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EVOLVING CONCEPTS OF
MORAL EDUCATION:
1970 - 1985

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Abstract

Moral education is a complex and contested area of curriculum in New Zealand schools. This thesis examines the moral education debate from 1970 to 1985 and argues that much was achieved before the 'reforms' of the late 1980s diverted energy and time to other matters.

The first part of the thesis introduces the debate by outlining theoretical considerations, historical influences, and social, economic and political contexts. The main thrust of the thesis explores different aspects of the debate through the reports, courses and conferences of the 1970s. The final section of the thesis examines the significance of developments in health education between 1980 and 1985 to the moral education debate.

Preface and acknowledgements

Roger Openshaw's post graduate paper 'Education and Historical Analysis' kindled an interest in the history of curriculum development. The paper brought together two aspects of my own background: that of undergraduate studies in history as a student at the University of Canterbury during the early 1970s and my role as a teacher and later health education coordinator from 1986 to 1995 at Central Normal School, in Palmerston North. As I worked my way through Roger's paper, I recalled the legal framework for consultation which has been a unique feature of health education since 1985. The starting point for my research was therefore to look at the historical context of consultation and legislation in health education.

Preliminary research indicated that provision for consultation and the need for legislation were products of a moral education debate that had engaged the Department of Education, teachers, parents and the community for many years. The thesis topic was consequently revised to consider health education within the context of moral education.

I could not have completed this thesis without the support and encouragement of many people. I am indebted to my supervisors Associate Professor Roger Openshaw and Emeritus Professor Ivan Snook who have guided me through the process. I am also grateful for advice and encouragement from colleagues at Massey University College of Education, particularly Kerry Bethell. My thanks also to Colin McGeorge, a senior lecturer in the Education Department at the University of Canterbury, for advice and useful material.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

During the 1970s and 1980s there were significant levels of debate on moral education. Consultation took place at local and national levels as moral education received unprecedented attention. Many articles in teachers' publications and in tertiary journals were devoted to the topic and overseas 'experts' were consulted. Resources were developed to inform discussion and support the teaching of moral education, and secondary schools trialled a variety of programmes. Consultation, professional interest, school based innovations, the release of several major reports and extensive media coverage ensured a high profile for moral education.

This thesis explores the changing concepts of moral education from 1970 until 1985 and argues that the negotiation of the Health Education Syllabus was of great significance as it was the culmination of many attempts to make moral education explicit in New Zealand schools. The thesis is largely organised chronologically with different sites selected as a means of exposing the continuing debate.

In a response written in 1978 to *Growing, Sharing, Learning: The Report of the Committee on Health and Social Education*, better known as the Johnson Report,¹ the Bishop of Waiapu Paul Reeves noted that at a personal level values education implied "debate, disagreement, controversy, experimentation, and getting your fingers burnt".² The contentious nature of moral education was evident at a national level in the politics of curriculum development which took place in the period from the late 1960s until 1985 when a revised health education syllabus, *Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*³ was published by the Education Department. During this period the Department of Education, schools, and an array of interest groups engaged in debate about moral education. The competing rights of parents and schools to educate children in the moral domain, the changing roles of schools in moral education and the significance of the secular framework for state education were central to

¹ Department of Education, *Growing, Sharing and Learning: the Report of the Committee on Health and Social Education*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1977. Henceforth referred to as the Johnson Report.

² Paul Reeves, "Teachers in Loco Parents", *Education*, 27: 4, 1978, Department of Education.

³ *Health Education in Primary and Secondary schools*, Department of Education, 1985. Henceforth referred to as the Health Education Syllabus.

this debate.

This thesis is principally an historical study which is based on the interpretation of primary sources and does not contain a literature review; the references to secondary material are incorporated into the text. The secondary material which has informed the thesis is from curriculum history, the history of moral education in New Zealand, and accounts of New Zealand's recent social and political history.

Since the 1970s the term 'moral education' has become less widely used with 'values education' becoming the preferred term. The change in terminology in New Zealand reflects a move away from the use of 'moral education' in the northern hemisphere in the 1970s and 1980s. During this time the terms were often used concurrently as was the case in an education text published in the United Kingdom. With reference to the interest in values education during this period, the introduction to the book notes:

As regards the day to day concerns of teachers and parents, values education, particularly moral and social education, is something to which at least a great deal of lip service is still paid (think of the last school speech day you had to sit through!), though different people seem to mean very different things by these terms.⁴

This quotation illustrates the interchangeability of these terms in the 1970s and 1980s, reflecting confusion surrounding the concepts at this time.

The increasing use of the term 'values education' instead of 'moral education' has not however promoted clarity, because it is very difficult to arrive at a shared meaning. Values permeate every aspect of our lives and as noted by Haydon⁵ it is easier to compile a list of values than it is to describe what kind of thing a value is. Haydon makes it clear that rather than giving a definitive account of values, his intention is to illustrate their variety. According to Haydon, there are moral and non moral values and also different interpretations of moral values. The Johnson Report groups moral, spiritual and values education together:

We affirm that education in the dimension of morality, values and

⁴ P. Tomlinson and M. Quinlan, "Introduction", in *Values Across the Curriculum*, (eds) P. Tomlinson and M. Quinlan: The Falmer Press, 1986.

⁵ G. Haydon, *Teaching about Values, a new approach*, London: New York: Cassells, 1996.

spirituality is essential to the total growth of each person.⁶

For the purposes of this research, the term "moral education" is preferred over "values education". "Moral education" picks out a particular area of values of which relationships and social norms are key elements, whereas "values" can include elements such as aesthetic and scientific values, and process values such as correct spelling, and legible handwriting. Moral education is inclusive of a range of education programmes which have operated in New Zealand schools since early last century. These programmes have included "character training", "family life education", "social education", "relationship education", and "civics".

What is perceived to be acceptable moral behaviour has changed over time. Writing in the 1970s, Codd distinguishes a set of universally valued principles that are set within a "pluralistic tradition", and perceives the major task of moral education as introducing children into this tradition. The pluralist tradition "both acknowledges and is tolerant of differences in moral codes without accepting an extreme moral relativism"⁷. Pluralism is not to be confused with a plural society which is a description of a kind of society where a variety of beliefs and values coexist. Pluralism is an ethical position which demands the widespread acceptance of tolerance and fairness so that different cultures and value systems within a plural society are protected.

The body of this thesis is concerned with the politics of moral education. Politics operated on several levels: politics within the Department of Education; politics between pressure groups and individuals and the Department; interaction between the Department and politicians, and politics at a national level.

The chronological parameters of this thesis were determined by the identification of the factors which were influential in the development of the moral education component of the Health Education Syllabus. Early work on this thesis indicated that two major education reports of the 1970s, *Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum*⁸, which has become known as the Ross Report, and the Johnson Report would be major focus areas and so they proved to be. It soon became apparent however, that although significant, these reports

⁶ Johnson Report, p. 37.

⁷ J. A. Codd, "Moral Development and Moral Education: Kohlberg in Perspective", *Delta* 16 (June 1975), p. 3.

⁸ *Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1973. Henceforth referred to as the Ross Report.

had to be considered as part of a cluster of moral education developments which occurred in the 1970s and included some which can be sourced to the late 1960s. These developments have been interpreted in the context of the interplay between moral education trends and the social and political influences of the period. A further direction for the thesis has been the exploration of the history of moral education in New Zealand. This chapter introduces the major themes of the mid twentieth century moral education debate within their historic, social, economic and political contexts.

A new way of looking at curriculum

A central argument of this thesis is that the ongoing debate about the nature of moral education in New Zealand schools must always be placed within wider contexts: historic, social, political and economic. The following section provides a theoretical justification for the contextualisation of curriculum and a summary of significant political, social and economic trends over a period of twenty five years from the late nineteen sixties through to the mid nineteen eighties.

During the 1960s and particularly the 1970s, curriculum scholars in Britain and North America put forward a new way of looking at curriculum: curriculum as political text. According to the American curriculum scholars Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman⁹, politically focussed curriculum theory has produced the largest body of curriculum research in recent years. Although the field is broad, these theorists claim that it is possible to summarise the main developments. A preeminent strand is that curriculum makes no sense if it is decontextualized. In order to come to a comprehensive understanding of curriculum, the researcher is required to place curriculum within a social, political and economic context.

In New Zealand contemporary debates on curriculum have paralleled the theories and methodologies that emerged out of American and British academic endeavours. The work of New Zealand educational historians such as McCulloch, G. Lee and H. Lee have explored the political, economic and social underpinnings of curriculum. McCulloch argues for the critical analysis of curriculum as a social and political construct, and claims that it is impossible to view curriculum in isolation:

⁹ For example, see W. Pinar, W. Reynolds, P. Slattery, and P. Taubman, *Understanding Curriculum: an introduction to the study of historical and contemporary curriculum discourses*, New York: P. Lang, 1995.

To approach curriculum as though it had arisen overnight, fully formed, without reference to its history, is to inspect only the tip of a huge iceberg.¹⁰

The social, economic and political context of curriculum: 1970 -1985

Looking back from 2000, the nineteen sixties look secure, comfortable and certain. Closer scrutiny indicates some significant developments that were already influencing the lives of New Zealanders and had the potential to profoundly affect social relationships in subsequent years. New Zealand was becoming a very mobile society with most people having access to cars and television; by 1970, ten years after television had been introduced into New Zealand lounges, 83% of New Zealanders had a set. The contraceptive pill had been developed and there was a huge increase in the number of women who had joined the paid work force (in 1951 almost one quarter of the work force were women and by 1971 this proportion had increased to almost half).¹¹ Two pieces of legislation both reflected changing times and were themselves catalysts for further social change; the Domestic Purposes Benefit of 1973 provided the economic means for women to survive as solo parents and the Matrimonial Property Act of 1976 provided for a 50/50 breakdown of family property regardless of financial contribution. Such legislation and the increase in government social expenditure were accompanied by a rise in media concern over solo mothers, divorce rates and changing attitudes to sexuality.

International developments were to have a profound effect on New Zealand; American intervention in Indo China (and the subsequent deployment of New Zealand troops to South Vietnam in 1965) broadened many New Zealanders' internal and external horizons and put New Zealand's relationship with countries throughout the region under scrutiny. Campaigns mounted by The Royal Forest and Bird Society (which spearheaded the 'Save Manapouri Campaign'), Citizens Association for Racial Equality (CARE, 1966), and Halt All Racist Tours (HART, 1969), gained national prominence as increasing numbers of New Zealanders entered into debates about conservation, feminism, homosexuality, abortion and race relations. Dunstall gives particular weighting to the women's liberation movement and Maori cultural resurgence as the

¹⁰ G. McCulloch, *The School Curriculum in New Zealand. History, Theory, Policy and Practice*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1992, p. 9.

¹¹ B. Gustafson, in *The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand*, (2nd ed.) K. Sinclair (ed.) Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1996.

enduring elements of a new wave of protest that brought a new hue to the social fabric from the late 1960s.¹²

The growth of the feminist movement provides an example of the complex nature of the changes taking place in New Zealand during the 1960s and 1970s. Feminist writers Anne Else and Rosilyn Noonan (Noonan later to become president of the primary teachers' union, the New Zealand Educational Institute) wrote:

Feminists didn't come out of nowhere, nor did we emerge simply in reaction to what we suddenly perceived to be the evils of an unchanging status quo. Deep changes were already occurring in areas as apparently unconnected as the export market and family patterns.¹³

By the beginning of the early 1960s, New Zealand's growing economic difficulties were becoming sources of anxiety for New Zealanders as the elements that were to coalesce into an economic recession during the late nineteen sixties began to take shape. Britain's eventual success in being admitted to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1972 confirmed the vulnerability of an agricultural economy that was focussed on producing butter and cheese for export to Britain.

Writing in 1975, McGeorge speculated that two of the reasons for renewed interest in moral education were:

A general concern over the incidence of drug abuse, crimes of violence, alcoholism, venereal disease and illegitimacy.¹⁴

The changes in personal lives and inter-personal relationships that were taking place as a result of these major shifts in national life were to some extent masked by the ruling National party's ability to maintain a sense of stability and control. This was largely due to the political acumen of Keith Holyoake who in 1960 had led his party to victory over the second Labour Government (1957-1960).

¹² G. Dunstall in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, (2nd ed.) G. Rice (ed.), Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 481.

¹³ Anne Else and Rosilyn Noonan, "Unfinished Business", in S. Kedgely and M. Varnham (eds), *Heading nowhere in a navy blue suit*. Wellington: Daphne Brasell Associates, 1993, p. 193.

¹⁴ McGeorge, "Some old wine and some new bottles: religious and moral education in New Zealand", *Journal of Moral Education*, 3:4 (1975), p. 218.

Holyoake's 'steady does it' approach encapsulated a pragmatic and conservative style. The Holyoake administration maintained its dominance from 1960 until the Labour victory in 1972.

The premature death of the charismatic Labour prime minister Norman Kirk in 1974 put enormous pressure on a government that was already beginning to show signs of stress largely due to the serious impact of international economic circumstances such as the first international oil crisis (1973). The 1975 election saw the National Party returned to power under Robert Muldoon and although Labour regained support in terms of votes over the next two elections years, this was not sufficient to assume government. The rise of Social Credit in the late nineteen seventies indicated the extent of the voter disenchantment with both of the major parties.

As both Minister of Finance and Prime Minister from 1975 until 1984, Robert Muldoon endeavoured to maintain a level of prosperity that was consistent with the steady economic growth and consequent comfortable lifestyle that New Zealanders had come to expect since the early nineteen fifties. An increasingly volatile and adverse international economic environment made this a very difficult task. The pressures on the national economy were reflected in families as households tried to come to terms with changes associated with unemployment, and reduced purchasing power.

Muldoon's attempts to regulate and manage the economy were underpinned by assumptions of continuity and uniformity of ideals and social cohesion. However beneath Muldoon's overwhelming presence and ability to dominate, not only the political scene but national life in general, a tide of social, cultural and environmental issues were subdued, but only just. Writing in 1992, political commentator Colin James asserts that the Muldoon era was:

in all but the margin, a denial of the changes that were going on in and around New Zealand.¹⁵

Preoccupation with economic matters and populist appeal (the slogan for the 1975 election campaign had been 'New Zealand the Way You Want It') encouraged an inward looking focus. Foreign policy for example witnessed a

¹⁵ C. James, *New Territory, the Transformation of New Zealand*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Limited, 1992, p. 95.

downgrading of Labour's principled stance and Pacific orientation.

Despite Muldoon's efforts to promote economic prosperity by making minor adjustments to the interventionist policies that had characterised the management of the New Zealand economy for the previous four decades, the economy continued to weaken. Key indicators such as rising unemployment and inflation during the late nineteen seventies pointed to continuing strains and conditions which were exacerbated by the second international oil crisis of 1979.

Muldoon's National Party was narrowly reelected in the 1981 election. After the Speaker was chosen, the Government had a majority of one. Disenchantment with both parties was escalating as Social Credit's credibility improved; the last time either major party had secured 40 per cent of votes cast had been in 1928.

Two issues had considerable influence on the campaign: the first was National's ambitious and ultimately disastrous 'Think Big' economic strategy which was designed to protect New Zealand from the ill winds of international economic crises. The second concerned the upheavals associated with the 1981 Springbok Tour. Images of police squads in full riot gear wielding long batons were profoundly disturbing and at odds with ideas of New Zealand as a contented and prosperous little Pacific back water nation. New Zealand historian Keith Sinclair described protests against the Government's decision to allow the tour to go ahead as:

the worst scenes of disorder and violence since the Anglo-Maori wars of the eighteen-sixties.¹⁶

Leadership issues were confronting both major parties. From 1978 onwards there were signs of increasing unease in National's ranks as parliamentary colleagues and party members became disenchanted with Muldoon's leadership style. Muldoon survived a leadership crisis in 1980, the so called Colonels' coup, while the leader of the Opposition, Labour's Bill Rowling, was trying to survive the stigma of three successive electoral defeats. Under increasing pressure, Rowling relinquished the leadership to David Lange in 1982.

By the middle of 1984 it had become obvious that the exchange rate was over

¹⁶ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, (4th ed.), Auckland: Penguin, 1991, p. 318.

valued. Economic threats were compounded by disunity within the Government. Internal discord was graphically illustrated when National's Marilyn Waring and Mike Minogue supported Richard Prebble's 'New Zealand Nuclear Free Bill' in June 1984. The day after she had supported the introduction of Prebble's bill, Waring resigned from the National caucus, and within a few hours Muldoon announced that a General Election would be held in July four and a half months earlier than required.

During the election campaign, the range of issues which had precipitated the crisis largely narrowed down to one, that of leadership. Muldoon continually reminded the country of his experience versus Labour's inexperience. This was not a difficult platform to sustain; voters had to look no further than Lange and his deputy: both were 41 and neither had been Members of Parliament during Labour's previous term in office. A preoccupation with leadership had the undesirable effect of minimising debate over other important issues such as ANZUS, the economy, health and education.

The 1984 election resulted in a resounding defeat for National. Labour now occupied fifty-six seats in Parliament compared to National's thirty-four, with Social credit holding two. Labour had been unable to sustain a two term government since 1949 but their return to power at the 1987 election seemed to signal that National's monopoly on power was a thing of the past. According to Sinclair:

The consensus that had kept National in power for the last thirty-five years had broken down.¹⁷

Politics at a national level reflected the significant social and economic changes taking place in the period from the early 1970s until the mid 1980s. The changes in ideas about moral education during this period were expressions of both the social and economic changes taking place and the national political responses to these changes.

Politics and curriculum

Curriculum developments at this time of powerful social and economic forces were characterised by reaction rather than clear ideological impetus.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 320.

Throughout the political activity at all levels, the Education Department remained largely unscathed in the ideological sense. Despite the momentous social and economic changes taking place, there was substantial continuity in the Department's role in the developments in moral education which took place from the 1970s until the mid 1980s. The Department's role was characterised by a liberal pragmatism and autonomy.

The huge political and ideological upheaval which began in the late 1980s and is therefore not relevant to this thesis, marked the beginning of new developments in moral education which were characterised by political ideology and separation from national education organisations such as the Department of Education and the teacher unions. The political and social upheavals made enormous differences to society and the education system and led to a changing outlook on moral education. Whereas curriculum had been the focus for debates about moral education in the 1970s and 1980s, the education 'reforms' initiated by the Labour government's endorsement of the Picot Report¹⁸ resulted in sweeping administrative reform which sidelined curriculum. This thesis argues that the pathways for moral education evident in the negotiation and implementation of the Health Education Syllabus, were overwhelmed by the 'reforms' and much that had been gained was lost.

This thesis also argues that the negotiation of the Health Education Syllabus acknowledged the legacy of the moral education developments of the 1960s and 1970s, and the continuity of the moral education debates which had been taking place in New Zealand since the mid nineteenth century¹⁹. The next section of this chapter provides an historical perspective on the moral education debate in New Zealand.

The historic context of moral education

Moral and religious education

Despite being a more precise term than 'values education', 'moral education' means different things to different people. From the early days of New Zealand's

¹⁸ The Taskforce to Review Education Administration (1987 -1988) set up by Prime Minister and Education Minister David Lange produced the *Administering for Excellence*, better known as the Picot Report after its chairperson, Brian Picot.

¹⁹ The first national curriculum for primary schools was set down in the Education Act of 1877.

educational history there have been disputes about the meanings of these words. One of the most significant disputes has occurred between those who distinguished between moral and religious education and those who considered them to be much the same thing.²⁰ This dispute is an important theme in this research and is the reason why many disputes remain unresolved. Sex education, for example, was the major battleground in the development of the Health Education Syllabus. Many people regarded sex education as a moral issue and were unhappy with the biological element of sex education being taught outside of a moral context. If schools countered this objection by putting reproductive knowledge into a moral context, this too was contentious for many of those who advocated that a moral context must involve a Christian perspective. In subsequent years others, for example feminists and Maori, have argued that their moral views must be taken into account in sex education.

The religious-secular debate and moral education

The context of the sex education controversy which raged between some conservative Christians groups and other pressure groups from the early 1970s through to the mid 1980s is part of a wider debate which began at the inception of state schooling in New Zealand. An understanding of the depth and intensity of this long standing religious-secular debate is a prerequisite to understanding the development of sex education in New Zealand.

The legislative process which established New Zealand's state primary school system was prolonged by fierce debate on the place of religion in schools. When the 1877 Education Act was eventually passed it included a 'secular clause' which stated:

The school shall be kept open five days in each week for at least four hours each day, two of which in the forenoon and two of which in the afternoon shall be consecutive, and the teaching shall be entirely of a secular character.²¹

The inclusion of the secular clause was disturbing to many people. Addressing the Citizens' Institute in Wellington in January 1894, Dr W. A. Chapple, responding to the 'laudatory approval' given to 'our present system of National

²⁰ See C. McGeorge in I. Snook and C. McGeorge, *More than Talk, Moral Education in New Zealand*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1978.

²¹ The Education Act, 1877, Section 77.

Education', described the secular nature of New Zealand's state education:

as the cause of much grief to many who have the welfare of New Zealand's youth most dearly at heart. ²²

Over a period of some fifty years there were no less than forty two bills attempting to amend the 1877 Act to enable religious education to take place in state primary schools. All were defeated through the combined influence of organisations such as the National Schools Defence League, the New Zealand Educational Institute and the Roman Catholic Church.²³

For many Christians, moral education was an impossibility in secular schools because in their view:

religion alone offered the necessary models, sanctions, and justification for moral behaviour, and therefore 'godless' schools could not offer genuine moral education or check evil in the rising generation.²⁴

Although intent on developing their own system of religious schooling independent of state control, Roman Catholics maintained a great interest in what was going on in state schools. Large numbers of the Roman Catholic community were still involved in the state system as parents, pupils and teachers.

A measure of religious instruction was brought into schools without changing the 1877 Act. A careful reading of the Act showed that schools were required to provide four hours of secular education per day (two consecutive hours in the morning and two in the afternoon) when in fact most schools were open for five hours. Since school committees had discretion over the use of the school buildings outside hours they could 'close' a school for a period at the beginning or the end of the school day, thereby creating a space in which religious instruction could take place. Based on an opt out rather than an opt in system, parents had the right to withdraw their children from religious instruction in primary schools. After an unsuccessful attempt in Canterbury during the 1880s,

²² Dr D. W. Chapple, "Physical Education in our State Schools", a paper read before the Citizen's Institute, Wellington, January, 1894, Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library. Photocopy supplied by Susan Graham.

²³ See I. Snook, "Moral Education: Past, Present and Future", in *Curriculum Issues in New Zealand*, Ramsay, P., (ed), Wellington: New Zealand Educational Institute, 1980.

²⁴ McGeorge in Snook and McGeorge, p. 8.

the scheme went ahead in Nelson in 1897 and became known as the 'Nelson System'. The system expanded, and by 1949 many who had been involved in the Bible In Schools movement and had carried on the struggle to make religious instruction part of the official syllabus, focussed their energies instead on working within a new organisation, the New Zealand Council for Christian Education, in order to strengthen the Nelson System and prepare teaching material.²⁵

McLaren claims that from the late 1940s, declining enrolments in Sunday Schools increased the tendency of the churches to view schools as an area of potential growth for religion, and the ecumenical movement provided both some degree of consensus on what should be taught and a large inter-denominational group of voluntary instructors.²⁶

In 1954, the Government set up the Special Committee on Moral Delinquency in Children and Adolescents to investigate 'juvenile immorality' in New Zealand. The findings of this committee were later written up as the Mazengarb Report. Groups such as the Associated Churches of Christ assumed a connection between morality and religion, and pressed for a report that acknowledged religion. In response to submissions by church groups, the Committee suggested that New Zealand society lacked spiritual substance:

The consensus of opinion before the Committee is that there is a lack of spiritual values in the community. This not merely because the majority of people do not go to church, but because of the general temper of society and standards of morality. Most people would affirm some sort of belief in God, but are unable to relate it to their daily lives.²⁷

It was claimed that by 1960 the Nelson System was operating in 80 per cent of New Zealand's primary schools.²⁸ Despite this apparent success, The New Zealand Council for Christian Education became increasingly uneasy about the ethical implications of the system and the lack of impact by religious education instructors. McLaren argued that the Council tried to influence the group which produced the 1962 Report of the Commission on Education in New Zealand (the

²⁵ Ibid, p. 9.

²⁶ I. McLaren, *Education in a Small Democracy: New Zealand*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974.

²⁷ Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1954, H - 47:43.

²⁸ McLaren op. cit.

Currie Report)²⁹ to 'recommend a change in the law to permit legally what had long been done illegally.'³⁰ Although the "secular principle" was reaffirmed by the Commission³¹ it was noted that:

The existence of illegal or doubtfully legal practices, where the law is either obscure or runs counter to the general desires of the citizens, will surprise no one, but all parties are at one in wishing to see an end to the existing uncertainties and illegalities. This result could be achieved by court action and rigid enforcements, or by amending the law. The Commission is persuaded that the second is the more desirable course, and recommends therefore, that the law be appropriately amended.³²

The Religious Instruction and Observances in Public Schools Act (1962) that had been prepared by Education Minister W.B. Tennent³³ was a response to the arguments advanced by Christian groups such as the New Zealand Council for Christian Education and sanctioned by the Currie Report. The Act brought the Nelson System into a legal framework with committees given discretion over up to a half each week when they could close the school so that religious instruction could take place. The Act also allowed state primary teachers to participate in religious instruction (provided certain conditions were met) and for children to be contracted out rather than contracted in. This provision, later included in the 1964 Education Act, appeared to be a significant victory for religious groups. A number of organisations (including the primary teachers' union, the New Zealand Educational Institute) and individuals were alarmed by the new legislation which they considered contravened the 1877 Education Act.

Confusion seemed to be setting in as the hard edges of the secular agreement disappeared. A further example of the blurring of the secular agreement was the recognition of Christianity and other religions (together with humanism) as ways of contributing to the personal growth of students. This view was expressed in the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association's 1969 curriculum review

²⁹The Commission on Education was set up in February 1960 under the chairmanship of Sir George Currie, Vice Chancellor of the University of New Zealand, until its dissolution in 1961. The Report of the Commission on Education in New Zealand became known as the Currie Report. Henceforth referred to as such.

³⁰ McLaren, p. 53.

³¹ See p. 685 of the Currie Report.

³² The Currie Report, p. 681.

³³ Tennent was the Minister of Education during the period 1960 - 1963.

publication, *Education In Change*.³⁴

Moral Education in Schools

Regardless of what had been stated in legislation and other official documents, some form of moral education had taken place in schools from the beginning of the education system. There has always been a moral education curriculum and students and teachers have always brought their own values into schools; educators and education are inevitably caught up in values. Moral education has never been locked up within the walls of the classroom, the assembly hall or the principal's office. Moral education goes on throughout the school. The school itself has conveyed moral messages, for example discrimination and violence, that have often been in conflict with explicit moral teaching.

From the 1870s when New Zealand's primary education system was established, it was clear that there were to be substantial differences between the primary and secondary systems. Although differences between the two systems were to become less obvious, early development was based on different educational and administrative goals. The secondary (high) schools were for the elite who would presumably acquire their morality from the classical models upheld in their studies and from their involvement in sports and other activities which emphasised their future leadership roles.

From the outset secondary schools were not bound by the secular clause of the 1877 Education Act. Religious activities such as Bible readings and prayers were an integral part of many high schools. Nevertheless, though not constrained by this legislation, secondary schools by and large adopted the secular climate of primary schools. McGeorge considers both primary and secondary to have shared the same broad principles with regard to moral education. According to McGeorge, secondary schools gradually absorbed the spirit of the 1877 Act and both sectors relied heavily on the moral education immersion model whereby pupils were expected to absorb moral attributes.³⁵

Indirect methods of moral instruction extended into the early part of the century. In a response to an international survey of moral education conducted by Sir

³⁴ *Education in Change: Report of the Curriculum Review Group*, New Zealand Post-Primary Teachers' Association, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1969.

³⁵ See McGeorge in Snook and McGeorge op. cit.

Michael Sadler in 1908, George Hogben, the Inspector General of Schools indicated that the absence of religious instruction in New Zealand schools meant that direct moral instruction was not possible. Hogben was sympathetic to the idea of structured moral lessons with biblical links, but he was sensitive to possible disagreement, and refrained from being too specific about moral education.

Although both primary and secondary schools had similar ways of providing moral education, secondary schools were imbued with the tradition of the English public schools and assigned themselves an important role in character training. Noble values such as bravery and virtue dominated the moral curriculum of secondary schools because pupils in these schools were young men destined to be leaders rather than to be led. The values emphasised in primary schools were more likely to be those of obedience and diligence. McGeorge observed that differences between the primary and secondary school curricula were less obvious by the 1950s, and notes the effect of the influx of the 'common herd' into secondary schools with the introduction of the free place scheme in 1903.³⁶

The model for moral education used in both primary and secondary schools had begun to take shape soon after the passing of the 1877 Education Act. Although many believed that moral education was impossible without religion, others thought that moral education was possible in state schools and got on with it. In the late nineteenth century a number of those who had opposed religious teaching in state schools in the belief that religious teaching should be left to the churches and parents proposed that moral education should take place in schools through subject studies and school organisation.³⁷ McGeorge notes that John Gammell, a member of the New Zealand Educational Institute and Southland school inspector, argued in 1897 that a well run school would produce virtuous children and subjects such as arithmetic and spelling would make them "methodical" and "careful". Gammell was certain that state primary schools, each being a "natural nursery of morality", could provide training 'in all the virtues, in fact, by which life in society is made possible for man' (sic).³⁸

³⁶ See McGeorge, "The Moral Curriculum: 'Forming the Kiwi Character'", in G. McCulloch, *The School Curriculum in New Zealand, History Theory, Policy and Practice*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1992.

³⁷ See McGeorge, in Snook and McGeorge.

³⁸ C. McGeorge, 1992, p. 45.

The idea of schools as moral communities emerges during the first half of the century. Writing in 1980, Shallcrass noted the work of Strachan at Rangiora High School in the 1930s and Wild at Feilding High School in the 1940s as examples of educators who

have recognised the importance of shared authority and the acceptance of responsibility as a necessity to moral growth.³⁹

The possibility of the school as a moral institution was further developed by G.W.Parkyn, then Director of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, in the first (April 1964) Combs - Lopdell Memorial Address. Parkyn's speech commemorated the contributions of Frank Combs (as first editor of the School Publications Branch) and Francis Lopdell (as Chief Inspector of Primary Schools) to education in New Zealand. Parkyn described how the educational and life experiences of the two men had influenced their approaches to education, and identified two "crucial" problems that they had chosen to face as:

how to respect the unity and wholeness of the human organism and personality and to achieve its balanced and harmonious development ; and how to strike such a balance between freedom and authority that pupils may learn through practical experience the democratic art of exercising freedom responsibly.⁴⁰

Although mainly concerned with improving the opportunities for intellectual development, the Currie Commission noted the importance of social aspects of education, and recorded that submissions to the Commission had been supportive of developments in this area. While commending what had gone on in the past, the Commission looked forward to further development:

the Commission does believe that the school environment now affords a majority of children an opportunity of developing themselves as social beings in many ways that were hardly possible before.⁴¹

The Educational Development Conference working party report, *Improving Learning and Teaching* (1974), recommended:

³⁹ J. Shallcrass, "Schooling and Society", in G. Robinson and B. O'Rourke (eds) *Schools on New Zealand Society, a book of readings*, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1980, p. 292.

⁴⁰ G. W. Parkyn, Combs-Lopdell memorial address, 27 April 1964, *Sight of that Immortal Sea*, Wellington: Combs-Lopdell Memorial Committee, 1964, p. 25.

⁴¹ The Currie Report, p. 366.

That schools examine their own rules and regulations and the means by which they are enforced, bearing in mind that these details of social organisation are powerful examples for pupils of the ways in which fundamental moral principles are applied in everyday social life.⁴²

Shallcrass too considered that education

has an increasing responsibility for the moral growth of the young *that* character training suffuses the work of the schools *and that* attitudes appear to be influenced by the spirit and values which animate a school community.⁴³

Mercurio's revelations regarding the use of corporal punishment in a New Zealand high school during 1969 and 1970 is a case in point. Mercurio's research indicated that caning was entrenched in the social system of the school, with

an almost surprising degree of agreement between the perspectives on corporal punishment of boys and masters, an indication that the constraints of the system are sufficiently generally applicable to all its members to engender considerable similarity of views between even so apparently contrasting sets of participants as those at opposite ends of the cane.⁴⁴

During the 1950s and 1960s official publications described the role of schools in New Zealand society in broad terms. An aim articulated by the Department of Education in 1957 is indicative of the very general ways in which moral education was described in official documents. □Concerning children, the New Zealand Department of Education Annual Report states:

We want them also to have a firm appreciation of the values of their society, and a readiness to defend them, and with this, some awareness of the shortcomings of society and a desire to improve it.⁴⁵

The Currie Commission noted that schools reflected the changing needs of society but cautions that:

⁴² *Improving Learning and Teaching : Report of the Working Party on Improving Learning and Teaching*, Wellington: Educational Development Conference, 1974, p. 153.

⁴³ Shallcrass, p. 296 op. cit.

⁴⁴ J. Mercurio, "Participant Perspectives on Corporal Punishment", *Delta*, 12 (June 1973), p. 19.

⁴⁵ Department of Education Annual Report (1957), p. 26.

the needs of society are seldom explicitly stated; instead they are interpreted and expounded by experts, by enthusiasts, by interested parties, by all the myriad of voices of a democratic society....it is sometimes difficult for those responsible for decisions to determine what the general will of society really is.⁴⁶

From the early years of New Zealand's educational history, schools were looking for support in both defining what was being asked of them and also in providing resources. An early instance of collaboration between teachers and the department in working with syllabus matters is noted by Ewing. The demands of the 1904 syllabus⁴⁷ were considered onerous and an editorial in the New Zealand Journal of Education suggested that "considerable additions will have to be made to our lunatic asylums".⁴⁸ The NZEI was asked to facilitate contact between inspectors, teachers, and Hogben. The NZJE reports an agreement that future syllabus revisions would include consultation with inspectors and teachers.⁴⁹

Some education boards sent resources such as 'Good Manners' charts (produced in England and later supplemented by a local version) to schools to assist them in implementing the 1904 syllabus requirement for moral instruction. According to McGeorge⁵⁰ such resources in the main gathered dust on classroom walls.

Numerous groups, including several from Britain offered guidance in the moral education field. The British Moral Education League had been influential in promoting secular moral education in some British school boards during the early 1900s. The influence of the League found its way to New Zealand in the form of publications by one of its leaders F.J.Gould, but there was no reference to the League in the 1904 syllabus. The general reaction to such publications was that direct moral instruction in the form of texts to be memorised were of little value: C.C.Bowen, who as Minister of Justice had introduced the 1877 Education Bill was scathing about the worth of a "namby -pamby textbook of

⁴⁶ The Currie Commission, p. 17-18.

⁴⁷ New Zealand Gazette, 1904, p. 1085.

⁴⁸ Editorial in the New Zealand Journal of Education cited in J. Ewing, *The Development of the New Zealand Primary School Curriculum*, Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1970, p. 110.

⁴⁹ *ibid*, p. 111.

⁵⁰ McGeorge, 1992, p. 46.

moral maxims that would go in one ear and out the other".⁵¹ McGeorge argues that this view, together with the religious issue, probably explains why the British Moral Education League received no official recognition.

The White Cross League, an Anglican organisation founded in England in the late nineteenth century, was dedicated to promoting "purity among men and boys, respect for womanhood, and general moral uplift".⁵² R. H. W. Bligh of the League's Australasian branch was active in Auckland and Christchurch during the early 1900s.

While it is interesting to speculate on Bligh's ability to get his message across to schoolboys, of greater significance is his influence on some of the people and organisations with whom he came into contact. In his address to the annual meeting of 1912, the President of the NZEI, O.D. Flamank, gave his support to the kind of work that Bligh was doing, with the reservation that parents should have the first option of instruction in sex education. Resulting discussion concluded with the following becoming Institute policy:

The Minister be urged to provide two special instructors for the purpose of giving the senior scholars of our primary schools a course in the elements of sexual physiology.⁵³

Sex education was discussed in a number of forums including the Cohen Commission of 1912. The Commission was mainly concerned with educational administration but a variety of other topics were considered. Submissions on sex education mainly endorsed Flamank's view that accurate parental instruction was the best option. If parental efforts were not available, opinion was less united on whether sex education should be school based. McGeorge records that the headmaster of Stratford School noted the NZEI's support for sex education "but not by teachers. The vote was absolutely unanimous on that".⁵⁴ Meanwhile, as has often been the case, some schools got on and did something anyway. In addition to Bligh's work, pupils in some secondary schools (for example Southland Boy's High School) were among those who received some sex education during this period.⁵⁵

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² C. McGeorge, "Sex Education in 1912", *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 12:2 (November, 1977), p. 133.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 136.

⁵⁴ Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives, E -12, 1912 (Sess 2) p. 229, cited in McGeorge, 1977, p. 137.

⁵⁵ Mc George, 1977.

Organisations that espoused specific moral intentions were active in a number of areas and were not discouraged from involvement in schools. The Society for Promoting the Introduction of the Penny Bank into the Schools as Means of Cultivating Practical and Moral Education was established in Dunedin in 1874, and was the catalyst for a variety of school banking schemes. Even in 1950s, school bank books decorated with prudent squirrels were as much a feature of primary schooling as school milk.

From the 1880s, the Temperance Movement viewed schools as sites for moral education, and their views gained some explicit departmental weight with the appointment of George Fowlds as Minister of Education in 1906. During Fowld's time in office the department produced a number of temperance publications, and a series of anti-smoking articles appeared in the School journal. Fowlds was later to become a member of the National School Defence League, the pressure group that was committed to maintaining the secular character of state schools.

McGeorge identifies additional activities from the late nineteenth century that were permitted if not encouraged by authorities. These included military training for boys (a requirement of the Education Act 1877, but prior to the influence of the Boer War given little emphasis) and the promotion of physical training as a means of building character. McGeorge notes that the Johnson Report:

also saw sports as a means of promoting benevolence justice, fair play, and harmony.⁵⁶

If it is accepted that teachers have a role in moral education, as well as ongoing support for those involved in working in schools, there are implications for pre-service education. The necessity of providing for this is noted in the PPTA document produced by the Review Group on the Education and Training of Secondary Teachers in 1974. The Review Group suggests that student-teachers should face some "major philosophical questions" at an early stage in their training. These might include:

Given my values, what degree of tolerance of other people's differing values can I achieve?

⁵⁶ McGeorge, 1992, p. 49.

To what extent is my behaviour consistent with my values?⁵⁷

Moral education in the syllabus

That moral education was taking place in state schools was formally recognised by the Department of Education when moral education became part of the 1904 syllabus. The new syllabus pointed out that moral education was not viewed as a separate subject and no new resources were to be developed. Subject studies, school organisation and the role models provided by teachers would encourage the development of characteristics such as “kindness to animals, humanity, prudence, loyalty and patriotism”.⁵⁸ McGeorge points out that there were effectively,

as many syllabuses as teachers and there was certainly no textbook to stir up charges of atheistic moral teaching or the surreptitious introduction of religious instruction.⁵⁹

The flexible approach to moral education that was evident in syllabus documents had much to do with political expediency. Educators and politicians were generally anxious to avoid controversy, particularly over religious education. McGeorge noted the continuation of the incidental approach to moral instruction in the revisions of the 1904 syllabus. (These revisions included the 1929⁶⁰ syllabus which remained in place until the 1940s.) The 1929 syllabus revision included appendices “written by Inspectors and others who have had a long experience in primary-school work”.⁶¹ The section on character training suggested the following:

The utilitarian aspect of conduct is probably too frequently presented to children. The futility of neglect of work and of dishonest methods of satisfying the teacher should be brought home to the pupils, but this should be effected by the natural process of letting them experience the evil results rather than lecturing them.⁶²

⁵⁷ Report of the NZPPTA's Review Group on the 'Education and Training of Secondary Teachers', 1974, p. 41.

⁵⁸ Cited in McGeorge, 1978, p. 9.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Copies of the revised syllabus were released in 1928 and the new syllabus was gazetted in 1929.

⁶¹ Appendices to the 1929 syllabus, p. 63.

⁶² *ibid.*

From 1904 when the new syllabus was published, teachers were no doubt confused by the expectations that they were to plan for moral instruction but were given no guidance as to what exactly was to be taught or when such teaching was to take place:

It is not intended that these lessons should occupy, any more than they have done in the past, a separate place on the timetable or be considered a separate subject apart from the general instruction or from the life of the school. The experience of the teachers will guide them as to the best time and manner in which to impart these lessons. It is best to enforce the principles of moral conduct by examples taken from history, biography, poetry and fiction, and by anecdote, allegory and fable.⁶³

The appendices to the 1929 syllabus again reminded teachers that character training should not be regarded as a subject:

even though a suggestive prescription is offered in the Syllabus, but rather as the principal function the State calls upon the teacher to perform.⁶⁴

After Hogben's 1904 syllabus, subsequent syllabi made reference to moral education, (often described as character training or civics) but such references had gone by the mid 1940s. McGeorge notes that in the years following the Second World War the moral education component of syllabus revisions and reprints was distributed through subjects such as physical education and social studies.

Included in the aims of the revised primary school social studies 1947 syllabus were elements of moral education. Ewing summarised the aims in terms of citizenship:

to set before children, through stories of men and women of past times, ideals such as brotherhood, truth, justice, tolerance, courage and responsibility to others; and to help every child to know his own community and his own country so that he may understand some of their shortcomings and be ready to make help them still better places to live. ⁶⁵

⁶³ New Zealand Gazette, 1904, p. 1085.

⁶⁴ Appendices to the 1929 syllabus, p. 63.

