

NEW ZEALAND FREE KINDERGARTEN UNION (INCORPORATED)

EXECUTIVE REPORT - 1969-70

It gives me pleasure to present the Annual Report of your Executive's activities for the year ending 30 June, 1970. The Mid-year Survey, required by our Constitution, gives associations an up-to-date resume of projects accomplished, or being dealt with, and should help considerably with the framing of remits to annual conference. The survey, which I take as part of the Annual Report, saves duplication and gives plenty of time for discussion in local areas. This, I feel, is the justification for the compiling of it. Sometimes I wonder just how well it is read and discussed - enquiries often make one think that scant attention is given to it in some instances. I would urge you all to keep up-to-date with progress - authentic publicity has very desirable results, and invariably stems from knowing what is happening in our movement.

One new member joined the Executive at the last Annual Meeting, Mr Frank Zillwood, a non-training nominee. I would like to record here my thanks to Executive members for their continued interest and helpfulness. The year has been a demanding one and the battle for our share of the Education vote seems to grow more torrid each year. Although we have now reached the two million dollar mark spent on kindergarten pre-school, I sometimes feel as though we are "running on the spot!"

Only the President knows what we owe to our Secretary, Mrs R. A. Elliott, - much more than her remuneration shows. She continues to give meticulous attention to the Union as Secretary-Treasurer and I am pleased that, in this report, I can record the grateful thanks of all for her service to kindergarten education.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of associations affiliated to the Union is 67 and the number of recognised kindergartens 305. We offer our congratulations to committees who have gained recognition and have had official openings this year.

BUILDING PROGRAMME

The Minister approved for inclusion in the building programme the following kindergartens:

Orewa (East Coast Bays), Broadlands, Green Bay, Northbridge and Roskill South (Auckland), Manurewa Hill (Franklin), Paraonui (Tokoroa), Brookfield (Bay of Plenty), Barsanti (Wanganui), Highbury (Manawatu), Pirimai (Napier-Taradale), Foxton (Foxton), Elsdon and Waitangirua (Tawa), Stokes Valley (Lower Hutt), Bluff, Glengarry and Grasmere (Southland).

Two kindergartens considered for special assistance by the Department of Education and Maori and Island Affairs have been approved:

Kingsdene (Auckland) and Te Awhina (Ngaruawahia).

I hope you are all pleased with this - 18 in the first list, 2 in the second and I have high hopes of Yendarra (Auckland). A further kindergarten, Tairangi, is established and operating as an experimental kindergarten in the Tawa Association. This makes 21 certain and 1 to be added in October.

Once more I must say how well it pays off if I can go to the Department with nearly all of our vote uplifted by the end of



March. I would ask all those with building projects to keep those progress payments moving.

We are not yet entirely used to the Grade 0 kindergarten as part of Government policy. Some associations which have waiting lists not sufficient for another Grade I kindergarten should be thinking about this form of expansion. Also I would be prepared to put a strong case for suitable halls to be used, as interim measures, if any association feels that it is expedient to "get started" while funds are being raised. It is essential that more children should be involved - the National coverage is still only about 31%. I am disturbed that the percentage of pre-school children attending kindergartens is less each year and I am sure that this is because of the colossal sum required to be raised for sections and buildings. We are making strong submissions on this.

#### RECRUITMENT AND PUBLICITY

Some time ago I wrote to Mr Gair M.P., who is in charge of the pre-school part of the Ministry of Education, re grants for this year and was assured by him that every attention would be given to it. You will be pleased with the result -

Auckland	- 70
Wellington	- 57
Christchurch	- 40
Dunedin	- 43
	<u>210</u>

To cope with the increase in student numbers in Auckland and Wellington, Mr Gair has also approved an increase in the number of full-time lecturers in those training centres. It has been decided that, when the student roll reaches 100, the Principal shall be not counted in the staff-student ratio. This means that Auckland, with a total of 123 students, and Wellington, with a roll of 101 students, both qualify for an extra lecturer. The increase in the student rolls also justifies ~~two~~ additional lecturer in Auckland and an additional ~~three~~ lecturers in Wellington.

Publicity - both for staffing and for what is being achieved is everybody's business and all must be equally responsible. I agree with those who feel that this is a weakness in our movement. In the field of publicity we are seriously curtailed by lack of finance but more could be done at local level through press and radio and television. This is still International Education Year and much could be done. Advantage taken of our own National Education Week was most pleasing - now the pattern is set, I am sure that it could be an annual effort.

