THE NEW ZEALAND PLANNING COUNCIL: A CASE STUDY

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FOREWORD

This paper was written originally for a conference on aids to policy makers organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris from 27 to 30 April 1981. The Conference had two parts: one dealt with governmental policy advice units (such as the Treasury, and the Prime Minister's Advisory Group); the other dealt with policy analysis groups outside government.

The Planning Council - along with some internationally-known organisations like the Rand Corporation and Brookings Institute in the United States - belongs in the second category. The case study prepared for the Conference was seen as being of wider interest within New Zealand and accordingly the Council has decided to publish it as a planning paper.

Frank Holmes
Chairman

THE NEW ZEALAND PLANNING COUNCIL: A CASE STUDY

The Council is a small independent planning body set up in March 1977 as a result of recommendations by a Task Force on Economic and Social Planning which aimed to produce a more relevant planning framework for New Zealand. The Council has a very broad brief which encompasses both advising Government on planning for New Zealand's social, economic, and cultural development, and providing a focus for consultation and debate about important planning issues. Its functions and powers are listed in Appendix 1. It is funded by the Government through Treasury; it has close links with the decision-making processes within Government and it has built into its functions the right to publish on important issues of the day. It was given statutory backing, along with the Commission for the Future, in the New Zealand Planning Act passed in November 1977.

The Council does not fit neatly into the categories discussed in Professor Dror's background papers.* It is a high-level group giving advice to the Government, but it sees the promotion of frank public discussion of important issues of medium-term policy as equally important. With a full-time Chairman and its own secretariat of 12 professional and 8 support staff, it can be described as a small "think-tank". However, with its other responsibilities for advice and consultation, its capacity to engage in independent research is limited. Nor does its budget permit it to commission more than a limited amount of research by others.

The Council is a relatively new organisation, though it is not the first established by the Government to engage in planning. The Organisation for National Development, formed towards the end of the Second World War, did not last long. A National

* Professor Yehekel Dror, Professor - Political Science and Wolfson Professor of Public Administration at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, was retained by the OECD as a consultant to the project on administrative innovations and the conference on aids to policy makers. He has produced several background papers on policy advice and analysis groups and administrative change for this exercise (See references: page 22).

Development Council operated from 1969 to 1974. Some of the sector councils established under this body continued to function under a Cabinet Committee on Policy and Priorities in 1974-75. However, by 1976 it was obvious that new approaches were needed to deal with a more unstable external and internal situation, and the more complex policy issues which had emerged.

The Task Force on Economic and Social Planning

Accordingly, early in 1976, the Government established the Task Force on Economic and Social Planning. The Task Force was given the responsibility of studying previous planning experience in New Zealand, and recommending an institutional framework suitable for current planning needs. It was asked to examine the main issues affecting New Zealand's economic and social development which needed to be taken into account in planning. Its mandate was broad and involved a study of private and public sector planning as well as extensive consultation with organisations and individuals throughout the country.

Under the chairmanship of Sir Frank Holmes, former Chairman of the Monetary and Economic Council and Professor of Money and Finance at Victoria University of Wellington, the Task Force - a group of 8 public servants - talked to a wide range of individuals and groups, received more than 300 submissions from many people and institutions and, after 6 months, produced a comprehensive report advocating new approaches to planning.

While the Task Force consultations indicated the existence of widespread disquiet about some economic and social trends, there was also a general belief that these adverse directions might be reversed if Governments were prepared to take a long range approach in programmes and if consultation could ensure a wider participation of the public in the formulation of national objectives.

In searching for a new planning framework the Task Force assessed the achievements of the planning exercises of the 1960s,

when a series of conferences on individual aspects of the economy and society had been held. These had culminated in two National Development Conferences; and a National Development Council with a network of individual sector councils had been established. One of the major aims of these comprehensive planning activities was to broaden out the consultative process from the Government into the market place and into the community. The conferences and council concerns also led to the creation of an extensive information base on the economy; the more systematic use of new techniques, notably economic modelling, for understanding the economy; and a broadening of the planning base to include social and environmental concerns as well as economic ones.

After a useful beginning in the first year or two, however, the system "ran out of steam". The Task Force gave several reasons. There were too many committees and too much paper to digest. The dominance of Ministers and representatives of major pressure groups on the Council did not always permit frank discussion of important issues. There were inadequate links between the planning and Government decisions. Targets set were not adequately monitored and results were not used to reappraise policy. The situation was not improved when the Council was abolished in 1974 and responsibility for co-ordination assumed by a Cabinet Committee on Policy and Priorities. Busy ministers and officials found it difficult to give adequate time to planning. The oil crisis aggravated the problem. Several sector councils felt that they were "planning in a vacuum."[1]

In its report to the Government, the Task Force recognised both the achievements and disappointments of the National Development Council activity and the importance for Governments to set aside time to plan.

