



KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

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NEW ZEALAND FREE KINDERGARTEN UNION CONFERENCE

AUGUST, 25, 1975

This was our first one day Conference and in the modern idiom we really 'zapped' through the business on the agenda. The innovation of circulating the majority of reports prior to Conference met with enthusiasm.

The introduction of a standard set of by-laws was accepted by Conference after some discussion. It is anticipated that minor alterations will have to be made to these from time to time. In the coming year associations will be putting them into practice for the first time. These by-laws have been produced at the request of Associations and the Kindergarten Teachers Association who found the differences encountered between associations often frustrating and difficult to adjust to.

Although the number of remits was smaller than usual one hardy annual was again listed. The request for greater professional advice and help for our staff. The words "request" and "Supervising Head Teachers" have appeared in remits for the last 12-13 years. This would be a case of—"make haste slowly".

The paper which gave most food for thought was undoubtedly the President's opening remarks. It is reprinted here so that everyone may read it at leisure and more importantly digest it.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You have always been aware that my opening remarks have caused me a great deal of concern — and these are not one bit easier than the past eight have been. I do not intend to survey my years as President — it is hard, in fact I feel impossible, to cut things off as having happened in a certain given period. If you want progress and that really is a foregone conclusion, then the best I can claim is that I leave the position of President with Kindergarten taking its rightful place in education. The sort of education we hope will be the roots of the "on-going process of learning" one hears so much about today.

The two motions directed to the National Advisory Council for Pre-School Education by the unanimous vote of the Annual General Meeting last year spelled out quite definitely that THE UNION, by regulation, must effect change in policy. I am pleased that Conference heeded my warning as I had had the distinct impression that this was one of the functions of the Council desired by some members of the Department. By constant scrutiny of the wording of circulars and various papers issued from the Department I hope I have shown a determination that the Union is NOT going to be by-passed in matters concerning it, and that we must be included AT THE BEGINNING when the personnel of working parties are decided.

In matters pertaining to Teacher training Mr Ken Hayr has been involved as has Mr Peter Bussell in buildings and maintenance. Over the years I have always been personally involved in the building programme where it is essential for the Union to have a definite say about priorities

to retain the overall picture of growth. To be fair we must keep an eye on both "special areas", and establishment committees which first meet the requirements to the stage of calling tenders — remembering always that the vote is not unlimited. I am delighted that we now have over 400 Kindergartens — 402 to be exact — this has meant an average of 16.3 Kindergartens each year for my term — nearly 38% in nine years.

I want to quote to you a passage from a speech, recorded in Hansard page 2,662, on July 2, 1975, by the Hon. P. Amos, in moving that the Education Amendment Bill (No. 5) be read a second time — and I quote: "The Government's policy for the improvement of pre-school education is further advanced by the introduction of a provision TO PERMIT education boards to perform architectural and building work on behalf of pre-school authorities", end of quote.

You will note that the Minister said "to permit" not that they "will" or "must", and the second point is that they, the Education Boards work "on behalf of pre-school authorities." When the building is a KINDERGARTEN — the KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATION is the AUTHORITY for whom it is being built. I can only stress that the high standards of present day kindergartens have been attained by the voluntary effort of all those who have kept their sights high. Please do not sell the past by foregoing your right to be satisfied that you are getting the kindergarten you have worked for. You are entitled to make decisions from a choice of approved plans — and private architects are not ruled out.

Our strength is in our union — it is a testing period both for us and for Education Boards which have become involved over the last two years in payment of staff salary, student selection, and maintenance. But please remember in all ways they act as agents for us — in the words of the Minister "work on behalf of the pre-school authorities".

This can be done in a spirit of togetherness — a partnership in education — but where it affects kindergarten — the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union is the senior partner.

During the Conference two special awards were made. Life Membership of the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union was bestowed by Miss Ingram on Mr K. J. Kayr (Auckland) for special service to the Union in the field of teacher training. In absentia to Mr S. P. Bussell (Wellington) for special service to the Union in the field of buildings and maintenance.