This year a feature was made of the presentation of our Diploma to Mrs Dorothy Evans B.A., of Christchurch, who was the first graduate to receive her Degree while training for kindergarten teaching. This, I am told, is having the very desirable effect of older applicants coming forward for selection for training.

Mention must be made of "The Free Kindergarten Movement in New Zealand" compiled for us by Miss Myrtle Simpson M.A. This booklet is useful publicity material and associations could use it with confidence.

Adverse publicity, as appeared in two issues of the New Zealand Women's Weekly, should be taken up by all who read it.



## NEW ZEALAND FREE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

I hope every association is making sure that its staff are financial members of the Kindergarten Teachers' Association - they are doing a most worthwhile service for teachers. Some of their leaders came under fire with the minimum weekly schedule but I am sure that from a professional point of view, we must applaud the Executive officers. Salaries are an important part of their Executive's business and I am sure the establishing of the minimum weekly schedule gives them a very strong negotiating position. I am sure they understand that there are always dissenters and learn to live with them.

## EXECUTIVE TRAVEL

This year an International Pre-school Conference was held in Japan and every effort was made to secure a late enrolment for the President to attend. However this was not successful, but an effort is being made by the Resident Japanese Ambassador to secure for us the papers presented by Professor Jean Piaget who was the Guest Speaker. These papers will be most valuable and will be circulated if received.

The President presented Diplomas at Auckland, *and Wellington.* Executive members have represented the Union at many Official Openings during the year. These are very happy occasions and we record here our pleasure in being invited to participate.

## NEW ZEALAND PLAY CENTRE FEDERATION

This year the President was invited to attend the Play Centre Federation Annual Conference held in Dunedin. We appreciate very much being included in this way and hope that their National President will be with us in Hamilton. The Union was ably represented by Mrs W. E. Hall, and full conference papers were made available to us.

We hope to have a meeting with the Play Centre Federation Standing Committee after Conference, when it is hoped a National Pre-school Education Council will be formed. At present, with kindergarten and play centre going their separate ways, it is too easy for one service to be played off against the other and it is time that this was rectified. Both services are ready for this now and I am sure that only good can come from it.

## COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Associations were asked to send into the Union office material which would be suitable for inclusion in our submissions. I am sorry to record that help in this was most discouraging - I do feel that an "all-out" effort should have been made. These submissions are to be taken as our thinking on pre-school education for the next twenty-five years, and a "nil return" from most associations hardly lines up with the importance we say the 3 - 5 year, years has on a child's life.

The Executive had a special meeting to consider submissions and I am hopeful that what we have to present to the Commission will be helpful and fruitful as far as kindergarten pre-school education is concerned. It is a colossal job to get all the ideas in logical sequence but our submissions should be ready for the Committee soon after conference.

A grant of \$500 was made by the Minister to enable us to hold this meeting.



### FINANCE

Once again the Executive records its sincere appreciation of the generosity of the J. R. McKenzie Trust Board for a further donation of \$200 for the reprinting of the Kindergarten Handbook.

### THANKS

The Annual Report affords the opportunity to record thanks to many people who help in very significant ways throughout the year. Our new Minister of Education, Mr B. E. Talboys, and his Under Secretary, Mr George Gair, have been most helpful and generous in dealing with our requests. It has been a difficult year for them both, but time given to us was liberal and friendly and we have pleasure in recording our thanks to them. To Miss I. J. Christison and Mr B. M. Pinder of the Department, we record our thanks for endless time given to requests - debate has been strenuous but always with an underlying friendliness. Our thanks also to the Honorary Solicitor, Mr J. D. Davys, and Honorary Auditor, Mr H. L. Wylie for professional knowledge so freely available. One day we hope to meet these gentlemen.

A very warm vote of thanks to the Southland Association for making the 1969 Conference such a memorable one.

The year has been one where "vigilance" has paid off. Money is not unlimited, and those who provide it for the whole of the running of this country number only about one million. We will always want more, but progress has been made and I am sure the future holds real possibilities for reaching the goal so ably defined by those who founded, and have worked for, kindergarten education over the past eighty years.

For the Executive,

Laura M. C. Ingram

President

September, 1970.