It set out what it regarded as the salient characteristics of the "broadly-based and incisive" planning mechanism it envisaged:

1. The system should provide for widespread, two-way consultation among representatives of central government, the private sector and local bodies, with the following aims:
   - to obtain as much consensus as possible on longer-run national goals;
   - to help government determine priorities in its own programmes;
   - to formulate national guidelines for development in the private and local body sectors; and
   - to establish sound criteria for central government assistance to such development.
2. The system should establish stronger links than in the past between consultative planning and all levels of the decision-making process, government and private. The aim should be to ensure that decisions are not shortsighted but take account of relevant economic, social, cultural (including multicultural aspects) and environmental considerations.
3. Greater provision should be made for independent assessment of important trends, of the issues which these trends raise in relation to the achievement of government and other community objectives, and of alternative strategies which might be adopted to deal with these issues.
4. The mechanism should aim to improve the workings of our Parliamentary democracy by giving the public more adequate information and opportunity to comment on the main issues of national development, as well as providing a better basis for informed debate among political parties and interest groups.
5. An important objective would be to produce a "plan", embodied in a document or set of documents. It would be based on the study and consultations outlined above and would be revised regularly.[2]

A New Planning Framework

The actual mechanism which the Task Force suggested had two main components:

- A New Zealand Planning Council of about 7 or 8 members selected on the basis of personal ability rather than on any status as representatives of particular interest groups. Nevertheless the composition should represent a broad image of New Zealand society. This emphasis on

individual merit was a response to the difficulties which had arisen during the period of the National Development Conference because of the irreconcilable differences which arose between interest groups.

The Council was to be supplemented by consultative groups which would be brought together in 3 committees, each headed by a Council member. One committee would have an economic focus, one a regional, and the third social and cultural.

- The second main component of the Council was to be a multi-disciplinary secretariat, of up to 12 professional officers, serving the Council and its committees. Staff were to be drawn from outside the Public Service as well as inside and would be brought in under a series of different arrangements of secondments and contract appointments.

The Council would work closely with existing advisory councils, including the sector councils still remaining from the National Development exercise, and Government departments. In addition, the Task Force suggested that 2 new advisory councils be established: a Population and Immigration Advisory Council and a council dealing with health, education and welfare.

The Government adopted the Task Force's recommendations about the Planning Council with some changes. Fourteen members rather than the 7 or 8 suggested were appointed, to expand the range of experience and ability available. (Present Council members have experience in farming, manufacturing, university life, union affairs, and local and central government.) To ensure close links with the Cabinet, the Minister of National Development was made a member of the Council, while the inclusion of the Secretary to the Treasury (which had been recommended by the Task Force) ensured close contacts with the Administration in general and the powerful Officials Economic Committee (which he chaired), in particular.

The emphasis on time for planning was acknowledged by the appointment of a full-time chairman, Sir Frank Holmes (chairman of the Task Force) and by the appointment of convenors with appropriate honoraria, for the steering committee of the Planning Council. Perhaps most important of all as an acknowledgment of a commitment to planning was the acceptance of the concept of a full-time independent secretariat (until then virtually all advisory councils had been serviced by departmental officials). The Task Force had emphasised the importance of an independent multi-disciplinary group to carry out effective co-ordination. "High intellectual calibre, capacity for effective consultation, and a variety of experience in different walks of life should be the main criteria used..."[3].

Committee Structure

The Committee structure set up under the Planning Council differed from the Task Force recommendations. Four committees were established, each convened by a member of the Council. Other Council members, representative of outside bodies, including sector councils, and individuals with particular expertise also joined the committees. The Steering Committees were:

SCI - Economic Efficiency and Flexibility;
SCII - (in conjunction with Monetary and Economic Council) Economic Stability;
SCIII - Social and Cultural Development;
SCIV - Regional Planning and Development.

In addition, the first year of the Council's activity saw the establishment of four special working groups:

Human relations in the workplace
Population and migration
Medium-term economic prospects
Taxation and income maintenance.

Much of the work of the steering committees focused on consultation preparatory to the production of the Council's first "integrated" document in early 1978, Planning Perspectives 1978-83. In addition the Council published several papers, including a commentary on the Town and Country Planning Bill (in line with its responsibility to advise the Government on links between planning at regional and national levels). A short provocative paper on major economic issues, "A Moment of Truth", was sent out to a number of business leaders and decision-makers and generated a considerable number of replies and comments, which were taken into account in Planning Perspectives.