⁶⁵ Ewing, 1970, p. 27.

The idea of integrating sex education into existing subjects was given some official attention during the 1920s. Several articles appeared in the Education Gazette, perhaps as a result of the activities of the White Cross League. The articles were written by the Director of the Division of School Hygiene from the Department of Health. In the articles it was suggested that sex education in primary schools could be taught through established subjects such as nature study, history, morals and civics.

In September 1945 a revised syllabus on health education was gazetted.⁶⁶ The focus of the 1945 syllabus for primary schools was very similar to that of the 1929 syllabus. Hygiene, body systems and safety were again part of an explicit teaching requirement. A significant development was that children's mental health was mentioned and for the first time sex education just got a mention, if only to be ruled out. The syllabus statement on sex education was to resound through the 1970s and early 1980s. It said:

there is no place in the primary school for group or class instruction in sex education.⁶⁷

This chapter has defined the parameters of this thesis and has argued the significance of the development of the Health Education Syllabus of 1985. It has provided the social, political and historic context for the national debates on moral education which took place from 1970 until 1985.

The next chapter is the first in the series of chapters which analyse what was occurring in the moral education debate through the consideration of a number of sites during the period 1970 - 1985. Chapter Two includes discussion of school initiatives which took place in the 1960s, but the essence of the thesis is contained in the material drawn from the years 1970 - 1985.

⁶⁶ New Zealand Education Gazette, 1945, p. 214-216.

⁶⁷ The revised Health Education Syllabus for Primary Schools, p. 2.

CHAPTER TWO The moral education debate: legislation and initiatives

Legislation and interpretation of legislation were significant components of moral education debate during the 1970s. There was much discussion and lobbying with some groups pressing for legislative change in areas relating to the aspect of moral education that consistently received more attention than any other: sex education, while other groups were determined to preserve the status quo. Conflicting interpretations of legislation regarding the legality of some aspects of existing and proposed sex education programmes contributed to the complexity of the debate.

While pressure groups, politicians and government officials grappled with the legal issues regarding sex education, a growing number of post primary schools proceeded with moral education initiatives. These initiatives illustrate an established tendency for some schools to proceed with moral education endeavours regardless of official validation¹, and provide another example of the moral education networks which were developing during the 1960s and 1970s. The impetus was to develop sex education programmes in secondary schools. The initiatives were school based and developed different characteristics according to the wishes of the school (generally the need for such programmes was identified by the principal with some staff and parental consultation). The Department of Education did not take the lead in these developments; rather the school initiatives put pressure on the Department to develop policy to catch up with what was happening in the secondary sector.

Primary schools continued to show interest in sex and related moral education programmes², but primary schools were inhibited in a way that post primary schools were not. Both primary and secondary schools were subject to the regulations of the 1964 Education Act as it pertained to curriculum content, but primary schools were also bound by the 1945 Health Education syllabus which was explicit about the limits on sex education.³ Some intermediate schools got

¹ See also Chapter One - regarding when sex education was operating in a number of secondary schools in the early years of the twentieth century.

² Some intermediate schools ran sex education programmes outside of school hours during the 1960s and 1970s. 'Situation Note on Family Life Education in Primary and Post Primary Schools', 1965, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Box 1840.

³ "There is no place in the primary school for group or class instruction in sex education", Health Education Syllabus, 1945, p. 2.

around this restriction by offering sex education programmes outside official school hours, a kind of Nelson system approach to sex education. The extent to which post-primary schools could develop sex education programmes was dependent on the views of principals, Boards of Governors and school communities rather than on official limitations. Shuker points out that although secondary schools were in theory controlled by Boards in partnership with the principal (whom they had appointed), in practice the principal and staff had considerable freedom, particularly in matters concerned with curriculum.⁴

Legislation, sex education, contraception

Legislation on contraception was the dominant legislative influence on the development of moral education in schools in the 1960s and 1970s. One outcome of the Hutt Valley incident of 1954 and the subsequent Mazengarb recommendations had been an Amendment to the Police Offences Act (1954) which made it an offence to "instruct or persuade any child under the age of 16 to use any contraceptive."⁵ A number of groups perceived this legislation to be preventing the development of sex education in secondary schools. One such group was the feminist pressure group the National Organisation for Women (NOW).⁶ A NOW newsletter of 1972 claimed that all the barriers to providing young people with a "comprehensive, adequate and up to date sex education".⁷ were related to the 1954 Amendment. NOW claimed that the attitudes and policies of the Education Department towards sex education were inevitably influenced by this legislation. According to NOW, the views of the Department were encapsulated in 1967 by the then Minister of Education A.E. Kinsella, when he said, 'I make it clear that sex instruction is not permitted in primary schools during normal school hours and I do not intend to extend or liberalise the system.'⁸ The caveat "during normal school hours" appears to be an acknowledgement that some schools were proceeding with sex education programmes outside school hours.

⁴ R. Shuker, *History in the New Zealand Secondary School: A Study in Aspects of Curriculum Development*, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis in Education, Wellington: Victoria University, 1978.

⁵ The Amendment to the Police Offences Act (1954) was one of the legislative responses to the Mazengarb Report. See also Chapter One.

⁶ The National Organisation for Women (NOW) established in 1972 was one of a number of women's liberation and feminist groups set up during the early 1970s. See Chapter One.

⁷ NOW newsletter, Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1972, p. 89-359.

⁸ *ibid.*

Another barrier identified by NOW was

The attitudes of teachers, especially senior staff and headmasters, who hide behind Departmental policy statements and the Police Offences Act at the moment, and who would still fail to do anything significant about sex education even if the law was altered.⁹

NOW argued that conservative politicians, Department of Education officials and teachers could use the 1954 legislation as a compelling reason for not developing sex education programmes. This may well have been the case. Certainly the ambiguity concerning 'instruct' suggested discretion when working with young people. NOW concluded that a necessary first step in working towards the provision of sex education for young people was to remove the Amendment to the Police Offences Act, 1954.

A number of attempts were made to challenge the Amendment by adopting a liberal interpretation. In 1972 for example, Jacqueline Allan conducted a seminar on contraception for secondary school pupils. She described her actions as 'instructing in the use of ' and 'not instructing to use'.¹⁰ Percy Allen, the Minister of Police at the time, did not prosecute. Snook emphasises the significance of the Amendment to both sides of the sex education argument:

Whatever the correct legal interpretation (it was never tested in the courts) the clause became another symbol. Its retention became crucial to those wanting to protect the young from the "sexologists"; its removal became a rallying cry for those concerned to liberate adolescents from sexual ignorance.¹¹

Sex education and legislation on contraception and abortion in the 1970s

The arguments around the 1954 legislation continued into the controversies of the mid 1970s when abortion emerged as a political issue. In June 1975 the Labour Government with Bill Rowling as Prime Minister established a Royal Commission on Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion. The Commission's Report was published in March 1977. Two recommendations in the Report are

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Notes on the history of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act (1977), supplied by Family Planning Association, Central Region.

¹¹ I. Snook, "Moral Education: Past, Present and Future", in *Curriculum Issues in New Zealand*, Ramsay, P., (ed), Wellington: New Zealand Educational Institute, 1980, p. 212.

relevant to this discussion: those on human development and relationship programmes, including sex education, and changes to the Amendment to the Police Offences Act (1954), including the repeal of Section 2 (1) (b), the section that dealt with contraception instruction. The Report suggested that teachers and other designated people should be permitted to give contraceptive information within school programmes.

The Report provided a basis for legislation, and the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act was introduced into Parliament for consideration in August 1977. During the parliamentary debate Les Gandar (National's Minister of Education) fielded criticism over some of the curriculum proposals, and after considerable argument Clauses 55 and 56 sanctioning sex education were dropped from the Bill. However Section 2 (1) (b) of the Police Offences Amendment Act (1954) was repealed and replaced by Section 3 of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act, which allowed parents, doctors, family planners, chemists and other designated people including teachers (as part of sex education programmes in schools) to provide contraceptive information for under sixteens. Instruction was restricted to these people, and in schools approval from the principal and the governing body was mandatory.

In January 1978, The Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act became law. The wording of Section 3 was open to conflicting interpretation and created special difficulties for educators, booksellers, librarians and the media. Groups such as the teacher unions (NZPPTA and NZEI) and the Family Planning Association began struggling with the application of the Act to sex education. In a letter to the Minister, the General Secretary of the PPTA, B.A. Webster, registered his belief that the Act failed "to provide clearly for contraceptive guidance in schools"¹², and stated that his Association was convinced that:

Principals must be made aware of the inadvisability of allowing any adult, whether Guidance Counsellor, Senior Mistress, Senior Master, District Nurse or local Doctor, to become involved in instruction on a one-to-one basis within the confines of a school.¹³

Such concern stemmed from fears of legal entanglements (and presumably consequent drain on the Association's coffers) for its members rather than

¹² Letter from Webster to Gandar, 18 April, 1978, NZFPA: records and correspondence, Alexander Turnbull Library, 91-123-2/3. (Restricted file).

¹³ *ibid.*

disapproval in principle. In the same letter Webster also wrote:

Clearly the present provisions of Section 3 of the Act in question do not meet the real needs of those children who are clearly at risk, and the Association asks that appropriate amending legislation be enacted in the coming session of parliament.¹⁴

In an effort to provide guidance for schools having to deal with the Contraception Sterilisation and Abortion Act, a circular signed by the Minister of Education, L.W.Gandar, was released in April 1978. The circular provided guidelines on the Act as it applied to schools, and was prepared by the Department of Education in consultation with a number of education groups including representatives from PPTA, NZEI, the Education Boards Association, Catholic Education Office, and the Association of Heads of Independent Secondary Schools. The guidelines attempted to address the concerns of such groups as the PPTA and the political sensitivities surrounding this issue.

The Auckland Family Planning Association however, considered the circular to be a restrictive interpretation of the Act and asked for a legal opinion. The lawyer consulted by the Auckland FPA criticised the interpretations advanced by the circular and indeed, questioned the legality of the document:

No pronouncement on the interpretation of the Act is of the slightest official authority that does not emanate from a judge or a magistrate. For a government department to put forward a seemingly official interpretation of a statute is open to the gravest constitutional objection. And this criticism would be just as valid even if they had not bungled it.¹⁵

Prosecutions under Section 3 of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act¹⁶ did not eventuate as common sense by the police seemed to prevail. For schools, however, Section 3 of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act and the subsequent guidelines hindered rather than advanced the development of human development and relationships education. As Snook commented:

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Legal comment on the Minister of Education's 17 April, 1978 circular distributed to primary and secondary schools, NZFPA: records and correspondence. Alexander Turnbull Library, 91-123-2/3 (Restricted file).

¹⁶ Between 1981 and 1987 there were fifteen complaints and only two prosecutions. The two prosecutions were for selling contraceptives. Notes on the history of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act (1977) supplied by Family Planning Association, Central Region.

It seems that this kind of piece-meal legislation is not helpful. A resolution of the particular issue of contraception instruction must await a resolution of the sex education controversy itself.¹⁷

The impact of Section 3 of the Act upon sex education was noted as late as 1986 when V. J. Catherwood (a departmental officer) wrote notes on behalf of the Director General of Education for the Minister of Education Russell Marshall, in December 1986:

The provisions under Clause 3 of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act (1977) have not been well understood by schools. In many instances Section (3) is cited as a reason why schools do not offer any sex education teaching that covers information about contraception yet clearly with prior board approval for the programme and for those involved as teachers, schools are presently entitled to inform about contraception for students under sixteen years.¹⁸

Moral education initiatives in schools in the 1950s - 1970s

While the legal issues were debated from the mid 1950s and on into the late 1970s, sex education was happening in some schools, regardless of the ambiguous nature of the legislation. This section provides examples of the way moral education was being incorporated into schools.

In 1958, only a few years after the 'Hutt Valley incident' and the subsequent 'moral panic'¹⁹, a sex education project began in Christchurch. The project began on a modest scale when Mrs Sybil Woods and Mrs Pauline Phillips of the Church of England Mothers' Union gave talks followed by discussion on "boy/girl relationships and preparation for marriage to fourth formers and sixth form leavers of four girls' schools"²⁰ in Christchurch.

In 1959, the Headmistress of Avonside Girls' High School invited Mrs Zeff from the Family Planning Association and the Marriage Guidance Council to conduct two mother and daughter evenings with films and discussions. These sessions

¹⁷ Snook, 1980, p. 215.

¹⁸ ABEP W4262, 50/2, Pt 2 Box 3708.

¹⁹ A sociological model applied to a variety of social upheavals. See for example, J. Soler, " 'Drifting Towards Moral Chaos': The 1954 Mazengarb Report - a moral panic over Juvenile Immorality", M. Phil. Thesis, Palmerston North: Massey University, 1988.

²⁰ Report of Sex Education Project in Christchurch, New Zealand 1958-1965, Alexander Turnbull Library, 97-035-05/3 (Restricted file).

proved very popular so the school asked Mrs Zeff to extend her work in the school by returning that same year to visit all Fourth Form classes to answer student questions. "The questions were anonymous, written, placed in a sealed box and opened only in the classroom by Mrs Zeff in front of the class."²¹

With the aim of expanding the programme, Mrs Woods of the Mothers' Union and Mrs Holmes of the Parents' Centre were asked to join Mrs Zeff. The report records that this group of women "visited the school twice during 1960 and talked with 22 classes of third and fourth forms."²²

The same pattern of activity went on in 1961 with the addition of a voluntary after school session, which according to the report was very popular: "the school hall was packed".²³ The number of schools involved in the programme continued to grow, and from 1961 the 'Teachers' Training College' was included in the programme.

An important aspect of the group's work was the development of a wide reference group with a stake in what was going on in schools. School pupils, their teachers and parents were at the first level of involvement. At a second level were the people who were "consulted" by the women who were running the programme. The report mentions:

many consultations with teachers, doctors (both general practitioners and gynaecologists), psychiatrists, university lecturers, parents, clergy, welfare workers, and in fact anyone who would listen to them.²⁴

Another group to be included in discussions about the project was the Canterbury branch of the Department of Education. In 1962 a new development had occurred with the involvement of the Superintendent of Education for the Department of Education (a 'Mr Archer') 'who was informed and fully approved of all they were trying to do.'²⁵ Hewitson, Archer's successor, was also sympathetic.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *ibid.*

A further example of the kinds of programmes operating in schools during the 1960s comes from Penrose High School in Auckland. Penrose offered a 'Family Life Education' programme called 'Design For Living' to all its students in 1965. A memorandum sent to parents provides an example of the content of such courses, and also gives a feeling for the way in which the course was introduced to the school's community. The content of the course was derived from:

some of the few schools in New Zealand conducting similar courses as well as from schools in Tasmania, the United Kingdom and the USA. It was proposed that the course would take the place of one period of Physical Education each week for seven weeks and would include the following topics: 'Emotional Growth; The Family; Problems in Marriage; The Opposite Sex; Social Relationships; Preparation for Marriage; Social Customs and Falling in Love.'²⁶

Care was taken to establish some sort of official approval for the programme and to show that the course would be taught by people who were well qualified and also sympathetic to the developmental needs of the students:

the draft of the syllabus has been examined by the Controlling Authority, by officers of the Department of Education, Officers of the Department of Health, a local magistrate, and Dr Whiteside-Taylor, a Fulbright Scholar in Human Relationships who recently visited Auckland.

Two staff members, who are trained Marriage Guidance Counsellors, will be responsible for the course.

It is obvious that some topics could be discussed profitably with mature students only. A careful selection will be made to suit the development, interests and age of each group.²⁷

The Principal's memorandum does not include any reference to community consultation, but parents "who would like to learn more about this course"²⁸ were invited to a meeting at the school.

Some questions posed by students from Tawa College at the end of an eight session course run by Marriage Guidance in 1965 are indicative of the breadth of programmes run in some secondary schools. The questions were asked anonymously and answered by a panel. The following questions were among

²⁶ *Preparation For The World Beyond The School Gates*, a memorandum for parents prepared by the principal of Penrose High School, 2 February, 1965, ABEP, W4262, 34/2/17, Box 1840.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *ibid.*

those asked:

What do parents have against parties with alcohol? How closely do you think parents should supervise their adolescents' nighttime activities?

How much does sex govern marital relationships?

What is the obligation, moral or otherwise of the father of an illegitimate baby to its mother?

Parents and teenagers all want to go out, who is going to stay at home to look after the young children?²⁹

Sex education programmes were taught by teachers as well as by members of outside agencies. Writing to J.A.Ross in 1973, Professor Philip Smithells, then Director of the School of Physical Education at Otago University, explained that the School had been "giving our students a course into which sex education comes" for the last 24 years.³⁰

Smithells went on to tell Ross about the experiences of some of his students:

The feedback we have from old students (and our contact with them is considerable) is that as one would expect, the situation varies very much but in the last 10 years in secondary schools at least there is no doubt that far more of them are asked to help with this field than in the previous 15. To take a strong example - one married girl student who went straight out from here to a well known academic school in New Zealand was asked by the Principal to take a sex education and family life education course throughout the school and to tell the girls anything they wished to know including knowledge about contraception and that was 8 years ago.³¹

The Department of Education and moral education initiatives in schools

Sex education programmes in schools were gaining momentum as increasing numbers of students and their parents became involved in the programmes. In a new development, some primary schools allowed Health Department officers to conduct sex education lessons in intermediate schools.³² This instruction was at

²⁹ 'Flexible Syllabus used at Tawa with sixth form pupils', ABEP W4262, 17/3/64 - 10/1/64 Social Education.

³⁰ Letter to Ross from Smithells, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

³¹ *ibid.*

³² 'Situation Note on Family Life Education in Primary and Post Primary Schools', 1965, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17, Box 1840.

the request of schools and side stepped the 1945 syllabus restriction by offering instruction as an extra curricular activity. The move contributed to growing pressure on the Department of Education to develop policy on sex education as regional offices of the Department began to react to school initiatives and the Department of Health maintained pressure on the Department of Education at head office level.³³

As the number of health and relationship courses offered in schools by various providers grew, so too did official interest. In some cases Department of Education representatives from provincial areas became involved (as they did in the Christchurch project and at Penrose High School) but there was also increasing interest shown by Head Office in Wellington. During the 1960s, a number of secondary schools were offering regular courses in Family Life Education.³⁴ Some were taught by school staff members and others were taken by members of organisations such as Marriage Guidance. This was the case at Tawa High School in 1965. The Department of Education was aware of these courses, and as such programmes became more widespread and therefore more conspicuous, the Department moved to produce some policy guidelines³⁵:

In view of the steady pressure to extend family life education there is now a real need for the Department to state the guidelines for principals to follow in establishing and controlling such programmes. It is recommended that a statement on this matter be prepared as soon as possible.³⁶

A paper called 'Situation Note on Family Life Education in Primary and Post Primary Schools' was prepared by an Education Department officer in 1965. The paper explores some of the issues raised by school initiatives and partnerships with external groups during this decade. The bulk of the paper provides the basis of a Departmental response, and pays particular attention to

³³ See Chapter 3 for further discussion of the pressure being placed on the Department of Education by the Department of Health.

³⁴ "Family Life Education in Schools" began in Australia. It was an educational programme to introduce sex education in the context of family life education into Australian schools. It was started in 1966 by the Headmistresses' Association of the Independent Girls' Schools, in conjunction with specially selected and trained medical practitioners. It was planned 'to meet the known needs of changing society, as demonstrated in the statistical figures relating to ex-nuptial conceptions'. A report from Australia by Clair Webster and Grace Browne. ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

³⁵ A draft 'Circular to Secondary School Principals - Family Life Guidance' outlines the position of the Department of Education and seeks information from secondary schools that are already involved in Family Life Education or contemplating involvement. ABEP W4262, 43/2/17 Box 1840.

³⁶ A paper prepared by D. H. Ross, Officer for Special Education, 2 December, 1965, ABEP W4262, 43/2/17, Box 1840.

syllabus provisions.

“Likely” future developments are summarised as follows:

- (a) Syllabus revision in form 1-5 Social Studies permitting more attention to civics.
- (b) Syllabus revision in Primary Health to admit some family life elements.
- (c) A consequent look at Secondary Health Syllabus and possible revision.
- (d) Development of voluntary family life counselling and pressure for this to be included in official Secondary Curriculum.
- (e) Possible extension of existing guidance counselling service in the schools.³⁷

By the 1970s, the Education Department in Wellington was getting a range of feedback from the community about the sex education developments in schools. Negative and positive comments were received at ‘head office’; both served to keep the spotlight on school initiatives. Examples from each category serve to illustrate what the Department was hearing.

The first example is an extract from a letter written in 1970 to the Director General (Renwick) by F. E. Grinlinton, a clinical psychologist who had accepted a position in Australia:

prior to my departure from New Zealand to take up my current appointment I was particularly impressed to see that ‘Social Education’ was to become part of the curriculum at Freyberg High School in Palmerston North. I presumed that this would be a pilot scheme and that it foreshadowed a significant departure from the more traditional subjects in secondary school curricula.³⁸

The second example is from a letter written to the Minister of Education (Merv Wellington) in October 1979. The letter was written by a retired secondary teacher who had received a copy of a ‘Syllabus on Human Reproduction’ which was being used at Awatapu College in Palmerston North in the late 1970s. The writer asked the minister to note:

³⁷ Situation Note on Family Life Education in primary and Post Primary Schools, 1965, ABEP, W4262, 34/2/17 Box 1840.

³⁸ Letter to Renwick from Grinlinton, October, 1970, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

that certain topics may be discussedthese include: virginity, masturbation, contraception family planning, VD, homosexuality, prostitution, abortion and family roles.There is no indication as to what moral line is to be taken, For example, Is masturbation legitimate? Is homosexuality right or wrong?

The writer concludes that in his experience:

discussions of such controversial subjects in schools opens the door to moral corruption.³⁹

The Minister of Education's reply is of interest because it summarises the framework within which secondary schools could work and while sympathising with the writer's viewpoint, acknowledges that the school has done all that it was required to do:

I agree with you that the moral line taken is an important aspect of such a course. I believe that in the case of Awatapu College, the board's approval and the provision made for parental involvement ensure that parents have the opportunity to assure themselves that the moral line is acceptable to them. Although the papers you enclosed do not state so, I believe that there is a provision for parents to withdraw their children and for an alternative course to be available.⁴⁰

The Awatapu programme and earlier examples from other New Zealand secondary schools convey the kind of school based initiatives which were possible during the 1960s and 1970s.⁴¹ One factor conducive to the development of these kinds of school programmes was that the Health, Social Studies and Science syllabi of the period were less prescriptive than formerly, and provided broad guidelines which schools used to shape their own courses.

School initiatives during the 1960s and 1970s are important in their own right because they offered schools and communities the opportunity to work together to develop moral education programmes. These programmes were designed to meet the needs of students, and reports from this time suggest that many students were able to explore issues which were part of broadly based

³⁹ Letter from Amies to Wellington, 12/9/79, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

⁴⁰ Letter from to Wellington to Amies, 12/9/79, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

⁴¹ Jean Herbison, Chair of the Review of Educational Developments 1974-1978, noted: We know that many schools are building programmes in Human Development and Relationships, Social Education and Liberal Studies in consultation with parents, students and staff, developments which we welcome. 'Progress on recommendations of the Educational Development Conference', Department of Education, 1978.

programmes.

The initiatives of this period are also important because they contributed a school based dimension to the growing moral education network. As the number of school programmes grew, the Department of Education, at a local level especially, often proved supportive of these initiatives.

Politicians and moral education

Merv Wellington's⁴² response to the complaint concerning the sex education programmes run at Awatapu College in the late 1970s illustrates the careful path trod by politicians, and emphasised that parents had the ultimate say as to whether their child would participate in such programmes.

The legislation relating to moral education is also indicative of a very careful approach, for legislation on 'moral' topics seems to have been characteristically ambiguous. Perhaps this was inevitable for politicians would have been aware that they were operating in highly contentious areas. The ever present possibility of electoral punishment⁴³ meant it was in their interests to support legislation which was sufficiently ambiguous to ensure that no substantial sections of voters were alienated.

Another reason for lack of clarity in legislation relating to sex education is indicated by the reported comments of Russell Marshall, Labour's Minister of Education (1984 to 1987). His remarks are in relation to the pressure to change the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act (1977) at the onset of the perceived AIDS crisis during the mid 1980s. According to the Bay of Plenty Times, Russell Marshall acknowledged that at the time of passing the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act he (as opposition spokesperson on Education) and Gandar as minister had settled for a less than perfect arrangement. The Bay Of Plenty Times quotes Marshall as saying that when the Act was passed in 1977, both he and Gandar:

had the same view of the unwisdom of what the House was

⁴² In 1990 legislation lifted the restrictions on selling or giving a contraceptive, or providing contraceptive advice to people under sixteen. One dissenting voice was that of the member of parliament for Papakura, Merv Wellington, who claimed that if the bill went through there would be no prohibition on anyone giving sex education whether qualified or not.

⁴³ For examples of threats of electoral repercussions, see Chapter 7.

alternative to still more draconian prohibitions which were being put up.⁴⁴

This chapter has outlined the legislative context for moral education initiatives from the mid 1950s until the late 1970s. In common with legislation which regulated religious education in state schools, the legislation relating to sex education did not have a uniform influence. While it placed restrictions on sex education, some schools developed and successfully implemented sex education programmes. These initiatives reflected a growing belief that moral education, and in particular sex education, was very much the business of schools and that the Department of Education should take a substantial role in any new developments.

The next chapter considers the Department of Education and its role in the moral education debate.

⁴⁴ Undated extract from The Bay of Plenty Times found in FPA file, Correspondence and Clippings 91-123-3/1, Alexander Turnbull Library (Restricted file).

CHAPTER THREE The moral education debate:

The Department of Education

This section considers the organisational setting in which the curriculum developed during the 1970s. The structure, purposes and politics of the Education Department are examined. Influences and ideas which were current in education circles and which had relevance to curriculum development are also discussed.

An understanding of the organisational setting provides the institutional context in which moral education developed during this decade, and also establishes the institutional background from which the Health Education syllabus was to grow during the 1980s.

Moral education developments in the 1970s were led by the Department of Education. Through a complex network of groups and personal relationships there was a continual exchange of ideas about moral education between government and non government groups, with the Department assuming a leadership role in a wide range of moral education initiatives. Involvement extended beyond the official initiatives (for example, the Ross and Johnson Reports) which led into the Health Education syllabus. Groups and individuals who participated in moral education initiatives outside the Department's official sphere were often involved in Departmental projects. The combined effect of this interaction between interested parties contributed to over a decade of national interest in moral education.

Department of Education Structure and Curriculum Development

The Director of Primary Education, B. M. Pinder, gave a broad outline of the Education Department's structure and functions in 1964. He described the organisation as a "state Department under the control of the Minister of Education and responsible to the Government for the administration of the Education Act of 1964 and regulations made thereunder".¹ According to Pinder, the Department had

¹ B. Pinder, "The Department of Education", in Mitchell F. W. (ed), *New Zealand Education Today*, Wellington: A. H. and A. W. Reed, 1968, p. 17.

a threefold responsibility: to determine educational policy; to see that standards are maintained throughout the country on an equitable basis; and to ensure that the community gets full value for the money the people, as taxpayers, contribute towards education.²

The Department was a centrally funded and hierarchical administrative structure with a Director-General of Education as its permanent head. The Director General was responsible to the Minister of Education. There were two Assistant Director Generals, four Assistant Secretaries, and twelve directors. The Department was organised into a Head Office in Wellington and three Regional Offices.

Pinder was anxious to dispel the idea of the Department as being an inflexible bureaucratic structure:

When one refers to the "the Department" it is easy to think of some highly centralised monolithic structure dictating to all and sundry. In fact, however, correlative with the word "Department" are such words as "consultation", "discussion", "negotiation", "agreement". The Department rarely acts in major matters without the closest consultation with the local authorities or with the teachers' professional bodies.³

Shuker⁴ asserts that the relationship between the Minister of Education and the Director General was of prime importance if policy implementation was to proceed. He notes the consequence in one instance when this relationship broke down:

the often strained relationship between the Minister and Director General⁵ during the early period of the third Labour Government (1972-1975), and the court action subsequently brought by the latter against the Minister.⁶

The Curriculum Development Unit (CDU)⁷ and the Inspectorate were the

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴ R. Shuker, *History in the New Zealand Secondary School: A Study in Aspects of Curriculum Development*, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis in Education, Wellington: Victoria University, 1978.

⁵ A. N. V. Dobbs was the Director General of Education from 1971 until 1975.

⁶ Shuker, p. 258.

⁷ The Curriculum Development Unit was renamed the Curriculum Development Division in June 1977. To assist consistency the term CDU is used in this thesis.

Departmental groups primarily concerned with curriculum. The centralised body responsible for curriculum development, the CDU, had been set up in 1963 on the recommendation of the 1962 Commission on Education (The Currie Report). The second group with major responsibility for curriculum were the primary and secondary inspectors and the advisors and specialists who were associated with the various subject areas.

Writing in 1974, the education historian I.A. McLaren presented a descriptive account of the C.D.U.'s role:

The Curriculum Development Unit has, in its few years of existence, gone some distance towards developing a national curriculum as distinct from a set of syllabuses. Each subject area is being developed on the basis of a common pattern involving the statement of precise objectives in terms of intended changes in pupils' cognitive and effective behaviour, the drafting of learning materials designed to achieve these objectives, the trial and appraisal of these materials in schools and then the revision in light of the trials prior to publication and dissemination. This is the process which, in its various forms, is in New Zealand as elsewhere, termed, 'curriculum development'.⁸

According to an overseas academic, New Zealand had established a viable and well resourced system for curriculum innovation by 1970. Writing in 1980, John Nisbet⁹ claimed that in common with England and Scotland, New Zealand had an organisational structure that was based on "a "centre-periphery" model which assumed innovation must start at the centre, and should "diffuse" to the periphery-that is, the teachers, in the schools."¹⁰

The "centre-periphery" model was developed by Schon and is discussed by Shuker in his work on the development of history as a subject in New Zealand secondary schools.¹¹ Shuker argues that Schon's "centre-periphery" model was "the approach to national curriculum development normally employed in New

⁸ I. A. McLaren, *Education in a Small Democracy: New Zealand*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974, p. 112.

⁹ John Nesbit was Professor of Education at the University of Aberdeen. In 1974 he had visited New Zealand to take part in the Educational Development Conference and returned in 1978 as a post doctoral Fellow at the University of Waikato. He had been involved in curriculum development in Scotland since the early 1960s.

¹⁰ J. Nesbit, "Curriculum Process: International Perspectives", in Ramsay P. (ed) *Curriculum Issues In New Zealand*, Wellington, New Zealand Educational Institute, 1980, p. 53.

¹¹ Shuker.

Zealand secondary schools."¹² The model rests on three suppositions:

(1) the innovation exists, fully realised in its essentials, prior to its diffusion.

(2) Diffusion is the movement of an innovation from a centre out to its ultimate users.

(3) Directed diffusion is a centrally managed process of dissemination, training, and the provision of resources and incentives.¹³

In 1976, J. A. Ross, formerly Superintendent of Curriculum Development and chairman of the committee on Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum (and major author of the subsequent report), acknowledged Schon's work¹⁴. Commenting on the activities of the National Social Studies Committee and the National English Syllabus Committee, Ross claimed that both committees had worked to overcome problems associated with the flow of ideas from the centre to the periphery.

Kahn used the "centre-periphery" model in 1990 when he discussed curriculum innovation in New Zealand, and refers to Ramsay's theory of state control in curriculum.¹⁵ With reference to state control, Kahn says:

This focus of control, exemplified by such features as the periodic government-initiated curriculum reviews, and the institutional structures for syllabi reviews, emphasises the centre-periphery agenda for educational change in New Zealand.¹⁶

Writing in 1978, Shuker stated that the "New Zealand education system is a national one, characterised by a high degree of centralised state control' and that there is 'an authoritarian aspect to the system."¹⁷ However, Shuker goes on to suggest that actual practice indicates 'essentially a consensus decision -

¹² *ibid*, p. 248.

¹³ D. Schon, *Beyond the Stable State*, New York: Penguin, 1973, p. 77.

¹⁴ See J. A. Ross, "Development of The Secondary School Curriculum", in J. A. Codd & G. L. Hermansson, (eds) *Directions in Secondary Education*, Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976.

¹⁵ P. Ramsay, "The Dynamics of Curriculum Change", in *Adventures in Curriculum*, Minogue W. J. D. (ed.) Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1983.

¹⁶ G. I. A. R. Khan, "The Politics of Curriculum Innovation", in *Towards Successful Schooling*, (ed.) H. Lauder & C. Wylie, London: The Falmer Press, 1990, p. 123.

¹⁷ Shuker, p. 254.

making process'.¹⁸ The centralised nature of the system was mitigated by the involvement of many other groups.

Links between the Department of Education and other groups

In his description of the Department in 1968, Pinder acknowledged the Department's "rather complicated system of educational administration"¹⁹ but also stressed that:

the Department has national, administrative and professional responsibilities which it carries out in the closest association with a remarkably wide variety of national and local groups and organisations. In many respects the Department itself is part of the local administration of education. In the same way, the local authorities and the teachers' organisations are part of the national problem-solving, decision-making machinery.²⁰

A number of groups worked with the Department on curriculum development. Those on whom the successful implementation of curriculum ultimately depended, primary and secondary teachers, were represented by their respective professional organisations, the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) and the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA). With greater emphasis on school based curriculum development,²¹ teachers and the Department were getting into the habit of working together.

During the periods when Hogben²² as Inspector General and later Beeby²³ as Director General headed the Education Department, teacher organisations were regularly involved in curriculum matters. From the early 1960s links between the NZEI and the Department of Education were formalised through the efforts of Campbell, then Director of Education, and W. R. Familton, then President of the New Zealand Educational Institute. A meeting of the CDU in May of 1967 provides an example of connections between the Unit and the NZEI. Under the

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ Pinder, p. 26.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ J. J. Lee (a former Director of Primary Education) refers to this development in a speech in 1974. An extract from this speech appears in *Schools and New Zealand Society - a book of readings* (eds) G. Robinson & B. O'Rourke, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1980.

²² Hogben was Inspector General of Schools from 1899 to 1915. In 1915 he was appointed New Zealand's first Director of Education and retired in the same year.

²³ Beeby was Director of Education from 1940 to 1960.

heading 'NZEI Curriculum Officer', the minutes note:

The policy is to keep him informed of work undertaken by the Unit and help him as far as possible in the dissemination of it. The Department is most anxious to co operate and hopes that the liaison with the NZEI will strengthen through co operation with the NZEI curriculum officer.²⁴

This quotation illustrates two aspects of the Department's methodology; while keen to enlist the views and support of teacher organisations, the Department was nevertheless in control.

Sometimes the Department sought the views of school representatives (usually principals). In 1964 the Regional Superintendent of the Auckland branch of the Department of Education invited the Principal of Avondale Primary School and a representative from Lynfield College to be part of a sub committee which was set up to discuss the Family Life section of a school health instruction programme used in Ohio, USA. Other members of the committee were the the Regional Superintendent and representatives from the Department of Health, the Maori Inspectorate, and members of the Auckland Inspectorate (primary and secondary).

The sub committee recommended that secondary schools should follow a Family Life or Social Living education programme which covered sex education from Form 1 to Form 4. Agreement on the name of the course could not be reached, but agreement that 'sex education' should be avoided was unanimous.

The representative from Lynfield College continued the discussion back at school, and the report from the sub committee records some staff reactions to the prospect of teaching sex education. A married male biology teacher expressed "alarm and abhorrence" while a second male biology teacher felt comfortable about teaching the biological aspects of sex education, but was not prepared to teach "the ethical and philosophical aspects".²⁵

A further example of the links between the centre and the periphery is provided in a letter from D. J. Francis, a Curriculum Officer with the CDU. Writing to O. Orange at Glenfield College in November 1972: "on instruction from W. L.

²⁴ ABEP W4262, 34/12/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

²⁵ ABEP W4262, Social Education 17/3/64 - 10/1/64.

Renwick", Francis encloses:

a folder of papers on aspects of Moral Education. A group within the Curriculum Development Unit is studying this whole matter and have found these papers useful as background.²⁶

The significance of this letter was twofold: firstly Renwick, later to become Director General, shows his interest in moral education and also his willingness to share Departmental resources. Secondly, the letter demonstrates the intricacy of the educational network for here was the central agency liaising with one teacher in one school.

The identity, interests and connections of the recipient of the letter (Orange) are also of interest because they illustrate the complexity of the connections within the education network during the 1970s. Orange had written to Renwick from Auckland University where he was on secondment from his position as Head of the Humanities Department at Glenfield College. In his letter to Renwick (subsequently forwarded to Francis), Orange provides us with another link, this time to teacher education:

I have been fortunate to have the opportunity this year, while seconded to the University staff, to read fairly extensively in the related areas of social/moral education and the sociology of the secondary school. Perhaps, because in consequence, I have been asked by Murray Print²⁷ to give a paper at this January's (1973) refresher course on Guidance Counselling. My title is: "Social Education: What can Curriculum do for Guidance?"²⁸

Other important educational groups involved in the process of curriculum development included the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER), Universities and Teachers' Colleges. The PPTA was enthusiastic about opportunities for various groups to work together: in 1969 the PPTA Curriculum Review made only one formal recommendation, and this was in the area of "research and experimentation."²⁹ The group proposed:

²⁶ Letter from Francis to Orange, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

²⁷ Murray Print was at this time principal of Freyberg High School in Palmerston North, a school noted for its efforts in social education. He was later principal of Penrose High School in Auckland and member of the 'Committee on Health and Social Education'. (This committee produced the 'Johnson Report').

²⁸ Letter from Orange to Renwick, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

²⁹ In April 1978 the Minister of Education, Les Gandar, convened a two day conference on educational research, the first for over forty years.

That, as the future education in New Zealand will depend directly on the quality of experimentation, every encouragement should be given to research conducted jointly by the schools and such professional bodies as the Curriculum Development Unit, The Council for Educational Research, the universities and teachers' colleges.³⁰

During the 1970s teachers were involved in subject committees within their organisations in addition to representation on various Departmental curriculum committees and numerous conferences on curriculum which took place during this decade. Writing in 1980, Peter Brice, then Director (Development) in the Department of Education, noted that the general sequence of curriculum development during the 1970s began with an identified need for change and included consultation with teachers, academics, Department of Education curriculum officers, inspectors, advisors and "lay people"³¹. Consultation usually took the form of a conference convened by the Department at which recommendations considered to warrant further review were established. A second conference often furthered the process by developing guidelines for a review which was undertaken by a national revision committee. Representatives of the groups present at the conferences also made up the membership of the committee. Brice emphasised the importance of the teacher organisations in curriculum change:

no new syllabus has been introduced unless it had the support of the teachers' organisations, which are involved in the whole development process from the outset.³²

Politics

Recognising the delicate position of an educational administrator, the Director General of Education, W.L. Renwick³³, noted some of the tensions encountered by the educational bureaucracy in a speech called "Some of the issues behind the issues in New Zealand Education". His remarks were addressed to an

³⁰ NZPPTA Curriculum Review Group, *Education in Change: Report of the Curriculum Review Group*, NZPPTA, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1969, p. 80.

³¹ P. Brice, "Curriculum Process: The New Zealand Instance", in *Curriculum Issues in New Zealand*, (ed.) P. Ramsay, Wellington: NZEI, 1980, p. 69.

³² *ibid*, p. 70.

³³ Renwick was Director General of Education from 1975 to 1988.

educational administration conference held in 1976. Renwick refers to some factors constraining administrators, and observed that in "agreeing to write on "Issues" in New Zealand education I am aware, ... that I am offering hostages to fortune."³⁴ He went on to tell his audience that:

Education in New Zealand is a highly political activity, and matters which can be identified as a concern are quickly dressed up as an issue, something vexatious to 'us' that 'they' should be relieving or resolving.³⁵

Among the current issues identified by Renwick were the following: "Should sex education be included in the primary school curricula?"; "What are the merits of integration compared with further state aid as an answer to the problems of private schools?" and "Will the new Government³⁶ continue the policies of the previous administration?" This last "issue" suggests that the recent change of government was causing some trepidation inside and outside the Education Department. Renwick's expression of bureaucratic unease is understandable but in hindsight, the political impact of the switch from Labour to National in the mid 1970s had a minimal effect upon educational policies. From the perspective of today, there is a remarkable sense of continuity regardless of which party was in power.

The "highly political" nature of education in New Zealand in the 1970s was not "political" in the party-political sense of the 1980s. The "highly political" nature of education politics in the 1970s was about "the things that have people in a sweat".³⁷ These were issues which frightened politicians and bureaucrats because of their potential for electoral problems. The Minister of Education was directly affected, and it was likely that he in turn exerted pressure upon his Department. An early example of the kinds of responses which were produced in the area of sex education during the 1970s is from a letter written to Gandar, Minister of Education in the Muldoon government (1975-1978). The writer had recently seen a film produced by the FPA. In comparison with his successor, Merv Wellington, Gandar was a liberal and sympathetic to moral education initiatives. The two ministers would no doubt have had different reactions to the

³⁴ W. L. Renwick, "Some of the issues behind the issues in New Zealand education", in *Schools and New Zealand Society - a book of readings* (eds) G. Robinson & B. O'Rourke, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1980, p. 303.

³⁵ *ibid*, p. 303

³⁶ In December 1975 the Labour Government was replaced by a National Government with Robert Muldoon as Prime Minister.