The last duty which the retiring President Miss Ingram performed was to invest the incoming President with the Chain of Office. In accepting the Chain Mrs Lockhart explained to the

meeting that it was a gift to the Union from Miss Ingram. Spontaneous acclamation for the Donor followed this announcement.

LAUNCHING OF KINDERGARTENS IN NEW ZEALAND

In presenting the first copy of this book to Miss Ingram, the Editor, Mrs K. D. Lockhart, commented that it was the fruit of twenty months work. She paid tribute to the many people who had helped in the production of the publication. The Evening Star Company who printed it and, in particular, Mr John Crampton and Mr Lex Gardner who gave much assistance and who displayed a great deal of patience on the many oc-

casions that changes had to be made. She thanked the proof readers, the 67 associations who supplied their own histories, Miss P. M. Varcoe, and Mrs Maureen Ryan.

The attractive cover which is predominantly orange is the work of Mrs Rita Blakely, an artist of international renown. The book which sells at \$1.50 a copy is available from the Union Office, Wellington, and for the Canterbury area from Mrs June Davey, 58 Mountain View Road, Timaru. Otago area — Mrs K. D. Lockhart, 129 Easter Crescent, Kew, Dunedin, and Southland — Mrs G. Logan, 84 Melbourne Street, Invercargill.

Farewell Function for Miss Laura Ingram

Prior to the Annual Conference some 200 delegates and friends gathered in the Lower Common Room of the University Students Union to pay tribute to Miss Laura Ingram, M.B.E., J.P., who had for nine years been President of the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union.

Among the invited guests were Mr B. J. Wilson, Superintendent of the Southern Regional Office of the Department of Education, Miss I. J. Christison, Officer for Pre-School Education, Mrs A. F. Johnson, a Life Member and Past President of the Union, Miss E. Overton from Motueka and Mr J. H. M. Dawson, a past Union executive member.

Mr Wilson representing the Director General of Education spoke of the tremendous contribution Miss Ingram had made in the field of primary education and latterly in the Early Childhood field through the Kindergarten Movement. He congratulated her on her tireless devotion to the cause of small children.

On behalf of the Pre-School advisors Miss Christison congratulated Miss Ingram on the achievements gained during her term as President. Miss Christison spoke of Miss Ingram's many visits to the Department to do battle to gain support or simply to say hello. The sound and pace of Miss Ingram's footsteps in the passage indicated to the Departmental officers long before she did the exact purpose of her visit.

Miss Christison on behalf of the advisors presented the guest of honour with a mohair knee rug and a piece of antique china.

The incoming President of the Union, Mrs K. D. Lockhart, spoke of Miss Ingram as a President with a difference. She recalled many amusing incidents in which Miss Ingram had taken part over the years. Mrs Lockhart made mention of the many advances and changes which the Kindergarten Movement had seen during the nine years Miss Ingram had been President. She mentioned that 38% of the 402 recognised Kindergartens had been built during the past nine years and the setting up of the Ward system

as one of the most successful changes in the administration. She spoke of the successful enthusiasm and drive of Miss Ingram who would leave no stone unturned to advance the cause of Kindergarten Education.

On behalf of the 67 Associations Mrs Lockhart presented Miss Ingram with a colour TV set. In making the presentation Mrs Lockhart said, "this gift is given to you with our love, our best wishes and with our deep gratitude for the tremendous job you have done on our behalf".

In reply Miss Ingram thanked the three speakers for their messages. She spoke of the many people she had worked with and the many instances of kindness and hospitality extended to her. She spoke of the 400 times she had crossed Cook Strait by aeroplane, of driving her car from Kaitiaki to Bluff and of the many changes she had witnessed in training, administration and in the types of kindergartens built. Miss Ingram said that although she had retired from her teaching career ten years early she had derived immense pleasure and satisfaction from her many years of service in the field of Kindergarten Education. Her voluntary effort was given for the benefit of small children and seeing the tremendous progress made in the kindergarten movement was reward in itself.

Mrs Lockhart proposed a toast to Miss Ingram which was accompanied by a rendition of "Tell Laura I Love Her".

All connected with the Movement wish Miss Ingram good health, the time and energy to pursue her many other interests and all look forward to working with her as Immediate Past-President.