Steering Committee II assisted the Monetary and Economic Council (MEC) with a publication on inflation in 1977. Shortly afterwards, the Government abolished the MEC and asked the Planning Council to assume its functions. The Council established an Economic Monitoring Group (EMG), under the chairmanship of a Council member, to monitor short-term economic developments and policies against the background of medium-term development strategies. The EMG is left free to publish reports as it wishes. The terms of reference of this group, which has published a report each year since its inception, are set out in Appendix 2.

The Planning Council subscribes to the view that planning is a process and monitoring is part of that process. Thus the Council has itself undergone changes since it was established, changes designed to make it more flexible and able to meet the changing requirements of the New Zealand environment.

Steering committees, which were seen by some members as being too rigid and not allowing enough interaction between all Council members, have been replaced by single-purpose task forces which carry through specific projects. Like the committees, the task forces are headed by Council members as convenors and are augmented by others with particular contributions to make.

Within the last year task forces have successfully completed and published work on aspects of regional planning, investment issues, and an active labour market policy. A list of Council publications, including commissioned papers by individuals, is given in Appendix 3.

Another innovation to the Council structure has been the establishment of the Executive Committee. This consisted originally of the Chairman, convenors of steering committees, and one additional Wellington member. Subsequently convenors of task forces replaced convenors of steering committees and now the structure has been changed again. As well as the chairman and one Wellington member, the Executive Committee includes four members elected by the Council as a whole to serve for one year on the Committee. The Executive Committee is able to meet more frequently than the Council as a whole and thus a number of administrative and policy matters can be handled quickly and flexibly without having to wait for Council meetings which are held every 2 months. It can also act as a vehicle for the Chairman and secretariat to test out ideas before approaching the full Council. Moreover, the new system of electing members of the Committee will allow greater participation of more Council members.

Funding and Staffing

The Council and secretariat are funded through the Treasury vote, and accounting procedures fit in with those of the Treasury. Total budgetary allocations for the Council have grown from $274,000 in 1977-78 to $622,200 in 1980-81. Much of this growth has occurred as a result of movements in salaries which respond to general adjustments in the public service. When the secretariat was established initially the staff establishment consisted (apart from the Chairman) of a director, 5 professional staff and 3 back-up staff. Between 1977 and 1979 the establishment was gradually increased to its present level of a director, 11 professionals, and 8 back-up staff. Another feature which causes salary payments to be so dominant is that in the absence of an established career

structure the Council must pay individual staff members on merit and qualifications rather than in line with a hierarchical ladder. Moreover, if it is to aim to be an "island of excellence"[4] in scientific study, it needs freedom to negotiate for the people who can contribute to such an objective.

Secretariat staff at present include economists, geographers, regional planners, political scientists, a mathematician, a sociologist, and a career diplomat turned agricultural policy analyst. In addition there are an information officer, an executive officer (who is also personal assistant to the chairman) and secretarial and clerical staff. It is the policy of the Council not to expand its staff beyond this level, unless it is asked to assume new functions. Present appointment arrangements for staff are mostly on a contract basis with some secondments from central government, local authorities and private enterprise. Recently the Council has negotiated a secondment of one of its staff to one Government department and an exchange of staff with another department.

Functions, Conflicts, Expectations

The extremely broad range of functions prescribed for the Planning Council (see Appendix 1) creates conflicts for the Council in carrying them out, and also gives rise to high expectations among the Council's clientele. Given the fact that the Council is funded by the Government, most people regard the Council's primary responsibility as giving advice to the Government. While the Council does regard this as a major function it also sees its public educative and consultative functions as extremely important. This was illustrated by the opening words in Planning Perspectives 1978-1983: "This document is addressed to all the people of New Zealand."

The value the Council ascribes to its consultative role is manifest in the programme of speaking engagements of the chairman, regional gatherings of the Council to meet people in centres other than Wellington, and regular travel throughout New Zealand by Council and secretariat.

The Council also sees itself as a catalyst to encourage planning in organisations, and in local and central government. Thus, it has been involved with a major planning exercise with the New Zealand Manufacturers' Federation, and is participating with other sectoral organisations such as the agricultural advisory bodies and the Forestry Council in stimulating planning in their areas of responsibility. This year the Council is continuing work on planning for the different sectors of the New Zealand economy within the framework of an overall national development strategy.

Although the intense lobbying of the Council in its early days tends to have been reduced, many organisations still seek to have their own points of view taken up by the Council, which is regarded by many people as an organisation with some political clout.