³⁷ Renwick, in Robinson and O'Rourke, p. 303.

following:

I write as a Father of a family of five and an insider, myself being one of the country's fourth generation. I wish to note my disgust at the recent filming of (indecipherable) Gordon's grubby efforts on family planning. I object to also paying tax in support of such an effort. From a man in your position Sir, I require guidance which will enhance human nature, not degrade it.³⁸

The popular press was also strident in its criticism of Gandar. When Gandar lost the Rangitikei seat to Social Credit's Bruce Beetham in 1978, the tabloid weekly 'Truth' used the opportunity of his departure to London as New Zealand's High Commissioner to censure his term as Education Minister.

According to 'Truth', Gandar:

was a disaster as a Minister of Education, in fact he would share line honours with Deputy Prime Minister Brian Talboys and Labour's Phil Amos as among the worst ever in this office.³⁹

'Truth' also suggested that the reason Gandar was 'dumped' was because of his support for sex education:

He crossed swords with Beetham when he was accused of being "all for sex education." Social Credit's leader made the claim at a conference of the League in Wellington late last year. The whole question of human development and relationship courses in schools was one that required the widest public discussion Mr Gandar said. Alas for Les, "the widest public discussion" are four words that are returning to haunt him, Parents up and down the land have been bamboozled on this one; notably by the notorious Johnson Report. He should be back from London in time to catch the aftermath!⁴⁰

Issues relating to the growing size and complexity of the Department had been voiced since the late 1960s⁴¹, and a new element was beginning to emerge; the idea of an inflexible bureaucratic persona. Writing in 1990, Kahn uses Weberian theory to indicate the challenges to bureaucratic structures which had emerged prior to the educational 'reforms' of the late 1980s. According to Weber:

³⁸ Letter to Gandar, August 1977, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 3.

³⁹ *Truth*, 5 January 1979, p. 4.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ See F. W. Mitchell (ed.) *New Zealand Education Today*, Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1968.

The professional bureaucrat is chained to his activity in his entire economic and ideological existence. In the great majority of cases he is only a small cog in a ceaselessly moving mechanism which prescribes to him an essentially fixed route of marchThe individual bureaucrat is, after all, forged to the common interest of all the functionaries in the perpetuation of the apparatus and the persistence of its rationally organised domination.⁴²

Truth gave an extreme version of the anti Department sentiments which were developing momentum towards the end of the decade. One of the reasons *Truth* believed Gandar to be a 'disaster' as Education Minister was because of his relationship with his Department:

His willingness to ape the nonsense of the theorist careerists in the head office of the Department of Education saw him tarred with their brush.⁴³

There were also tensions within the Education Department. This is illustrated by an exchange of letters between H.J.Dowling, District Senior Inspector in Hawke's Bay, and B. M. Pinder, Director of Primary Education.

In 1972 Dowling had prepared a report for the General Manager of the Hawke's Bay Education Board with the title: 'Principles in Establishing a Course In Family Life Education to Cater For All Levels In The Primary School', and had sent a copy to Pinder "for your information".⁴⁴ (It would appear from a comment in Pinder's letter that someone in the Department had found out about the report and had asked for a copy to be sent to Pinder).

The opening paragraph of Pinder's letter to Dowling is warm and congratulatory, but the rest of the letter contains some very firm messages. Pinder and his advisors⁴⁵ were upset by some of the bold statements about sex education in the report. The office copy has a very telling line alongside 'Goal 9' in the Goals and Objectives Section. Goal 9 is recorded below:

To promote a wholesome understanding of sexual behaviour; to

⁴² M. Weber, cited in Khan, p. 139.

⁴³ *Truth*, 5 January 1979, p. 4.

⁴⁴ ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

⁴⁵ Although signed by Pinder, the letter to Dowling was written by someone else and forwarded to Pinder as hand written comments (in defence of Dowling) initialled by Pinder appear on the copy kept in the Departmental file.

develop a respect for a mature and responsible sexual life within marriage; and to discuss the personal and social difficulties that are inherent in the use of sex for exploitation or solely for self-gratification without regard for other parties or social consequences.⁴⁶

Pinder was concerned because Dowling has written a report for the General Manager of an Education Board⁴⁷ :

As you know, the whole question of sex education - whether that name is used or whether "Family Life Education" is used - is a highly delicate and sensitive one. I cannot understand the circumstances in which a District Senior Inspector would appropriately be reporting on a matter which is a high policy one and in the hands of the Cabinet, to the General Manager of an Education Board.⁴⁸

Pinder is at some pains to point out that the Department of Education (and certainly not a District Senior Inspector in Hawkes Bay) is not in the business of offering policy advice:

You will appreciate that you have set out a series of goals and objectives which I would personally regard as being very sound indeed but which fall completely outside the present policy as approved by Government. The Department's whole attitude on this issue is that it does not lay down policy or speculate about the nature of any new policy as this is a matter to be determined by Government itself.⁴⁹

Pinder was upholding an official position which was not always reflected in the action of Department officers in the regions.

Pinder's sensitivity would have been heightened by the steady pressure being exerted on the Department of Education by the Department of Health on the subject of Family Life Education in primary schools. In a letter dated December 1971, Kennedy, the Director General of Health, wrote thus to Dobbs, the Director General of Education:

⁴⁶ ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

⁴⁷ Primary Schools were controlled by their district Education Board while most secondary schools were administered by their own Board of Governors.

⁴⁸ Letter from Pinder to Dowling, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

on October 12 I wrote to you expressing my concern about your Department's current ruling on Family Life Education in primary schools. As you have now been informed by the Family Planning seminar held at National Women's Hospital Auckland, last month that there should be an appraisal of family life education in schools, training colleges and universities, I wonder whether you are in a position yet to let me have your views on the matter.⁵⁰

The Curriculum Development Unit

In May 1972 a seminar on Educational Planning was held at Victoria University. Among the papers presented was "Who Makes the Curriculum?"⁵¹ The presenter was A. H. McNaughton, Professor of Education at the University of Auckland. J. A. Ross, then Superintendent of the CDU, was one of those given the opportunity to respond to the paper.

McNaughton suggested that there were a number of significant ways in which curriculum development was moving. He argued that the "formal education agencies in New Zealand are attempting to assume a new kind of initiative in curriculum construction" ⁵², and that curriculum was increasingly understood as a:

planned exercise which is responsive to principles and basic philosophies rather than to the capriciousness of perceptions of what society wants, or to the questionable authority of traditional forms of examinations, or to the short-term effects of the charisma of individual Directors General.⁵³

Theoretical influences from overseas (Piaget and Skinner) and a "background of social problems such as increasing crime, violence and pollution and ...increasing numbers of young people staying at school until they are 16 or 17"⁵⁴ were also noted as contributing to changes in curriculum development.

The influence of overseas "experts" and the leadership of the Department in organising such visits shows an increasing commitment to educational theory.

⁵⁰ Letter from Kennedy to Dobbs, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

⁵¹ A. H. McNaughton, "Who Makes the Curriculum", *Educational Planning in New Zealand*, (ed.) W. L. Renwick, Wellington: Government Printer, 1974.

⁵² *ibid*, p. 141.

⁵³ *ibid*, p. 141.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, p. 142.

Later in the decade the Department hosted Professor Bronfenbrenner⁵⁵. A note from Renwick urged attendance at a planned meeting:

due to Bronfenbrenner's international standing, I do hope you will be able to attend. If for any reason there are circumstances which might make it difficult for you to attend, would you please clear them with me well in advance of the meeting. It would be embarrassing to us if we treated our guest to a thin meeting.⁵⁶

McNaughton commented on the rapid growth of the CDU and emphasised its importance as "the locus of current curriculum change in schools".⁵⁷ He was hopeful that CDU, together with the teacher organisations and other groups that worked with it, would be able to influence curriculum development and as a result "may effect social change in a way that has not before been achieved by any branch of the formal education system".⁵⁸

In his response to McNaughton's paper, J. A. Ross confirms the view that the curriculum will increasingly be used as a means for social change. Ross cites the changing roles of secondary schools, as they had been articulated at numerous conferences, as an example of the possibilities for social impact:

the roles of secondary schools are changing, and schools are much concerned with developing their students' knowledge and understanding and with helping individual students to develop values and attitudes -attitudes to work, to others and to life, - besides developing their skills and habits.⁵⁹

Correspondence and minutes from CDU meetings during the 1970s provide an insider view of what was going on in curriculum development at this time.

McNaughton viewed the CDU as significant as the prime location for curriculum change and of the key interaction between the unit and teachers. A sampling from CDU documents gives weight to this viewpoint.

⁵⁵ Urie Bronfenbrenner was in New Zealand as the guest of the Early Childhood Convention, and he had achieved international standing for his work in child development. He suggested a way of developmental contexts that help to clarify how they are related to each other and how they influence each other.

⁵⁶ Note from Renwick, August, 1979, ABEP W4262, 27/1/115 Pt 1.

⁵⁷ McNaughton, 1974, p. 141.

⁵⁸ *ibid*, p. 145.

⁵⁹ J. A. Ross, Response to A. McNaughton, "Who Makes the Curriculum?", in W. L. Renwick and L. J. Ingham (eds), *Educational Planning in New Zealand*, Government Printer, Wellington, 1974, p. 153.

There were close links between the CDU and teachers; according to one curriculum officer,

We are all former teachers who now work with teachers from state and private schools, primary and secondary, in planning and carrying out changes in curriculum, and in producing materials to help the work in the classroom.⁶⁰

Perhaps this close identification with teachers accounted for a somewhat protective element in the CDU. When, for instance, the Director General raised the matter of an Advisory Council on Curriculum Planning that would provide a forum for evaluating curriculum reform and “identifying problem areas”⁶¹, Ross mentioned the possible difficulties which might occur if, instead of a national body, there were a series of local ones composed of advisors, inspectors, teachers, parents and lay people:

These would be at the interface between institutional educational and the public, and this may have the disadvantage of exposing teachers to uninformed, unrestrained or crankish criticism.⁶²

McNaughton had indicated that a more theoretical, less pragmatic view of curriculum was emerging. It would seem that because of tensions within the CDU, it took some time for a broad view of curriculum to develop. The CDU’s attempts to grapple with internal dilemmas during the 1970s were to advantage those who worked on the Health Education Syllabus.

By 1981, when the Health Education project team was formed, the CDU had already wrestled with a number of curriculum development issues. A significant issue for the 1970s was the attempt to establish a collaborative basis for curriculum development.

Curriculum Officers were appointed for their specialist knowledge and were keen to advance their own projects. In a climate of diminishing resources from the middle of the 1970s, there are indications that there was some unease about

⁶⁰ Letter from G. R. McDonald, Curriculum Officer, 19 March, 1975 providing information for schools that were inviting students to participate in a CDU sponsored panel discussion, “Young People’s View of the Curriculum”. ABEP W4262, Box 1713, CDU meetings.

⁶¹ Minutes, CDU meeting, 17 March, 1972, ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 1 Box 1824, 72-74.

⁶² *ibid.*

the effect of a host of projects driven by various Curriculum Officers. In a Discussion Paper written for a CDU meeting in 1976, Peter Macpherson (later a member of the Committee on Health and Social Education) and Ken Millar noted that Curriculum Officers had traditionally:

approached their jobs with expectations of independent action in their own area. (Is it true that the expression "Doing your thing" originated in the Unit?).⁶³

This approach was coming under pressure as the number of Curriculum Officers increased while funding decreased:

The problem of more people jockeying for a share of a smaller slice of the cake needs no elaboration.⁶⁴

The problem of shrinking resources was a recurrent theme during the latter part of the 1970s. In 1979 the *New Zealand Herald*⁶⁵ reported that in an address to the NZEI, Mr Thompson, the Minister of State had warned teachers in all areas to prepare for cuts in expenditure.

Reporting on the same address, *The Christchurch Star* told its readers:

Mr Thompson is the latest cabinet minister to warn that the Government is running the pruning shears over departmental spending this year.⁶⁶

Macpherson and Millar argued that the "current ad hoc approach to curriculum development"⁶⁷ needed reviewing and suggested some new approaches which would involve setting up "development teams", each headed by a Curriculum Officer. This would mean "giving up the total, tunnel vision of our subject orientated approach", and it would also mean "significant support for a current focus project."⁶⁸

Macpherson and Millar noted the varied influences from outside the unit and expressed the view that at the time of writing the CDU could only respond to:

⁶³ ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713, CDU meetings.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *New Zealand Herald* (NZH), August 1979.

⁶⁶ *Christchurch Star*, August 1979.

⁶⁷ ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713, CDU meetings.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

outside decision making, and have no machinery to influence, structure, and co-ordinate the work of the unit from within. Not only is this a growing frustration for us, but it is also a common criticism from teachers. ... it seems surprising if a group such as this cannot look beyond narrow specialism and make, and work to, decisions that influence wider curriculum development.⁶⁹

The minutes from a series of CDU meetings held early in the following year (1977) indicate that the CDU was getting involved in a wider, less subject bound view of curriculum. There is also evidence of an increasingly proactive stance. Meeting notes distributed prior to the 14 March meeting of the CDU give notice of a discussion on "the "Personal and Social Development" paper"⁷⁰. The rationale for the discussion was summarised in the last section of the minutes:

The planning groups are of the opinion that a more deliberate effort to discuss the process of curriculum initiation should be made, and that PSD be used as an illustration.⁷¹

The minutes from the meeting held on 14 March,⁷² summarise the discussion which took place on the "Paper on Personal and Social Education".⁷³ The record of the meeting signals a significant shift in the way the CDU perceived its role:

RWP⁷⁴ saw (the paper on Personal and Social Development) as a prototype of procedures for innovation, incorporating what was being done in the past, and what may be done in the future. A wide-ranging discussion followed, raising issues of how to effect change, community, political and A/O attitudes, and the role of the CDU in influencing change in these. RGA suggested that a development group should, to be effective, become a pressure group, with all its inherent dangers. RO'C⁷⁵ reported the need of support to particular schools, and need for

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ CDU Minutes, 11 March. ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713.

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² *ibid.*, 14 March.

⁷³ 'The Committee on Health and Social Education' was sitting during this time. It began sitting on 18 March 1977 and presented its report to Gandar on 24 August 1977.

⁷⁴ Those present at the meeting were identified by their initials.

⁷⁵ Curriculum Officers defined their roles around a number of interests. In the late 1970s, Rory O'Connor had three "responsibilities": Curriculum evaluation; Values and moral education; and Parenthood education and broadcasting. His "duties" included Health and Social Education Referral Group, The Johnson Report, Religious Education, Values and moral education inservice kit, and with a colleague (Peter MacPherson) 'setting up pattern of inservice work' (ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713, CDU meetings).

some coordination of efforts of a variety of groups. ("Back up or shut up".)Any statement of objectives of group is a unit task-not of one person.⁷⁶

At the same meeting JNC asked why the Department had not supported schools. The following is the response:

Unless there is an official syllabus, Department can't support issues in face of political pressure.Often first we hear is ministerial complaints.⁷⁷

RO'C raised the issue of funding:

DG and others have said that this area has high priority -Will there be funds? If not must stop saying this is a high priority.⁷⁸

The contribution of another participant in the discussion signal the extent to which some schools were already involved in moral education:

DJF-Climate of Schools. What sort of questions can principal ask self and staff that will help them understand the social, physical and moral climate of school? Gave example of school which has a set of such questions.⁷⁹

A further meeting to discuss curriculum initiation was held on 1 April 1977. Some guidelines and information about the format of the meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. "Personal and Social Development" was again used as an example. The purposes of the meeting were identified as being:

1. To identify the various forces interacting in curriculum development.
2. To identify the role of curriculum specialists in the initiation process.⁸⁰

Suggested outcomes included "assisting the current development of PSD and sensitising ourselves to initiatives that have yet to gain momentum".⁸¹

The minutes of the 1 April meeting record attempts to clarify "Personal and

⁷⁶ CDU Minutes, 14 March, ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713, CDU meetings.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ CDU Minutes, 1 April. ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713, CDU meetings.

⁸¹ *ibid.*

Social Development". PSD was concerned with:

- health education
- social education
- moral education
- religious education⁸²

Mention was made of the Ross Report⁸³, and comment was made that 'the drug issue' was the tip of the iceberg which was motivating the whole issue of "Personal and Social Development".

After the clarification exercise, there was discussion on the model of curriculum initiation, which had been introduced to the meeting by R O'C. The model and the discussion around the model set the framework for the development of the moral education component of the Health Education Syllabus (1985).

The model and discussion were recorded as follows:

- (a) crucial to tap public opinion, particularly that from outside pressure groups. Likewise consumers (ie, students') views.
- (b) values of 'filters', 'interpreters' and 'organisers' impinge: 'distancing' by initiators seen as essential.
- (c) do initiators have a role in approaching politicians?
- (d) who are the decision maker(s)? (To some the answer seemed self evident.): who are the best people to lobby? Influencing key people seen as essential, regrettable though this may be.
- (e) teacher organisations also seen as influential groups to be lobbied.
- (f) Education OCD's (Officers, Curriculum Development) should be prepared to identify trends and write position papers, eg. the formation of CUD development groups.⁸⁴

According to the minutes, there was general agreement on the validity of RO'Cs model. PM remarked remarked that "RO'C had given a very realistic account of

⁸² *ibid.*

⁸³ see Chapter Five: The moral education debate: The Ross Report.

⁸⁴ CDU Minutes, 1 April. ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713, CDU meetings.

the modus operandi - unfortunate though it may be in order to be effective"⁸⁵ .

Another speaker (DJF) using social studies as an example of curriculum initiation:

described how decisions had been made in accordance with the ROC model, particularly with regard to values. 'Filtering' systems, 'gate-keepers' (eg. professors of history) were real forces to contend with, and they had to be lobbied to the point where they in turn influenced others.⁸⁶

Two speakers identified tactics which are visible in the process by which the Health Education Syllabus developed:

DJF commented that 'the CDU does have a role in early initiatives - in some cases the initiative may be to do nothing'.

JC commented that 'in many projects, time is a factor. If you wait, eventually views tend to shift, and initiative can be taken'.⁸⁷

The Department of Education was at the centre of developments in the area of moral education; it provided the structural and intellectual glue for the many strands of moral education development. This chapter has examined Departmental organisation relevant to the thesis, highlighted the political tensions associated with moral education and explored changing ideas about curriculum development. Subsequent chapters in this thesis examine the role of the Department during the 1970s and early 1980s in the following areas: courses and conferences; reports; resources for moral education and the development of the Health Education Syllabus. The Health Education Syllabus operationalised a number of moral education strands which were associated with the Department. The syllabus was shaped by people and forces that were either part of the Education Department, or closely aligned with the departmental initiatives of the previous decade. The formal and informal roots of document are firmly bedded in the operations of the Department. Having created the syllabus, the Department could give official support to schools wanting to implement moral education.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ See CDU minutes, p. 19.

The courses, conferences and reports which took place in the 1970s are a reminder of the way moral education generated widespread community interest and engaged those not directly involved in education. The next three chapters discuss these events and the documents associated with them.

CHAPTER FOUR: The moral education debate: Courses, Conferences and Reports: 1960s and 1970s

Moral education was the focus for many of the courses and conferences which took place from the mid 1960s through to the late 1970s. During this period the Department of Education organised health education courses¹ for teachers and officers from the Departments of Education and Health, and moral and religious education conferences involving the education sector, community groups and religious groups. These events provide a means of examining one of the official sites for the moral education debate. Unlike school based initiatives in moral education led by principals and teachers² (often undertaken in partnership with outside organisations such as the Family Planning Association), the courses and conferences were led by the Department of Education.

The Educational Development Conference³ is discussed in this chapter for although it had a broader focus than moral education, it provided some context and justification for the health and moral education initiatives that followed. A further reason for including the EDC in this chapter is that the EDC's broadly based consultation model was a precursor to the consultation used for the Ross Report, the Johnson Report and the Health Education Syllabus.

*The Report of a Working Party on Guidance in Secondary Schools*⁴ and *Towards Partnership*⁵, two reports written in the 1970s that provide insight into the moral education debate, are also considered in this chapter. Both reports reflect the changing socio-educational climate of the 1970s. *The Report of the Working Party on Guidance in Secondary Schools* recognised that new structures were necessary if schools were to adequately address the needs of their students in the broadest sense, while *Towards Partnership* was indicative of increasing pressure for partnership with parents.

¹ Courses taking place in the 1960s and 1970s have been referred to in several sections of this thesis, but this section provides more detailed discussion.

² See Chapter Five for discussion on such initiatives.

³ The Educational Development Conference (henceforth referred to as the EDC) was convened by the Minister of Education, Phil Amos, in 1974.

⁴ Report of a Working party, *Guidance in Schools*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1971.

⁵ *Towards Partnership: Report of the Committee on Secondary Education*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1976. Henceforth referred to as *Towards Partnership*.

The Educational Development Conference

The EDC established a model for consultation which was to be used in education from the 1970s until the mid 1980s. The conference attempted to canvas the views of a wide cross section of groups who had an interest in education. This model was innovative for it was more broadly based than previous consultations on education such as the Currie Commission.⁶

The consultative model was authorised within a few months of Norman Kirk's Labour Government coming to power in December of 1972, when the new Minister of Education, Phil Amos, gave notice of the Educational Development Conference. The EDC signalled the new Labour Government's intentions to do things differently, and was also a response to the sense of social unease which was a characteristic of the 1970s⁷. In a gesture which was typical of Labour Governments then and later, Amos called for a time of reflection and gave major stakeholders and the general public the opportunity to have their say on education matters. The Conference's terms of reference were based on public statements made by Amos and Directives from the Advisory Council in Educational Planning.

B. M. Williams, then Director of University Extension for Massey University, observed that the EDC consultation process had a precedent (on a limited scale) in the New Educational Fellowship of the 1930s. Williams considered, however, that the EDC was 'singular' for a number of other reasons:

The "closed unit" conception of the Education Priorities Conference of 1972 was widened with a change of government to invite the People's commentary upon the findings of expert committees. Secondly the Departments of University Extension were set the tasks of discovering who were the educational constituents of New Zealand - the "grass roots" as they were popularly called -and of engaging them in a deliberative enterprise of a scale and scope such as had never been attempted before.⁸

⁶ The Currie Commission was charged with considering the state education system with regard to New Zealand's future needs. *Report of the Commission on Education in New Zealand* (Currie Report), Commission of Education, 1962.

⁷ See Chapter One: Introduction.

⁸ B. M. Williams writing in the Foreword to Massey University's Report on the EDC 1973-1974, *Educational Development Conference Report 1973-1974*, Massey University Department of Extension.

Two of the EDC's terms of reference illustrate the characteristics of the EDC consultative model:

The Educational Development Conference is to establish the aims, direction and development of our system of education for the next decade if not to the end of the century.

The Conference aims for the fullest possible participation of all.⁹ By 'all New Zealanders' is meant the widest possible cross section of society: young people, minority groups, as well as the non-conformist sections of our society.¹⁰

During May and April of 1974 public meetings around the country discussed reports which had been prepared by three working parties. Regional Committees collated ideas from these meetings and presented this material to the Advisory Council of Educational Planning, which was given the task of writing a report for the Government.

A contemporary account provided by Lindsay Wright, a member of the EDC 'Steering Committee', provides an insider's view of the significance of the process. Wright gave a paper at a meeting of the Lincoln College branch of the Association of University Teachers held in June 1973.

He described the EDC as a

venture unparalleled in the history of government policy in New Zealand. It is an imaginative attempt by the Minister of Education to subject educational policies to widespread public debate and to careful national and local scrutiny. The background of the Conference, the organisation of the Conference and the activities so far undertaken or planned are all evidence of a new approach to education planning in New Zealand.¹¹

In the paper Wright acknowledged the view that:

a great deal of criticism is frequently levelled by teacher and other organisations about the deadening effect of bureaucracy and about the need for revitalising educational administration in New

⁹ According to R. Shaw, in "New Zealand's Recent Concern with Moral Education", *Journal of Moral Education*, 9:1, p. 28, the organisers underestimated the number of booklets required. An estimated 16,000 were involved in 915 official study groups.

¹⁰ Auckland Central Region Secretariat, 1974, Auckland Regional Report, p. 3, cited in R. Shaw.

¹¹ L. Wright, "Athens in the Antipodes", a paper given at Lincoln College, June 26, 1973, p. 3.

but went on to conclude:

The EDC is participatory democracy in action - at least it will be, if people divest themselves of the viewpoint that all debate takes place in Wellington and then only among a small and inaccessible clique.¹³

The EDC revealed a considerable degree of community interest in moral education, and presented some views on future directions for moral education. Moral education was among the topics raised both in the reports written by the working parties and at the public meetings. Two of the reports, *Educational Aims and Objectives* and *Improving Learning and Teaching* contain most of the written comment on moral education. In the second of these two reports, 'Improving Learning and Teaching', there was a chapter called "An Area of Concern - Moral Education". The chapter prefaced the main part of the text with the comment that:

schools are under under pressure to take a more active role in the moral education of their pupils, but exactly what this role should be is not always clear¹⁴

Among the four recommendations made by the working party was the following:

That the ability to discuss and evaluate moral issues and to learn what is involved in translating precepts into practice be a central rather than a peripheral outcome of teaching activities in the area of moral education. Moral education should therefore be a deliberately planned part of the curriculum in schools.¹⁵

National collation of all the submissions was carried out by the Advisory Council on Educational Planning and resulted in the report: *Talkback: Reports of Public Discussions*. This report recorded that the topic 'What Should Schools Teach?' was the "most widely debated topic of all", and stated that

the secondary school curriculum drew most fire, particularly that

¹² *ibid*, p. 15.

¹³ *ibid*.

¹⁴ Educational Development Conference Working Party on Improving Learning and Teaching, *Improving Learning and Teaching*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1974, p. 152.

¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 155.

part of it concerned with moral and sex education and the teaching of values. Most felt that the schools had a role to play, but there was no consensus on how this should be done. Some favoured the informal, incidental approach. Some would have teachers involved, others specialists only. Some would allow the teacher to express a viewpoint, others would not.¹⁶

When commenting on the EDC, the Editor of the Post Primary Teachers' Association Journal (L. Edmond) also noted the tendency to concentrate on sex education:

Most of the public discussions held this year on the subject of moral education have concentrated on minor aspects of the problem, largely because the public will insist on seizing upon any mention of sex as by far the most interesting part of morality.¹⁷

The EDC exercise established that there was renewed public interest in moral education, but future direction remained unclear. More discussion was a well tried and safe option. The final EDC document, *Directions for Educational Development* could confidently recommend:

7.16.9 That further public discussion of the issues involved in moral and religious education in schools be promoted.¹⁸

Conferences on Moral and Religious Education¹⁹

In an effort to encourage discussion, Amos asked that a series of informal discussions be arranged between Officers of the Department of Education and the Churches Education Commission. These discussions began early in 1973, and as they developed other groups such as teacher organisations became involved, helping to identify some of the religious and moral education issues.

By the end of 1973 it was proposed that a residential meeting would be held at Hogben House, the Department of Education's in-service facility in Christchurch.

¹⁶ Talkback report of public discussions; a summary of opinions expressed during the public discussion phase of the Educational Development Conference, Wellington: Department of Education, p. 6.

¹⁷ L. Edmond, "Morality and the Teacher", *New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association Journal*, October 5, 1974.

¹⁸ Advisory Council on Educational Planning, "Directions for Educational Development", Wellington: Department of Education, 1974.

¹⁹ In England under the pressures from 'World War Two' it was felt that the religious dimension was so important that, in the 1944 Education Act, Religious Education became the only compulsory subject in the curriculum (as a vehicle and basis for moral teaching).

Hogben House, the Department of Education's in-service facility in Christchurch. Jim Ross, (Superintendent of Curriculum Development), chaired the conference and Bill Renwick, then Assistant Director-General of Education, opened the proceedings with some thoughts on the current interest in "morality, values and religion".²⁰ Commenting on the ways in which curriculum was modified as a result of public pressure, Renwick said that a growing public interest in morality, values and religion was evident in New Zealand and overseas. He suggested that it was an appropriate time to look at a number of issues relating to religious and moral education in state schools:

As at the time of the Sputnik and the Vietnam conflict a social climate was developing which pointed to the need for a reexamination of all aspects of the education system. It appeared an opportune time now to consider the place, if any, of moral and religious education in State schools.²¹

Conference participants (some twenty five from tertiary institutions, schools, churches, community organisations, and including Rory O'Connor from the Curriculum Development Unit and Peter McPhail, Director of the Schools' Council Moral Education Projects in England and Wales) spent four days in discussion. McPhail's participation is significant for he had an international reputation in moral education, and the 'Lifeline' material he had developed became one of the major resources for moral education in New Zealand schools during the 1970s.²² The purpose of the conference was outlined as:

designed to provide an opportunity for individuals with a wide range of religious and non - religious views²³ to arrive at a common perception of the issues involved in religious and moral education in schools. It was not designed to produce a curriculum guideline or formal report, but was set up to provide an opportunity for individuals to raise some of the issues, as they saw them, regarding the possible roles of schools, in the fields of moral and religious education.²⁴

²⁰ Summary of the Discussions held at Hogben House , 22-25 September, 1974, "On moral and Religious Education". Paper made available by Colin McGeorge.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² See P. McPhail, J. R. Ungeod -Thomas, and H. Chapman, *Moral Education in the Secondary School*, London: Longmans, 1972. There were three sets of curricular materials: *In Other People's Shoes*, *Proving the Rule*, and *What Would You Have Done?*

²³ Representatives of the N.Z. Rationalist Association and the New Zealand Humanist Association were among the participants.

²⁴ Summary of the Discussions held at Hogben House , 22-25 September, 1974, "On Moral and Religious Education", p. 2.

The conference identified a number of important issues for exploration, including:

Is there a spiritual dimension missing from the school curriculum?

Attempt to identify a set of basic moral principles.

What is the role of the teacher and other agencies in moral education in the schools?

What would be the effect of removing the secular clause on:-

(a) The curriculum?

(b) Teachers?

(c) Community and parents?²⁵

A conclusion was included in the summary of the discussions. (The summary was released to those groups which had been represented at the conference). The conclusion recorded that the conference had made progress of a limited kind:

although a very wide range of religious and non - religious points of view were represented the meeting agreed upon a set of basic issues and agreed that they warranted further consideration by all interested members of the community.²⁶

The limited progress alluded to in the conference's summary report was a common feature of Departmental summaries and reports of meetings where there had been a wide range of views expressed; broad agreement in principle was usually implied, even if participants were extremely divided. At the conclusion of the conference, Jim Ross, the chairman of the conference, made it clear that future developments were in the hands of Minister of Education (Amos).

In late September 1975, the Education Department convened a second conference on Moral and Religious Education. The Conference Director was Rory O'Connor from the Curriculum Development Unit, and the Chairman was Professor R. Barham from Otago University. The intention of the second conference was to:

1. continue and widen the debate on moral and religious education in New Zealand schools as a follow-up to the 1974 Hogben House Conference, and thereby contribute to the

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ *ibid.*

implementation of two of the recommendations in the report "Directions for Educational Development" of the Advisory Council on Educational Planning.²⁷

2. examine the issues identified at the 1974 Hogben House Conference.

3. make suggestions as to possible further courses of action in this field.²⁸

In reflecting on the 1975 conference, the chairman (Barham) noted the consensus that had been reached, despite the divergent groups represented:

Central to this consensus it appeared, were the notions of: recognition of and respect for the plurality in values and beliefs represented in the community; appreciation of their significance to those in the community and in the school; a wish to avoid mechanisms of indoctrination in favour of processes of education; and a feeling for a virtual universal importance in approaching, in partnership with parents and others, questions of more "ultimate concern" which have to do with how people have been, and might be related to their world - Where am I?"²⁹

The importance of teacher preparation in moral and religious education was an underlying theme of the conference:

One point that arose often, both formally and informally, during the conference was that of the training of teachers. It is implicit in many of the group reports, but does not appear as an explicit statement. Yet the training of teachers was seen as an essential element in developing programmes in moral and religious education. The point was made in general discussion that the Teachers' Colleges should be running courses in this field for their students. It was recognised that there are some fundamental questions about content of such programmes to be answered.³⁰

Two subsequent conferences on moral and religious education were focussed on pre service training. Although religious and moral education was discussed at these conferences, "religious education" was dropped

²⁷ see 7.16.9, and 7.16.10, *Advisory Council on Educational Planning, Directions for Educational Development*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1974.

²⁸ Conference On Moral and Religious Education, Summary of Discussions, 28 September - 1 October, 1975. Paper made available by Colin McGeorge.

²⁹ *ibid*, R. M. Barham's comments as Chairman.

³⁰ *ibid*, p. 23.

from the title of both conferences³¹; which were described as “moral and values education”. The 1976 conference spoke of:

“Values Education” which would include elements in curricula sometimes referred to as moral education and might for teaching purposes require a knowledge of belief systems.³²

The 1976 conference considered the identification of a common core of values that “teachers should be aware of and feel comfortable about pointing up within their teaching programmes”³³ as an important issue. The conference decided that a common core of values had been identified by “writers such as Snook, McGeorge and McKay.”³⁴

As part of the conference, course members associated with pre -service education contributed to a summary of ‘values education and religious studies programmes’ at teachers’ colleges.³⁵ Information on moral and religious education ‘activities’ was provided by Dunedin, Christchurch, Palmerston North, Hamilton and Auckland Teachers’ Colleges.

Renwick, now Director General of Education, had presented the main paper at the 1976 conference. According to J.S.Allan, principal of Hamilton Teachers’ College, discussion of Renwick’s paper was reflected in the first of the nine recommendations from the 1976 conference:

teacher’s colleges be encouraged to examine the implications of incorporating a new dimension in the total college programme covering values, beliefs and emotions in human relationships and to seek ways and means of implementing this dimension.³⁶

J. S. Allan addressed the 1977 ‘Moral and Values Education In Teachers Colleges’ conference held in October 1977. Allan’s paper was an attempt to explore:

³¹ “Moral and Values Education in Teachers’ Colleges”, held at Lopdell House, 22-26 November 1976, and “Moral and Values Education in Teachers’ Colleges”, held at Hogben House in October 1977.

³² *ibid*, p. 3.

³³ *ibid*, p. 2.

³⁴ A “Common Core Values” summary was attached as Appendix D.

³⁵ “Moral and Values Education in Teachers’ Colleges”, held at Lopdell House, 22-26 November 1976, Appendix E.

³⁶ *ibid*.

some of the more important implications of the first recommendation in the light of the Renwick paper.³⁷

Allan's paper was wide ranging as he explored what this "new dimension" might be and its implications for teacher education. Allan concluded that changes to curriculum were likely to occur:

Despite our extremely ingenious technological advances we have clung tenaciously to what appear to be rather tribally orientated and somewhat predatory - based approaches to the system of relationships which underlies our arrangements for the production and distribution of goods and services. To enable the young to evaluate this phenomena and develop the broader conceptions, imaginative reach, human concern, vision and creative vitality that seem necessary as a basis for improving it, we will almost certainly be faced with the need for massive reorganisation of the curriculum³⁸. Decisions about the extent to which this 'new dimension' should permeate the curriculum are matters for moral choice.³⁹

Visitors from overseas with interest and expertise in moral education came to New Zealand during the mid 1970s to work with the Education Department and tertiary institutions. These visitors were usually education professionals who expressed a generally liberal point of view. Peter McPhail (a participant in the September 1974 conference on Moral and Religious Education) was one of the more prominent visitors. Another visitor with an interest in moral education was Dr J.R.Meyer from Canada. An example of the kinds of activities he was engaged in was a combined meeting of the Wellington Institute for Educational Research and the Professional Studies Department of Wellington Teachers' College. The topic for the meeting was "Research in the Preparation of Teachers for Moral/Values Education".⁴⁰ Meyer's background was summarised as follows:

Dr Meyer has been the coordinator of two values education projects for the Ministry of Education in Ontario. One report on the projects "A comparison of Different Theoretical Models and the Preparation of Teachers Implementing Them" was compiled in

³⁷ J. S. Allan, "This New Dimension, Some Thoughts About Its Possible Nature, Potential and Problems", a paper presented at Hogben House, 10 October, 1977.

³⁸ Allan was referring to the curriculum in Teachers' Colleges.

³⁹ Allan.

⁴⁰ ABEP W4262, 34/2/37 Pt 1.

Meyer's visit illustrates both the degree of interest in moral education during the 1970s and the way education networks operated at that time. The account above shows one link (between the two groups represented at that meeting). A letter from Alison Crawford, later a member of the Health Education Project Team in the early 1980s, links the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) with the Education Department's Curriculum Development Unit. Crawford writes to Rory O'Connor:

The NZEI National Consultative Committee lends its full support to Mr Ken Moody's proposal to bring Dr John Meyer to New Zealand to establish a longitudinal study in Values Education. We recommend this be in the Auckland area and organised and controlled by Mr Moody.⁴²

Discussions about moral education were taking place in the numerous courses and conferences on health education which took place during the 1960s and 1970s. The conferences on moral and religious education, and those on health education, were linked by people and shared ideas.

Courses and Conferences on Health Education

During the 1960s a series of courses were held for physical education advisors responsible for supporting the teaching of health education in schools.⁴³ (Department of Education physical education advisors had easier access to schools than officers had from the Department of Health.) In October 1967 a course was held at Lopdell House, Auckland, to give senior physical education advisors the opportunity to become conversant with the newly developed handbook⁴⁴ on Health Education being trialled in selected schools. Of the fourteen who participated in the course, nine were district advisors in physical education and four were inspectors. In November of the same year another course was held to enable primary teachers to familiarise themselves with the new handbook and consider its relationship to classroom programmes.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ There were no health education advisors at this stage. Physical education advisors included health education in their responsibilities.

⁴⁴ The handbook was published by the Department of Education in 1969 as *Health, Suggestions for Health Education in Primary Schools*.

The moral education flavour of these courses is evident despite being reminded by Dr Joel (one of the writers of the handbook) that :

discussion on sex education is not permissible in primary schools.⁴⁵

While concentrating on topics like posture, smoking, food and the digestive system, the handbook also discussed family and social living, and social and educational factors which influenced health. These latter topics encouraged a broader discussion of health education at the courses, and prompted a caution relating to the use of the handbook:

certain topics if not wisely handled could open unproductive controversy and these discussions have helped Advisors (physical education) to anticipate difficulties that may possibly arise. ⁴⁶

Evaluation of health education programmes in terms of "school climate" were also discussed at the October 1967 course. Evaluation was discussed

frequently during the course of the week and course members are aware of the need to see the results of a sound health course in the school - in better relationships, healthier environment, happier atmosphere. ⁴⁷

At the November 1967 course (for primary school teachers) the participants discussed some implications of implementing health education programmes in small schools. Their discussion illustrates teachers' awareness that moral education was a community matter. Some particular issues, evident in small schools, were identified in the Report under the heading 'Religious':

Ideas contrary to health practises taught (anti immunisation, vegetarianism). Isolated instances in large schools - sometimes greater proportion in small schools - enough to cast considerable influence.⁴⁸

Questions relating to the implementation of health education programmes in intermediate schools (part of the primary system) were raised:

⁴⁵ ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18 Health Education Development (Restricted file).

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

2. Can you foresee any problems related to the parents' ideas and standards in relation to any aspects of the health programmes? If so what?⁴⁹
3. In what ways, if any, should health education programmes affect aspects of school life outside the health class?
4. Should the health programme in an intermediate school place equal emphasis on the physical, social, emotional and mental areas of the child's development? If so, say why. If not, what should the balance or emphasis be?⁵⁰

Such questions indicate the formative state of health education for teachers and foreshadow many of the later debates on what health education consisted of; what health education could achieve, and community - school partnership issues.

In September 1972, a Secondary National Course on Health Education was held under the direction of L.G. Brunetti, a secondary school inspector from Auckland. The majority of those attending the five day course were teachers (of physical education, science, social studies and liberal studies, and home science)⁵¹ and guidance counsellors from secondary schools throughout the country. Department of Education advisers for physical education, a medical officer from the Health Department, and two representatives from tertiary institutions also attended. The course aimed to:

review the present programmes in secondary schools, their place in and relationship to the major subject areas (e.g., physical education and science) and the extent of their topic coverage (e.g., alcohol and drug addiction, mental health, sex education); their relevance to present day trends and demands; to consider what should be taught, in which subject areas and to what levels.

The course report contained the review which was put together after five days of discussion. The review covered a definition of health education, some background material, and course participants' views of health education coverage in secondary schools in New Zealand at the time (1972). The review was significant for three reasons: firstly because it gave another perspective on

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ Health Education was still not a stand alone subject area so there were no health education specialists among the teachers attending the September 1972 course.

what was happening in secondary schools throughout New Zealand and was a reminder that what was happening in some secondary schools was not standard practice⁵², secondly the review charted the disappointing state of health education in New Zealand secondary schools despite local initiatives and valiant attempts to get things going at a national level⁵³, and thirdly the review contained a definition of health education which outlined the conceptual framework for health education at the time.

The review included the following information and viewpoints:

It was felt that few schools operated comprehensive health education programmes:

In the few schools where Health Education programmes exist, it is evident that the subject is not being handled adequately. Many important topics are being treated factually, often superficially and in isolation without recognition being given to the human relationships involved. There is little indication that efforts are being made to meet the needs arising from the particular characteristics of pupils in a school district. The majority of programmes reviewed indicate that no provision is being made to cater for the expressed interests of the young.⁵⁴

The review concluded that "Health Education in its broadest sense is rarely recognised".⁵⁵

The review was working on the basis of the following definition of Health Education:

Health Education is a means of forming attitudes and values, which in turn may influence behaviour. It is based on the presentation and discussion of accurate, up to date information which may help the individual to cope physically, emotionally and socially in youth and adulthood. The content must be adjusted

⁵² See Chapter Two for what was happening in some schools during the 1960s and 1970s.

⁵³ The review noted the work of a sub committee of the Thomas Report which had prepared material for the Thomas Report. The Report itself had contained two and a half pages on Health Education including one page on sex education. The School Certificate regulations published in 1946, based on the Thomas Report, retained the Health education section, but omitted the part on sex education.

