Introduction to the Commission on Education 1960 - 1962	1
Revisiting the Report	3
Methodology	10
History and Theory	10
The 'Terms of Reference'	12
Sources of Research	19
The Organizational Rationale of the Thesis	22
Historical Research Perspectives and Methodology in the Study of New Zealand Education	25
Changing Perspectives	27

CHAPTER TWO

Commentary and Criticism of the Report in the Intervening Years	28
---	----

CHAPTER THREE

The Currie Report: Preview of Content and an Initial Appraisal	34
The Status of the Commission	38
Contradictions Within the Report	47
Language and Discourse	48
Departmental Difficulties	49

Internationalism.....	50
The Continuity of the Departmental View	52

CHAPTER FOUR

Currie, Crisis and theory	53
Applying Theoretical Leverage to Our Educational Past.....	53

SECTION TWO: ORIGINS

CHAPTER FIVE

Myths, Currie and Earlier New Zealand Education: Questioning the myths	67
A Short History of Mass Schooling in New Zealand.....	69
Earlier Controversies	74
Questioning the Myths in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century.....	75
Irreconcilable views: The influence of newspapers. The Media Issues of 'Zoning', 'Financing Private School', 'Maoris' and 'Delinquency'	77

CHAPTER SIX

The Second World War to 1964. Social Change and Increasing Disharmony in New Zealand Society. The End of Beeby's Directorship.....	84
Union Discontent	94
The Slow Bureaucracy	97
Summary	98

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Comparative History of Commissions	100
Re-evaluations of Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Commissions on Education	117
Commissions on Education During the 1950's	120

SECTION THREE: PROCESSCHAPTER EIGHT

The Chairman, Members and Supporters.....	128
Sir George Currie	138
The Commissioners	148

CHAPTER NINE

The Secretariat	157
Recommendations to Inaction	165

CHAPTER TEN

The Written Submissions.....	168
Religion in Schools and State Aid to Private Schools Issues: Official and Unofficial Agendas	177
Teacher Shortage.....	180
Delinquency, Corporal Punishment and Reluctant Learners	184
Maori Education.....	191
Education Boards and Local Issues	196
Rural Problems.....	202
Class-based Education, Formal Methods, Elitism and the Curriculum.....	204

Slurred Speech, Alcohol and 'Good' English.....	209
Classroom Promotion on Age or Ability.....	211
Other Complaints.....	214
General Comment.....	215
Summation: The Themes and Relevance of the Written Submissions.....	230
Issues Arising from the Written Submissions to the Commission.....	236

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Oral Interrogations.....	237
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER TWELVE

Constructing the Agenda and Shaping the Language of Consensus.....	266
Working Within the Confines of an Agenda: Ordering the Submissions into Predetermined Topics.....	276

SECTION FOUR: OUTCOMES

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Commentaries on the Currie Report During the Following Decade. The Report, the 1964 Act and Further Deliberations.....	285
---	-----

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Minimising the disquiet: Departmental Processing of Policy Recommendations.....	309
The Prioritizing of the Recommendations.....	323

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Summary and Conclusions 330

The Erosion of Teachers' Working Conditions 345

The Divergence of Elite Policy and Public Interest 349

Final Comment..... 352

REFERENCES 355

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Government Reports 363

Papers and Theses 366

Books..... 386

APPENDICES 401