There is a constant stream of requests to Council members (especially to the Chairman) to speak to groups, and to participate in seminars and conferences. The Council is also inevitably approached to take sides on major issues of the day, such as the establishment of a second aluminium smelter. In response to these pressures the Council has generally avoided publicly choosing a specific course. However, it believes that topical issues (e.g. employment opportunities, the effects of investment decisions, or the use of electricity) should be debated within the overall context of New Zealand's national interest. It believes that the impact of short-term policy decisions on longer-term options must be clearly spelt out, and costs and benefits of these decisions understood by the community as a whole.

One hears occasional criticism that the Council does not perform in the way many groups would like. For instance, the New Zealand Demographic Society has indicated its disappointment that the Council has not promoted the Task Force recommendations that a Population and Immigration Council be established, that population trends be closely monitored, and that Government be encouraged to formulate a population policy for New Zealand. The Society has suggested a population monitoring group along the lines of the Economic Monitoring Group would be an appropriate adjunct to the Planning Council.[5]

A recent survey of opinions of professional economists[6] showed that in response to the proposition "the Planning Council serves a useful role", 30 percent of the 118 respondents generally agreed, 40 percent agreed with reservations, and 27 percent generally disagreed. In the same questionnaire, over half of the respondents felt it was a mistake to abolish the Monetary and Economic Council (whose functions were absorbed by the Planning Council's Economic Monitoring Group).

Comments by the NZ Council of Social Services on the Council's study Employment: Towards an Active Employment Policy indicated concern that a wider range of development options had not been studied, that a broader definition of work had not been attempted, or that differing value systems and goals within society had not been explored.

The nature of the Council's functions and the expectations which it raises within Government circles and the wider community illustrate that the Council is not seen entirely as a producer of scientific analysis on strategic medium-term issues. It cannot in fact be isolated from the wider political and social environment.

The Political Environment

The decision to appoint the Minister of National Development to the Planning Council (and thus give it closer links with the

Government than recommended by the Task Force - which emphasised an independent bipartisan role for the Council) raised the ire of the Opposition during the Parliamentary debates on the New Zealand Planning Act, although they supported the concept and did not dispute the calibre of the proposed membership. As one Opposition member put it, "The Labour Party has always been a strong supporter of economic planning... If we are to have long-term planning, which I strongly subscribe to, it can best be achieved by bringing all the resources available within the economic, cultural, environmental and political sides of life into one group. It cannot be done... by making it an issue on which only one side of the political fence is represented."[7]

The Labour Party Opposition has praised some Council reports (e.g. those on employment and regional planning) and vigorously criticised others (e.g. that on investment issues). The Government too, has given a mixed response to Council reports. Nevertheless, on some issues, such as a more flexible use of exchange rates, an initial adverse reaction has been followed later by the adoption of some of the advice given.

The nature of politics means that the Council, in spite of continuing and regular consultation with the Opposition parties in Parliament, is almost inevitably regarded by many as an agency of the present Government. The detailing of a number of its functions as advisory to the Government, and the close links it has developed with the Government and the bureaucracy have to a large extent contributed to this image. It is not quite a two-edged sword, but it does mean that the Council is probably more accepted by Government politicians than it might be if it had both Opposition and Government members. Moreover, it means that sensitive information can frequently be made available to the Council because it includes both ministerial and senior Government representatives. Nevertheless in view of the difficulties that Government departments have in providing a long-term comprehensive view, and in the light of the

Opposition's own view of planning (see page 12), it seems unlikely that if there were a change of Government the new Government would look for major changes immediately.

In its dealings with the Government the Planning Council has regular contacts with officials at senior level and also with ministers. The chairman has a weekly meeting with the Minister of National Development who sees himself as an active protagonist for the Council and acts as a catalyst with other ministers in seeing that recommendations from Council publications, which are the major means of providing advice to Government, are taken seriously by ministers who have particular responsibilities. In the case of two recent publications, for example, Planning and the Regions and Employment: Towards an Active Employment Policy, a checklist of points for follow-up was given to the Minister who arranged a series of ministerial meetings with Council and secretariat representatives and then undertook to see that the checklist was actioned by relevant ministers and officials. Indirectly, this has also encouraged Planning Council secretariat liaison with Government departments as, under the auspices of the Minister and his colleagues, meetings of officials are convened from time to time. Officials are encouraged to seek Planning Council involvement in those activities which can benefit from a medium-term view or from a more comprehensive approach (examples of this are in the areas of energy, technology, manpower planning and training - the Council has been represented on officials committees dealing with activities in these areas over the last year.)