⁵⁴ Course 552, Health Education, 18-22 September, 1974, ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18, Health Education Development (Restricted file).

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

continually to meet social change and to suit differing environments.⁵⁶

After the review process the course went on to cover the the second part of the brief: to consider what should be taught, in which subject areas, and at what levels. Course members devised a schema as a basis for more detailed planning. Four headings were used to show the complex relationship between many topics. The headings were "somatic", referring to the body as an organism; "psycho-somatic", referring to the relationship between the body and the mind; "psycho-social", referring to psychological and social links, and "socio-somantic", the individual-community relationship. The report had moral education as its core for it stated:

It is hoped that the ultimate outcome of the Health education programme is the emergence of a system of values attitudes and beliefs.

A spiritual element has a bearing on this schema, but this is not specifically identified.⁵⁷

A Primary National Course in Health education and Fitness in Schools took place in 1974, from May 20 to 24. This course focussed on:

the implementation of health education in schools with particular reference to content and methods of presentation to teachers at local in service courses.⁵⁸

Selection of participants for this course drew criticism from the course director, Mr Hildyard, District Senior Inspector of primary schools for the Department of Education in Invercargill. Hildyard observed:

District nominations were almost entirely from the Physical Education branch (of the) advisory service⁵⁹ and Teachers' Colleges. Only two principals of schools were nominated. While this provided the group with a strong background of experience, many of whom had been on previous courses on Health education, it was considered that a wider cross section of the advisory service and teachers, and of women, would have been

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁵⁸ ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18, Health Education Development (Restricted file).

⁵⁹ There were no health education advisors at this stage. Physical education advisors included health education in their responsibilities.

preferable.⁶⁰

The gender imbalance (there were only two women on the course, both representing the Health Department) was typical of the time; that it was noted shows an increasing sensitivity to changes in society.

J.J.Lee, Director of Primary Education, responded to Hildyard's report on the course. Lee noted the group's view on the Ross Report, and was particularly interested in the suggestion that:

the aims outlined in the Health handbook⁶¹ should be extended to include the development of children's attitudes and values.⁶²

In April 1975 a "National Course in Health Studies" took place at Hogben House. The course director was Peter Macpherson, Curriculum Officer from the Department of Education and subsequently a member of the Johnson Committee.

In his introductory paper to some thirty primary and secondary teachers, Department of Education officers, and tertiary representatives, Macpherson confessed to some anxiety about being course director, having been "drawn into Health teaching sideways (because of the vacuum in Health teaching)".⁶³ Despite initial reluctance, Macpherson warmed to the position for he went on to state his belief in the importance of health education and to claim that health education "has been with us since the inception of public education and in New Zealand it has often been a stated educational objective."⁶⁴ Macpherson drew his example of a 'stated educational objective' from the New Zealand Department of Education's Annual Report (1957):

We want children to be healthy and physically vigorous, and if possible, happy; to live their lives fully and significantly as children; and to grow up into men and women who are generous, self-disciplined, and emotionally stable, willing to shoulder their responsibilities and equipped to do so, able to give and and take

⁶⁰ ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18, Health Education Development (Restricted file).

⁶¹ *Health, Suggestions for Health Education in Primary Schools*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1969.

⁶² ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18, Health Education Development (Restricted file).

⁶³ Paper given at the "Health Studies Course", Hogben House, 7-11 April, 1975, ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18, Health Education Development (Restricted file)

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

freely with others (and yet with their own inner resources), attractive and interesting as persons, mentally alert, clear headed, and with an effective grasp of learning, and some understanding of their natural and social worlds. They should have creative interests of some kind, and good if simple standards of taste. We want them to also to have a firm appreciation of the values of their society, and a readiness to defend them, and with this, some awareness of the shortcomings of their society and a desire to improve it. Finally, we would wish them to be people of integrity and courage, with enough moral toughness to do unpleasant duties and a willingness to make sacrifices for ends bigger than themselves.⁶⁵

Macpherson's example is of interest because it appears that the embodied hopes of New Zealand society (to be interpreted by the Department of Education) were identified by him as directly linked with health education. The content of the 1957 Department of Education's Report was hard to argue with, and would have attracted widespread endorsement. The difficulty, as is often the case with moral education, was how to work out what role schools might occupy. Macpherson accepted the statement as an unquestioned educational objective, and made no comment on any attempts to translate it into educational practice after 1957. He merely goes on to say:

Sadly there appears to have been a decline in health teaching in recent years because teachers and /or other educators have no longer seen health as valuable.⁶⁶

Macpherson suggested that changing patterns of health and disease had resulted in the impression that Health Education was not a priority. On the contrary, Macpherson believed "the very lifestyle of man himself causes grave concern".⁶⁷ Macpherson's observations reflected differences in perceptions about health education. The physical part of well being for people living in New Zealand in the 1970s seemed to be increasingly under control as indicators such as life expectancy and infant mortality rates improved. The 1957 report, however, was not confined to physical well being, and the response to this broader conception concerned Macpherson.

He claimed the response:

⁶⁵ Annual report of the New Zealand Department of Education, 1957, p. 26, cited in MacPherson's introductory paper, delivered to the Health Studies Course, Hogben House, 7-11 April, 1975.

⁶⁶ Paper given at the 'Health Studies Course', Hogben House, 7-11 April, 1975, ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18 Health Education Development (Restricted file)

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

to this new dimension has been spasmodic and uncoordinated: Government Departments, notably (Health and Education) and a host of other concerned organisations have produced material of the "notes for the teacher" type, eg Drugs, Smoking, Human Development and Relationships etc.⁶⁸

Citing an economic rationale, Macpherson stressed the importance of taking action:

In the current economic plight of New Zealand it is well to know that any project is expensive but let us also be aware when considering Health Studies that in human terms the advantages could be tremendous. We know only too well that the costs of our current failures are astronomical (eg see Social Welfare and Hospital costs!)⁶⁹

J. A. Ross (the major author of the Ross Report and in 1975 still Superintendent of Curriculum Development) also addressed the "National Course in Health Studies". Ross attempted to explain what was meant by health education and reflected some changes in how health and health education were defined. One of these trends was a move away from an emphasis on individual responsibility for health to a broader view. Ross quoted the World Health Organisation:

Health is but one of the elements in the general welfare of people and health education is only one of the factors in improving health and social conditions. It is, however, an indispensable factor and should therefore be integrated with other social, economic, health and educational efforts - World Health Organisation Technical Report Series No. 89, Expert Committee on Health Education of the Public: First Report.⁷⁰

Ross reflected on the "narrow conception of health" (and therefore health education) at the beginning of the twentieth century:

To our grandparents health meant the absence of disease and physical defects. Today it means total fitness for living. Man no longer seeks merely to be unshackled from sickness and infirmity. He aspires to attain optimum physical mental, social, and emotional wellbeing.⁷¹

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, from an address given by J. A. Ross.

⁷¹ *ibid.*

Like Macpherson, Ross was influenced by the economic climate of the mid 1970s and ended his address with a reference to New Zealand's economic health:

Health has attained a high rank in our hierarchy of values because it provides the keystone for individual and national development.⁷²

The background briefing and indication of possible lines of approach given by Macpherson and Ross serve to illustrate the breadth and complexity of ideas associated with health. One of the course objectives was to clarify the numerous terms used to describe this curriculum area. The course agreed that the terms "health education", "health studies", and health were not interchangeable and suggested that after possible modifications, the following be used in all future developments:

HEALTH EDUCATION describes all the learning experiences that affect a person's health and that take place in any educational setting (planned or not, either classroom lessons or the school "climate", in the home or through the media; and so on.)

HEALTH STUDIES describes the planned learning experiences that teachers develop in the school setting (including the "extended" school, eg on school trips.)

HEALTH has been defined by the W.H.O.⁷³ as "a complete physical, mental, social and emotional well being; not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

We endorse this concept of health but regret that the W.H.O. definition focuses on complete health as an essential attribute.

We therefore define HEALTH as a person's current physical, mental, social and emotional health status.

The aim of the "National Course in Health Studies" was to move health education further along the curriculum track. Macpherson's address on the first day included the brief for the conference. This brief had been prepared by a small "Head Office Conference on Health Education" set up by Macpherson on his appointment with responsibility in Health in 1974. The 1974 conference was a consequence of his appointment and of:

⁷² *ibid.*

⁷³ The World Health Organisation's influence on Public Health was beginning to have an impact at this time as the Health Promotion theory gained momentum.

continuing community pressures including feedback via the E.D.C. and from the Human Development and Relationship booklet and backing from senior officers of the Curriculum Development Unit.⁷⁴

The brief for the 1975 National Conference was :

To produce a statement of aims and objectives of Health Studies in New Zealand schools. This statement should consider Health in its widest sense, embracing all levels of education and reflect[ing] the involvement of the community.⁷⁵

Such a brief for the five day National Conference was ambitious, but the records of the conference suggest considerable progress was made in the following areas: the aims and objectives of health education; curriculum design and decision making including topics and learning experiences for different levels; and working through the implications of the curriculum in areas such as teacher training, in service development and resourcing.

The Report of the Working Party on Guidance in Secondary Schools

In 1971 a document associated with the development of guidance and counselling in secondary schools was released by the Department of Education. The Report of the Working Party on Guidance in Secondary Schools, chaired by W. L. Renwick (then Assistant Director-General of Education), referred to the 1968 decision by Government to create additional positions for school guidance counsellors. "This decision marked the acceptance of a guidance and counselling service as a developing part of the New Zealand pattern of secondary education".⁷⁶

The significance of the report for subsequent developments in moral education in secondary schools is two fold: its definition of guidance and the concept of a guidance network. The report defined guidance in broad terms:

When we speak of guidance we shall have in mind all the influences in a school that bear on the choices and decisions that pupils make in respect of their own personal, educational and

⁷⁴ Paper given at the 'Health Studies Course', Hogben House, 7-11 April, 1975, ABEP W4262, ACC 40/13/18 Health Education Development (Restricted file).

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Report of a Working party , "Guidance in Schools", Wellington: Department of Education, 1971.

vocational concerns. ⁷⁷

While concentrating on the role of careers advisers and guidance counsellors, the report noted the importance of all staff members within a guidance network:

We see guidance as a network of services and influences - some of them formal, others informal and incidental - which taken together, reflect a school's awareness of its responsibilities to its pupils as persons. In our report, we shall refer to this network of services and influences as a guidance network. ⁷⁸

Guidance provisions were part of a response to a comprehensive survey of secondary education, which had begun in the late 1960s and intensified during the early 1970s. Public concern about the pressures on young people were expressed in letters to government ministers. An example of this concern is contained in a letter to the Minister of Social Welfare in August 1973. The writer stressed the importance of preparing young people to face the complexities of living in a world of rapid social change. A copy of the letter had been forwarded to the Minister of Education (Phil Amos) for comment on social education developments in schools. The reply is noteworthy for two reasons. Firstly, it signals the importance accorded to social development in education and the intent of government to expand guidance in secondary schools:

As part of the important changes taking place in secondary education increasing efforts are being made to cater for the social and personal development of pupils. I expect the provision of more guidance and counselling services in secondary schools, approved this year,⁷⁹ to provide assistance in this direction. ⁸⁰

Secondly, the reply serves as an example of the network of interests that was developing in the area of human relationship education in the Department of Education⁸¹ at this time. In this case the departmental official who prepared the response for Amos was J. A. Ross, chairman of the Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum committee which had begun meeting in

⁷⁷ *ibid*, p. 4.

⁷⁸ *ibid*, p. 5.

⁷⁹ In January 1973 the government approved in principle the development of comprehensive guidance networks in all secondary schools. Full time, one year specialist courses at Massey and Canterbury Universities were established and approved to prepare selected teachers for work as counsellors.

⁸⁰ Letter from Amos to Moverly, 13 August 1973, ABEP W4262, 34/11/53, Pt 1.

⁸¹ See Chapter 3 for discussion on the structure of the Department of Education at this time.

March 1973.

Towards Partnership

One of the emerging themes in the moral education debate of the 1970s was the idea of partnership involving parents, schools and communities. These ideas were among those discussed by the McCombs Committee in 1975. The Committee produced *Towards Partnership* in 1976. Less well known and less controversial than either of the two big reports of the 1970s (Ross and Johnson), *Towards Partnership* is nevertheless significant because it foreshadowed the idea of partnership which was to become a familiar theme into the 1980s and beyond, and because it articulated the importance of moral education.

The Committee on Secondary Education chaired by Sir Terence McCombs had been established in 1975 by the Minister of Education, Phil Amos. The committee had been asked to "advise the Government on priorities of action arising from the secondary education review."⁸²

The review of secondary education referred to had taken place during the early 1970s when a series of conferences had discussed the nature and purpose of secondary education. The conferences had been organised by the Department of Education following pressure from the Post Primary Teachers' Association. The first conference was a residential course held in 1971 at which current issues in secondary education were discussed. A report on the conference made a number of references to moral education, and this report was used when Education Department personnel wrote a pamphlet called *Secondary School Curriculum: Some Issues and Prospects*. At a second conference held in 1972, representation was again predominantly composed of senior educators, and this time 'moral education' was identified as a major issue.

The last of this series of conferences was held in 1973. This conference had a tighter focus than those held in 1971 and 1972, and required participants to draft some guidelines which could be used by teachers as a basis for policy in their schools. The conferences and initiatives which took place on secondary education in the early years of the 1970s were enlarged in 1974 as resources

⁸² *Towards Partnership*, p. 2.

such as seconded teachers and teacher release days were made available. At a meeting of the Curriculum Development Unit in August 1974, Ormond Tait, later Principal of the New Zealand Correspondence School, reported that the main concerns emerging from the review were “values, courses for the bottom 50% and integration of third and fourth form courses”.⁸³ Further momentum was generated as the review was caught up in the EDC study groups which had begun meeting in 1973.

Terms of reference for the McCombs committee included :

c) ways of ensuring close co-operation between schools, parents and communities.⁸⁴

Membership of the committee included representatives from secondary schools (teachers and members of Boards of Governors), universities, the Department of Education, the Catholic Women’s League, Trade Unions and Industry representatives.

McCombs noted that the committee had worked very hard to review material, consider submissions and prepare a report within eleven months, and expressed the hope that “our contribution furthers the aim of the present tentative but committed steps towards partnership”⁸⁵. The following recommendations are indicative of ideas about partnership in the report:

2.1 Each secondary school formulate and periodically review its aims in consultation with parents and students.⁸⁶

7.2 (Each secondary school) take the initiative in establishing better communications and relationships with the parents of each student and with the community.⁸⁷

The report argues that the secondary school has a role beyond intellectual, physical and aesthetic education, and that “it is essential that every school clarify

⁸³ ABEP W4262, 34/12/17, Pt 2, Box 1728.

⁸⁴ *Towards Partnership*, 1976, p. 2.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 100.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p. 101.

the moral values it is developing by its tone and programmes”⁸⁸. The report notes the primacy of the family in providing for the spiritual values and needs of adolescents, but also suggests a contribution from schools: “If schools try to opt out or fumble over issues of love, tenderness, concern for others and death , they do so at cost to the individual and to society”⁸⁹.

Towards Partnership, like the Johnson Report, covered a wide range of issues in a general way. The reactions of a teacher from Palmerston North were recorded at the time, and give an indication of the way the report was received by some teachers:

On the whole very worthwhile. My notes are critical, even antagonistic to bring out the detail. Tendency to make statements with a lack of precision. Also, lack of evidence - reference material. This report’s recommendations fit a broad overview and it will not be appropriate for Government to pick one here and there to implant.⁹⁰

The Department of Education was responsible for stimulating and maintaining interest in moral education through initiating conferences, courses and working parties during the 1960s and particularly the 1970s. Moral and religious education was the primary topic for some conferences and courses, while moral education was one of the issues being considered by those who examined the possibilities for health education in schools. Health education was no longer focussed on the physical; influenced by holistic notions of defining health, the links between moral education and health education were becoming stronger.

The EDC, the reports, the conferences on moral and religious education and those on health education had provided the Department of Education with consultation models and a wealth of material on moral education. The EDC can be considered successful when measured against its own terms of reference, and particularly because it established a new participatory model which was to become a blueprint for consultation in education. The courses, conferences and reports sustained the moral education impetus, and gave the Education Department ample evidence that many education professionals were sympathetic to working through the education issues and were ready to take the

⁸⁸ *ibid*, p. 19.

⁸⁹ *ibid*, p. 27.

⁹⁰ Written on a copy of *Towards Partnership* and dated 1976.

ideas discussed and work on implementation issues such as curriculum design and professional development. The challenge for the Department of Education was to shape up what had emerged from all the discussions and keep the process moving.

The next two chapters consider the two major reports of the decade, the Ross and the Johnson Reports. These documents were the most important education reports of the 1970s. They were significant in their own right, and for the purposes of this thesis, are critical to understanding the subsequent development of the Health Education Syllabus.

CHAPTER FIVE: the moral education debate: **Ross Report**

In March 1973, the Director General of Education, W. L. Renwick, set up a committee with the task of producing a discussion paper "on the issues involved in developing programmes in human development and relationships in schools".¹

Teachers formed the largest single group in the committee. Excluding Ross, of the eleven committee members, two represented the teacher organisations (the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association and the New Zealand Educational Institute),² and six were from primary and secondary schools (of these two were secondary principals representing The Association of Heads of Independent Schools). Other members of the committee were from Christchurch Teachers' College, the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the National Council of Women.

In setting up the committee, it is likely that Renwick had the support of Education Minister Phil Amos, for the Labour minister's sympathy to such initiatives is indicated in speeches such as the one he delivered to the Post Primary Teachers' Association conference in 1974. In his address Amos made reference to the role of secondary schools in moral education when he described one of the keystones of secondary education as: "The need to make greater provision for the social and cultural education of pupils including teaching about values, and moral education".³

The purpose of the discussion paper was to stimulate debate. Individuals and groups, including teachers, were encouraged to make their views known to the

¹ Foreword, "Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum", Wellington: Department of Education, 1973. Henceforth referred to as the Ross Report.

² Particularly from the late 1960s, the NZEI and the PPTA were playing an increasingly active role in shaping curriculum as well as considering the impact of the curriculum on teachers and schools.

³ P. A. Amos, text of an address to the post primary teacher's association, annual conference 1974, *New Zealand Post Primary Teacher's Association Journal*, 29:22 (Sep 1974), cited in R. Shaw, "New Zealand's Recent Concern with Moral Education", *Journal of Moral Education*, 9:1, p. 24.

Education Department.⁴ After six meetings of the committee, a discussion paper was produced and distributed by the Department of Education in December 1973. The discussion paper, *Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum*, became known as the Ross Report after the chairman of the committee, J. A. Ross, who was at the time Superintendent of Curriculum Development in the Department of Education in Wellington.

Why the committee was set up

At the July 5th meeting of the Curriculum Development Unit, Ross outlined some of the influences which had resulted in the committee being established.⁵ His comments are valuable because they provide a window into the views of the Education Department, provide links with the previous decade, and signal some issues which were to be of continuing interest. The following is a summary of his comments as it was recorded at the meeting.

The 1945 health syllabus made the point that there was no place for sex education in schools, but by 1965 discussions had started. These discussions were in a representative group which began initial exploration only, but in 1968 N.Z.E.I. published some of these deliberations. There was a sharp public reaction that turned it into a political issue and the matter was dropped. Between 1968 and 1971⁶ many groups and organisations in the community began asking that schools deal with sex education as an answer to social ills and promiscuity. Such groups, writing to MPs, strongly made the point that sex education is part of total development. The Department was caught between these groups and another equally concerned group who believed sex education must remain the task of parents.⁷

⁴ The New Zealand Education Department's Annual Report of 1973 recorded a Lopdell House course of September 1972 which reviewed Health education programmes in secondary schools. They noted that a representative committee had been established to produce a study document on family life education (including sex education) programmes in primary and secondary schools. "The report of the committee will be distributed widely so that diverse groups in the community will be able to make their views known to the department" p. 23.

⁵ The Ross Report outlines the need for programmes in H. D. & R. in schools under such headings as "social change", "earlier maturity", "counter inaccurate and inadequate information", "attitudes of teenagers" and "the role of schools" (pp. 9 - 14).

⁶ In a 1968 survey of first year tertiary students living in Christchurch found that 93% approved of sex education in schools, with 48% believing that this should begin at primary school level (J. Irwin, *Survey into Sexual Knowledge, Attitudes and behaviour in First Year University and Teacher's College Students*, Christchurch, 1972). A survey of New Zealand secondary students in 1969 indicated discontent with their sex education and suggested support for school based human relationship programmes which included sex education (P. Gow, "Sex Education: Who's Responsible?", *Post Primary Teachers' Association Journal*, 8:2 (1969)).

⁷ ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 1 Box 1824.

Public concerns regarding social change in New Zealand had become evident during the late 1960s and early 1970s. It could be argued that the growing demand for schools to address moral education issues was a result of the media's identification of problem behaviours rather than people's reaction to what was actually going on in their communities. The role of the media in fanning and to some extent shaping the debate is illustrated by an article which appeared in the *Evening Post* in November 1970. Beneath the headline "Moral Teaching Urged In State Schools", it was reported that Mr D.M. Piggin, president of the Auckland Federation of the Parent - Teachers' Association, had called for a greater role in moral and religious education in State primary and intermediate schools. Piggin's interest in "moral teaching" seemed to arise from fears associated with his perception of what was going on in New Zealand and consequent effects upon children's achievement. He urged greater 'moral teaching', "in light of influences outside the school, such as drugs, pornography and sensationalism, which are obstructing children's learning".⁸

The increasing pressure on the Department of Education to take some action in the area of moral education is shown by the inclusion of the newspaper article (and a letter asking for comment by the newspaper) in a Departmental file.⁹ Accompanying notes indicate that the letter had been seen by a number of Departmental officers including Peter Brice.¹⁰

Worries about young people were central to a letter written by Mary Dixon (a member of the Women's Division of Federated Farmers), requesting the status of the report on Citizenship Training prepared by the Young People's Committee of the National Youth Council in 1967. Writing to Brian Talboys (Minister of Education) in 1970, Dixon told him that she had been asked to lead a discussion at a Womens' Division of Federated Farmer's inter-provincial conference "on the increase of violence and anti-social behaviour".¹¹ She asked if the Youth Council's report "is still under consideration or has been permanently shelved and for any other comment you would care to make that would help us with our discussion." She concluded her letter by stating:

⁸ *Evening Post*, 18 Nov. 1970.

⁹ ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 1 Box 1824.

¹⁰ Peter Brice was associated with many Education Department initiatives in moral education, including the 1985 Health Education Syllabus.

¹¹ ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

You will I am sure appreciate that many women, in the town AND the country, feel that education is the only answer to the present state of affairs.¹²

Talboys' response identified schools as one of the places where moral education occurs, and highlighted the way moral education was spread through a number of syllabuses and programmes, in this case social studies and a new programme called social biology. Talboys considered that most of the Citizenship Training will be implemented through the revised social studies syllabus, with the exception of some "aspects of legal training" and "some suggestions as regards sex education". His general comments on the role of education are also valuable as they give an official view on the role of schools in moral education and suggest some limitations:

It has always been an aim of education generally to help children become good law-abiding citizens. Schools undertake this task in various ways. The good tone of secondary schools and the high standards of behaviour and attitude demanded all contribute to training the pupils to fit properly into society. The emphasis on discipline and belonging to a school and not letting it down are all parts of the basic training of pupils.

I agree that education must play its part in solving our problems. There is a limit, of course, to what schools can do. The onus is on society as a whole.¹³

The impact of social change and the role of the media were discussed at University Extension seminar called "The Rights of the Child" which was held at Victoria University in April 1974. One participant in the seminar commented:

We are moving into an age of where issues of increasing complexity are brought into the home. Who would have thought 20 years ago that topics such as abortion, homosexuality and contraception would be on 'screen' in everyone's living rooms. Pressure groups of all sorts are bringing their viewpoints before the public.¹⁴

The Department of Education was also lobbied by organisations such as the Family Life Council, which was a strong advocate for sex education in schools, and the Mental Health Association.

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *ibid.*

The President of the Mental Health Association wrote to Amos in 1974 with a series of recommendations pertaining to the mental health of young people. The reply from Amos notes to the Ross Report:

my department has recently launched a nationwide examination of family life education by the production of the discussion booklet, *Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum* which contains some suggestions regarding family life education programmes in schools. Recommendations are being received from all over the country at the present time on the suggested programmes.¹⁵

An additional pressure on the Education Department was from other government departments, in particular the Department of Health. The Department of Health and the Department of Education had worked together on a number of joint projects. One of these projects was the production of the *Handbook of Suggestions for Health Education in Primary Schools* (1969). Department of Health officials were becoming increasingly agitated about what they considered to be lack of progress in the area of Family Life Education in primary schools. Officers from the Department had been involved in running "out of school" programmes in sex education for primary school students from the 1960s, but there was a growing sense of dissatisfaction with this procedure. It was felt that only a small percentage of children were being reached, and that children in the state system were disadvantaged because private schools were already including sex and family life education in their teaching programmes.

A letter dated October 1971 from D. P. Kennedy, Director-General of Health, claimed: "Attitudes of the public towards matters concerning human reproduction and sex have undergone quite considerable changes. A great deal of inaccurate information comes to children in this country through the mass media." The letter urged action by the Department of Education:

I suggest that the time has come for your Department to review its policy and include human reproduction and family life education in the teaching programme for the Intermediate classes.¹⁶

¹⁵ ABEP W4262, 34/2/17, Pt 2 Box 1728.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

Correspondence between government departments shows one kind of relationship where a department seeks to influence another. Another relationship was established when departments were represented on interdepartmental committees. Ross, for example, was the Education Department's representative on a committee set up by the Department of Social Welfare to discuss parent education through television (1974).

In addition to responding to pressures from a variety of groups to take some action in moral education, the Department of Education was aware of calls for a return to the syllabus model of listing desirable moral characteristics. The 1904 Syllabus and subsequent revisions had listed the values teachers were supposed to integrate into their teaching in order to exert a "moral" influence on the development of their pupils. When the Department of Education issued a series of booklets called *The Secondary School Curriculum* (1972), the Head of Social Studies at Buller High School wrote to the Department to express his concern "about the position taken up on the question of moral values". The teacher's main concern was that the "moral habits" listed in the 1929 syllabus had disappeared:

apart from a vague reference to 'Social Justice' no such aims appear in the present proposals and, instead, a great deal is made of the fact that traditional values are often questioned today.

The teacher argued that although some values might change, basic values like the ones listed in the 1929 Syllabus did not:

There could be nothing worse than an indecisive or uncertain attitude to the basic moral virtues referred to in the 1929 syllabus. To assume that these values may change is to assume that society will destroy itself.¹⁷

In the same letter, the Health Education handbook (*Suggestions for Teaching Health Education in Primary Schools*, 1969), was used as an illustration of an indecisive attitude to "moral questions" because in this document:

drugs are to be discussed but they are not condemned, and when promiscuity, prostitution and homosexuality are discussed, the teacher may present various viewpoints but there should be no

¹⁷ ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

effort to morally judge these.¹⁸

The pressure from various liberal, professional and conservative groups shaped the Ross Report. Although the tone of the report was liberal, the tensions which were later to become evident were present in the report. One such tension was the competing rights of parents and schools to provide sex education for children. An outline of the content of the report follows.

The Report

The committee's report acknowledges the family as the preeminent influence on human development, and relationships but argues that schools also have a part to play. The committee felt that children had the right to know about themselves, have opportunities to make decisions, and take responsibility for the consequences of their decisions. Sex education was linked with decision making in a broadly based document. According to McQueen:

Strong advocacy for sex education in the context of human development, social and emotional relationships, the need for teacher education in the nature and objectives of human development and relationships and the involvement of community agencies and parents was evident throughout the report.¹⁹

The committee did not produce a syllabus, believing that this should be drawn up between parents and teachers in each school, but teaching programmes for primary and secondary were suggested. In the section called The Role of the Schools, the *Education in Change*²⁰ "three values": the urge to enquire, concern for others, and the desire for self respect were endorsed by the committee. *Education in Change* was a report on secondary education by the Post Primary Teachers' Association Curriculum Group in 1969. The Ross committee believed "that there should be opportunities within the school community and curriculum

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ P. McQueen, "Health Education in New Zealand, Whose Responsibility?", Paper presented at the University of Auckland, 1989.

²⁰ *Education in Change* was chaired by H. G. Munro of Auckland's Secondary Teachers' College. The report made only one formal recommendation: That, as the future of education in New Zealand will depend directly on the quality of experimentation, every encouragement should be given to research conducted jointly by the schools and such professional bodies as the Curriculum Development Unit, The Council for Educational Research, the Universities and the teachers' colleges. NZPPTA Curriculum Review Group, *Education in Change: Report of the Curriculum Review Group, NZPPTA*, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1969.

for pupils to assimilate such personal values.”²¹

The Ross committee recommended the revision of the primary school syllabus *Health Education* (1945) and the handbook *Health - Suggestions for Health Education in Primary Schools*, “in a manner that allows for the guidance of teachers in the implementing of programmes in human development and relationships”. The committee invited “principals of all secondary schools to review and assess their existing programmes in human development and relationships”²², with a view to making human development and relationships a core subject.

Implementation of human development and relationship programmes in primary schools would necessitate the removal of the statement in the Health Education syllabus of 1945 “that there is no place in the primary school for group or class instruction in sex education”.²³ In fact the Ross report included a recommendation that the statement be removed.

Reactions to the report: the first phase

Compared to the current state of affairs when the time allowed for consultation is very short, the timeframe for the Ross Report seems generous, enabling two kinds of consultation to take place. The first phase was “in house” when a number of people representing a range of health, education church, welfare and parent groups²⁴ were invited to comment on the “confidential” draft report. One person invited to comment was the Head of the Counselling Service at a New Zealand university. Her comments are significant because they show that it was not just the “conservative” groups who were critical of the report. The counsellor’s critique provides an example of a liberal critical perspective. The counsellor acknowledged the complexity and contentious nature of the task, but was uncomplimentary regarding the committee’s draft:

²¹ Ross Report, p. 13.

²² Ross Report, p. 21.

²³ Health Education syllabus, Department of Education, 1945, p. 2.

²⁴ Consultants included: the Director of Catholic Education, the head of Sociology and Social Work at Victoria University, President of the NZ Parent Teacher Association, the Principal of Hagley High School (Christchurch), the Director of the National Marriage Guidance Council, the President of STANZ (Student Teachers' Association of NZ), and representatives from The Salvation Army, National Council of Women, Maori Womens' Welfare League and Auckland University.

while there are flashes of light in the Report, the efforts of the Committee to work from a guarded approach has, I feel, served to produce a document which is evasive, defensive, out of step with the times and often moralistic and condemning.²⁵

The counsellor went on to offer a number of comments relating to attitudes and the content of the draft. A reservation concerning the committee's focus was raised:

Despite its statement to the contrary, I have the strong impression that the Committee is very much wanting to contain social and sexual " problems."²⁶

The writer was also concerned about the committee's attitude towards family and family life which she considered to be "often directly and indirectly narrow, defensive and condemnatory", and went on to argue for a broader and more critical approach:

If people are to be provided with a moral education that is to be of help to them in the complex decisions they are likely to be faced with in life, it is not enough to be told that one has to be responsible and not hurt others, that the roles of wife, husband and parent are the only bases for a successful adult life, that divorce is a problem and by implication, that homosexuality and having illegitimate children are wicked.²⁷

The counsellor expressed the view that the draft report showed a "remarkable lack of attention" to one of the terms of reference, the key area of sexual behaviour and human reproduction. While in agreement with the committee that information alone was inadequate, the counsellor was adamant that without

at least some statement to the effect that students at all levels should have access to accurate information pertaining to matters of sex and sexuality, both as a way of understanding themselves and others ... any attempt at a programme of sex education is sterile.²⁸

The researcher has not had access to the draft or the comments from other consultants, but from this one example it seems that this was indeed consultation at work because a number of the points raised by the counsellor (and others

²⁵ ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2 Box 1728.

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *ibid.*

perhaps) can be seen to have been addressed in the final draft. Several examples follow:

I would take issue with the concepts of education at the primary and intermediate level that look primarily to the models of seed planting and reproduction in animals as major models, and if the report stands as it is at the moment, this is how these statements will be taken.

There are no mentions of these models in the final report:

There is some suggestion from the bibliography that the Committee has not read widely enough. I wonder why the Schofield Report for example, has not been included.

The Schofield report is listed in the references for the final report:

The attitudes towards family and family life are often directly and indirectly narrow, defensive and condemnatory.²⁹

It would appear that the report has made its definition of family a little more inclusive: the junior primary section suggests that one of the topics should be the "different kinds of family groups", and the senior primary section of the proposed teaching programme includes:

the importance and influence of the family or other social groups for meeting needs; (eg. solo parents, single children, large families, the extended family).³⁰

The views of an academic, Professor Philip Smithells (Director of the School of Physical Education at Otago University), raises a number of issues relevant to a discussion of the Ross Report including difficulties associated with the consultation process. The tone of the letter is somewhat disgruntled as Smithells feels he has been prevented from sharing some important things about the School of Physical Education's course of studies and sex education in schools because at the time of writing, he had not been consulted. In the opening paragraph of his letter dated July 1973 (during the time when the Ross committee would have been meeting), he tells Ross that he heard about the activities of the committee when a staff member had "called my attention to a

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ *ibid.*

reference in the Womens Weekly of May 28th about a document your Unit is preparing on the general question of sex education which will be sent to PTA's etc, for comment."³¹

Smithells asked for a copy of the report when it became available and then made his contribution. Given that he would have been unaware of the terms of reference for the committee, his comments are surprisingly relevant and would have provided the committee with valuable information. It would seem likely that Ross took some of his comments back to the committee, particularly those which gave substance to the need for sex education to be taught as part of human development and relationships:

You may or may not be aware that for the last 24 years we have been regularly giving our students a course into which sex education comes. It has always been my view that it should not be taught basically as something separate but built into a course on mental health and human relationships and so far our course has been in that context.³²

Smithells emphasised the crucial importance of human relationships, and makes the case that other topics should be taught within this framework:

At the Lopdell House course last October, which produced a report which I am sure you have seen, we were much more concerned with the general field of human relationships than we were with particular questions such as drugs, tobacco and sexual behaviour.³³

Smithells also made the point that teacher attitudes and the atmosphere of the school should be taken into account when teaching sex education.

The letter ended with a plea for future involvement and a reference to the Thomas Committee which had produced its report in 1943.

Perhaps what I'm really saying is that it would be nice, and it might be valuable, if sometime I could have a session with you and some of your team about the kind of things that go on here because I am quite sure that there is no one else in your department who could tell you. And of course it should be said that a lot that goes on here

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *ibid.*

³³ *ibid.*

was implied in the evidence before the Thomas Committee

Smithell's initiative was acknowledged by the first copies of the Ross Report "consultants".

The dilemma of who to consult was touched upon at the Curriculum Development meeting. A discussion on the composition of the committees took place, and the following is noted in the minutes:

Discussion on Committee membership led to views that many are not necessarily the best people available.³⁵

The selection of members for the committees continued to be a contested and controversial, as in the case of sex education.

Reactions to the report: the second case

The Ross Report was intended to generate discussion about human development and relationships education. Despite the Department of Education's efforts to encourage debate within this broad context, public responses to the document had a narrower focus, being particularly concerned with sex education.

At a Curriculum Development Meeting in July 1974, Ross had commented that it had been:

unfortunate that many of the discussion groups also had on the same programme or more of the Merry Go Round series of films on the biology of sex. This tends to give a distorted view. The committee emphasises that this is a small part only of the whole topic of human development and relationships.³⁶

which our sub-committee put before the department; a circulation list for 30 years ago.³⁴

includes his name under the heading of "consultants".

Development meeting of 1 April, 1977. committees took place, and the following

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various groups discussing moral education especially where the issues were very controversial.

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³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ ABEP W4262, 34/1/53, Pt 1 Box 172

Responses to the Ross Report material on sex education ranged from endorsement to strong criticism. Responses which received the greatest media attention were not surprisingly those which were the most critical. The *New Zealand Herald*³⁷ printed the transcript of a speech given by Patricia Bartlett³⁸ under the headline, "Booklet prepared as hastily as a shotgun marriage". The speech had been delivered to "almost 200 people at Arahanga Intermediate School in November of 1974". An introduction to the speech described the Ross Report as "a booklet which had found intense opposition in New Zealand's crusader for continence, Patricia Bartlett". Bartlett used the comments of Professor Bonham³⁹ of Auckland University (and National Womens' Hospital) as a starting point for her criticism. According to Bartlett, Bonham made a statement on television that the discussion paper was "brilliant and that a certain frustrated individual was criticising it." (Bartlett assumes that the individual referred to is herself).

The acrimonious and personal nature of the debate is an example of the intensity of feeling about sex education; later in the speech, Bartlett refers to Professor Bonham's "pagan philosophy of no self control before marriage".⁴⁰

A second important aspect of the speech is the reference to feelings of disempowerment through not having access to the committee. Bartlett was concerned that the committee of twelve who were chosen to formulate the discussion paper were not representative: "neither of the two selected independent schools were from the Catholic school system and nor was there a representative from our Maori or Polynesian people". Bartlett was also concerned with the degree of secrecy which had been a feature of the consultation process: "It is the right of the community to know the organisations and the individuals within the churches who were consulted".⁴¹

Exclusion from the consultation process was a point taken up by the

³⁷ *New Zealand Herald*, extract found in Department of Education files, ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 1 Box 1728.

³⁸ Bartlett was founder of the Society for the Protection of Community Standards and a well known campaigner on moral issues through the 1970s and 1980s.

³⁹ Bonham was one of the consultants for the draft report.

⁴⁰ *New Zealand Herald* extract found in Department of Education files, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

conservative pressure group the Concerned Parents' Association⁴² which began making its presence felt around the time the Ross Report was released. In 1974 the Christchurch group connected with the CPA sent out a collection of papers to school committees around New Zealand. The collection included a letter to each chairman explaining the purpose of the mailing. The letter referred to "sample sex education material that is being circulated by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)"⁴³, and expressed alarm over lack of opportunities for parents to share their opinions on the sex education programme (the Ross Report) which the CPA feared was about to be implemented:

It would appear that this material has been prepared and circulated on the assumption that the Department of Education will introduce the programme, regardless of any expression of parents' opinion. If we, as parents, do not now establish our rights over what our children are being taught and exposed to, we may lose these once and for all.⁴⁴

The group of concerned parents from Christchurch predicted further exclusion for parents when it expressed dismay that the Department of Education was preparing another syllabus on moral and religious education "in a similar manner to the Human Development and Relationships proposals, under the guidance of another educational expert from England".⁴⁵

Patricia Bartlett and the CPA did not have access to the means of communication used by such groups as the NZEI and PPTA, so had to develop other means of influencing public opinion. In order to make an impact the messages of those associated with the CPA were of necessity highly selective with regard to the language and issues they chose.

One of the messages used by the CPA to powerful effect was disempowerment. An early example occurs in this 1974 collection. The CPA alerted parents to

⁴² The Concerned Parents' Association (CPA) of the late 1970s and 1980s is described in subsequent chapters.

⁴³ The material referred to was in *Set* 74:2, published by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. The first edition of SET was published in May of 1974. Copies were distributed direct from NZCER to all state and private schools, teachers' colleges, technical institutes and universities. Additional copies went to inspectors and Department of Education staff.

⁴⁴ Letter from Christchurch branch of CPA, 'New Zealand Family Planning Association': Records (MS-Group-0548) Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref No 97-035-12/3 (Restricted file).

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

their powerlessness in the face of curriculum innovations:

Children have already been introduced to "New Maths" and "New Social Studies" and some are having the "New English". Unless parents take some prompt action to safeguard children, they will soon have the "New Human Development" and the "New Morality".⁴⁶

McGeorge (1977) makes an interesting comparison between the controversy over the Ross report (the report itself was described by him as "mild"⁴⁷) and the discussions around sex education in 1912. McGeorge observes there was 'one striking difference: in 1912 the possibility that home and school might not teach the same beliefs and values was hardly an issue - while in the 1970s it was the crux of the matter'.⁴⁸ The CPA exhorted parents to exercise their rights and make sure that they had their say about what should be taught in schools. Speculating that schools might use a resource originating from the Family Planning Association in Britain, a comic called *Too Great A Risk*⁴⁹, as part of their "moral education", and noting that Amos has requested "grass roots" views, the newsletter concludes with the following statement:

WE BELIEVE THAT ALL CONCERNED PARENTS SHOULD IMMEDIATELY TAKE STEPS TO CLARIFY THEIR RIGHTS, AND TO EXERT INFLUENCE UPON THOSE WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT IN OUR SCHOOLS.⁵⁰

A number of school committees and parent groups responded to the invitation to participate in debate about the "role of the school in the broad fields of human development and family and personal relationships, including sex education".⁵¹

Four Catholic groups⁵² sent the Department their responses: St Dominic's

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ C. McGeorge, "Some old wine and some new bottles; religious and moral education in New Zealand", *Journal of Moral Education*, 3:4 (1975), p. 215-23.

⁴⁸ C. McGeorge, "Sex Education in 1912", *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 12:2 (Nov 1977).

⁴⁹ "Too Great A Risk", a resource for sex education produced by the South West London branch of the British Family Planning Association and reprinted with permission by the NZCER in *Set*, 2 (1974).

⁵⁰ Letter from Christchurch branch of CPA. Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref No 97-035-12/3. (Restricted file).

⁵¹ Ross Report, p. 5.

⁵² Copies of the four documents referred to were given to the author by Sr M De Porres RSM, archivist at the Library and Archives of the Archdiocese of Wellington.

Primary School Home and School Association⁵³ from Dunedin and three other Catholic groupings. These were the Christchurch Diocesan Federation of Catholic Parent -Teacher Home and School Associations⁵⁴, a special study group from the Roman Catholic Community in Dunedin⁵⁵, and the subcommittee established by the executive of the Wellington Catholic Education Board.⁵⁶ These groups could be expected to be critical of the Ross Report's recommendations because of the avowed religious basis of education in Catholic schools. The reactions of these four schools give an indication of how the Ross Report initiated intense debate and also prefigure subsequent debate on sex education. An analysis of material produced by the groups also shows that while they were critical of much of the Ross Report, they endorsed the possibility of developing human development and relationship programmes in schools and offered substantial areas for negotiation. Most significantly, there is a link between their recommendations and ensuing work in consultation.

The Ross Committee's intention of stimulating public discussion on what it considered to be the wider issues was not what these groups wished to discuss. The three groups denied that there was a wider debate, and devoted their energies to claiming the primary right of parents to address all aspects of human development and relationships with their children and rejecting classroom based sex education in both primary and secondary schools. As far as they were concerned, sex education was the only new element in the committee's proposals:

After a detailed study of the booklet and proposed programme we decided that much of its content is already used in our schools in the religious education programme, health and social studies syllabi, and the only area that is not being taught in Primary Schools is the part relating to sex education.⁵⁷

The H. D. &R. report is deceptive, deliberately or otherwise in that most of the acceptable material it proposes to teach is already covered in the education system. Sex instruction is purported to

⁵³A *Study of the Report, Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum*, St Dominic's Primary School Home and School Association, Dunedin, October 1974.

⁵⁴ Christchurch Diocesan Federation of Catholic Parent -Teacher Home and School Associations, undated.

⁵⁵ *Submissions to the Committee on Health and Social Education*: Dunedin 1973.

⁵⁶ *Report of the Special Sub-Committee established by the Executive of the Wellington Catholic Education Board*, 1974.

⁵⁷ Christchurch Diocesan Federation Of Parent -Teacher Home and School Associations, undated, p. 1.

be only a minor part of the programme but in fact is the only section that is new and is therefore the subject of this study.⁵⁸

Although the groups focussed on sex education and dismissed the Ross Report's invitation to a wider debate, there are strong similarities between the positions held by the Ross Committee and the Catholic groups. All gave primacy to the family in human development education, and all argued that sex education was more than the transmission of biological information.

Examples of a shared understanding of what was involved in sex education is illustrated in the following two extracts. The first example is from the Ross Report. One of the terms of reference for the Ross Committee was to produce developmentally appropriate courses which would:

include aspects of human physiology such as human reproduction from conception through pregnancy to childbirth, as well as the moral and social implications of sexual behaviour including family and child -parent relationships.⁵⁹

The second example is from the Catholic study group:

We have always opposed an excessively biological approach to sex education, holding that true sex education cannot be divorced from the study of values. It is only when values and meanings accompany sexual information that it makes sense.⁶⁰

Another instance of some degree of common ground between the Ross Committee and the Catholic groups is that although all the groups upheld the family as the ideal environment for sex education, claiming a primary role for parents did not deny a role for schools in sex education. Neither the Ross Report nor the material produced by the Catholic groups excluded the role of schools, but there were very different expectations. One of the basic assumptions of the Ross Report was that :

In supporting the influence of the family schools should ensure that all children have the opportunities to develop personally and in their relationships with others.⁶¹

⁵⁸ St. Dominic's Home and School Association, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Ross Report, p. 6.

⁶⁰ *Submissions to the Committee on Health and Social Education*, Dunedin, 1973.

⁶¹ Ross Report, p. 8.

However, the Dunedin study group argued that parental rights must be protected and therefore put the emphasis on the controlling influence of parents. If the school is to offer instruction, it ought to be done in such a way that:

It should be mandatory for the principal of the school to call a meeting at which he consults with parents and discusses all material before he implements any programme of Human Development and Relationships or any address by non staff members on this subject. At this consultation, he would be required to obtain the approval of a majority of those parents whose children would be involved, and only then should such programmes be implemented in the school. Parents should also have the right to withdraw their child or children from any programme. We consider that this consultation is absolutely essential if the school is to co-operate with parents and help their children 'develop and internalise a personal set of values in the light of which they can live their lives'.⁶²

This statement is significant because it foreshadowed the way parental rights were included in departmental initiatives, and has particular relevance for the consultation, the syllabus development and the legislation associated with the revision of the Health Education syllabus during the 1980s.

The Catholic groups proposed some ways of providing "prudent sex education".⁶³ One proposal suggested the use of the Royal New Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children, (the Plunket Society) as a means of achieving this goal. The Plunket Society was recommended for the task because it was considered that the society could provide national coverage, had a very favourable public profile, had no denominational affiliations, and was motivated by idealism.

Referring to a quotation from the Society's Director of Medical Services, Dr Neil Begg,⁶⁴ it was stated that his view of sex education:

comes from a non-denominational, non-political organisation which above all remains a creation and reflection of ordinary New Zealanders who work for it throughout the country. It thus

⁶² Submissions to the Committee on Health and Social Education, 1973, p. 2.

⁶³ St. Dominics Home and School Association, p. 11.

⁶⁴ See N. Begg, *The New Zealand Child and His Family*, Christchurch: New Zealand Plunket Society, 1970.

reflects their values, values which at present find it hard to get a hearing. It is also basically Christian.⁶⁵

Other suggestions outlined content for a human development programme following the template provided by the Ross Report. These suggestions were based on the twin assumptions of parental involvement and programmes taking place within the context of "religious and philosophical ideals."⁶⁶

Although Amos had on several occasions stated that sex education would not be compulsory in New Zealand schools and individual schools could turn down sex education programmes,⁶⁷ the groups were very concerned that although there would be no universal compulsion, "it does not allow for the minority of parents where it is voted into a school by a majority vote, especially where there is no alternative school".⁶⁸

Suspicion of the Education Department's role was a factor in all the groups' criticism. The Education Department's development of the Ross Report was criticised by the St Dominic's group for not carrying out research about the effects of sex education programmes overseas. St Dominics proposed that such a study should be undertaken but not by the Department because:

it has already shown, through the way in which this booklet was prepared, that it has made up its mind. IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT THIS MATTER SHOULD BE TAKEN OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR A PROPER EVALUATION.⁶⁹

According to the Christchurch group, Amos had indicated at a national conference of the Parent Teachers' Federation that the "government is seriously thinking of implementing a study in moral values, that study to be made independently of the department".⁷⁰

The Catholic education groups shared the CPA's concern that decisions were being made without sufficient consultation. The St Dominic's group were very

⁶⁵ St. Dominics Home and School Association, p. 12.

⁶⁶ Submissions to the Committee on Health and Social Education, 1973, p. 1.

⁶⁷ For an example of such a statement see the *Christchurch Star*, 29 July, 1974.

⁶⁸ Christchurch Diocesan Federation Of Parent -Teacher Home and School Associations, undated, p. 1.

⁶⁹ St. Dominics Home and School Association, p. 8.

⁷⁰ Christchurch Diocesan Federation Of Parent -Teacher Home and School Associations, undated, p. 8.

concerned about the attitude of the Department, citing insufficient copies of the Ross Report, the absence of any official representative of the Catholic schools system, and claiming that the source material for the report was "almost entirely pro-classroom sex education".⁷¹

St Dominics also registered an emphatic protest :

that the department's planners have pushed on preparing course material and have begun distributing it even though both the late Prime Minister, Mr Kirk, and the present Minister of Education, Mr Amos, have given public assurances that nothing will be undertaken until the views of parents have been fully ascertained.⁷²

St Dominics made reference to the *Too Great A Risk* comic included in the NZCER's resource kit ⁷³ which had been distributed to all state and private schools, and made the point that:

THE FACT THAT SUCH A DOCUMENT SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IS AN INDICATION OF HOW LITTLE EDUCATIONALISTS⁷⁴ ARE AWARE OF , OR CARE FOR, THE BELIEFS HELD BY THE CHURCH WHICH MAINTAINS THOSE SCHOOLS.⁷⁵

Many of the concerns about lack of consultation and the movement of schools from academic to social aspects of education can be seen in the context of critiques dating back to the Thomas Report and earlier. St Dominic's concern over the absence of an official Catholic representative on the Ross Committee, for example, echoes concerns over the exclusion of a Catholic representative from the Thomas Committee.

The Catholic study group argued that if human development was taught in schools it should not be part of Health and Social Education programmes:

a more appropriate place for sex education would be in the

⁷¹ St. Dominic's Home and School Association, p. 4.

⁷² *ibid.*

⁷³ NZCER, *Set*, 74:2.

⁷⁴ See R. Openshaw, *The Unresolved Struggle: consensus and conflict in New Zealand state post-primary education*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1995, for a discussion of a common theme in the literature of conservative protest groups in the 1970s: that the Department of Education represented an essentially out-of-control Left-Liberalism which was not accountable.

⁷⁵ St. Dominic's Home and School Association, p. 5.

school syllabus on Social Studies where teachers and class are better prepared to see these questions in the whole context of humanity in its relationships.⁷⁶

According to the NZEI, teachers needed time to work through the Ross Report and discuss their ideas with one another. At the Curriculum Development Unit meeting of July 1974, Ross talked about some reactions to the report including that of the NZEI which was "of the opinion that teachers must be taken through the booklet and given time to discuss the concepts involved".⁷⁷ Simmonds, the National Secretary of NZEI, had written to the Director General of Education earlier in the year asking Dobbs to ensure that more copies of the document be made available so that all teachers would have the opportunity to become "fully acquainted with the document".⁷⁸

The Ross Report stressed the pivotal role of teachers in human development and relationships programmes. The Report suggested that teachers involved in such programmes must have certain qualities such as a knowledge of human development, pupils and society, emotional maturity, and a concern for the feelings and viewpoints of others. The selection of teachers for programmes and suggestions for co-operative planning and the use of community resources was discussed, and the committee also noted the importance of schools working with "voluntary and Government supportive agencies"⁷⁹ which could involve seeking specialised information and in some cases using specialists in the classroom to assist with programmes. In order for teachers to have the capacity to carry out successful programmes, the Ross Report emphasised the crucial importance of teacher development:

The committee believes that any plan for the implementation of programmes in human development and relationships will stand or fall on the quality and knowledge of the teachers in the schools. For practising teachers it believes that in-service courses and the help of advisory teachers are essential steps in implementing programmes. For teachers undergoing initial training it believes that the teachers colleges should devise courses that will help students to understand the nature of their own feelings and attitudes about human development, relationships and sexuality.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ *Submissions to the Committee on Health and Social Education*, 1973.

⁷⁷ CDU Minutes, July 1974, ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Box 1713.

⁷⁸ Letter from Simmonds to Dobbs, *ibid.*

⁷⁹ The Ross Report, p. 33.

⁸⁰ The Ross Report, p. 32.

The importance of professional development for teachers was also noted in a statement issued by the Executive of the Wellington Catholic Education Board, and referred to by the subcommittee set up by the Executive. The apprehension of parents was alluded to in the statement and teacher training recommended:

There is among parents a well-founded suspicion and fear concerning the calibre of some of the teachers and their ability to implement this type of programme. It must be borne in mind also that in this climate of confused public opinion and divided public support, some teachers are apprehensive as to the task entrusted to them. For that very reason, they have the right to expect that their own training in Human Development and Relationships will be thorough so that their partnership with parents will be one of mutual trust and confidence.⁸¹

Support for "the current tentative approach to sex education" by some teachers is illustrated by the initiative of a group of principals from Auckland.⁸² In April 1974 a series of lectures was organised by the Auckland Headmasters' Association. In the foreword to the transcripts of the lectures, the convener of the series posed the question:

How can biologists, behaviourists, theologians and educationalists insist in good conscience upon the continued existence of a massive state of ignorance of human sexual response, to the detriment of the well-being of millions of individuals?⁸³

The convener went on to outline the efforts of the Headmasters' Association to:

transcend the well-recognised , well-worn, and enduring fears-
fear of public opinion
fear of social consequence
fear of religious intolerance
fear of political pressure, and-above all,
fear of bigotry and prejudice.⁸⁴

The Headmasters' Association hoped that the lectures presented by Rev.

⁸¹Statement referred to in the Report of the Special Sub-Committee established by the Executive of the Wellington Catholic Education Board, 1974.

⁸² R. Sanders (ed.), *Green for Go: Responsibility for Sex Education*, Auckland Headmasters' Association Course Lectures, 1974.

⁸³ *ibid*, p. 6.

⁸⁴ *ibid*, p. 7.

Jeremy Shaw, Mr Gordon Tait, Dr Carol Shand and Professor H. H. Schaefer would contribute to public debate about sex education.

The Department of Education and the Ross Report

The Education Department appeared to have decided that interest generated by the discussion paper should be harnessed without delay. Planning for the next stage was already in hand by mid 1974. In the minutes of the 12 July meeting of the Education Department's Curriculum Development Unit it is noted with reference to the *Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum*:

Inspectors from each District are soon to be briefed by the Superintendent of Curriculum Development so they can interpret the booklet for their colleagues and next term run courses for primary heads.⁸⁵

One of the courses organised by the department was the Primary National Course in Health Education and Fitness in Schools held at Lopdell House for a week in May 1974. The purpose of this course was to discuss the implementation of Health Education in schools with particular reference to content and methods. It was intended that this course would be the catalyst for local courses on the same topic. A report on the national course from the office of the District Senior Inspector of Schools in Invercargill noted that the national course also examined the reactions to the Ross Report which were available to the districts at that time.

There was a general view that the extreme views getting publicity did not reflect the range of true range of opinion and that groups should report the positive attitudes from communities which did accept the need for programmes outlined in the booklet. These reports should be sent directly to the Director General. It was also considered that the Department should actively promote the positive aspects of the booklet.⁸⁶

A letter from E.J.Simmonds, NZEI National Secretary, to the Director General of Education (Dobbs) in May 1974 shows that the teachers (through their union)

⁸⁵ ABEP W4262, 34/12/17.

⁸⁶ Report on the Primary National Course in Health Education and Fitness (20-24 May, 1974) from the office of the District Senior Inspector, Invercargill. ABEP W4262, 40/13/18 (Restricted file).

were involved in the process. Simmonds let Dobbs know that B.W. Kelly and M. Gianotti were to be the NZEI representatives nominated by the executive to meet with Ross and other departmental officials to discuss local initiatives:

This group would discuss specific methods of setting up a small pilot scheme and would consider such questions as who would organise pilot schemes, the materials which might become necessary and how and to what extent parents might be involved.⁸⁷

An extract from the standard response which was sent out by Ross (for the Director General) to those who had conveyed their views to the Education Department was cautious, and certainly gave no indication of the initiatives that were underway:

As you know this booklet is a discussion paper and I am pleased to have your views about it. I should like you to know they will be taken into account, if, and when any policy changes are being considered.⁸⁸

The release of the Ross Report continued to produce the desired results as many individuals and groups discussed health and social education. So great was demand for the booklet that there were distribution problems. An initial administrative problem concerned the number of copies that were available to the public. The Education Department had underestimated the level of response to the report and was not able to provide sufficient copies. The first printing run of 20,000 booklets was soon exhausted and a further 40,000 copies were produced to meet the demand.

Difficulties in acquiring copies of the report added to the sense of unease about the human development and relationships proposals:

my main protest is the fact that parents have been asked to vote whether or not they want sex education in schools without knowing what will be taught. The booklet has not been readily available and most parents regard sex education as a sort of human biology course.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Letter from Simmonds to Dobbs, ABEP W4262, 34/12/17, Pt 2.

⁸⁸ DGO's letter, ABEP W4262, 34/12/17 Pt 3.

⁸⁹ Letter to the Minister of Education, 14/3/74, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

The level of public debate seemed to have taken the Education Department by surprise. Problems of supply were followed by difficulties in analysing the material which had been generated by the report. A Curriculum Development meeting of April 1977 reflected on that time and it was noted in the minutes that:

Timing was bad, and unit was not really able to cope with the responses in terms of value and weight being given to views. People who wrote in

- Didn't trust teachers to do the job
- Saw it as the parents' job, but agreed not all know how to do it.⁹⁰

The Ross Report's purpose was to stimulate discussion and for individuals and groups, including teachers, to make their views known to the Education Department. The report's success in generating discussion was acknowledged in the Report of the Department of Education of 31 March 1976. The Department noted that the Ross Report:

stimulated public discussion and the expression of a wide and conflicting range of opinions. The Department accepts the obligation to continue to take heed of these views and to find ways of implementing them that respects the wishes of both majority and minority groups in society.⁹¹

This statement indicates two areas of ongoing difficulty for the Department. Both concern consultation. Firstly, how are consultants' viewpoints to be analysed and interpreted, and secondly, what is to be done as a result of consultation? These two questions were to become issues for the 1970s and 1980s, and in particular, for the two major consultations of the period, the Johnson Report of 1977 and the Health Education Syllabus. The next chapter considers the Johnson Report.

⁹⁰ Curriculum Unit Meetings, ABEP 34/1/53 , W4262 Pt 2, Box 1713.

⁹¹ Report of the Department of Education of 31 March 1976, in 'Parliamentary Papers' belonging to Information Services, Ministry of Education, Wellington, p. 14

CHAPTER SIX: T noral education debate: the Johnson Report

A climate of consultation

The OECD¹ Examiners who visit with some "general observations" section headed "A Consensual Approach" value attached to consensus in education:

Although education in New Zealand as we have already stated, has a long tradition of consultation, to involving non-professionals alike, in the processes of choice and decision-making and, more particularly, at local level.³

In another section the Examiners refer to the "family" nature of the system and cite 'extensive references to the views of New Zealand educators as a reflection of the tradition of widespread consultation and lay participation in decision making'. The Examiners:

With a few exceptions, the aim of consultation has produced a remarkable consensus about the objectives and processes of education.⁴

The "few exceptions" identified by the Examiners in moral education: "aspects of religious education."⁵

If consultation is supposed to produce a consensus, this aim was, and continues to be, an unrealisable goal. The extent of consensus in moral education is

¹ New Zealand became a signatory to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in May of 1973. In 1973, Karmel, Vice Chancellor of the Australian National University visited New Zealand to review tertiary education policy with reference to tertiary working life.

² *Reviews of National Policies For Education*

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵ *ibid.*

New Zealand in 1982 prefaced their report about New Zealand's education system. In a section headed "A Consensual Approach to Education", the Examiners noted the extent of consensus in education:

New Zealand is centrally directed, there is a long-standing commitment to consultation with the whole community, professionals and non-professionals alike, in the processes of choice and decision-making, in the management of institutions and in the management of institutions.

On the cohesive nature of the system, the Examiners refer to the "family" nature of the system, and cite 'extensive references to the views of New Zealand educators as a reflection of the tradition of widespread consultation and lay participation in decision making'. The Examiners:

... the long-standing practice of consultation has produced a remarkable consensus about the objectives and processes of education that should characterise New Zealand education.

The Examiners were concerned with moral education, the inculcation of values and sex education.

If consultation is supposed to produce a consensus, this aim was, and continues to be, an unrealisable goal. The extent of consensus in moral education is

... the long-standing practice of consultation has produced a remarkable consensus about the objectives and processes of education that should characterise New Zealand education.

New Zealand, Paris: OECD, 1983, p. 22.

nicely summed up by the OECD Examiners in 1982:

A multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, tolerant and diverse society involves some loss of social cohesion. It is no longer possible to believe that all good men and women adhere to a single, comprehensible set of personal and social values, which can readily be embodied not only in educational structures and processes, but also relied upon to characterise family, neighbourhood and community life. ⁶

Nevertheless, even in this difficult area, consultation was very evident in the work of the Committee on Health and Social Education, the group which in 1977 produced *Growing Learning and Sharing* (the report is usually referred to as the Johnson Report after its chairman, J. G. Johnson⁷). The Johnson Report was the most extensive and significant of the series of reports produced during the 1970s.⁸ The deliberations spanned two governments and three ministers of education.⁹ The Johnson Report is notable for the immense investment of time involved in its production and subsequent debate, and for the heat which was generated during the process. At the end of it all, many points raised by the committee were taken further and resulted in some new directions for schools in such areas as guidance, special needs and outdoor education. This was not the case for moral education. The sections of the report which concerned moral education were fiercely contested, and implementation issues for moral education in schools continue into the twenty first century.

The Johnson Report and the ensuing debate are complex matters and cannot be done justice in this research. The two features of the report relevant to this research are firstly, the difficulties which inevitably surface when there is extensive consultation on moral education and secondly, the continued interest of the Department of Education in moral education and the ways in which it

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Garfield Johnson was principal of Hillary College (he retired in January 1977). An early indication of his interest and involvement in national educational initiatives for the Department of Education was his role as chair of the committee which produced the *Report of the Committee on Communication Between Schools and Parents*, in 1973.

⁸ In L. W. Gandar's introduction to *Education*, Number 4 (1978) (a special issue on the Johnson Report) he noted: 'The Johnson Committee studied reports from earlier committees on education, and its Report should be considered along with reports such as *Towards Partnership*.' These reports are discussed in Chapter four of this thesis.

⁹ The ministers were P. Amos, L. Gandar and M. Wellington. There was a change of government from Labour to National in 1975.

continued to move in this area, despite an unsupportive Minister of Education¹⁰ and strong campaigns mounted by morally conservative pressure groups.

The Committee on Health and Social Education

A ministerial committee was set up in December 1975 by Phil Amos, Labour's Minister of Education. The committee had been established with the intention of placing the Ross Report's recommendations in a broader context. Before the Committee met, the Labour Government was replaced by National on December 12, 1975.

The Johnson Committee met for the first time in March 1976 after the new Minister, Les Gandar, had confirmed the Committee's establishment and approved its terms of reference. The introduction to the Johnson Report notes that while confirming the terms of reference, Gandar had also asked the Committee to consider a wider range of social and moral issues. In his address to the Committee's first meeting Gandar had:

referred the members to a number of concerns that had been in the public mind over a number of years. The National Party Election Statement for instance referred to 'promoting sound family relationships, effective work, responsible citizenship, cultural enjoyment and adaptability to change'.¹¹

When the Report was received by Gandar, the Minister assured the public that he would take no action on the report until public reaction had been gauged:

It is my intention that the public have one year in which to consider the recommendations and let my department have their comments.¹²

Membership

The members of the committee came together on numerous occasions and during some of these periods lived together for up to a week. A short time spent

¹⁰ L. W. Gandar, considered to be sympathetic to the liberal view point, was replaced by the morally conservative M. L. Wellington in 1978.

¹¹ "Growing, Sharing and Learning", The Report of the Committee on Health and Social Education. Wellington: Department of Education, 1977, henceforth referred to as the Johnson Report, p. 6.

¹² *ibid*, p. 2.

on the Uwhiarai marae is indicative of Garfield Johnson's recognition of Maori as tangata whenua. On occasions the Johnson Committee met as three groups which were based in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland. Committee membership included representatives from teacher unions, public health, health professionals, church, business, tertiary institutions, schools¹³, the police and community organisations. There was also a representative from the Curriculum Development Unit of the Education Department, Peter MacPherson.¹⁴ MacPherson and Jock Crawford (a departmental District Advisor in Physical Education who acted as secretary for the Committee) were accorded special mention by Garfield Johnson at the beginning of the report:

All members of the committee join with me in expressing our gratitude for the great deal of work done by our liaison officer with the Department of Education, Peter McPherson and especially the secretary, Jock Crawford.¹⁵

Given the personal, professional and academic relationships on the committee the Johnson Committee was a tight knit group. The personal and professional links between members of the Johnson Committee and the Education Department were noted by Jack Mulheron, Secretary of the Committee for the Defence of Secular Education. Writing in March 1979, Mulheron, stated:

I think that you would be interested in comparing J.M.Print's address to the Religious Education Course, Lopdell House 1979 with Section 2.4 of the Johnson Report. We are becoming particularly interested in the activities of J.R.O'Connor who was the course director. His unacknowledged contribution to the Johnson Report is the justification for recommendation 2.22.¹⁶

Some of the submissions on the Johnson Report criticised the committees's terms of reference and the membership of the committee; the contentious nature of the committee's work was signalled at this early stage. The comments on membership of the committee are significant because a number of them

¹³ Murray Print, principal of Penrose High School at this time in Auckland and later principal of Freyberg High School in Palmerston North, was also a member of the Educational Development Conference's Aims and Objectives Working Party. See section on the EDC, Chapter 4. Print became Principal of Auckland Secondary Teachers' College (which would later become part of the Auckland College of Education).

¹⁴ See mention of some of Macpherson's contributions to the CDU in Chapter 3.

¹⁵ Johnson Report, p. 3.

¹⁶ Letter from Mulheron to Snook, March 1, 1979, 'Correspondence with Ivan Snook', Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref. 5541-031.

foreshadow themes which were evident in responses to the Johnson Report. Three themes that emerged from the submissions were; a concern that employment issues were not being addressed; difficulties in translating ideals into school and classroom practice and a lack of academic rigour which accounted for interpretation problems. These three themes are exemplified in the following comments about membership.

The Seatoun School Council felt that many of the Committee on Health and Social Education members knew about teaching, but:

none could properly be called an employer concerned with the hiring, firing, training and motivation of staff. Their expertise in what to teach is therefore open to serious doubt.¹⁷

The National Council of Women wanted more practising teachers on the Committee because this would have:

ensured direct classroom contact (and) would have avoided some of the impractical idealism (of the Johnson Report).¹⁸

D. C. Shields, senior lecturer in education at the University of Waikato, noted many "semantic and logical confusions" and concluded that :

no philosopher of education could have possibly been on the Committee. ... As in most other areas of life we are paying the price for lack of expertise, and so it is with this document.¹⁹

The Report

The report supported the recommendations of the Ross Report and widened the basis of discussion to include other issues. It consisted of an introduction followed by four sections, and concluded with a list of seventy recommendations and consequent priorities. The four sections were: Major Concerns for Schools, The Community and its Contribution, Some Problems for the School-Parent-

¹⁷ Submission from Seatoun School Council, July 1979, cited in the analysis of the public submissions received by the Minister of Education, M. Wellington by Link Consultants, p. 21. Henceforth referred to as The Link Report. The significance of the Link Report is discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁸ *ibid* p. 21.

¹⁹ Newspaper article commissioned by the Education Development Association, Southland, cited in the Link Report, p. 22.

Community Partnership, and Implementation.

The biggest section of the Report is taken up with section two, "Major Concerns for Schools". This section includes the Committee's views on Climate; Guidance; Moral, spiritual and values education; Education about human development and relationships; Outdoor education; Physical Education and Teacher training.

In the introduction to the issue of *Education*²⁰ devoted to comment on the Johnson Report, Gandar (then Minister of Education) commented:

Many people will be particularly interested in the recommendations relating to human development and relationships. This section of the Report is worthy of special consideration and I have made it clear that I will make no decision on the teaching of human development and relationships until there has been sufficient discussion of this part of the report.²¹

The Minister commended all aspects of health and social education covered in the report to the reader and expressed the hope that

it is not only the pages relating to human development and relationships that are read.²²

The Johnson Report encapsulated some of the more liberal sexual attitudes of the 1970s. Gandar's reassurance that he would move with caution in the area of human development indicates political sensitivity. It was not surprising that the human development and relationships component of the Johnson Report became the focus of attention²³ but it was ironic. As Snook pointed out in a book review of the Johnson Report in 1978:

[the committee] has been interpreted as having talked only about values education and sex education in particular. In fact only

²⁰ *Education* was issued free to schools. It was published by the School Publications Branch of the Department of Education. A note at the beginning of the publication pointed out that opinions expressed by contributors were "those of the writers themselves and do not necessarily reflect the policy of the Department".

²¹ L. W. Gandar, *Education*, 1978.

²² *ibid.* p. 3.

²³ In 1980 the Department of Education observed that while most of the Johnson Report's recommendations were accepted, "two groups of recommendations did prove controversial and received support and opposition with no clear consensus: education about human development and relationships, and moral, spiritual and values education". Notes on Developments, June 1980. Information Services of the Ministry of Education.

eleven pages deal with the values domain as such.²⁴

In the same review, Snook suggests that the broad approach taken by the Johnson Committee resulted in a report:

about which it is difficult to get excited either positively or negatively. Among its eighty odd recommendations we find 'Research be undertaken into ways of evaluating effective school climates'; 'schools be encouraged and given assistance, to involve parents in the educational partnership'; 'teacher relief be approved for teachers conducting field trips in outdoor education.' These recommendations and dozens like them are hardly likely to fill the PTA meetings or cause a rumpus at the NZEI conference.²⁵

Many people however, did get excited about the small section of the Johnson Report which came within the values domain. The *New Zealand Listener* devoted extensive coverage to the Johnson report in August 1978. The magazine quoted an "Auckland Housewife" as saying:

I tell you, if I were a teacher I'd want \$30,000 to teach the stuff, plus comprehensive insurance against law-suits brought by parents blaming me for alienating their children's affections.²⁶

In a "Personal Message To Parents", Ron Smith, Vice President of Wellington High School's Parents' Association, gives an indication of the problems facing groups which were trying to engage with the Johnson Report. In a few introductory notes prior to some general concerns about what the Report "doesn't focus on", (for example "unemployment"²⁷, "Maori social conditions", "commercialism" and "sexism") the writer provided a less than glowing statement:

The Johnson Report is a long one. It deals with "values" and "morals" - and these are very difficult subjects. It contains much that is good, eg. the need for a warm friendly atmosphere in schools. It also contains serious deficiencies. The press calls it controversial".²⁸

²⁴ I. A. Snook, review of "Growing, Sharing, Learning: The Report of the Committee on Health and Social Education", in *Journal of Educational Studies*, (November 1978) p. 189.

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ *New Zealand Listener*, August 12, 1978.

²⁷ Unemployment was not usually considered an issue during the 1970s.

²⁸ "Personal Message to Parents" is part of a collection of papers belonging to John Mulheron: General Papers-Variou Topics, (97-035-071) Alexander Turnbull Library.

With hindsight, some of the objections raise the issue of the ideology underlying the Report. In some ways, it is a liberal ideology that sits between an older conservatism epitomised by the Concerned Parents' Association and the later much more radical critique advanced by the new sociology of knowledge.

Snook suggested that the Johnson Report "has functioned as a projective test for political and educational attitudes".²⁹

Political and educational attitudes were indeed given plenty of exposure in subsequent months as the Johnson Report and related issues became increasingly controversial. It would be fair to say that the writers of the report did not intend that the Report should be a "kite flying" exercise. The Committee was composed of well intentioned and dedicated people who were enthusiastic about their task. Reaching a consensus on all matters was an over-riding concern and one which necessitated time and resolution. Garfield Johnson was committed to working in a consensual manner, and this determination was maintained throughout the Committee's deliberations. Johnson made his position clear in a letter to Mulheron in 1979:

As Chairman I determined right from the outset of the committee's work, with agreement from the committee, that no votes would be taken but matters would be talked out till consensus was reached. Thus no matters on which consensus was not reached are included in the final report. Our committee endeavoured to practise what we preach.³⁰

Members of the Committee had an active role after the Report was published, and spoke about the Report at meetings throughout the country. Such enthusiasm on the part of Committee members was not always appreciated by some groups and individuals, who objected to what were perceived to be "hard sell" tactics. The weekly tabloid *New Zealand Truth*,³¹ noted for its sensationalism and political conservatism³², added its endorsement of these criticisms in its coverage.

²⁹ Snook, 1978, p. 190.

³⁰ Letter from Johnson to Mulheron, Secretary of the Committee for the Defence of Secular Education, 10 May 1979. Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref. No:97-035-20/1.

³¹ *NZ Truth* provided its readers with many comments on the Johnson Report. A typical headline of this period: 'That Report's a Shocker', 12 September 1978.

³² A Committee for the Defence of Secular Education newsletter written in 1978 notes that Prime Minister Robert Muldoon was at that time writing a weekly column in *NZ Truth*. Alex Turnbull Library, Ref. No. 96-342-07/09

Snook argued that of a number of options open to the Johnson Committee, the one adopted was to use the broadest of brushes:

To take the whole area of formal education and say something about every aspect of it.³³

Not only was something said about many things; in many instances what was said lacked clarity. *The Humanist Education Service Report on the Johnson Report*³⁴ states:

With valid concerns and great possibilities, it is a report that can only be described as 'good in parts and bad in parts'. On one hand there seems the understandable effort to placate as wide opinion as possible, and on the other a divergence of intent in two directions not consistent with each other. The result is a degree of vagueness, with difficulties of interpretation and confusion (some have disagreed with the report for completely opposite reasons!) and some intrinsic contradictions.

Academic participation (does not mean dominance!) would have gone a long way towards avoiding the woolliness and anti-intellectual tone. It would have helped give a consistency on principles, key arguments, and conclusions; better regard for research and informedness.³⁵

A report presented at a national conference of principals and teachers in 1979 by Dennis Standring³⁶ also commented on the confused nature of the report.

The Johnson Committee's comments on spiritual matters, in my opinion are woolly and are disappointing.

Submissions on the Johnson Report: analysis and interpretation

There were two phases of reactions to the Report. When the Report was

³³ Snook, 1978, p.189.

³⁴ 'The Humanist Education Service Report on the Johnson Report', A Humanist Occasional Paper, No 6, July 1979.

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ D. E. Standring, "A Critical Appraisal of the Johnson Report: A Psychological Perspective", presented to the combined National Conferences of the Association of Principals and Teachers of Private and Independent Secondary Schools and the Association of Principals and Teachers of Private and Independent Primary Schools at Christchurch 7 May 1979.

presented to the new Minister of Education, Les Gandar, in mid 1977, twelve months were allowed for public comment. During this period, a large number of submissions from individuals and groups were received by the Education Department. Following the re-election of the National government in 1978, the new Minister of Education, Merv Wellington³⁷, reluctantly extended the period in which submissions were to be received through to July 1979. Writing in 1985, Wellington reported that 2700 submissions had arrived by the end of July 1979.³⁸

Helen Shaw³⁹, who led the Department of Education's project team engaged in the revision of the Health Education Syllabus, told Barlow in 1989:

that although the purpose of the (Johnson) committee was to put forward a view that most people would accept, the Report generated a pile of submissions "as high as a door."⁴⁰

The strength of public reaction to the Ross Report took the Department of Education by surprise, and the CDU had not been able to devise satisfactory procedures for coping with the responses it had received⁴¹. This time round the Department appeared to have taken these factors into account by giving the Committee a wide brief, and was also prepared for a likely deluge of submissions. Consideration had also been given to methods of reporting the results of the consultation process.

Evidence of the strategies being developed by the Department of Education is revealed in the report on the consultation which was produced early in 1979. This report was not released to the public. The copy⁴² cited in this research, for example, has "confidential" stamped on it. Called "Report on Johnson Committee File Summary" it summarised the results of the consultation process up until the end of March 1979. By the time the report appeared, the Minister had extended

³⁷ In his book, *New Zealand Education in Crisis*, Wellington stated that he "had no option but to extend the deadline to July 1979" because of Gandar's commitment to give the public plenty of time to comment before the government made any decisions. M. Wellington, *New Zealand Education in Crisis*, Wellington: Endeavour Press, 1985, p. 72.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ See Chapter 8 for discussion of the project team and health education syllabus revision.

⁴⁰ K. Barlow, *The Development of Procedures of Assessment and Evaluation of Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in New Zealand*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 1994.

⁴¹ See Chapter 3.

⁴² Report on Johnson Committee File Summary is part of a collection of papers belonging to John Mulheron: General Papers-Variou Topics, (97-035-071) Alexander Turnbull Library.

the period in which submissions were to be received. The Department's report does not include the large number of submissions which emerged during the extended consultation period. The report:

summarises the views expressed in correspondence received by the Minister of Education and the Director-General of Education since the publication in November 1977, of the Johnson Committee Report, *Growing, Sharing, Learning*.⁴³

The Departmental report logged all correspondence as it came and noted trends such as an increase in the correspondence coming from groups and organisations not related to schools, but concluded that the majority of items came from "school related groups".⁴⁴

The Department analysed group and individual responses separately. Responses were classified according to topics, and views were transposed onto a rating scale (from very supportive to strongly opposed). In a written summary which prefaced the tables, overall trends were reported, and items requiring action were recorded; for example when commenting on group responses, it was noted that

one group, the Auckland Catholic Primary and Intermediate Principals' Association, would be pleased to discuss their recommendations with officers of the Department of Education.⁴⁵

In the section of the Department's report which dealt with individual responses it was noted there was

evidence of identical, chain and 'pro-forma' letters. Some were supporting of the Report although most were opposed to it.⁴⁶

The Department commented on similarities between the correspondence received by Gandar and Wellington.

Since the appointment of the present Minister of Education,

⁴³ Report on Johnson Committee file summary: To 31 March 1979. Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref 97-035-071.

⁴⁴ District Senior Inspectors often played a facilitative role at school meetings.

⁴⁵ Report on Johnson Committee file summary: To 31 March 1979. Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref 97-035-071, p. 4.

⁴⁶ *ibid*, p. 13.

(Wellington) it has been noted that a number of individuals were writing letters similar or even identical to the Hon L.R.Gandar. These have all been opposed to the report and to date, have numbered about a dozen in all.⁴⁷

The Department dealt with duplication in the following way:

Unless the writers' assessments have changed, these items have been logged but without the ratings being noted.⁴⁸

In addition to being sorted into topics and being rated, an attempt was made to select the main idea from each letter. These comments were included in a file summary. "The Report on the Johnson Committee File" records

Comments ranged from 'a wonderful Report.....such a positive document' to 'absolutely Godless', 'the Johnson Report is alarming in its potential for furthering evil both as to sex and as to religion' and 'simply because some children may need extra guidance, it is no reason why our children need to be subjected to all this nonsense'.⁴⁹

The Department's analysis of the report included a section which summarised "clippings and press cuttings". 'Letters to the Editor' were included in the summary. No clear picture emerges of conclusive support for, or opposition to, the Johnson Report, but again comment on moral education was very much in evidence. Two examples of the general preoccupation with moral education were cited in the file:

8.6 Miss Patricia Bartlett's comments on the adverse effects of sex education on young children and the ineffectiveness of such education programmes is taken up by columnist 'Sally' in a remarkably similar article where she laments the lost innocence of youth.⁵⁰

8.7 The Rev C.W. Haskell is campaigning against the implementation of the "dangerous" sex and values recommendations contained in the Report by way of a booklet he has written.⁵¹

47 *ibid.*

48 *ibid.*

49 *ibid.*, p. 14.

50 *ibid.*, p. 19.

51 Report on Johnson Committee file summary: To 31 March 1979, p. 19.

The Education Department assumed that its role in analysing submissions on the Johnson Report was ongoing. The Report cited is indicative of this assumption, with textual hints such as "Total to date" and "Reports will continue to be made at regular intervals". The Minister was not happy with this arrangement, and went outside the Department to employ a public relations group, Link Consultants, to carry out an independent analysis. The significance of Wellington's decision is profound for it illustrates the extent to which minister and department were out of step. Writing in 1985, Wellington recalled this decision:

I wanted complete objectivity and an outside agency was the only alternative.⁵²

Yet when this "objective" report was received by Wellington, he decided to suppress it. As a consequence, public access to the findings of the Link Report was not possible until several years after it was written and then only because it was released through the Official Information Act. It is not clear why the Minister suppressed the Link Report, for the consultants' analysis of the submissions showed that an acceptable basis for policy determination on the role of schools in moral education had not yet emerged. The Report provided Wellington with a perfect excuse to do nothing in the area of moral education. Given Wellington's conservative leanings and association with some of the more high profile right wing groups such as the Concerned Parents' Association it seems strange that the Link Report was not released immediately.

The delay and degree of secrecy associated with publishing an analysis of the submissions on the Johnson Report produced widespread anxiety and frustration. An extract from a letter to the Minister of Education is illustrative of this situation. The letter was written by Fiona Larsen for the Women's National Abortion Action Campaign (WONAAC) in May 1980 and expressed concern over the lack of information regarding the Johnson Report submissions and the McNair Survey:

We are concerned at your refusal to reveal the analysis of the Johnson Report submissions.

It appears to us that the McNair Survey commissioned by the Society for the Unborn Child was instrumental in guiding

⁵² M. Wellington, 1985, p. 85.

Government policy in this area, and we believe that it is in the public interest to reveal that the McNair Survey be made freely available by the Government.⁵³

The New Zealand Family Planning Federation also attempted to exert pressure on the Minister. A meeting of the National Executive of the organisation in 1980

agreed that Dr Batt should write a letter to the Minister of Education to express extreme concern at the Minister's refusal to publish the consultants' report of the Johnson Report.⁵⁴

Perhaps mindful of such pressure, Merv Wellington made selective use of the Link analysis.⁵⁵ In 1 April 1980 he issued the long awaited ministerial statement on the Johnson Report.

In an introduction to his statement on the Johnson Report, Wellington noted that there had been a mixed reaction to the Ross Report's recommendations on the inclusion of human development and relationships in primary schools:

The majority views of the national and other organised bodies that commented on the recommendations expressed support or modified support. The majority of individuals who wrote to the Minister or to the Department of Education expressed opposition to the introduction of sex education programmes.⁵⁶

Wellington also noted the work of the McMullen Royal Commission⁵⁷ and the report published by this Commission in 1977 which had favoured the introduction courses on human development and relationships in primary and secondary schools. The Johnson Report's recommendations on human development and relationships education were, in the Minister's view, "similar to those of the Royal Commission".⁵⁸

Wellington's statement included a section called "Analysis of Submissions Made

⁵³ Letter from Larsen to Wellington, Minister of Education, May 1980. The Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref No. 91/123-2/6.

⁵⁴ New Zealand Family Planning Association: Records. Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref No. 97-035-07/1 (Restricted file).

⁵⁵ The Link Report.

⁵⁶ M. L. Wellington, Ministerial statement on *The Johnson Report*, 1 April 1980, p. 1.

⁵⁷ The Royal Commission had been set up in response to the public debate around contraception, sterilisation and abortion - For discussion on the subsequent legislation and deletion of clauses 55 and 56, see Chapter 2.

⁵⁸ Wellington, *Johnson Report*, p. 2.

on the Johnson Report". According to Wellington's interpretation of the analysis, most of the Johnson Committee's recommendations had not been controversial and had "received considerable amount of support". Included in this group of recommendations were those relating to

School organisation (climate, guidance, absenteeism); Health, physical and outdoor education; Community aspects considered by the committee (education in parenthood, television violence); Children with special needs; Teacher training and Research.⁵⁹

The Minister went on to describe the two groups of recommendations which had been controversial, namely:

Education about human development and relationships;
Moral, spiritual and values education.⁶⁰

Wellington then turned to the National Government's 1978 election policy which in relation to the Johnson Report stated:

The Johnson Report on health and social education is currently the subject of wide public consultation. If assessment of public opinion shows that legislation is desirable, such legislation will be referred to a select committee for thorough examination.⁶¹

Given Wellington's mistrust of the Department and his consequent engagement of Link Consultants, it seems reasonable to assume that his assessment of public opinion was based on the Link Report. There is ample confirmation of this view in Wellington's personal writing. In his book⁶² he enthuses over the work done by Link Consultants:

Link did an outstanding job. They were given complete freedom and their report was a masterpiece of its type. It showed there was no clear mandate for change.⁶³

The Minister rejected the Johnson Report's recommendations in both of the identified controversial areas. In his book Wellington voiced a number of reasons

⁵⁹ *ibid* p. 1.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 3.

⁶¹ *ibid* p. 4.

⁶² Wellington, 1985.

⁶³ *ibid*, p. 73.

why he was not keen for the Johnson Report's recommendations on human development and relationships to go ahead.⁶⁴ It would certainly have been convenient for him if the submissions on the Johnson Report had supported his views. Wellington obviously thought they did because he included tables from the Link Report in his April 1980 statement.

The Minister's conclusions are suspect because the methodology used by Link Consultants belies his belief that the report provided objective data that reflected well the views of New Zealanders. The Link Report is fluent and persuasive but the methodology is questionable. The submissions of individuals are analysed separately, but no attempt is made to quantify group submissions or to weight their significance. The Link Consultants explained this procedure in the following way:

The view expressed in a submission from an individual was accorded the same weight as the view expressed in a submission from a large organisation. A large number of submissions were from organisations who were writing on behalf of their memberships. Link had no knowledge of the size of these memberships or of the degree of support within a membership for the view expressed by the organisation.⁶⁵

As far as the Minister was concerned, there was no justification for change; he rejected the Johnson Report's recommendations on "Human Development and Relationships Education" and "Moral, Spiritual and Values Education".

The Department of Education remains active in Moral Education

Minutes from Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) meetings in 1977 suggest that the CDU was following the Johnson Committee's deliberations with considerable interest and anticipation.

At a meeting in June 1977 the CDU discussed issues associated with implementing Human Development and Relationships. It was observed that:

much of the proposed scope is being covered in many schools, contributing to development. Teachers see courses as the

⁶⁴ See Wellington, 1985, pp. 74-75.

⁶⁵ Link Report, p. 114.

answer, but the Development Group sees prior need of setting up organisation in schools.⁶⁶

At the same meeting school structures and the CDU's role in resource development were also mentioned:

Some attempts at co-ordination of material from across subjects. Some schools are integrating subjects with one teacher for a large part of one week, giving wider opportunities for values education.⁶⁷

R.O'Connor has material from Ontario on packages for values education within subjects. A visitor from Ontario will be available to talk to CDD.⁶⁸ (Curriculum Development Division)

The June meeting of the CDU was mindful of "two major problems"; the right of withdrawal from class, and the choosing of teachers for HD&R.⁶⁹ A month before the Johnson Report's release in November 1977, the minutes from an October meeting of the CDU record:

The in house committee looking at the report to comment to Minister (Gandar). At stage report is published will be getting officers and Development Groups to look at specific recommendations and comment.⁷⁰

At the same meeting a "buzz group" speculated on what the future might hold. A number of topics were discussed and the notes from the discussions are recorded under the heading "Crystal Ball Gazing: A look at five years and into the future for a report to the top 3". The following was recorded under the heading 'Issues In Education'.

The implementation of the Johnson Report
curriculum
school structure
values etc

⁶⁶ Minutes from CDU meetings, June and October 1977, ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 2 Box 1713.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

Several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, It is clear from these CDU records that the Department of Education was preparing for an enlarged role in the development and implementation of moral education in schools. The extent of this role would be determined by the degree of consensus which emerged from the Johnson Report and ultimately upon Merv Wellington's interpretation of responses to the Report, and consequent decision as to implementation. In the meantime, before it was clear just what was going to emerge from the Johnson Report the Department got on with preparing for the next stage in moral education.

Secondly, the CDU records allude to one of the continuing strands of debate in moral education. At the October CDU meeting, the minutes note that D.Gunn attended the DSIs (District Senior Inspectors) meeting on "Back To Basics".⁷² The relationship between the debate about "values education" and the "back to basics" argument is discussed by Snook in 1990.⁷³ Snook points out that the "back to basics argument" had been around for a long time, and was part of an ongoing controversy over the aims of education. The 1970s and 1980s version of the "back to basics" movement was espoused by conservative pressure groups and was part of Merv Wellington's morally conservative viewpoint.

The Education Department was determined to keep moral education on the agenda. The Department had initiated, organised and taken key roles in the large number of national local and courses on moral education during the 1970s.⁷⁴ A number of these courses had been associated with the Ross Report.⁷⁵ Some courses took place between the two Reports and were part of the Department's efforts to maintain momentum in moral education. One of these courses was a national course on Values and Religious Education which took place in 1974. CDU minutes at that time state that 'issues' to be discussed were:

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² *ibid.*

⁷³ I. A. Snook, "Contesting the Curriculum: The Politics of Basics and Frills", in *Political Issues in New Zealand*, (ed) J. Codd, R. Harker and R. Nash, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1990.

⁷⁴ See Chapter 4 for discussion on the significance of these courses.

⁷⁵ See also Chapter 5 on the Ross Report.

the use of half hour when schools closed; the place of values and values formation in education.⁷⁶

In the late 1970s the Department moved from running national courses in the general area of moral education to once again focusing on the ramifications of a particular document, this time the Johnson Report. The importance of national courses is indicated by the description of one of the early meetings of the Johnson Committee as being a national course. The "national course", called "Committee on Health and Social Education", was held at Hogben House on 18-22 October. The Course Director was Garfield Johnson and Guest Speakers included P.Boag, Assistant Director General of Education at Head Office, and Miss R.Heinz, Principal, Hagley High School, Christchurch. Eighteen out of the twenty three members of the Johnson Committee were present.⁷⁷

Just as the basis of the Johnson Report was broader than that of the Ross Report, so too were the courses: Large numbers of people embarked upon broad agendas. A national course held in May 1978, during the extended time the Minister had allowed for submissions, illustrates the nature of such courses. In a letter to the thirty-one invited course members, the Course Director, Peter Macpherson (Education Officer for Curriculum development and member of the Johnson Committee), stressed the importance of drawing together as many interest groups as possible. He set down the framework for the five day course:

I certainly hope that you are able to join me because a great deal of care has been taken to ensure that course members adequately represent the wide range necessary for consideration of the set brief.

The purpose is to examine the implications of this Report

i) for schools planning to develop programmes in association with their parent communities and taking into account their own community resources

ii) for teacher training

iii) for resource provision.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ ABEP W4262, 34/1/53 Pt 1 Box 1824, CDU meetings, 72-74.

⁷⁷ Note from M. W. Smiler for Director General of Education, copies to Course members, Accounts, Inspectors, Directors of Primary and Secondary Education. ABEP W4262, 40/13/18.

⁷⁸ Letter written by MacPherson, ABEP W4262, 40/13/80.

The "Course Report" for "The Johnson Report and its Implications for Schools"⁷⁹ is suggestive of how committed course members, Johnson Committee members, and the Department were to national initiatives in moral education. The "Course Report" includes a "Programme Outline", notes on the various discussions taking place, and a number of appendices. During the "Introductory phase" of the course, Garfield Johnson gave a paper which expressed the ethos developed by his committee. A panel of members of the Johnson Committee answered questions and made personal comment; a background paper of past influences, present and possible future developments was given by Peter Brice (Director of Development); and four principals⁸⁰ shared their reactions to the Johnson Report.

The record of group discussions reveals that talking had been productive and had given some practical focus to the vast sweep of the Johnson Report. For example, consideration had been given to the Johnson Report in relation to aspects of the curriculum such as health, social studies and science. Groups discussing the setting up and development of programmes in schools had noted the importance of establishing guidelines on consultative procedures, ways of initiating and sustaining discussion of the Report, and suggesting that special efforts would need to be made in order "to deal with minority groups in small group settings".⁸¹

It is evident from the Course Report that considerable time was devoted to discussion on teacher education. Representatives from three tertiary institutions⁸², Student Teacher Association of New Zealand (STANZ), and the Teacher Directorate, outlined the current situation and commented on future needs. "In-school in-service training" was seen as "a most desirable mode of training in the human relations area", and Riccarton High School in Christchurch was cited as a useful model.

Pressure Groups and Moral Education

The pattern of activity evident in the working of the Department of Education was

⁷⁹ Course Report, *ibid.*

⁸⁰ The four principals were Mary Whata, Ann Gluckman, Noel Crawley and Ralph Rollo.

⁸¹ Course Report, ABEP W4262, 40/13/80.

⁸² The representatives were Peter McQueen from North Shore Teachers' College, Hillary Evison from Otago University, Ian Stevenson from Auckland Secondary Teachers' College, and on behalf of the Teacher Education Directorate. Course Report, *ibid.*

mirrored by those pressure groups interested in moral education. The consultation procedures which were a feature of the 1970s included two periods of time when ongoing discussions spiralled into national preoccupations. The Johnson Report and to a lesser the Ross Report were catalysts for this intensification of pressure group activity.⁸³

In an address to the the Auckland Federation of Parent Teachers' Association, the Minister of Education, Merv Wellington, emphasised the non controversial content of the Johnson report, and complained that debate on the Report had been "too hung up on the controversial sex education clause".⁸⁴ The Minister considered that the bulk of the Johnson Report's recommendations were underway:

My estimate, and it is an informed one, is that probably 90% of the Report's recommendations are either in train or in process.

Wellington went on to say that the public wanted schools to provide "more of the same with additional sharpening of skills needed to develop employment opportunities".⁸⁵ To emphasise the priority which his government placed upon education as a means of gaining employment, Wellington mentioned that a cabinet committee was "investigating the transition from school to the work force of the eighties".⁸⁶

The New Zealand Employers' Federation was, not surprisingly, a prime mover in the pressure to educate for employment.⁸⁷ The Federation represented a large group of politically influential people and was one of a number of groups which, though holding differing viewpoints, had one characteristic in common: they had a variety of perspectives and were engaged in a range of activities. Another such group was the New Zealand Family Planning Federation. These groups can be distinguished from single issue pressure groups which were characteristic of the 1970s and early 1980s. Both Openshaw and Snook point out that behind the the "single issue" nature of campaigns, the groups were a complex conservative and

⁸³ See Chapter 5 for a discussion on the Ross Report and pressure groups.

⁸⁴ Untitled and undated newspaper clipping in Moral Education file, ABEP W4262, 3.12.79-13.5.80 Pt 2.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷ See Snook, 1990.

political mixture.⁸⁸

The single issue groups were united by their opposition to sex education taking place in schools. The CPA continued to be one of the more prominent pressure groups. Another like-minded group was formed in 1979, when the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) joined the Family Rights' Association to form the Council of Organisations for Moral Education (COME). David Elliot Hogg⁸⁹, a former Inspector with the Department, was appointed Council secretary. The FPA was very fearful of the possible effects of COME. Alongside a clipping from a newspaper which reports the formation of COME, notes from FPA records state:

COME is now a powerful, politically sophisticated organisation which will use its influence with the Department of Education⁹⁰ and with the political parties to impose its moral-religious code on to all New Zealanders in State schools regardless of the wishes of parents. Civilised acceptance of diversity in society quickly turns into bitter conflict if the state favours one belief over others.⁹¹

A letter from the secretary of NOW (Pat Stockley) to Jack Mulheron, also expresses alarm⁹² at the activities of SPUC, CPA and The Society for the Protection of Community Standards:

My Committee has asked me to assure you of our wholehearted support for your organisation and the goals it intends to achieve. We are very conscious that SPUC, 'Concerned Parents' and the 'Society for the Promotion of Community Standards' - virtually the same people - will stop at nothing in their fanatical pursuit of sexual ignorance for all young people. As Dr Geiringer says, in "SPUC 'em All".. "it is important at all times to remember the fanaticism of the movement. SPUC is not an ordinary pressure group within a small democratic society. It is a powerful, international pressure group of irrational fanatics.⁹³

⁸⁸ See R. Openshaw, "Upholding Basic Values: A Case Study of a Conservative Pressure Group", in Codd et al (ed) *Political issues In New Zealand Education*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1990.

⁸⁹ For discussion on Hogg and the values education resource 'What Do You Think?' see Chapter 7.

⁹⁰ For discussion on Hogg and the Department of Education see Chapter 7.

⁹¹ New Zealand Family Planning Association, Clippings on education, Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref. No. 97-035-32/2 (Restricted file).

⁹² It appears that conservative groups held similar opinions of the liberals.

⁹³ MS-Papers - 5541-038, Alexander Turnbull Library.

Relationships between pressure groups and the Minister of Education

The FPA was one of a number of groups who were concerned about the degree to which COME and similar organisations could influence the Department of Education, politicians, and in particular the Minister of Education, Merv Wellington.

In May 1980 the *New Zealand Herald* reported that the Auckland Education Board was dissatisfied with the Government's decision not to implement certain parts of the Johnson Report:

The Board yesterday decided to ask the Education Boards' Association to ask the Minister of Education to reconsider the report's recommendation on human development and relationships. Mr R. A. Hoggard said the Minister had given way to political pressure from a vocal minority. 'I believe that the Minister made a mistake' he said.⁹⁴

When he was interviewed by Ian Fraser in 1984, Wellington acknowledged that he took particular notice of groups such as CPA and COME.⁹⁵

Further evidence of Merv Wellington's conservative tendencies is displayed in an interview with the *Evening Post* newspaper in May 1979 when Wellington is reported as arguing that because many children were not given a sense of ethics:

the need for alternative schools which taught children ethics was greater than before.⁹⁶

In another report which appeared in the *Christchurch Star*, Wellington is reported to have expressed the view that many people were worried by the seeming lack of moral and spiritual training in the state education system, but in New Zealand they had some choice about schooling:

It is up to the parent to elect what form of education his children will have.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, May 15, 1980.

⁹⁵ TVNZ interview of Wellington by Ian Fraser, 'Sunday' programme, cited in Snook, 1990.

⁹⁶ *Wellington Evening Post*, May 9, 1979.

⁹⁷ The Minister of Education, M. L. Wellington, quoted in *The Christchurch Star*, May 1979.

Merv Wellington seemed responsive to letter writing campaigns mounted by groups and individuals. An interesting example of the Minister's attention to correspondence on moral education is provided by a letter he received from J. W. Foreman, Managing Director of Trigon Industries in 1979. Foreman made two points in his letter; one concerned the Japanese approach to moral education, the other commented on a perceived lack of national pride and a plea for a "flag raising ceremony at schools every morning with the playing of the National Anthem".⁹⁸ Wellington's "reply" was one of the many ministerials prepared by Department of Education officers. In this case the officer involved, Jack Cox, provided a brief survey of the history of moral education in New Zealand, noted the current interest "in the context of public debate" on the report of the Committee on Health and Social Education (the Johnson Report) and enclosed a copy of the Johnson Report and a booklet published by the Department, "More Than Talk"⁹⁹. Comment was also made on the possibility of flag raising. It can be assumed that the Foreman's efforts had something to do with Wellington's subsequent attempts to have the New Zealand flag prominently displayed in every school. Openshaw et al. report that

the reintroduction of flag-honouring regulations by the then Minister of Education, the Hon M. V. Wellington, [were] imminent (1984).¹⁰⁰

Wellington's sympathies may have been with the moral right but that public opinion, as interpreted by public opinion polls, was on the side of the Department of Education. The McNair Survey for example found that a majority of respondents (72%) believed schools should teach courses in human development and relationships.

As Snook argued in 1981, studies of public opinion in New Zealand have always found a majority in favour of human development and relationship education in schools.¹⁰¹ The records from the 1970s show that the Department of Education

⁹⁸ Letter written from Foreman to Wellington, 3 August 1979, Moral Education file, ABEP W4262, 3.12.79-13.5.80 Pt 2.

⁹⁹ For a discussion of this and other moral education resources, see Chapter 7.

¹⁰⁰ R. Openshaw, G. Lee, and H. Lee, "Youth in Danger, Schools Against Socialism", in R. Openshaw, G. Lee, and H. Lee, *Challenging the Myths, Rethinking New Zealand's Educational History*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1993. In an article written in July 1984, Gordon and Openshaw argued that there was a strong link between the ideology of 'patriotism' and economic difficulties.

¹⁰¹ I. A. Snook, "Who Wants Sex Education?", *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 16(2):189-193.

was planning to move on the Johnson Report, but was unable to do so openly because the Minister was not sympathetic. A conversation between the researcher and a former Department of Education Inspector sheds light on the the Department's modus operandi at this time. Commenting on the difference between working for Wellington as the Minister of Education and his successor Russell Marshall, it was said:

It was easier to work for Wellington because we always knew that he would say no to everything so we just got on and worked out how we could subvert him. Marshall on the other hand always said yes to everything and that made things far more difficult.¹⁰²

It is argued that this comment has substance and reflects the political power of the Department at this time. Insight regarding Departmental processes is provided in the following chapter when the history of two moral education publications is discussed.

¹⁰² Conversation with former Inspector (Southern region) held in July 2000.

CHAPTER SEVEN: The moral education debate: 'What Do You Think?' and 'More than Talk'

Resource development for moral education

The interest in moral education which had been a significant element of discussion about education in many countries during the 1970s resulted in numerous projects and resources involving religious and moral education. For example, Australia's Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra undertook a religious education project during the 1970s and in England, Peter McPhail's School's Council Moral Education Project, 'Lifeline' and the work of Wilson¹ attracted considerable interest. The New Zealand Education Department took note of overseas developments and made efforts to find resources and experts. The Department considered a number of overseas options, with members of the Curriculum Development Unit making contact with people in North America, Australia, and Europe.² McPhail's ventures³ were of particular interest and the 'Lifeline' series was used in New Zealand secondary schools during the 1970s.⁴

Efforts to produce social education resources designed for New Zealand schools were evident during the early 1970s. The anticipated demand for New Zealand material is illustrated by a letter from the senior editor (T. McClennan) of the publishing firm A. H. & A. W. Reed to Phil Amos, Minister of Education in 1973. The letter outlines the social education material being prepared by a group of writers⁵ commissioned by the publishing company. The editor expresses the hope that his company will be able to meet with the working party which he believes is being set up "to research family life and sex education areas."⁶

The working party which is referred to by McClennan published the Ross Report. Public response to the Ross report and earlier discussions associated with the EDC prompted the search for educational materials which would assist the

¹ For example, J. Wilson, *Practical Methods of Moral Education*, London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1972.

² For example, CDU minutes of June 1977 note that "R. O'Connor has material from Ontario on packages for values education within given subjects. A visitor from Ontario will be available to talk to the CDU". ABEP W4262, 34/53 Pt 2.

³ Peter McPhail, Director of the Schools' Council Moral Education Projects in England and Wales, visited New Zealand during 1974 - see Chapter One.

⁴ Schools using McPhail's material included Piopio, Fairfield and Nga Tapawae Colleges.

⁵ The writers included a marriage guidance counsellor, teachers, and a doctor, with Fraser McDonald (an expert in mental health) as a consultant.

⁶ Letter from McClennan, Senior Editor, Reed Education, to Amos, Minister of Education. ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

implementation of moral education in schools. Amos's response to the letter from McClennan suggests that:

Ross be made aware of your interest and I would advise you to contact him direct regarding the plan you have underway.⁷

Requests for moral education material also came from conferences on moral and religious education⁸ and the teacher unions: A policy report prepared for a NZEI national seminar on values education in July 1977 stated:

It is recommended that appropriate resource material in the field of basic values and controversial issues be urgently prepared.⁹

'What Do You Think?' and 'More than Talk'

The Department of Education's involvement with two publications on moral education provides an example of Departmental processes and the way the Department responded to opposing viewpoints in a controversial curriculum area. Neither of the two publications, *What Do You Think? An Audio - Visual Programme*¹⁰ nor *More than Talk, Moral Education in New Zealand*¹¹, were widely used in New Zealand schools. The relevance of these resources to this research is that they provide an example of the way the Department managed conflict over moral education. *What Do You Think?* and *More than Talk* represented different approaches to moral education. *What Do You Think?* was underpinned by the assumption that there was a set of accepted moral rules and virtues which could be transmitted by teachers. David Hogg¹², who initiated *What Do You Think?* in 1965, described the scheme in an article for the *Social Studies Observer* in 1977:

⁷ Letter from Amos to McClennan, 1/5/73, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 2.

⁸ For discussion on the significance of conferences, see Ch 4.

⁹ Policy Report on Values Education, New Zealand Educational Institute. Ref 95-159-068/3, Alexander Turnbull Library (Restricted file).

¹⁰ D. Elliot Hogg and S. Christie, *What Do You Think? An Audio-Visual Programme*. The programme was released over a number of years, and eventually published by the Council of Organisations for Moral Education (COME).

¹¹ I. Snook and C. McGeorge, *More Than Talk: Moral Education New Zealand*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1978.

¹² David Hogg (Inspector of secondary schools (sciences) in South Auckland between 1965 and 1976) was also known as David Elliott-Hogg and in another role, as secretary of (COME). Elliot Hogg will be used for the rest of this thesis as this was the name used in the correspondence during the late 1970s and 1980s.

The 'What Do You Think?' Moral Education scheme is based on traditional Christian morality as defined by the the Golden Rule, Beatitudes and Ten Commandments, and the aim of the authors is to produce generally accepted programmes which fairly and squarely present that morality.¹³

The *What Do You Think?* programme became a rallying cry for the pressure groups associated with COME. These groups were champions of "traditional morality." The letterhead of one such group, "Integrity", stated:

Absolute honesty, truth, obedience, responsibility, chastity before and faithfulness throughout marriage.¹⁴

Members of these groups wanted the Education Department to accept "traditional morality" as a basis for policy. Notes¹⁵ sent to the Minister of Education (Merv Wellington) prior to a meeting with a COME delegation late in 1979 gave a "departmental comment"¹⁶ on "traditional morality":

Traditional Morality is defined by COME as the 10 commandments and the 3 beatitudes, together with chastity and the sanctity of human life. Its stress on these touches on the issue of religious education and tends to ignore the greater range of values that is evident in New Zealand society. Schools have a difficult task in selecting the values they should stress, but teachers reflect New Zealand society and do, in general, support aspects of Traditional Morality. Parents who wish their children to be fully exposed to Traditional Morality have the choice of private schools, and probably increasingly in the future of integrated schools.¹⁷

More than Talk, written by Ivan Snook and Colin McGeorge, academics from Canterbury University's Education Department, argued for a set of moral principles and the development of moral reasoning skills rather than moral rules as a basis for moral education. In a review of their work John Codd, a fellow academic in the Education Department of Massey University, compared 'More than Talk' with the section in the Johnson Report which dealt with moral, spiritual

¹³ D. Hogg, "What Do You Think? An Audio-Visual Programme", in *Social Values, Approaches to Moral Education*, N. Zepke & R. Sommerville, (eds.) Hamilton: Waikato Social Studies Association, 1977, p. 43.

¹⁴ Copy of 'Integrity' newsletter supplied by Ruth Mansell, member of the project team which worked on the revision of the Health Education syllabus during the early 1980s.

¹⁵ Notes sent to the Minister of Education's Office in November 1979 by C. P. Brice (Director General of Education) ABEP W4262, 34/2/37 Pt 2.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ *ibid.*

and values education:

the Johnson Report is utterly confused about what it means to educate morally and has consequently provided a very unsound base from which to launch a wider discussion on this very vexed topic. *More Than Talk*, on the other hand, cuts into this complex area with a masterly precision and clarity of purpose, indicating a grasp of the subject which is both scholarly and pragmatic.¹⁸

The Department of Education was instrumental in setting up both publications. In both cases there was tension and ultimately neither publication was advanced by the Department. A brief history of both publications and a discussion of the issues associated with their development reveals the way the Department endeavoured to offend the least number of people by trying to steer a course between the two opposing views of moral education represented by *What Do You Think* and *More than Talk*. Ultimately it would seem to have been decided that the best interests of the Department were served by side-lining both publications.

What Do You Think? and the Department of Education -the beginning of a troubled relationship.

The relationship between the Department and the authors of both *More than Talk* and *What Do You Think?* was uneasy, particularly in the case of latter. The origin of difficulties between the Department and the authors of *What Do You Think?*, David Elliot-Hogg and Stewart Christie, was that they were the insiders; both had been employed by the Department of Education as secondary school inspectors. Their insider status led to many arguments as to whether *What Do You Think?* was an official project. Correspondence between Elliot-Hogg and the Department on this topic spans three ministers of education (Gandar, Wellington and Marshall), and stretches from the mid 1970s until the mid 1980s. Confusion over the status of the resource resulted in criticism of the Department by those who supported the resource and those who opposed it.

The official story on *What Do You Think?* can be pieced together from correspondence and material prepared for ministers of education by Departmental officials. An early example of the Department's stand on the

¹⁸ J. Codd, "Review, *More Than Talk: Moral Education in New Zealand Schools*", *Delta*, 24 (June 1979).

resource is given in a response to a letter written to Gandar (Minister of Education from 1975 until 1978) early in 1978. Elliot-Hogg had addressed a meeting held in Lower Hutt on moral education in schools. One of the people attending the meeting, Mrs J Durrant, wrote to the minister commenting favourably on *What Do You Think?*:

Some years ago I was on a P.T.A which ran a discussion on the Ross H.D.R. course.¹⁹ The parents there were not happy about that course, but hoped that something would be done to improve it. Now that Messers Hogg and Christie have put all this work into such a marvellous programme, we hope that it will be completed and used in all schools.²⁰

The letter also expressed concern about the future of the programme:

We were astounded to hear that the programme had been used by the Department of Education in South Auckland, with a very good response from parents and children, and that the Department had now withdrawn its support. If nothing better is being offered, this situation seems ridiculous.²¹

In his reply, Gandar made it clear *What Do You Think?* was not a Department of Education initiative:

You should know that Mr Hogg has produced this programme because of a personal interest; it has never been an official departmental programme. He began it while a developmental officer, (sic) and when he resigned so that he could devote more time to it, he was assisted financially by the Department of education during 1976 and 1977 to complete a number of units.²²

Gandar went on to say that he intended setting up advisory groups "from a wide range of community interests" to evaluate any new material in moral or religious education or related to human development and relationships, and would refer *What Do You Think?* to such a group. Any further development of Elliot-Hogg's programme:

¹⁹ The Ross Report was never intended to be a programme, rather a discussion document - see Chapter 5.

²⁰ Letter from Mrs J. Durrant to Rt Hon Mr Gandar, 23 March 1978, ABEP W4262, 34/2/7 Pt 1.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² Letter to Mrs J. Durrant from Gandar, 27 April 1978.

or at least of departmental involvement in the development of a programme of this type, should wait until I have received a report on its merits.²³

Gandar's successor, Merv Wellington, was supplied with notes by Departmental officers in late 1979. The notes gave an overview of "Departmental Action since the EDC"²⁴ In response to the recommendation of the final EDC document:

7.16.9 That further public discussion of the issues involved in moral and religious education in schools be promoted.²⁵

The conferences²⁶ convened by the Department during the 1970s are mentioned, as is the commissioning and publication of *More than Talk*. Under the heading "Assistance to Elliot-Hogg" the following is recorded:

- a Salary for Mr Hogg as a seconded teacher attached to Melville High School for four terms.
- b Salary for Mr Christie as a part-time teacher attached to Otumaetai College.
- c Travel costs for both, for four terms.
- d Costs for both for four terms.
- e Typing service.

In total, the above assistance has amounted to almost \$20,000.²⁷

The Department and *More than Talk*

The relationship between the authors of *More than Talk* and the Department got off to a strong start for the booklet was commissioned by the Director General of Education, W.L.Renwick, in 1975 for use in discussions in 1976-1977. Another factor which augured well was that the brief for the publication was clearly stated from the outset. This was in marked contrast to *What Do You Think?*, which was determined by the authors.

The brief for *More than Talk* established the broad context it was hoped the

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ Notes for Minister, ABEP W4262, 1846 34/2/7 Pt 2.

²⁵ cited in Notes for Minister, *ibid.*

²⁶ For discussion of these conferences see Chapter 4.

²⁷ Notes for Minister,, ABEP W4262, 1846 34/2/7, Pt 2.

booklet would address. In his forward to *More than Talk*, Renwick noted some of the current social concerns such as increased crime and lowered standards of morality, and said that if education was the answer, there were some questions to be answered:

But what is to be taught? Morals? Religion? Human relationships? Will teaching any of these things do what the reformers hope? Will the way in which the teaching is done make it ineffective? What is morality anyway?²⁸

Renwick stressed Snook's and McGeorge's independence, and eschewed Department of Education involvement in the booklet. Snook and McGeorge had been:

asked to write about these questions, to look at this current issue in education. Their ideas are their own. They look at how morals are taught, in New Zealand, now, and how this situation came about. They suggest changes and put forward their arguments for it. They suggest changes they think ought to be made.²⁹

With the clamour created by the release of the Ross and Johnson Reports, Renwick was anxious to anticipate any suggestions that the *More than Talk* was official policy:

The book is not departmental policy, it is not a blueprint for changes contemplated, it is not even kite-flying: it is a contribution to discussion of how education may be able to help.³⁰

When *More than Talk* was released in 1978, Renwick was able to counter any criticism of the Department's involvement with the publication. In response to a letter from a Hawke's Bay principal expressing concern over the Department's involvement, Renwick asserted:

the Snook and McGeorge booklet was commissioned in response to a specific recommendation of a report commissioned by the government of the day.³¹ On the question of costs, the booklet is estimated to cost about \$12,000. The Government Printer has exercised his right to sell the booklet through Government Book

²⁸ W. L. Renwick, Foreword to "More than Talk, Current Issues in education", Wellington: Department of Education, 1978.

²⁹ *ibid*

³⁰ *ibid*.

³¹ The report referred to is the last Educational Development Conference publication which recommended: "that further public discussion of the issues involved in moral and religious education in schools be promoted".

shops. In view of the public interest in the issue, I think that it is quite possible that sales of the booklet through the Government Printer will offset the costs of publication.³²

Despite distancing the Department from the project, Renwick appeared to be very pleased with *More than Talk*; in a letter written to Snook in late November 1978, Renwick expressed his gratitude and personal interest:

This is to place on record what I mentioned to you over the phone this morning, namely, that I am greatly indebted to you and Colin for the extremely useful book you have written on moral education in New Zealand. The book does extremely well what I had hoped for it in encouraging you to write it in the first place. It provides in a brief and readable form a clear path through what has become an extremely technical discussion among specialists in the field of moral education; and it does it in a way that will, I believe, make it readable by the very groups for whom it is intended - teachers and interested parents and members of the public.³³

Renwick's predictions were not realised. *More than Talk* was published in election week of 1978. With the media preoccupied with the election, the booklet received scant attention and was "remaindered" within months of its release. It is surely no coincidence that *More than Talk* 'disappeared' as the second wave³⁴ of submissions on the Johnson Report arrived.

A subsequent letter to Snook from Renwick written in early 1979 indicates that something had changed within the Department. Perhaps it was the aftermath of the Johnson Report or the presence of the new Minister of Education, Merv Wellington: probably it was a combination of the two. Certainly there appeared to be a closing down of initiatives in moral education. The letter had been circulated to a number of Department officers Peter Brice, Jim Ross and Rory O'Connor. A typed note on the letter beside O'Connor's³⁵ name (presumably written by Renwick) asked: "Are there any other people that I should sign off in this way?" The handwritten reply with what appears to be O'Connor's signature beside it says "No". In the letter Renwick defers any action on getting together a small group to discuss ethical pluralism in public education, a proposal which

³² Letter from W. L. Renwick to R. A. Foster, 9 February 1979, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

³³ Letter from Renwick to Snook, 20 November 1978, *ibid*.

³⁴ Following the reelection of National, new Minister of Education Merv Wellington extended the period in which submissions were to be received through to July 1979.

³⁵ O'Connor was a member of the Curriculum development unit with responsibility for moral education.

O'Connor had been discussing with Snook. Renwick explained that he was "putting the idea into cold storage" because of staffing pressures and "various demands there are upon me and my colleagues at the present time"³⁶ Clearly times had changed and the Department was not going to get itself involved in other moral education projects, not even clearly defined projects such as the model established by *More than Talk*.

Even before the unfortunate timing of the release of *More than Talk*, there were hints of dark things going on behind the scenes. Writing to John Codd in September 1979, John Riseborough agrees with Codd's review³⁷ of the booklet and also points out that *More than Talk* was actually written in 1975 and was supposed to "precede"³⁸ the Johnson Report. Riseborough quotes a letter written by Snook which referred to the booklet being "held up in the most frustrating way for almost three years." Riseborough's last paragraph states:

I believe you are fully justified in saying that Snook and McGeorge make an informative and clear-headed contribution. I also believe that they were buried in the pile by interested parties in the Department, who, with the Churches Education Commission, had another drum to follow.³⁹

Soon after the release of *More than Talk*, another letter (this time written by Jack Mulheron⁴⁰ to Snook) compares the booklet with the Johnson report and comments:

now the Johnson Report looks shabbier than before. I think that the Report has done great harm to your cause.⁴¹

Martin Viney, a spokesperson for the CPA in Christchurch, mentioned that the Johnson Committee had read a "pre-publication"⁴² copy of *More than Talk* in an

³⁶ Letter from Renwick to Snook, 26 March 1979, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7, Pt 2.

³⁷ Codd, 1979.

³⁸ Letter to John Codd from John Riseborough, 6 September 1979, Ref no MS papers 5541-031 Alexander Turnbull Library.

³⁹ *ibid*.

⁴⁰ Jack Mulheron was secretary of the 'Committee for the Defence of Secular Education.'

⁴¹ Letter from Mulheron to Snook, 14 December 1978, MS Papers - 5541-O31, Alexander Turnbull Library.

⁴² A 'draft copy' of 'More than Talk' is listed in the bibliography of the Johnson Report.

article written for *Education*.⁴³ Mulheron and Viney⁴⁴ held very different views on religious matters but both were complimentary about parts of the book. Viney wrote:

In *More than Talk*, Ivan Snook and Colin McGeorge have rendered a valuable service in setting out the historical development and in outlining the current methods of moral education and its associated research. Although the Johnson Committee read a pre-publication copy of the book, it appears that they did not fully appreciate, or chose to ignore, the difficulties and pitfalls which it describes. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that the majority of members of the public will read either of these documents; they will rely for their opinions and judgments on the half-digested resumes of somebody else.⁴⁵

It was far more likely that members of the public would hear about and perhaps see *What Do You Think?* than *More than Talk*. This was because of the publicity surrounding 'What Do You Think?', partly due to the unrelenting efforts of Elliot Hogg and the pressure groups who drew attention to the publication but also because *What Do You Think?* was around for a much longer period of time. In contrast, *More than Talk* was released at a time when it was very unlikely to get much publicity, and literally disappeared from sight.

More than Talk and *What Do You Think?*: Conflict over moral education

Apart from both being about moral education, *More than Talk* and *What Do you Think?* had little in common. Of the two, *More than Talk* would seem to have had the greater potential to influence developments in moral education: it was not a programme, but a broadly based discussion document and therefore had wider application. It was also commissioned and published by the Education Department and had the blessing and approval of the Director General of Education. There was one significant element which the two publications had in common; they both had the potential to be contentious and, through their association with the Department, become politically embarrassing.

⁴³ M. Viney, "Whose Values?", *Education*, 28:5 (1979), p. 18.

⁴⁴ Viney was asked to contribute to *Education*, following a suggestion made by C. W. Haskell in a letter to Renwick which criticised 'More Than Talk' and asked that a "Christian" should be commissioned to show the "other side of the coin". Letter from C. W. Haskell to Renwick, 4 January 1979, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁴⁵ Viney.

Responses to *More than Talk, What Do You Think?*, and to other even more contentious material, such as *The Little Red School Book*⁴⁶ and *Too Great A Risk*⁴⁷, undoubtedly contributed to the decision made by the Minister of Education in 1980. Early in that year, Merv Wellington placed an embargo on any classroom material related to health and social education. The *New Zealand Herald*⁴⁸ reported on his actions under the headline: "Ban Put On Sensitive School Aids." The report stated:

The ban will prohibit the buying of teaching aids or films on these controversial subjects until after the Government has reviewed public comment on the Johnson Report and decided what action, if any should be taken. In the meantime, Mr Wellington intends to review personally all sensitive material already in the National Library. He denied that public pressure had prompted the surprise embargo.⁴⁹

However, the *New Zealand Herald* also quoted him as saying:

I would certainly admit that the Johnson Report has heightened public awareness on such subjects.⁵⁰

The Department emphasised that *More than Talk* was designed to assist discussion on moral education and was just part of what the Department did: A letter drafted by a Departmental officer for Renwick to send to the Hawke's Bay principal (subsequently redrafted by Renwick)⁵¹, stated:

The Department has as one of its many functions the role of assisting public discussion and awareness of current educational issues. Dr Snook and Mr McGeorge refer to this on page 6 of *More than Talk*. It is in this context that they were commissioned to write their booklet.⁵²

⁴⁶ *The Little Red School Book*, Soren Hanson and Jesper Jensen (original authors), translated from Danish by Berit Thornberry Edited and revised for New Zealand conditions by a diverse group of teachers, university lecturers, students, doctors, journalists, editors, and lawyers, Wellington: Alister Taylor, 1972.

⁴⁷ Comic strip devised by a branch of the South West branch of the Family Planning Association, (UK) and later distributed in many countries including New Zealand.

⁴⁸ *New Zealand Herald*, 5 January 1980.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ Letter from W. L. Renwick to R. A. Foster, 9 February 1979, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁵² *ibid.*

Taking into account the history of the Department's "discussion" documents on moral education, the Department cannot have been surprised when reactions to *More than Talk* started to emerge. Public views on moral education once again found expression in approval or disapproval of a publication produced by the Department.

One of the target groups for the publication was "interested parents".⁵³ An example of a response from a representative of this group is recorded by a member of the Takapau Primary School committee, Mrs Elvi Frings, who was given a copy of *More than Talk* by the school's principal. Mrs Frings wrote to Renwick asking for more copies of *More than Talk* because she wished to discuss the booklet with her family. Mrs Frings felt that the booklet:

should be discussed not only by schoolteachers and parents in charge of today's world but by the people who will inherit this world tomorrow, i.e. the Younger generation.⁵⁴

Mrs Frings considered the publication had: "a common sense approach and is full of positive ideas", and ventured the opinion:

that I am looking forward to the day when you will be able to say "the book is departmental policy, it is a blueprint for changes contemplated".⁵⁵

Two other letters written to Renwick at around the same time are illustrative of criticism of *More than Talk*. R.A.Foster⁵⁶ wrote to Renwick in December 1978 and C.W.Haskell⁵⁷ wrote in February 1979. Both writers were critical of the Department's association with the booklet. Haskell stated:

Parts of the book are unworthy of a Department of Education publication and you would not have time to peruse all that could be said in refutation of these.⁵⁸

R.A.Foster, Principal of Hawke's Bay College, wrote:

⁵³ Letter from Renwick to Snook, 20 November 1978, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁵⁴ Letter from Frings to Renwick, 26 March 1979, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ Letter to Renwick from Foster, 12 December 1978, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7, Pt 1.

⁵⁷ Letter from C. W. Haskell to Renwick, 4 January 1979, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

my particular reason for writing to you is to express my strong objection to the booklet in general, and to chapter 10 in particular, and my regret that you have associated your department with this document.⁵⁹

Chapter 10 of *More than Talk* was the final chapter in the book and was entitled "The "Tone" of the School". The chapter emphasised one of the book's main themes: that schools which were serious about moral education had to go beyond the classroom and look critically at school organisation and administration. Topics included in this chapter were "school rules", "the rights of pupils", "modelling", and "the wider society".

Renwick's response to Foster's letter is significant because it suggests a personal view and one which was at odds with the complimentary remarks which he made about *More than Talk* in other correspondence. It was not necessary for Renwick to give a detailed response to Foster: a short and generalised reply had already been drafted by an officer of his department, but Renwick decided to redraft the letter. The first draft of the letter had suggested that because the book was not departmental policy, Foster should direct his criticisms to the "public forums where the discussion is being pursued".⁶⁰ Renwick also distanced himself from the book, suggesting that Foster's comments could be more appropriately made to the authors of *More than Talk*:

I do not think it is my responsibility, as publisher to enter into a debate which is really one between yourself as the reader and the authors of *More than Talk*.⁶¹

In contrast to the first draft of the letter which remains distant and bland, Renwick does engage for he went on to say:

I will however, say this. I felt myself when I read the booklet in its final form, that Chapter 10 was a bit out of character with the rest of the booklet. I felt that the authors had shifted from a discursive stance to something of a preaching stance and, like yourself, I became aware of the accusative finger. One or two of the words ("prattle" is one) suggest to me that the author's temperature had

⁵⁹ Letter to Renwick from R. A. Foster, 12 December 1978, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 1.

⁶⁰ Letter drafted for Renwick in response to Foster's 12 December letter, 9 January 1979. ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁶¹ Letter from Renwick to Foster, 9 January 1979, *ibid*.

risen a little when they came to Chapter 10. I think myself, with the advantage of hindsight, that the tone of this chapter could have been changed for the better through further editorial discussion with the authors on this point.⁶²

Renwick concluded the letter by affirming the value of *More than Talk*, while again distancing himself from the author's views:

You should know that apart from the comments I have made about Chapter 10, I believe that Snook and McGeorge have done a very good job in producing a discussion booklet on an inherently difficult subject. I certainly don't agree with all of the conclusions they have reached, nor, in some cases, with some of their major emphases.⁶³

It should be remembered that Renwick advanced his personal views to a member of the public. It is significant first of all that he did so, and secondly it indicates reservations about the book, which when added to the climate of the time did not suggest a long life for *More than Talk*.

More than Talk was longer in the production stage than it was out in the public arena, with three years between its commissioning and publication. Department of Education records⁶⁴ show that the authors were commissioned to write in August 1975 and submitted their manuscript in October of the same year. The book was edited "chapter by chapter" during 1976, and remained with the Government Printer from March 1977 until it was finally published in November 1978.

The production of the *What Do You Think?* programme spanned a much longer period of time, from 1965 until 1976. The potential for *What Do You Think?* to be a political issue was far greater because *What Do You Think?* was longer in the making, and so provided more exposure for both the resource and its authors. There were other reasons why *What do You Think?* became such a liability for the Department; the most significant lay in its origins as an unofficial project. In contrast with *More than Talk*, it was never under the Department's control. Indeed, the Department was in the difficult position of being attacked from both

⁶² Renwick's 9 February 1979 letter in response to Foster's 12 December letter, ABEP W4262, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁶³ *ibid.*

⁶⁴ Notes written in answer to a query from Renwick by Peter Brice, 30/1/79, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

sides of the moral education spectrum, over a programme with which it had only tenuous links. To add to the complexity of the problem, *What Do You Think?* was finally published by COME.⁶⁵ The programme's hybrid nature was highlighted by Russell Hodge, President of the Post Primary Teacher's Association, in a press statement released on 5 November 1979:

It appears that public funds have been used to develop a publication of questionable balance which is being distributed to schools as the property of private citizens.⁶⁶

The Department of Education and the controversy over *What Do You Think?*

Whereas the Department could easily dampen down any difficulties with *More than Talk*, and certainly appears to have done so, *What Do You Think?* was altogether another matter. The crux of the issue was that regardless of what the Department of Education said, it was associated with a contentious programme which had been written by a man who was tenacious; Elliot Hogg, who, with the support of those who subscribed to "traditional morality", elements of the media and those who were influenced by his views, was involved in a prolonged and bitter wrangle with the Department, which was to last to the mid 1980s. The Department was the ultimate winner for *What Do You Think?* eventually disappeared. In the meantime the controversy tied up an immense amount of Department of Education energy (such was the frequency of the exchanges that Peter Macpherson, a senior officer in the Department, mentioned that his colleague Peter Brice "specialises in interpreting Mr Hogg")⁶⁷ and once again demonstrated the enormous sensitivity of moral education issues.

The contentious nature of *What Do You Think?* is illustrated by the reactions of two national pressure groups: the Post Primary Teachers' Association and the Family Planning Association. One major area of concern was the association between the groups represented by COME and the resource. Russell Hodge observed:

the Foreword and Introduction to the booklet that accompanies the Audio-Visual material reflects the standpoint of those

⁶⁵ COME was a federation of SPUC, SPCS, and the Family Rights Association.

⁶⁶ Press Statement by Russell Hodge, President of the PPTA, 5 November 1979, ABEP W4262, 26/1/87 Pt 2.

⁶⁷ ABEP W4262, 26/1/87 Pt 2.

organisations. They contain a sourly critical comment on current Human Development and Relationship courses in schools, an implication that the Johnson report disregards chastity as a value of significance, and develops a contorted argument that a publication [the Johnson Report] whose structure is built around the Ten Commandments and the Sermon On The Mount is not a vehicle for religious education.⁶⁸

Hodge was concerned that departmental funds had been provided for a project over which ultimately the Department had no control. A further concern was that there had been no consultation with national groups, and that public funds⁶⁹ had been used on a programme of questionable objectivity. Hodge concluded by stating:

If the Department of Education was unaware of the nature of the material that was being produced with their support they should have come clean and say so. By doing so, they would at least withdraw from COME the opportunity to give their publication the authority of official status'.⁷⁰

The Family Planning Association's views on *What Do You Think?* were similar to the PPTA's. A letter from Dr Olga Batt, National President of the FPA, expressed some of the Association's anxieties:

(the) NZFPA views with some concern the activities of COME and its affiliated organisations. Several recent press reports have indicated that the COME programme *What Do You Think?* was devised with Department of Education backing and that it is being introduced into schools with Departmental approval. We would be grateful if you could inform us if these reports are true because NZFPA would wish to advise you that the *What Do You Think?* programme is likely to have a seriously counterproductive effect in its approach to human sexuality.⁷¹

There was an additional element for the FPA and Elliot-Hogg (and those groups

⁶⁸ Press Statement by Russell Hodge, President of the PPTA, 5 November 1979, ABEP W4262, 26/1/87 Pt 2.

⁶⁹ Concern that public money was being spent on material which represented a narrow view of moral education was also expressed by Helen Beaglehole, spokeswoman for the 'Working Party on Religious and Moral Education' and Patsy McGrath and Christine Dann national spokespersons for the 'New Zealand Values' Party', ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/37 Pt 3.

⁷⁰ Press Statement by Russell Hodge, President of the PPTA, 5 November 1979, ABEP W4262, 26/1/87 Pt 3.

⁷¹ Letter from Batt to Merv Wellington, 29 October 1979, NZFPA Records (MS-Group-0548) Ref no 97-035-07/1 (Restricted).

and individuals associated with COME) were engaged in a wider political controversy. COME and like minded groups were opposed to sex education in schools and were involved in an ongoing campaign against the FPA.

An indication of the long life of this campaign is contained in a letter written in 1984 by the National President of FPA, C. N. Taylor, to Russell Marshall, the new Minister of Education in the Labour government. Taylor was hoping to gain Marshall's support for a FPA sex education resource which had been piloted by a number of Auckland secondary schools, and noted:

the letter-writing campaign to the press from those people opposed to our sex education teaching kit.⁷²

Throughout the long history of *What Do You Think?*, Elliot-Hogg was extremely successful in giving the impression that the programme was official despite repeated attempts by the Department to distance itself. An example is taken from the National Film Library records of 1979 which stated:

The N.F.L. is producing a series of recorded panel discussions for Mr D. A. Hogg, Inspector of Secondary Schools, Hamilton, under the Chairmanship of Sir John Marshall.⁷³

The use of the title of "Inspector" gave a sense Departmental authority (Elliot - Hogg had at this stage had been retired from the inspectorate for three years). It is conceivable that the use of the title was a mistake but an earlier example shows that Elliot-Hogg could be deliberately misleading. In a letter to the Hon Lance Adams-Schneider, Elliot-Hogg wrote of his fears that his work on the programme was about to be terminated, quoting Peter Boag (Assistant Director General of Education) as saying:

I have now concluded that we should stop our involvement as a Department in this project from the beginning of 1978.⁷⁴

Elliot-Hogg expressed surprise, claiming:

⁷² Letter to Marshall from C. N. Taylor, 24 August 1984, NZFPA Records (MS-Group-0548) Ref no 97-035-07/1 (Restricted).

⁷³ Information on page headed 'National Film Library', ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/7 Pt 2.

⁷⁴ Letter to Lance Adams Schneider, from David Elliot Hogg, 27 December 1977, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/37 Pt 1.

On the face of it this decision is curious firstly because the *What Do You Think?* project was the Department's own baby, conceived and nurtured within the Department, not foisted from outside.⁷⁵

The depiction of the Department of Education as liberals who at the very least were unsympathetic to "traditional morality" was also part of Elliot-Hogg's argument. In his letter to Adams-Schneider, Elliot-Hogg went on to say that Boag's decision was:

Nevertheless an expected decision because of the irreconcilability of Head Office philosophy with the philosophy on which this traditional morality is based. Those who see Plum Tree morality as progress and traditional morality as backwardness cannot work together for long in harmony. So it looks at present like the victory for the MACOS educationalists with the Traditional Morality ship bulldozed off the road, leaving it clear for further developments.⁷⁶

The letter to Adams-Schneider illustrates another element of Elliot-Hogg's success, that of gaining the support of prominent New Zealanders such as Sir John Marshall, and politicians such as Ben Couch, W. L. Young, Michael Connelly and Bruce Beetham.⁷⁷ A number of these politicians were colleagues of Les Gandar, the Minister of Education. Opposition Members of Parliament could perhaps be given a superficial response, but in order for the Minister to maintain the confidence of his colleagues it was necessary for the Minister to be fully briefed by his Department.

Notes to prepare Les Gandar for questions from Adams Schneider reveal a little more about Department's involvement with *What Do You Think?* and the degree to which Elliot-Hogg had become a major irritation to the Department:

Although Mr Hogg embarked upon his work in his private capacity without any official approval, it cannot be said that he encountered any disapproval or discouragement. On the contrary, he was helped from time to time by, for example, enabling him to attend on occasions recording sessions of his discussion groups during working hours. Mr Hogg was, however, always suspicious of Departmental policy and of Head Office attitudes in particular.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

⁷⁷ Letters from and to these politicians, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/37 Pts 1&2.

During his time in the Department he not only published his *What Do You Think?* book under a pseudonym, as referred to in the reply to Mr Adams Schneider, but also wrote the occasional letter to the press critical of educational trends under the same or similar nom de plume.⁷⁸

The notes went on to point out that there were signs that Elliot-Hogg was developing a more extreme approach compared to his earlier work:

The project developed by Messers Hogg and Christie during 1976 and 1977 was one of a different nature. Although the initial broadcasts, at least, were genuine attempts to discuss in an open-minded way important moral issues, the audio-visual material now produced has apparently been taking a much more obvious fundamentalist Christian line which some observers have described as clearly biased, certainly too much for it to be considered as an "official" departmental production⁷⁹.

Boag suggested that as Hogg was not likely to accept any attempts to evaluate his work by the Department, it would be prudent to refer his material to an advisory group for a report.

A review panel was set up and the results of its evaluation of *What Do You Think?* were communicated to Gandar's successor by the Director General of Education, W.L.Renwick, in August 1979:

An analysis of the representatives' comments reveals that there was little support for the complete acceptance of the programme.

I have decided that the department should make no further contribution to the development of the series and should not purchase them for the National Film Library. Responsibility for the future developing and publishing the programme lies with the authors; it will then be up to teachers and other potential users to purchase it if they wish.⁸⁰

The Department of Education had effectively washed its hands of the programme, but Elliot-Hogg and the groups associated with him were outraged. Upholders of "Traditional Morality" lobbied politicians, and Elliot-Hogg mounted a media

⁷⁸ Briefing notes for Merv Wellington prepared by P. W. Boag for the Director General, 19 April 1978, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/37, Moral education, Pt 1.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ 'Panels to view materials for the National film Library: Viewing of Elliot-Hogg/Christie "What Do You Think?" Programme' - to the Minister of Education from the Director General of Education, 13 August 1979, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/37 Pt 1.

campaign which stressed the money which the Department had wasted. A report from the 'Dominion' picked up this theme with an article called "Money Lost on Morals Show".⁸¹ In the article Elliot-Hogg was quoted as saying:

I suppose it was too hot for them to handle. The business of morals is ticklish.⁸²

It continued to be "ticklish" for Merv Wellington who had to field questions in the House about the wastage of taxpayers' money and the lack of monitoring procedures.⁸³

In late November Wellington met with a deputation from COME. The deputation consisted of Mr R Pearce, President of COME, Mrs M Pryor, President of SPUC, and Miss P Bartlett, Secretary for the "Society for the Promotion of Community Standards". Peter Brice was also present. Following the meeting, the deputation participated in a radio interview. A record of the meeting indicates heat and confusion, and also provides an insight into at least the official viewpoint of the Minister:

Mrs Pryor then raised again the Minister's attitude to the *What Do You Think?* programme. The minister reiterated his earlier points; stressing that as it was it said to students "this is it" whereas it needed to promote and stimulate discussion. He stated that he and COME probably agreed on the ends but he could not agree that the methodology at present used to get there was appropriate. He suggested it be put more in the form of a discussion programme. In response to Mr Hogg he stated that he was aware of the discussion questions. Mr Pearce stated that COME should be wary of an open-ended approach and Miss Bartlett referred to such an approach as situational ethics. The Minister stressed that he was talking about technique and that he supported such statements as made by one panel member that the present programme presented "closed conclusions". Mr Pearce stated it must be clear what was right and wrong.⁸⁴

The *What Do You Think?* programme continued to be a source of controversy

⁸¹ *Dominion*, 6/11/79.

⁸² *ibid.*

⁸³ Questions directed to Wellington by MPs Russell Marshall, Labour spokesperson for Education, and Marilyn Waring, Wellington member for Waipa.

⁸⁴ Report of the meeting on 29 November 1979 between the deputation from the Council of Organisations for Moral Education and the Minister of Education, Merv Wellington, ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/3/37 Pt 2.

through to the mid 1980s.⁸⁵ The minutes from a meeting with the Minister in November 1979 provide a succinct reminder of the inherent danger of an unofficial moral education programme becoming identified with the Department of Education:

ADG⁸⁶ reported on the background behind the departmental involvement with Messers Hogg and Christie. The Minister would like us to make sure that we do not find ourselves again in the position of committing departmental money to projects that may later be rejected by the screening panel.⁸⁷

At the end of the decade, the Department of Education was distancing itself from attempts to provide schools with educational material on moral education. The issues raised by the two publications discussed in this chapter highlight the inherent controversy of moral education and the implications for educational bureaucracies.

As the 1970s drew to a close there were opportunities for reflection on what had been happening in education over the decade. One of the defining points had been the EDC, and in 1978 Jean Herbison, then Deputy Director of the Christchurch Technical Institute, chaired a committee which evaluated progress on the recommendations of the EDC. The committee published a report which was:

directed on the one hand to the Minister of Education, (L.Gandar) the teachers and officials who carry the responsibility for education. It is also directed to the general public, more particularly those who took part in the various conference activities in 1973 and 1974.⁸⁸

Herbison's report included a summation of what was going on in "morals and values education". The Report noted that many of the 'concerns' which exercised the EDC and other consultative endeavours were:

⁸⁵ As evidenced by the on-going correspondence in Departmental files, ABEP, W4262, 1846, 34/3/37, Pt 3.

⁸⁶ Assistant Director General of Education.

⁸⁷ Extract of the meeting and correspondence with Mr Pearce (Sub 7212), ABEP W4262, 1846, 34/2/37 Pt 1.

⁸⁸ "Progress on recommendations of the Educational Development Conference", Department of Education, 1978, p. 14.

universals that require considerable discussion and are often intractable. One particular area of contention is morals and values education, more precisely human development and relationships and sex education.⁸⁹

While welcoming Gandar's invitation to take part in discussion and debate following the release of the Johnson Report in 1977, the Report commented that "a great deal of debate on these issues" had already taken place following recommendations on morals and values education made by the Royal Commission on Contraception Sterilisation and Abortion; the reports of the EDC working parties; the Secondary Curriculum Review, and the Ross Report. Herbison's report expresses a sense of the frustration felt by many health and educational professionals:

We repeat the Royal Commission's finding of many distressing cases apparently arising from lack of the most rudimentary guidance in moral principles, and an appreciation of responsibility.⁹⁰

Herbison's report recognised that while any development in school curriculum could not solve society's problems, such developments "should at least help towards reducing them".⁹¹

On a positive note, Herbison's report commented favourably on the many schools which were building programmes in human development and relationships, social education and liberal studies in consultation with parents, students and staff. The report highlighted the importance of community consultation in moral education:

We cannot emphasise too strongly however, that schools must always work closely with their communities in such programmes.⁹²

Herbison's review committee suggested three priorities in values education:

the establishment of a consultative curriculum committee to set broad national objectives

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² *ibid.*

effective means of involving staff, community, and students in the the development of school curricula

morals and values programmes in schools, including human development and relationships and sex education with preliminary discussions and consultations with parents a pre - requisite.⁹³

The Final Chapter in this thesis considers the development of the Health Education Syllabus which took place between 1980 and 1984. The development of this syllabus was the climax of complex interactions around moral education during the previous decade as well as the culmination of debates in earlier historical contexts.

⁹³ *ibid.*

THE FINAL CHAPTER: 1980-1985

By the end of the 1970s, the inherent difficulties of consultation on moral education were very apparent. The decade which covered the EDC and the Johnson Report had been marked by new levels of consultation. At the end of the decade, consultation had revealed issues which remained unresolved. Consensus on moral education was elusive because competing moral positions were evident, and hence it seemed unlikely there would ever be an agreed national direction. Despite the apparently discouraging environment, the development of the 1985 Health Education syllabus was to demonstrate that the Department of Education had taken heed of the lessons from the previous decade when extensive consultation had not been translated into action.

The aftermath of the Ross and Johnson Reports and the presence of a Minister of Education, Merv Wellington, who was much less liberal in respect to moral questions than his two predecessors (Les Gandar and Phil Amos) did not promise substantive progress in areas such as sex education. Nevertheless, the decision in 1980, to begin the first steps to revise provisions for health education in primary and secondary schools presented an opportunity to revisit the broad context for moral education and try to refocus the debate around less extreme positions.

The Johnson Report had emphasised the need to revise the primary school health education syllabus and the secondary school regulations which had been drawn up in the mid 1940s. This long overdue revision was something Merv Wellington could not delay. In April 1980 he announced the Government's decisions on the recommendations of the Johnson Report.¹ One of the decisions had been:

to authorise my department to proceed with a review of the primary and secondary health education syllabuses within the context of my other decisions.²

¹ See Chapter Six for discussion and reactions to this announcement.

² These other decisions referred to were: to retain the present position with regard to sex education in schools; to allow secondary school programmes in human development and relationships authorised by principals in consultation with boards of governors to continue, but with provision for review of consultative procedures followed by schools to formulate a set of national guidelines which could be helpful to schools; to take no action to change the Education Act 1964, in the light of the decision not to build sex education into the primary school curriculum.

The development of the Health Education Syllabus was a turning point for moral education in New Zealand. Had it not been for the turbulent political events of the late 1980s, a broad and consultative approach to moral education could have been firmly established in New Zealand schools. It is argued that despite political fall out from the 1970s a viable way forward in moral education was negotiated, only to be lost in the post Picot³ era when economic theories associated with the New Right began to influence decisions about education. Codd summed up the situation rather well when he said "in 1987 Rogernomics caught up with the education system".⁴

Recalling the very limited action envisaged by the Minister of Education following the Johnson Report, the syllabus and associated legislation which provided for sex and relationship education in a national syllabus for primary and secondary schools were remarkable achievements. The process by which the Health Education Syllabus and the accompanying legislation came about was the result of complex interactions between political and education groups, a changing social climate⁵ and the legacy of the 1970s.

As a result of the Government's deliberations on the recommendations of the Johnson Report, the Minister of Education, Merv Wellington, approved the establishment of a project group to undertake the revision of the primary and secondary health education syllabuses. The Health Education Project team, as it became known, began its work early in 1982. This chapter considers the development of the Health Education Syllabus which was approved by the Minister of Education, Russell Marshall, in October 1984, and the 1985 amendment to the Education Act (1964) which was designed to ensure that adequate consultation on all aspects of health education took place.

³ The Picot Report refers to the Report of the Task Force to Review Educational Administration in New Zealand: "Administrating for Excellence: Effective Administration in Education", Wellington, 1988. Set up in 1987, the task force was charged with carrying out a wide-ranging review of education. It was chaired by businessman Brian Picot.

⁴ John Codd, quoted by Ivan Snook in a paper presented to NZARE Conference, Trentham, 29 November-1 December 1989. Snook's paper was called, "Educational Reform in New Zealand; What Is Going On?".

⁵ See Chapter 1 for discussion on the changing social climate of the 1970s and 1980s.

The Health Education Project Team

The titular head of the Department of Education project team was Roy Phillips, Assistant Director, Curriculum Division, and Helen Shaw⁶ was the project director. Shaw took up her job with the Department of Education as Education Officer -Health and leader of the project team in September 1981. Shaw's background is significant because it illustrates the defining characteristics of the project team. All of the project team had strong links to teaching and to teacher unions. Shaw had been a science teacher at Rangi Ruru and Burnside⁷ secondary schools in Christchurch. At Burnside she had moved into a pastoral role as tutor in one of the divisions of the school where she had a wide ranging role with teachers, students, and parents. "Parent education" became an absorbing interest and in 1980 Shaw collaborated with the Head of Guidance to write *Working Together*,⁸ a publication which included material from the courses which she had organised at Burnside. As with other members of the project team, Shaw had links with the PPTA, and in addition was part of the in service circuit of courses on health education which were running during the 1970s. She was both a participant and a presenter at courses held at Hogben House and Lopdell House, and was also sought out by officers of the Education Psychological Service who became interested in her work in parent education.

Shaw's role as project team leader was crucial to the success of the project for the following reasons. Her impressive academic work history (she had worked at Otago University and Harvard Medical School) indicates intelligence and scholarship, qualities which were vital for the complexity of the task she had before her. She had relevant teaching and pastoral experience in New Zealand schools, and most importantly was experienced in consultation at the 'grassroots' level. She was asked to apply for a position in the Department of Education as Education Officer, Health, and attributes this invitation to work she had been doing in parent education and the various initiatives with which she had been involved:

⁶ For a discussion on the male dominated power structure which existed in the Education Department during the 1970s, see J. Aitken and R. Noonan, "The Politics of Resource Allocation in New Zealand. The Implications for New Zealand Women", a paper presented at the Politics and Education Seminar, NZCER, Wellington, December 1979.

⁷ Burnside High School had one of the pilot guidance systems in secondary schools. For discussion of the development of guidance in New Zealand, see Chapter 4.

⁸ Helen Shaw and David Mathews, "Working Together - A Handbook for Leaders working with Parent Groups", Christchurch: Burnside High school, 1980.

My whole approach to consultation was developed in those years and it was because of this that I was really invited to apply for this job in the Department.⁹

For the Department of Education, criticised on numerous occasions for being too close to the Johnson Committee, Shaw had two compelling qualities; she was both an outsider and, to a lesser degree, an insider. She was not identified with the Department but had been exposed to Departmental views and personnel during the latter half of the 1970s. Two quotations from Shaw serve to contrast her distance and the sense of “beginning” with her links to the Department. The first described her arrival at Head Office:

I was shown into an empty office with huge filing cabinets with nothing in them and I looked at them on the first day and thought will I ever get those filled? and the book shelves - there was not a book on the shelf - there was absolutely nothing, and in no time at all I was bursting out of the office and having to put things into cardboard cartons in storage because so much paper came at me.¹⁰

The second quotation tells of her association with Rory O'Connor¹¹ who had moral education among his responsibilities:

One of the senior officers was Rory O'Connor who had had a lot to do with the Johnson Committee and had become a colleague while I was working at Burnside. It was Rory who brought me up to take part in activities in Wellington that he was involved in and he was responsible for all sorts of things including parent education. I think that was when he first noticed me, and then he worked closely with me when I came into the Department.¹²

Shaw also had contact with Jim Ross (the main author of the Ross Report) who was by this stage Deputy Director General. Shaw recalls that Ross, Jack Cox (Director of the Curriculum Division), and Bill Renwick were extremely supportive of the project. Speaking of Ross she said:

⁹ Interview with Helen Shaw, March 1999, Tape A, page 3 of transcript.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ O'Connor's role in a variety of activities associated with moral education has been discussed in previous chapters.

¹² Shaw, 1999, Tape A, page 4 of transcript.

He had been Chairman of the Ross Report so he had been in the running from the beginning and he was always interested in what was happening - interested to hear how some of the old players were still attacking me and I really had a lot of good allies in the hierarchy of the Department.¹³

Other senior people in the Department were supportive; Peter Brice who at the time was the Assistant Director of Schools and Development also gave encouragement. Brice's support for health education is evidenced by the observations of Ian Newman, from the University of Nebraska. After commending Shaw for the health education curriculum materials she had sent him in 1985, Newman wrote:

I remember sitting in Peter Brice's office when he made a commitment that health education materials would be produced in a shorter time than is usual for similar curriculum changes. He was as good as his word!¹⁴

Like other Departmental officials, however, Brice was conscious of the recent set backs in human development and relationship education and his support for health education was moderated by caution. Brice's caution is illustrated by this comment from Shaw in 1999:

Anything I did that was the least bit controversial I had to clear it with him (Brice) and in a way that was an extra link and he was a very, very exacting taskmaster. Just about everything I wrote had to be rewritten. Every resource he had to see and go through in detail.¹⁵

Shaw drew together some other threads which came through from the 1960s and 1970s. She brought with her experience from school initiatives in health education and was also conversant with developments in New Zealand and overseas. She had read widely (*Towards Partnership*,¹⁶ the Johnson Report and *More Than Talk*¹⁷, for example) and before she took up her position in Wellington the Department sent her to Australia for three weeks to visit curriculum

¹³ *ibid*, page 5.

¹⁴ Letter from Newman to Shaw, 14 August 1985, ABEP W4262, N550/2/HE/IN Box 3708.

¹⁵ Interview with Helen Shaw, March 1999, Tape B, page 15 of transcript.

¹⁶ Report of the Committee on Secondary Education, *Towards partnership*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1976. Henceforth referred to as *Towards Partnership*.

¹⁷ I. Snook and C. McGeorge, *More Than Talk: Moral Education New Zealand*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1978.

development units in different centres. There are records of ongoing correspondence with health educators from numerous countries, and Shaw attended a number of international conferences during the period of syllabus development.

Helen Shaw's skills and experiences were complemented by other members of the project team. Alison (Punch) Crawford, the NZEI representative, had been a "visiting teacher" in Christchurch working in a pastoral role liaising between schools and families. At the time of her secondment she was working as a Teacher in Residence in Christchurch for the Correspondence School. Euan Dempsey, a teacher and Guidance Counsellor at Hutt Valley High School and later Coordinator of Guidance at the Correspondence School, represented the PPTA. The involvement of the teacher unions in the project recognised their role in professional matters, and acknowledged that they represented the teachers with whom the future of the curriculum lay. A statement from Helen Shaw in 1981 recognised the role of the PPTA:

The appointed PPTA member of the Project Team will be able to keep the Executive informed of the developments as the submissions from the national organisations are heard, and the planning tasks of the team take shape. The interest of the Executive of the PPTA in this review and revision of the Health Education syllabus, and the importance it is giving to it, should be of real benefit to the work of the whole project team.¹⁸

Shaw recognised the need for someone with primary experience, and managed to get a position created for a seconded teacher. Departmental inspectors and advisors suggested Ruth Mansell, Deputy Principal of Brooklyn School in Wellington, who was known to them through her inservice work with teachers. Mansell had led inservice training and resource development closely related to the mental and social health aspects of the proposed syllabus. When Shaw and Rory O'Connor subsequently interviewed Mansell, she was invited to join the project team at the end of 1981.

Shaw was the constant figure in the consultation process during the first phase, but the project team worked together whenever possible. This was particularly the case in some of the more difficult consultations:

¹⁸ Report on the "Progress of the Working Party for Health Education Syllabus Review", Hogben House 25 - 29 May 1981, copy supplied by Helen Shaw.

I generally chaired the meeting but in a way it depended on the group that we were meeting. A number of these groups I met on my own and just kept my own notes and invited them to keep notes of the meeting so that there was a second record but in other cases where we were meeting the more adversarial groups we would have a full brass turn out. Roy Phillips would be there and sometimes Rory O'Connor or Peter Brice and we always tried to have the PPTA and the NZEI representatives there on that day as well so that I had their support and they also had an opportunity to ask questions.¹⁹

The stressful circumstances of some consultations encouraged the project team to become a tight knit group. In Shaw's words:

I think the battleground was so intense with some of the various interest groups that we had to stand together or fall.²⁰

Shaw suggested the only tensions within the group were a result of delays by the Minister of Education, Merv Wellington:

There were all sorts of dismaying holdups and if anything caused dissension in the project team it was these dismaying holdups because everybody felt a sense of urgency. I guess I felt hugely disappointed when there would be these holdups, but I had the philosophical view that I was there for the long haul.²¹

Looking towards a new syllabus.

The ultimate goal was of course, the production of a syllabus which could be implemented. In this process, the role of teachers was identified as being crucial. The importance of involving teachers in the development of the Health Education Syllabus was expressed by Shaw when she was interviewed in 1999:

There was a lot of work with teachers because it was one thing to get through the consultation stage, it was going to be another thing to get teachers on board.

The first task that I was given was consultation with the national organisations including the NZEI and the PPTA. I couldn't engage

¹⁹ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape A, p.12.

²⁰ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape B, p. 5.

²¹ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape A, p. 11.

with teachers at large until after the consultation²² had been carried through and so the purpose of the consultation was really to consult national organisations and a few local organisations particularly the rowdy ones and also too with a number of individuals some of whom had been writing letters to the Minister and had been growing articulate on their own account.²³

This recollection is evidence of another element in the process of revising the Health Education Syllabus: the impact of Shaw herself on the consultation, development and implementation of the syllabus. Shaw has described herself as “a pragmatist who wanted to get things working”.²⁴ From the point when she accepted the job of project leader in 1981, until she became a Senior Education Officer in 1987 and moved on to another project,²⁵ the revision of the Health Education Syllabus was sustained by Shaw's drive and her vision that at the end of the process a document reflecting values broadly accepted by the community would be successfully implemented in New Zealand schools.

To ensure that health education would be implemented in all schools, Shaw was determined that teachers and communities should have a document that worked. When asked to reflect on the Health Education Syllabus and consider what changes she would now make, Shaw replied:

I think that it should reflect a Maori dimension much more plainly. That would be important so that there is a greater degree of engagement and involvement immediately, but I wouldn't want to see it much more complicated than it was really. I thought it was at the absolute limit of detail and complexity in terms of the group of people I felt I was working for in the teachers of the time and parents of the time.²⁶

Shaw recalls being sure of support from senior levels of the Department, but also being aware that the Minister was not sympathetic:

Certainly the hierarchy in the Department was enormously supportive - they were really keen to see this particular project succeed. There was never any resistance. The difficulty was

²² Consultation was in two stages. Shaw is referring to the initial stage.

²³ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape A, page 11.

²⁴ Phone conversation with Helen Shaw, March 3, 1999.

²⁵ Shaw was given the task of overseeing the Curriculum Review - this project disappeared when David Lange became Minister of Education.

²⁶ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape C, page 11.

getting it to succeed when the current Minister of Education had such fixed views and that was really the major problem.²⁷

The significance of the consultation process

This section examines the consultation process for the Health Education Syllabus in some detail, and argues that the consultation was successful in the terms outlined by Shaw. According to Shaw, consultative procedures for the Health Education Syllabus were developed that led to broad agreement on the nature, scope and emphasis of health education in New Zealand schools and, in the process of reaching this consensus, a method for implementing programmes and deciding priorities in individual schools was also evolved.

The consultation carried out by the health education project team was part of the consultation tradition developed during the the previous decade. "Consultation" had become the educational byword of the 1970s having evolved to become part of a fairly slender theoretical framework used by the Education Department. The process was well established and senior members of the Department, such as Bill Renwick, often referred to consultation in their speeches and writing.²⁸

Looking back to the 1970s Shaw identified four related areas where lack of agreement had prevented syllabus development. Central to the debate were the opposing rights of home and school to engage in moral education:

The apparently competing responsibilities between home and school for the moral education of children; the differing perceptions of the rights of parents to identify their children's needs for this education; the teaching considered appropriate - particularly with respect to sex education at various age levels; and the teachers selected for health education programmes.²⁹

The points identified by Shaw have a long history, and were part of a wider debate associated with the compulsory and secular character of New Zealand's

²⁷ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape A, page 6.

²⁸ As an example see W. L. Renwick, "An end and a beginning", a speech delivered to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Thomas Report, first published in *The Secondary School Curriculum*, 7 (1973), cited in G. Robinson and B. O' Rourke, *Schools in New Zealand Society- a book of readings*, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1980, p. 132; and Renwick, *Moving Targets*, Wellington, NZCER, 1986.

²⁹ Helen Shaw, "Health and Sex Education", a paper delivered in Dunedin to the Continuing Education Unit in association with The Otago Institute for Educational Research.

education system. Writing in 1979, Martin Viney, a member of the executive for the CPA, claimed that:

The trouble with state education is that it is compulsory and secular. Without these two features, there would be none of the interminable public wrangles concerning the school's curricular role in moral and religious education ³⁰

Viney was particularly concerned with boundary issues in education, and argued that schools should not be involved in "primary socialisation" of children:

The sooner we pass through this phase of seeing the compulsory school system as the vehicle for curing society's many ailments, the better. Surely, the lesson of history is that education is not the answer to moral and spiritual problems ³¹

The concern Viney was expressing was a longstanding one; namely, that schools should make academic studies their priority rather than socialisation. This was the point that had been frequently made by critics of the 1945 Thomas Report.³²

Given that consultation on moral education is a difficult task because of long standing debates such as those around competing views of education, and because each consulted group has its own distinct set of values, it is argued that the consultation process developed between 1981 and 1983 for health education was as successful as any consultation can be. A consensus, albeit fragile, on moral education was negotiated and an ongoing model for consultation in health education, together with the content of the Health Education Syllabus and associated resources for professional development, meant that moral education in New Zealand schools was poised to enter a new phase.

The Consultation Process

The initial phase involved consulting national organisations, while the second phase occurred after a report on the consultations and the draft syllabus had

³⁰ M. Viney, "Whose Values?", *Education*, 28: 5, 1979.

³¹ *ibid*, p. 20.

³² N.Z. Consultative Committee on the Post - Primary Curriculum, *The Post Primary Curriculum*; Report of the Committee appointed by the Minister of Education in November 1942, Wellington: Government Printer, 1944. The document is usually referred to as the Thomas Report after its chairman W.Thomas former Rector of Timaru Boys' High School.

been circulated for comment to schools, school committees and Boards of Governors. The two phases were distinguished from each other by the different groups consulted and by the rationale for consulting.

At the request of the Minister, the first task for the Project Team was to consult with national organisations. To provide a focus and to make this process constructive, the Project Team drew up a preparatory statement, often referred to as the "statement of intent" which was sent to the national organisations. This statement defused the extreme reactions to the more controversial aspects of health education, and at the same time ensured that the supporters of the 'middle ground' had a more compelling voice than had been the case in the 1970s. The statement was non threatening but also sufficiently robust to allow elements of sex and relationship education to be developed within the curriculum where appropriate to the age of the students. In order for work on the syllabus to proceed, the Project Team needed to be able to persuade the Minister that the majority of those consulted were in agreement with the broad parameters of health education which had been set before them.

The first phase of consultation was aimed at consensus building so that the project team could identify the 'middle ground', the broad agreement which the project team sought. This process, from late 1981 until November 1982 when the report on the consultations and the draft syllabus was released, was the key period. Controversy around the Johnson Report was still present and political sensitivities were running high at this time; the project team was aware that progress on health education could be made only if the consultations revealed a substantial support for the position the project team had spelled out in its initial statement of intent. It is highly likely that the union backgrounds of all the members of the project provided them with a very necessary dose of political understanding. Members of the project team believed that Merv Wellington had been captured by conservative extremists, and recognised it was crucial to show him that the majority of the community, (for example the churches), were very supportive of the intent and content of the draft syllabus.

The second phase of consultation included consensus building, but was primarily concerned with getting feedback from schools and confirming and refining the draft syllabus. The second phase of consultation made no major changes to the content of the draft syllabus. Shaw described the process thus:

Further development of the draft syllabus took place in consultation with all these national organisations and incorporated the feedback we got from schools. We made a few changes because schools came up with some good suggestions or said something could have been reworded, or have you thought of something? So there were some changes but not huge textual changes. They were really changes of detail.³³

The definitions of "health" and "health education" adopted for the Syllabus meant that a very wide range of groups were consulted; one hundred and eleven³⁴ groups were consulted during the initial phase. The breadth of health education envisaged was reflected in groups representing among others, health professionals, sports bodies, welfare organisations and churches. Some groups consulted were less interested in "moral education" topics than others, but all could be said to be interested in "values education" in the sense that they all attributed "value" to the skills and activities associated with their organisations.

The organisation and preparation for the consultation undertaken by the project team was very thorough. One of the groups invited to take part in the first phase of consultation was the New Zealand Dietetic Association. The letter and accompanying information which was sent to the Dietetic Association³⁵ illustrates the clear guidelines which were a feature of the consultative process. The information sent to the Association included the statement of intent, and a planning 'grid' which was provided to allow people to suggest content in their area of expertise which could be recorded and later collated. The statement of intent set out:

the operative definition of health to be used by the syllabus review, along with the rationale, aims and objectives for effective health programmes in health education, and guidelines for their implementation in schools. Besides being an indication of the direction and planning and development to date, this document will be available to groups intending to make submissions, to serve as a basis for their discussions with the Project Team.³⁶

³³ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape B, p. 21.

³⁴ These groups are listed in the *Health education in Primary and Secondary Schools: Syllabus Revision*. Report on Consultations, Draft Syllabus, Wellington: Department of Education, 1982, pp. 12-14.

³⁵ Letter to the New Zealand Dietetic Association, from J. N. Cox (for the Director General), 2 December 1981. Ref No 97 - 005 -8/10, Alexander Turnbull Library.

³⁶ Ref No 97 - 005 -8/10, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The accompanying letter to the Dietetic Association in 1981 included a precise description of the expectations of the project team:

The team will wish to hear of the skills and attitudes you will expect a programme of health education to develop, as well as suggestions for specific content in the area of your organisation's interest and experience. It would be helpful if the statement that accompanies this letter could be used as a basis for shaping your written submissions, or for discussions if a meeting is preferred.³⁷

In marked contrast, an earlier letter³⁸ and accompanying information sent to the Dietetics Association inviting the Association to write a submission to the Johnson Committee contained minimal guidelines.

Information sent to the Dietetics Association also included an unequivocal statement on sex education:

The revision of the syllabuses is being conducted within the decisions of the Government on the recommendations of the Johnson Report. This means that in respect to sex education in primary schools the status quo stands - there is no place in the primary school for group or class instruction in sex education. In secondary schools principals and Boards of Governors may approve courses in sex education in their schools within the conditions of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act, 1977.³⁹

The thorough organisation and preparation prior to the consultation meetings implied there was an expectation about the groups who wished to speak to the project team in addition to providing a written submission. The expectation was that the various groups were expected to respond within the planning grids provided for them. Shaw pointed out that although the meetings were informal, there was a structure to the proceedings and definite rigour in the way Shaw chaired the meetings. Shaw described the process:

I had fifteen different points that I wanted to raise during the discussion and I made sure they all came up so that for example, I

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ Letter to the Dietetics Association, 7 September 1976, from J. M. Crawford, Secretary, Committee on Health and Social Education, Ref No 97 - 005 -8/10, Alexander Turnbull Library.

³⁹ *ibid.*

checked everybody's perceptions about teacher training and I checked everybody's perceptions about sex education. In our introductory statement we had to make very clear that the Minister had given his permission for this project to proceed on the basis that there would be no place for group or class instruction in sex education in primary schools but certainly if people told me they thought sex education should be there, then I wrote that down too so that I was noting what people were telling me, not what they were allowed to tell me.⁴⁰

Before the conclusion of each meeting, Shaw read out what she had written about each of the key points and allowed the group to confirm that their views were recorded correctly.

Shaw resolved to keep the meetings focussed on the practicality of designing a syllabus which could be implemented. To this end she deconstructed the terms used by many of the groups:

So I kept trying to bring the consultation back to an absolutely practical level. What am I going to write down, what are we going to write in that is going to have meaning for teachers and is going to be relevant to the needs of kids? I guess I made a very conscious decision to try and avoid the big titles like 'mental health', 'values education', 'traditional values', 'cornerstone values', 'moral education' because I just felt they were portmanteaus into which everybody packed different meanings.⁴¹

One of the strengths of the work of the project team was their ability to articulate what a realistic health education syllabus should include, age by age. This provided protection against conservative groups that had hitherto been suggesting that the syllabus might contain much more extreme content.

A record of a meeting between the New Zealand Family Planning Association and the project team which took place during the first phase of the consultation process serves to illustrate the perceptions of one of the groups the project team engaged with during this period. The FPA was representative of groups who wanted sex education to be part of the Health Education Syllabus for both primary and secondary schools. The people who met together on March 23, 1982 at the Department of Education in Wellington were listed as Roger Gabb (Chairman of the FPA National Education Committee), Raewyn McKenzie

⁴⁰ *ibid*, Tape A, p.13.

⁴¹ Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape A, p. 14.

(Education Officer, FPA Auckland), Mr R. W. Phillips (Assistant Director Development Division), Helen Shaw (Coordinator of the Project), Mr E Dempsey (member of the Project Team), and one other.⁴²

The meeting was summarised in the following way:

The discussion lasted for one and a half hours and was amicable. We were left with the impression that members of the team were supportive of the FPA position on sex education in general. However, they also clearly pointed out that the revision of the syllabus was forced to take place with two major constraints imposed by the Minister of Education:

- a) Any new syllabus had to operate within the existing law. This meant that group sex instruction in primary and intermediate schools could not be considered.
- b) Any new sex education component in the secondary school syllabus had to be presented as a discrete entity so that parents could remove their children if they so wished. This meant that a programme of sex education which was integrated with other subjects could not be considered.

We expressed our belief that an effective programme of sex education would involve the primary syllabus as well and some members of the team indicated agreement with this position but regretted they were obliged to act within the guidelines imposed by the Minister.⁴³

Excerpts from letters to Roy Phillips and Helen Shaw from a group calling itself "Integrity" written after the document, *Report on the Consultations and the Draft Syllabus*⁴⁴, was released at the end of 1982 illustrate the views of another group involved in the first phase of the consultation process. One of the letters thanked Shaw for the opportunity to comment on the draft, but also expressed two reservations:

It was at least encouraging to see you had included our comment on the need for explicit teaching of the Virtues in the Draft.⁴⁵

(1) However, amongst the multitude of verbiage in the report do

⁴² Report of Meeting with the Health Education Project Team, Dept of Education, March 23 1982, Wellington. Ref. No: 97 -035-32/2, The Alexander Turnbull Library.

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Health education in Primary and Secondary Schools: Syllabus Revision*, report on Consultations, Draft Syllabus, Department of Education, Wellington, 1982.

⁴⁵ 'The Virtues' requested by 'Integrity' are listed on page 7 of the report on consultations.

you intend any inclusion of such basics in the final recommendations? The whole nation is falling apart for lack of basic character building material and there is no debate on whether it should be explicit or not.

2) The greatest danger to us in your presentation is that it reads so plausibly.⁴⁶

The same group's letter to Roy Phillips, written after the one to Shaw, contained the group's submission on the draft syllabus. "Integrity" was unhappy about the "vagueness"⁴⁷ of the report, claiming it "could mean many things to many people."

They gave as examples the 'Caring for the Body' and 'Eating for Health' themes from the draft syllabus.

It is therefore very misleading in that people could think it means health and cleanliness, decency and uprightness, when in fact, exactly the reverse could be justified.

Everybody would commend clean hands, clean bodies, clean rooms and clean clothes. There would be near unanimous response to clean and hygienic food preparation.

Why is there no explicit reference to clean minds and mouths?⁴⁸

"Integrity" voiced the opinion that there was in fact no need for a Health Syllabus revision because:

Our whole society has been mindful and hopefully progressing to a more hygienic community.⁴⁹

The letter concludes that there must be another purpose behind the revision, and this purpose was:

to increase the content of sexual activity.

Ever since the Ross Report, there has been constant endeavour to remove the initiative from the Parents to the Classroom..... The evident reluctance of Educational authorities to acknowledge or

⁴⁶ Letter from 'Integrity' to Helen Shaw, 8 March 1983, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 3.

⁴⁷ Letter from 'Integrity' to Roy Phillips, 23 March 1983, *ibid*.

⁴⁸ Letter from 'Integrity' to Roy Phillips, 23 March 1983, *ibid*.

⁴⁹ *ibid*.

accept the need for the Virtues to be explicit in the curriculum is nothing short of subversive.⁵⁰

The letter concluded on a very distrustful note:

The Humanist, as already said, sanctions explicit sex education, while opposing explicit use of the Virtues. The conclusion is clear, that there is an intentional violation of our Traditional Christian morality within the Department.⁵¹

The two letters from "Integrity" which are referred to illustrate one of the issues faced by the project team; how much weight to give to individual as opposed to group submissions. In the case of the letters quoted in the preceding text, there is the additional problem of separating individual opinions from those of the group, for the letters contain both individual and group views:

Our submission on the draft is as follows... *as well as* There is only one reason I haven't done that kind of thing, I was taught otherwise.⁵²

Shaw gathered all the different viewpoints together into the summary of the first phase of the consultation process. Critical of some other methods of collating responses, she analysed them according to how many she thought were represented by the responses:

Some were thirty pages long and some were one page but I tried to analyse them on the basis of how many people is this speaking for?... I very much gave weight to what the PPTA told us and what the NZEI told us because they were speaking for the people most in touch with children.⁵³

In addition to listening respectfully to the teacher unions because they represented people in touch with children, it was obviously important to maintain good relationships with the unions as their approval was vital in gaining teacher acceptance.

With reference to Patricia Bartlett, a well known 'morals' campaigner and

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ Interview with Helen Shaw, March 1999, Tape A, page 19 of transcript.

secretary of the Society for the Protection of Community Standards, Shaw stated :

She was a very committed person. All these people believed very strongly in their views and it was important to give them a sense that they were being heard; but that their group was such and such a size and the other groups we were listening to were such and such a size and provide some sort of a scale which I think was lacking in the responses to the Johnson Report.⁵⁴

Shaw had been careful to avoid compromising her position by being identified with any of the more extreme pressure groups, and felt at the time that none of those consulted would be surprised by the draft syllabus and the consultation summary on which it was based. Recollecting the task of summarising the first consultation phase and the draft syllabus, she said:

I don't think anyone was shocked by what they saw. I think they all had a fair inkling of the kinds of things that were going to happen - I wanted nobody to have any surprises and I certainly wanted nobody to feel that they had been misled. I guess one of the risks was I had to avoid being captured by either the people who were extremely conservative or by groups that were extremely liberal like WONAAC⁵⁵ who were giving out condoms over school fences and so on. I couldn't afford to be seen to be pally with a group like that because I could have easily been ostracised by the very conservative groups.⁵⁶

Shaw's efforts not to be seen as being sympathetic to any one group arose out of personal conviction as well as out of political necessity. In 1999 she said:

I guess there was a deliberate decision made to not identify explicit values because we had the 'ten commandments', the 'cornerstone values', the 'traditional values'. All of these debates were so destructive. I guess I was very keen to make it an operational model rather than an ideological model.⁵⁷

The broad agreement which the project team sought was expressed in the *Report*

⁵⁴ Interview with Helen Shaw, March 1999, Tape A, p. 9 of the transcript.

⁵⁵ Women's National Abortion Action Campaign. Members of this group challenged the Contraception Sterilisation and Abortion Act by distributing its contraception leaflet to three intermediate schools in the Wellington area in September 1983.

⁵⁶ Shaw, 1999, Tape A, p.15.

⁵⁷ Shaw, March 1999, Tape C, p. 6.

on the Consultations⁵⁸ which went to the Minister in November 1982. On the first page of the report, it is stated:

The consultations revealed that there is widespread agreement on many issues. By far the majority of organisations made very similar suggestions about the content that would be appropriate in the syllabus, and about the steps that schools might take to review their programmes. However, concerns were raised by a few groups about some issues.⁵⁹

While noting concerns of groups like the CPA and SPUC, the report uses material from the consultation process to show support for issues outlined in the project team's introductory paper. Where there was disagreement, the report makes it clear there were small numbers involved. In the case of differences over the definition of health, the report records says:

A few groups chose to define health in other ways. One asked for physical health to be given greater emphasis, seeing this as more relevant in schools than social and emotional health. Another wanted moral and religious health included in the definition. The Concerned Parents' Association wanted a distinction drawn between health education directed to physical health which it accepted, and social education including mental health which it did not support in schools. A similar view was expressed by the Society for the Promotion of Community Standards, while the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child wished to exclude mental health from a health education programme.⁶⁰

In contrast, national organisations of some prestige and 'moral' weight (for example, the National Council of Women and the Churches' Education Commission) were given prominence. It can also be assumed that the Department and its officers knew from previous experiences with syllabus documents that groups of this nature needed to be treated with deference. The broad definition of health outlined in the introductory paper, for example, was supported by the Churches' Education Commission and their submissions quoted in the report:

We see health education as part of the growing concept of

⁵⁸ *Health education in Primary and Secondary Schools: Syllabus Revision*, report on Consultations, Draft Syllabus, Department of Education, Wellington, 1982.

⁵⁹ *ibid*, p. 1.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 2.

education of the whole person, and that it is a positive process directed to fullness of life, not just towards the prevention of personal and social illness.⁶¹

There was also wide acceptance that health education was a shared responsibility:

All organisations consulted accepted that the school shares with the family and the community in having a role in health education. The way in which this responsibility is shared was discussed by most groups. All stressed the importance of health programmes in schools being relevant to local needs, and being sensitive to attitudes and cultural values within their communities.⁶²

All groups consulted saw the need for early contact with parents to be made when primary and secondary health education programmes were reviewed.⁶³

The project team's interpretation of the consultation was included in the report. The team's comments on the results of consultation about the content of classroom programmes stated:

The project team found there was a large measure of agreement about themes that are appropriate for a health education syllabus.⁶⁴

In this section summarising the consultation on content for classroom programmes, sex education was given a substantial section of the text, in fact, more than any other topic. This is despite the topic of sex education in primary schools being placed outside the consultation topics by the Minister. The report acknowledges Wellington's restriction but also notes the adverse reaction to this ruling from "a large number of groups".⁶⁵

A very large number of groups made comments on sex education. The preliminary paper that preceded the consultations made clear that no change was intended in the provisions for sex education in primary schools. This meant that any suggestions regarding sex education were therefore limited to the context of secondary

⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶² *ibid.*

⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 7.

schools. A large number of groups asked for their opposition to this ruling to be recorded, seeing the need for home teaching needing to be supplemented by sound programmes at school, particularly in view of the lower age at which menarche now begins.⁶⁶

The section which summarised the consultation on secondary sex education began with a quotation from a submission from SPUC:

A healthy, responsible, and balanced attitude to human sexuality is one of the most important factors in reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancies and the consequent demand for abortion.⁶⁷

The use of material from one of the more conservative pressure groups added weight to the sense that the majority of those consulted were sympathetic to the idea of sex education taking place in secondary schools. The material from SPUC was followed by support for sex education programmes in secondary schools from the New Zealand Medical Association, the Family Planning Association, the Department of Health and the Secondary School Boards' Association.

The right of parents to withdraw their adolescents from designated parts of a school health programme was a very important part of the consensus on sex education⁶⁸ :

Giving parents the right to withdraw their teenagers from designated parts of health programmes was accepted by most groups as a way of enabling secondary schools to proceed with programmes related to sexuality. It does appear that, where schools approach these programmes through appropriate consultation with parents, this right is seldom exercised.⁶⁹

One significant difference between the first draft and the final version of the syllabus was the inclusion of a sex education component. When the syllabus was approved in 1985, there was no reference to teaching sex education prior to Standard Four. Forms One and Two, however, could cover the sex education

⁶⁶ *ibid* , p. 6.

⁶⁷ *ibid*, p. 7.

⁶⁸ This provision had in fact been used since colonial times to defuse issues such as religious instruction.

⁶⁹ *Health education in Primary and Secondary Schools: Syllabus Revision*, report on Consultations, Draft Syllabus, Department of Education, Wellington, 1982, p. 7.

topic "Understanding Changes At Puberty"⁷⁰, provided certain criteria were met. The most significant of these criteria was the stipulation that in order to include the topic in a health education programme, schools were obliged under an amendment to the Education Act (1964) to consult parents. "Understanding Changes At Puberty" was linked to the syllabus through building self esteem and caring for the body, two of the nine themes in the syllabus.

The consensus established by the Health Education Project Team during the consultation process ensured that the document containing the consultation report and draft syllabus was well received. The feedback from schools resulted in minor textual changes, not critical changes of direction.

The Health Education Syllabus which was finally approved in 1984 (published in 1985) was a tight and clearly written document. It could be termed the "bare bones" of health education programmes as Ruth Mansell, one of the project team members, described it.⁷¹ The "moral education" content of the syllabus was contained within the "bare bones" of the syllabus in the nine 'Themes in Health Education'. The nine themes were: building self esteem; eating for health; caring for the body; physical activity for health; staying healthy; keeping safe; relating to others; finding out about helping agencies, and having a role in community health issues. These themes were derived from a definition of health which signalled a rejection of the sickness and body systems approach which had hitherto dominated health education. The definition adopted by the Syllabus stated:

Health is a state of well - being, and in the context of this syllabus it encompasses physical, mental, and social health.

Health education is the process through which people develop the understandings, skills and motivation to act in a responsible way for their own health and the health of others.⁷²

The 'bare bones', however, could be extended to take account of new needs. A key element of Shaw's vision for the Health education syllabus was to have a

⁷⁰ The resource developed to support this topic was called "Understanding Changes at Puberty": "Understanding Changes at Puberty", Health Education Trial Unit, Wellington: Department of Education, 1987.

⁷¹ From notes taken during an informal meeting with Ruth Mansell, January 1999.

⁷² *Syllabus for Schools - Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*, Department of Education, Wellington: 1985, p. 5.

broadly based and workable document which was flexible enough to accommodate emerging issues. A pertinent example is that of sexual abuse, an issue which was gaining attention around the time the syllabus was being developed. This issue was addressed with the development of the "Keeping Ourselves Safe"⁷³ programme which in Shaw's words "could be hooked on" to the existing syllabus. "Keeping Ourselves Safe" was "hooked on to" the "keeping safe" theme. The programme could be taught from junior classes through to Forms One and Two, providing consultation requirements were met. Regardless of its official classification under a safety theme, it undeniably contained elements of sex education.

Shaw was very aware that Wellington was not prepared to negotiate on sex education⁷⁴. Speaking about the "Keeping Ourselves Safe" (KOS programme as it became known), which was jointly developed by the Education Department and the New Zealand Police in the mid 1980s, Shaw said:

I was very committed to making sure that the syllabus could accommodate this [the KOS programme] and it could be seen as part of the syllabus, and that it was to be safety education and not sex education. That was something that I impressed on the police right from jump, that it had to be seen as a safety not sex education because otherwise it would run into the the Minister's embargo on group or class instruction on sex education.⁷⁵

The Health Education Syllabus was the 'bare bones' in another sense for as Mansell pointed out, the Syllabus content was not just about what was taught but envisaged a more comprehensive view of health. In this view school climate, leadership, and forms of management and discipline all contributed to the 'health' of a school. According to Mansell, it was the professional development associated with the Syllabus which had the potential to stimulate change in a school. To this end a resource to help teachers implement the Health Education Syllabus, "Developing A School Health Programme"⁷⁶, was produced. The material in the resource had been developed by Shaw and Mansell, with the help

⁷³ *Keeping Ourselves Safe*, Wellington: New Zealand Police and the Department of Education, 1987.

⁷⁴ See also Interview with Shaw, 1999, Tape A, p. 13, for Shaw's emphasis of this in the statement of intent.

⁷⁵ Shaw, 1999, Tape C, pp. 2-3.

⁷⁶ "Developing a Health education Programme". Principal's notes, a coordinator's guide and a set of activities to introduce into your school the revised syllabus, "Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools", Department of Education, Wellington, 1985.

of teachers and others in working parties and resource groups. The draft material for "Developing a School Health Education Programme" was trialled by selected schools, and issued to all schools at the end of 1985. The resource emphasised consultation and collaboration and embodied moral education in the broad sense. The Activity Cards included in the kit were intended to help schools to review and hopefully address their prevailing ethos. Each card asked principals and teachers to look at a particular aspect of school life and functioning, and reflect on their understandings. The final question on each card was intended to check for double messages by asking schools to compare the overt message with the corresponding covert message. Mansell reported that it was used by some schools. No doubt it would have been used by many more if the political events of the late 1980s had not taken centre stage.

The release of the report on the consultations and the draft syllabus represented a most significant milestone in the history of moral education in New Zealand. The document was a record of a consultation process which had sufficient substance to be used as a basis for negotiating moral education. Furthermore, a model of continuous consultation had been developed which enabled parents, teachers and communities to continue to work together for the ultimate benefit of young people. In combination with the sound framework presented in the draft syllabus, the future of health education in the broad sense and moral education within this context seemed viable.

The political context

Before a final syllabus could be implemented, it had to gain the official support of the Minister of Education, Merv Wellington. The Minister withheld his support. The political context of the health education syllabus development is discussed in this section.

Robert Muldoon, Prime Minister of the time, had this to say in reference to Wellington's selection as Minister of Education:

To take over from Les Gandar, who was well-regarded by the mass of pressure groups involved in that portfolio, was not an easy task. He has to stand up against the most extravagant criticism from some of the least attractive pressure groups in this country. As I believed he would, he has done it with quiet dignity and firmness. He has the

total confidence of his colleagues.⁷⁷

A different picture of the Minister of Education emerged from the project team. Merv Wellington was a daunting figure to them. Although he had authorised the revision of the syllabus, and presumably would consider it, there was never any guarantee he would accept the project team's recommendations.

The difficulties confronting the project team were obvious from the beginning. An indication of these difficulties is alluded to by Helen Shaw when she participated in a seminar⁷⁸ organised by the Curriculum Development Division in 1982:

The first task that the project team was set was to consult with the large number of national organisations, including all of the pressure groups that have been so outspoken about the Johnson Report, but don't let it get into the papers. So this has all had to be done in a very - devious? - that's not the word that I want to use today - but in a very careful manner. Because we have all been aware that when the build up of letters in the Dominion and the letters to the Press and so on get to a point that reaches four or five letters at a time, the minister will say enough! He's not having a bar of it. ⁷⁹

Wellington did nothing to hasten the revision process in the early stages. Shaw recalled what happened after summary of the consultations and the syllabus draft were written:

When we put together the draft we had to go back to the Minister and asked him for permission⁸⁰ to publish it and I think he sat on it for something like six months. The date the material went up was November and the response came back in May and the replies (from organisations and schools) had to be back by the middle of August - 19 August 1983.⁸¹

At the end of 1983 the project team sent a summary of these responses to the Minister. It was written as an annex to a submission to the Minister. (Material was always sent to Ministers in this form as it was public service protocol at this time).

⁷⁷ R. Muldoon, *My Way*, Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1981, p. 134.

⁷⁸ Professor Ray Adams of Massey University's Education Department was also present.

⁷⁹ Curriculum Development Division development day seminar held at the Department of Education, Wellington, 1982. Page 7 of transcript. Tape supplied by Helen Shaw in 1999.

⁸⁰ A letter to Wellington from the Project Head Roy Phillips dated 1 November asked for this permission. Department of Education reference number E30/2/4, ABEP W4262, 34/2/17 Pt 3.

⁸¹ Shaw, March 1999, Tape A, p. 21.

Shaw described what was presented to the Minister:

We didn't ever write a fuller report of any kind because really we were basically interested in what numbers are we getting and if there was general support for the syllabus. We told him that there was a great deal of concern about the lack of sex education and that was that.⁸²

Shaw's description confirms the crucial nature of the first phase of the consultation process, for while the second phase functioned to endorse the first phase, the prime function of the second phase was to provide feedback from schools on the syllabus draft. This would thereby increase the chances that the syllabus could be successfully implemented in schools.

By the end of 1983, the Minister had all the relevant material and the next move was his. In her thesis on the Health Education Syllabus, (1985), Katherine Barlow⁸³ claimed that Wellington 'rejected' the syllabus. This thesis argues that rather than reject it, the Minister simply did nothing with it. Those in the Department of Education not directly involved with the syllabus revision may not have been unduly concerned by the Minister's lack of action for it was becoming obvious that the political tide was turning and that time (and a change of Ministers of Education) would take care of the syllabus. The project team and those who sought more rapid change felt differently. Education Department files of this period contain numerous letters from schools requesting information about the draft syllabus and resources to assist its implementation. Equally there are numerous replies to these requests written by Helen Shaw. These replies from Shaw are typical:

I really haven't any news on the syllabus. It went to the Minister before Christmas and he is considering it. ⁸⁴

Until the final syllabus is accepted by the Minister, there is nothing else I can send out to schools.⁸⁵

⁸² Shaw, March 1999, Tape B, p. 1.

⁸³ K. Barlow, "The Development of Procedures of Assessment and Evaluation of Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in New Zealand", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 1994, p. 65.

⁸⁴ Letter from Shaw to Mayfair School, 2 February, 1984. W4262 ABEP, Health Education Pt 2, 3709.

⁸⁵ Letter from Shaw to a teacher who had requested resources, March 1984, *ibid*.

I cannot really say when the Minister will endorse the revised health syllabus but I do know that a number of schools are proceeding to plan on the basis of the draft syllabus.⁸⁶

Schools were puzzled and increasingly frustrated by a lack of progress in syllabus development. Having invested time energy and conviction in the venture, the project team must have been equally dismayed. Shaw records what happened next:

Now that went up to him at the end of 1983 and he did absolutely nothing for a whole year until the election in 1984 when he was no longer Minister and Russell Marshall⁸⁷ came in and said 'Get me the health syllabus'.⁸⁸

The new Minister of Education, Russell Marshall, had a longtime interest and involvement with education, and had a reputation for being sympathetic towards teachers. In 1978, as the Labour opposition's spokesperson on Education, he had decried the actions of the National Government over the secondary teachers' dispute:

The National Government has made fewer bad decisions in education than in most fields, but one of its worst blunders came public last week when most of the country's secondary school teachers went on strike for the first time in one hundred years.⁸⁹

The appointment of Russell Marshall as the new Labour Government's Minister of Education would have come as no surprise; nevertheless, it was met with euphoria in the Department of Education. To quote Shaw:

Merv Wellington was cautious and downright antagonistic and when Russell Marshall came it was just a breath of fresh air. It had an immense effect on the Department of Education after having everything we wanted cut back not just in health but in the heaps of other initiatives too. Suddenly it was like the lid that had been screwed on was lifted off with the change of government.⁹⁰

Marshall's appointment met with approval in other quarters too, as this letter from

⁸⁶ Letter from Helen Shaw to Paraparaumu College, 1984, *ibid.*

⁸⁷ Marshall approved the Health Education Syllabus in October of 1985.

⁸⁸ Shaw, March 1999, Tape B, p. 1.

⁸⁹ Russell Marshall writing in the 'Opposition Point of View' column of the Auckland Star, 1 March 1978.

⁹⁰ Shaw, March 1999, Tape B, p. 13.

Roger Gabb of the Family Planning Association indicates. The letter thanked Marshall for his support at a meeting between the Minister and representatives from FPA in October of 1984:

We were much encouraged by our discussion at that meeting and we wish to reiterate our support for your initiative in allowing the introduction of sex education into the intermediate school health education syllabus.⁹¹

Marshall's interest in taking action on the health education syllabus is evident from his early responses to the information contained in the summary of the responses to the draft syllabus. One of the issues which arose out of this summary had been concern about the lack of sex education in the draft syllabus. As indicated by Gabb's record of the October meeting, Marshall was already making decisions which confirmed his reputation as a liberal. A letter written to Roger Gabb after the October meeting illustrates his willingness to move quickly on the fraught topic of sex education:

I have made two changes to the draft syllabus concerning sex education in schools. Firstly, teachers at all levels in primary and secondary schools will be able to answer children's questions when they arise, openly and honestly, and my department will develop guidelines to assist teachers in making their responses in an appropriate way.⁹² The second revision is to add an understanding of pubertal change to the topics to be covered in planned programmes of health education for Form One and Two students. My department will develop resources⁹³ for teachers to use at this level.⁹⁴

Marshall's letter to Gabb also outlined the next steps in working towards the implementation of the syllabus in all New Zealand primary and secondary schools. Although Marshall had moved quickly to rescue the languishing health education syllabus his responses were measured and consultative, very much in keeping with the work of the project team during the first stage of the consultations. During 1985 Marshall proposed that trials of the method of

⁹¹ Letter from Roger Gabb to Russell Marshall, 24 October, 1984, Ref. No. 97 - 035 - 19/2, Alexander Turnbull Library.

⁹² In fact teachers had always been entitled to answer questions even in Merv Wellington's era. With Marshall as Minister, Shaw wrote a flyer on "Answering Childrens' Questions" that was subsequently incorporated into the *Understanding Changes At Puberty* resource.

⁹³ *Understanding Changes At Puberty*, Wellington: Department of Education, 1987.

⁹⁴ Letter from Marshall to Gabb, 14 November, 1984, Ref. No. 97 - 035 - 19/2 (Restricted file), Alexander Turnbull Library.

syllabus implementation and some of the resources to support it were to be carried out in four groups of primary, intermediate and secondary schools. It was intended that consultation with parents would be a key aspect of the implementation.

In his October 1984 letter to Gabb, Marshall anticipated the next steps:

A descriptive evaluation of the trials will be made during 1985 and a decision about timing and the support needed for further steps to implement the syllabus will be based on this study. Provided the trials present no serious problems, I would hope to move to full implementation during 1986, but the in-service training required will need to be spread over the next three to five years.

As far as teacher training is concerned, I am anxious to see that preparation for sex education is integrated naturally into the training for all aspects of health education. Officers of my department will be working closely with teachers college lecturers, and with district and regional in-service committees, to ensure that pre-service training is seen as a priority over the period within which the revised syllabus is implemented.⁹⁵

Marshall's approval of the Health Education Syllabus in October 1984 was subject to the passage of an amendment to the Education Act of 1964, making consultations with parents a requirement of schools implementing the revised health education syllabus. The Education Amendment Act was passed in September 1985. The provisions of the Act provided a consultative framework within which schools could develop health education programmes based on the syllabus. The Act required schools to consult about health education programmes every two years, and also set out the consultation necessary for the implementation of sex education programmes at senior primary (Forms One and Two) and secondary schools. The Act stipulated a transition period, with schools required to have implemented health education programmes based on the Syllabus by 1989.

The passing of the Education Amendment Act in 1985 was a very significant step. Barlow expresses the importance of the Act thus:

Some educationalists, supported by Marshall, had realised that legislation would legitimate and uphold the total changes

⁹⁵ *ibid.*

proposed in the Health Syllabus (1985).⁹⁶

Prior to its passing, the May 1985 edition of the *Education Gazette* noted the Bill's significance:

The Bill is breaking new ground because, for the first time, it lays down formal procedures for the development of a school programme, and it provides opportunities for parents in local districts to be in consultation about the programme.⁹⁷

In a paper presented at Auckland University in 1989, P. McQueen⁹⁸ stated:

This legislation has proved the supportive value of policy making as an instrument of promoting health.⁹⁹

Shaw's account of this time suggests a Minister and his Department in agreement and empowered to take action on the basis of a thorough consultation process:

Once he [Marshall] became Minister then things moved very quickly but he was very keen, and the Department was very keen, that the introduction of the final syllabus should be supported by legislation requiring schools to consult the parents. So a really major amount of effort then went into getting this legislation passed. That was really another tortuous process because it went to Select Committee. There was a huge amount of debate about it which meant we weren't able to trial the syllabus or the syllabus units (which I had already started writing with the help of an excellent group of teachers) until we had the enabling legislation designating certain schools to be entitled to try it. Nothing could happen until this legislation went through.¹⁰⁰

The Act emphasised the centrality of a consultation process which stretched back over some twelve years for, as the Foreword to the Health Education Syllabus stated:

This syllabus draws together twelve years of public discussion on

⁹⁶ Barlow, pp. 65-66.

⁹⁷ "Health Education Legislation", *The New Zealand Education Gazette*, Department of Education, May 1985.

⁹⁸ McQueen was a specialist in Health Education.

⁹⁹ P. McQueen, "Health Education in New Zealand. Whose Responsibility?", paper presented at Auckland University, 1989, cited in Barlow, 1994, p. 70.

¹⁰⁰ Shaw, 1999, Tape B, p. 2.

the nature and content of health education for New Zealand primary and secondary schools. It is designed to serve as a basis for further discussion and consultation within communities, as needs are identified and programmes are planned for individual schools.

Following the Ross Committee (1973) and the Johnson Committee (1977), this syllabus is the culmination of the work of a small project team set up within the department, but including representatives of the two main teacher organisations. The project team's task was to consult widely - first with national organisations, and then with teachers, parents and the governing bodies of schools, and through these consultations to develop a syllabus that would have widespread support. That task is now complete, and the resulting syllabus provides a framework that is soundly based, yet is sufficiently flexible to take account of the needs and values of individual communities.¹⁰¹

Shaw's recollections substantiate the interpretation of the Education Amendment Act as the climax of over a decade of discussion and consultation, and also provide valuable commentary on other reasons why the legislation was significant. She saw the legislation as the culmination of a model she had been working on from the 1970s, and also a reflection of the Department's undertaking to consult with parents. With reference to the act, Shaw noted that the consultation undertaken by the project team implied a contractual obligation:

It was the kind of commitment that we had made to all of the conservative groups (both those with a big C and a little c) that schools would be required to consult parents. I saw that not so much as seeing parents as gatekeepers, but believing that my notions of health education could only flower in an environment where schools and parents were working together.¹⁰²

A comment from Shaw in 1999 suggested another reason why the legislation was important:

He (Marshall) said the legislation must be in place. I think this was in part to protect him from unnecessary electoral attack because he had always been seen as a little bit pink and a bit too liberal, and so he saw the legislation as absolutely essential.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Foreword to the *Syllabus for Schools, Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*, Department of Education, 1985, p. 3.

¹⁰² Shaw, 1999, Tape B, p. 2.

¹⁰³ Shaw, 1999, Tape B, p. 19.

Confrontations over the Education Amendment Bill was the final stand for a number of the conservative groups involved in the disputes over sex education. In June 1985 the CPA circulated a newsletter under the banner headline: "Parents' Last Chance - Sex Education manoeuvred into Primary Schools?" and CPA's chairman, Peter Clements of Christchurch, made contact with the media. Marilyn Pryor of Wellington also distributed a newsletter at the same time which was outspoken in its criticism of the Education Amendment Bill. The core of both the CPA'S and Pryor's newsletter was a reiteration of parental rights being denied by the state, and associated with this argument, fear and distrust of teachers. Pryor's newsletter stated:

Parents or the State?

The Minister of Education (Mr Russell Marshall) speaking on 2YA, a fortnight before the 1984 General election said:

"You can't really do the traditional job of education without thinking about how we relate to each other and I intend to move into that area."

The Education Amendment Bill (1985) is the result.

Mr Marshall has clearly forgotten that Teachers are for Children and not Children for Teachers. Surely sex education, that most sensitive of subjects is the prerogative of Parents. The Prerogative to impart sexual instruction, naturally and gradually in the proper setting and context-*ie* the warmth and love of normal family life and relationship.¹⁰⁴

The CPA's newsletter was written in a 'crisis style' which had much in common with the tabloids of the time. Helen Shaw's perception of the Education Amendment Act as the culmination of over ten years of consultation activities was echoed in the CPA's newsletter, but from a very different perspective. Peter Clements began the newsletter with the following assertions:

For the last 10 years our Newsletter has warned about the many determined attempts to introduce classroom sex and contraceptive education into primary schools and given information showing why this is unwise.

THE NEXT THREE WEEKS ARE CRUCIAL for New Zealand's parents and young children: this Newsletter explains why. On the 23rd of May, I and two other CPA committee members flew to Wellington to speak to the Select Committee on Labour and

¹⁰⁴ Newsletter written by Marilyn Pryor, June 1985. ABEP W4262, Health Policy and Planning, Pt. 1, 3709.

Education (made up of 8 MPs). As a result of this meeting and useful talks held at Parliament, we are now able to give you an up-to-date account of the latest attempt to manoeuvre sex education into primary schools.¹⁰⁵

The four page newsletter goes on to outline the reasons the Education Amendment Bill should be opposed. The predominant theme is of the family under attack and the success of organisations like CPA in keeping sex education out of primary classrooms "for the past eleven years".

The family is the target of an Education Bill on which MPs will soon be voting. Passing the Bill in its present form will result in:

Your primary school children's teacher telling them all about sexual abuse and incest, and warning them that their home is the most likely place for this to occur.

Homosexual and lesbian teachers giving sex education to your primary school children, and being free to say that their life-style is as normal as ordinary family life.

Contraception instruction for 5-12 year olds in primary schools being legalised, and no parent consent would be required.¹⁰⁶

Circulation of the CPA newsletter was of concern to the Department of Education for a copy had been collected, the content talked about (a handwritten note on the newsletter said "Attention Helen Shaw as discussed"), and comment from the Department of Education had been prepared. Covering three pages, the Department's comment was detailed and challenged the assumptions which underpinned a number of the concerns expressed in the newsletter. The following example involved the CPA's interpretation of the Education Bill:

A key assumption behind most of the comments in the newsletter is that it is the Education Bill being enacted which will bring pubertal change into primary schools , ie sex education. In fact, it is already an element of the syllabus approved in October 1984, and the purpose of this legislation is to ensure that parents are consulted on the whole health programme for the school and on the pubertal change element of the programme for forms 1 and 2. It is incorrect that the family is the target of the Education Bill. By

¹⁰⁵ Concerned Parents' Association Newsletter, Special Edition - Urgent, June 1985.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*

introducing the word "family" the newsletter is generalising.¹⁰⁷

The two newsletters and associated media coverage had an effect on the number of letters received by the Education Department during June and July of 1985. Department files contain large numbers of letters critical of the Education Bill, the Health Education Syllabus, the Minister of Education and the Department of Education.¹⁰⁸

One of the more restrained of the many letters in the files of the Education Department from this time expresses alarm:

I am frankly frightened by the 'new broom' policy of this Department. It appears to me that it is an over-reaction to a stringent opposing point of view of the last Government and Minister and that moderation must be striven for.¹⁰⁹

A number of the letters referred to Marshall's role as a minister of religion. In July 1985, a writer from Taumarunui drew Marshall's attention to a feature article in the *New Zealand Herald* of July 1983 which revealed that one in four Americans were suffering from diseases associated with sexual activity. The letter writer commented:

Surely as a man of the cloth you can see through this gross promiscuity.¹¹⁰

Electoral repercussions was predicted in a letter from C.W.Haskell¹¹¹ :

It is apparent there is a death wish in the heart of the Government and it is determined to do its best to ensure that this is its last term in office.¹¹²

Many letters referred to overseas experiences. The following is typical:

¹⁰⁷ Comment from the Department of Education on CPA's Special Edition, ABEP W4262, Health Policy and Planning, Pt. 1, 3709.

¹⁰⁸ Shaw commented that there were 'swags of letters from Elliot Hogg'.

¹⁰⁹ Letter from Mrs A. Stacliffe, Rotorua, to the Department of Education, ABEP W4262, Health policy and planning, Pt 1, 3709.

¹¹⁰ Letter in Education Department files. ABEP W4262, Health policy and planning, Pt 1, 3709.

¹¹¹ Haskell had been a vociferous campaigner against the Johnson Report.

¹¹² Letter in Education Department files by C. W. Haskell, ABEP W4262, Health policy and planning, Pt 1, 3709.

Take Sweden as an example of a country where a similar Bill was adopted. The number of rapes and abortions and child abuse and all sorts of other moral issues rocketed. Children and the society as a whole, were not able to cope.¹¹³

Merv Wellington, now in Opposition, fought the the bill all the way through its passage through the House. In 1985 he wrote:

Russell Marshall, the Opposition spokesperson on education, was quick to align himself with the radicals. It was absolutely predictable that, as Minister, he should introduce, in March 1985, the Education Amendment Bill. This, which allows for sex education courses on a trial basis in selected schools, was just one of a series of measures designed by Labour to destroy traditional New Zealand society.¹¹⁴

Attempts by conservative groups to dissuade politicians from passing the Education Amendment Bill were unsuccessful. With the legislation in place, a new era in the history of health education was signalled as the first groups of schools became designated and the implementation of the Health Education Syllabus began.

The beginning of a new era

According to Shaw, the most controversial areas of the new syllabus were sex education and the issue of authority: "whether young people should be taught to respect authority"¹¹⁵. When the *Understanding Changes At Puberty*¹¹⁶ resource was produced, the morally conservative groups became active again:

When we came to write the 'Understanding Changes At Puberty' resource there was another great wave of antagonism and the Concerned Parents' Association took the paragraph on masturbation in the teaching resource and sort of blew it up into a newsletter and sent it all over the country saying ' look what the Department is doing next saying that masturbation is normal' so I would have heaps of questions about what did I think of masturbation.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Letter in Education Department files. ABEP W4262, Health policy and planning, Pt 1, 3709.

¹¹⁴ Wellington, 1985, p. 76.

¹¹⁵ Shaw, 1999, Tape B, p. 11 of transcript.

¹¹⁶ "Understanding Changes At Puberty".

¹¹⁷ Interview with Helen Shaw, March 1999, Tape B, p. 11 of transcript.

However, by 1986, it seemed that a more liberal approach to sex education was gaining momentum. In retrospect Shaw thought opposition to sex education was diminishing, and this is supported by comments from that time. A letter written to Shaw by Mike Andrew from Manning Intermediate (seconded to support teachers in the Christchurch area in Term One of 1986) illustrates this trend:

A few weeks ago the Canterbury Federation of PTA's had an evening meeting on 'Keeping Ourselves Safe'. The most vociferous opposition came from a group of parents I know well but it didn't seem to be quite so dogmatic as in the past so perhaps things are slowing down.¹¹⁸

Shaw suggested research¹¹⁹ undertaken by Gabrielle Maxwell from the University of Otago on teaching about changes at puberty had an important effect:

It seemed to me a vindication of what we had set up when this piece of research was recorded [August 1986]. The kind of pressure we'd had from Concerned Parents' Association just absolutely vanished. It ('Understanding Changes At Puberty') had been taught in eighteen [plus schools and 'no, nothing had gone wrong'. The kids hadn't all turned into hedonistic little louts but kids were able to talk. The kids were more considerate of one another in the playground. All sorts of good things came out of it. It produced a completely different climate in the school.¹²⁰

An indication things were going well in secondary schools is illustrated by a letter written to Helen Shaw by Jill Ussher,¹²¹ then a teacher at Rangiora High School in 1987:

The work we've done with twenty staff using Life Skills and 'Looking After Yourself' has been marvellous. We've just had all our parents in (third form 1987) over two nights and the twenty took turns being on deck to speak to parents, individually or in small groups about the programme and how we intend to use it. The school has taken on Peer Support from Australia (Rotary

¹¹⁸ Letter from Andrew to Shaw, W4262 ABEP, Health Education Pt 2, 3709.

¹¹⁹ G. A. Maxwell, "Teaching About Changes At Puberty", summary of the Report to the Department of Psychology, University of Otago, reprinted in the *Education Gazette*, 1 August 1986.

¹²⁰ Shaw, 1999, Tape C, pp. 7-8.

¹²¹ Jill Ussher is currently Principal of Palmerston North Girls' High School.

Support) and that also has very strong staff support.¹²²

When the Health Education Syllabus was gazetted in 1990, all primary and secondary schools were supposed to be involved in the implementation process. According to Shaw, about one third of schools had not reached this stage. Shaw suggests that there were a number of reasons for this including competition for teacher development funding. The major causes, however, were on a different scale from the perennial problems of curriculum rivalry:

ERO came in, everybody was focussed on different things, health got less and less publicity and promotion and the whole curriculum got neglected. Everyone was worried about administration and then gradually maths and English and single subject revisions came through. All of the in service training was devoted to those. So it has been a tough time for health to have come through. It just didn't have enough time in the sun to make a difference.¹²³

Conclusion

The moral education debate which took place in New Zealand during the 1970s and 1980s had two major overlapping features.

Firstly, the debate was marked by high levels of emotion, evident at many levels. Individuals, school communities, educational and religious groups, politicians and bureaucrats all believed they had a stake in the issues, and were either passionate in their advocacy or at least acutely aware of the dangerous passions involved. Moral education was not an issue to be discussed dispassionately.

The second, closely related element of the debate, was the preeminent focus on one aspect of moral education: sex education. It was sex education that was the most contentious issue right through the two decades under scrutiny. Views on sex education reflected fundamental beliefs and apprehensions about family; schooling; teacher, student and parent rights and responsibilities; even the shape of society. These views tended to polarise people's responses.

Ironically, a consequence of these two features of the debate was the wariness of

¹²² Letter from Ussher to Shaw, ABEP W4262, Health -Schools, Pt 2, 3709.

¹²³ Shaw, 1999 Tape C, p. 8.

both bureaucrats and politicians towards making an unequivocal stand. The passionate and uncompromising nature of the views expressed by their constituents meant there was no apparent safe middle ground for the country's leaders to lead from. In addition, media amplification of the debate intensified the issues and made politicians cautious about articulating a clear position. While it is clear from initiatives such as the Ross and Johnson Reports that the Department of Education was willing to advance discussion and promote action on moral education, the strength of public reaction and conflicting interpretations of the outcome of these initiatives made it difficult for the Department to claim a clear mandate to proceed with curriculum development.

The development of the Health Education Syllabus nevertheless drew much of its philosophy from the the moral education debates and initiatives of the 1970s. By the mid 1980s much had been achieved. The contentious nature of the debate remained, but the paralysis affecting national education initiatives was no longer the major characteristic of the education environment. This was due partly to a changing social and political environment, and partly to the curriculum development framework used by the Department of Education to promote moral education. With the gazetting of the new syllabus in 1990, a basis for moral education on a national scale was finally in place.

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1. Letter from Dr Gillian Body, Executive Director, Family Planning New Zealand
2. Letter from S. M. de Porres, Archivist, Archdiocese of Wellington
3. Letter from Gail Scullion, Reference Archivist, Ministry of Education
4. Oral History Recording Agreement Form

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The transcriptions of the tapes from the interviews with Helen Shaw are not included in this volume. On the request of the interviewee, they have been made available only to the examiners of this thesis.

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Appendices

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1. Letter from Dr Gillian Body, Executive Director, Family Planning New Zealand
2. Letter from S. M. de Porres, Archivist, Archdiocese of Wellington
3. Letter from Gail Scullion, Reference Archivist, Ministry of Education
4. Oral History Recording Agreement Form

NB: Tape Transcripts.

The transcriptions of the tapes from the interviews with Helen Shaw are not included in this volume. On the request of the interviewee, they have been made available only to the examiners of this thesis.