But because of most departments' preoccupations with short-term issues and because of the time-consuming nature of inter-departmental committee activity, the Planning Council and its secretariat have avoided becoming formal members of officials committees. On the whole co-operation and information from Government departments is good. But it is possible that one or two departments could see the Planning Council as being something of a threat. Ideally this should prod them into giving more time to planning and producing relevant information,

rather than resisting participation in planning activities with the Council. Certainly the Council has been able to identify gaps in departmental co-ordination which subsequently have been filled. This year's work programme for the Council includes studies of the operation of the public sector agencies: departmental planning and co-ordination will be systematically examined and recommendations for policy made.

The Chairman of the Planning Council, and at times other Council members and secretariat staff, have participated in the activities of the Minister of National Development's ad hoc Committee on National Development. In addition, ministers and officials are briefed from time to time on Council ideas for change. This is seen partly as an information exercise, and partly as an educative process which prepares the ground for Council publications. For example, with Employment: Towards an Active Employment Policy, extensive pre-publication consultation both within and outside Government ensured the final document had wide acceptability and met many of the practical needs which had been expressed. Moreover, as the hairman pointed out in his foreword, some specific policy changes were put in place even before the document was published.[8] Post-publication action has included more rapid re-organisation in the Department of Labour to meet new employment concerns. (The Council has seconded one of the authors of the employment document to the Department of Labour to work on these policy changes.)

The Council has also made submissions to Select Committees, most recently on the National Development Bill. This was an interesting case where the independence of the Council could perhaps have been put in jeopardy. The Minister of National Development (a member of the Planning Council) had introduced this Bill, which sought to speed up planning procedures for projects of major national importance so that there would not be costly time delays brought about by environmental, or town and country planning procedures. The Council believed that there were aspects of the Bill which could be improved for

better involvement by regional and local bodies and to foster more open government, and subsequently had several of its suggestions embodied in the Act finally passed.

It is interesting that the Council felt it necessary to make a public statement on a matter with which one of their members was closely identified; also that the Opposition members of the Select Committee did not make political capital out of this, though, particularly after the comments made at the time the New Zealand Planning Act was introduced, this might have been expected.

The Council has consistently promoted the cause of open government and presented a submission to the official committee considering this matter. It has also followed up this and other matters in its annual reports, such as suggesting a longer parliamentary term might be more conducive to better planning and management.

In another controversial area - that of regional planning and development policy - the Council's initiatives have had a perceptible effect on Government. The Council's responsibility to advise Government on the links between national and regional planning originated from the Task Force emphasis on devolution and decentralisation. Following on from the consultative work of the Steering Committee on Regional Planning and Development a regional task force in early 1980 produced Planning and the Regions which pointed to the advantages of a regional approach to planning and development, identified the legislative framework for this, but also critically commented on the Government's ambivalence in terms of its real commitment to these legislative proposals.

The role of the Minister of National Development in taking up the recommendations of this report within the Government has been mentioned earlier. The publication of this report also had ramifications throughout the wider community, giving support to other organisations including agencies of local government who were seeking a greater commitment from central government

to regional planning and policy making.

Some of the recommendations of The Welfare State? were adopted directly by the Government. Increased taxation on alcohol and tobacco in the 1979 Budget could be directly attributed to the Council's recommendations. The same publication provides another example of the way Council members see their independent role. The Council felt it necessary to point to the expense of maintaining the Government Superannuation Scheme by which all people over 60 (subject to residential qualifications) are automatically entitled to superannuation regardless of their own means. This particular scheme is regarded by many New Zealanders as one of the "sacred cows" and it is a measure both of the Council's concern for the growth of public expenditure and its financing at a time of constraints in real income, and its independent stance that it suggested changes in this area to allow other necessary adjustments in public expenditure.

Direct impacts of Council activity on Government policy can be relatively easily observed. In other areas the Council has played a part in raising people's consciousness about important issues of the day. For example in its stress on cultural identity and an "affirmative action" approach to the Maori people in New Zealand, the Council's attitudes may well have had an impact in the wider community and therefore indirectly on policy makers. The facilitating role of the Council in bringing together different groups to discuss mutual concerns should not be underestimated although the final outcome of this type of activity is less easily documented.

Internal Dynamics

Any assessment of the Council's external relations and influence is inclined to be subjective; so too is an assessment of the internal dynamics of the Council and its secretariat. Yet these are important to consider in the overall effectiveness of the Council. The very nature of the Council and its functions means that it is constantly in the public eye and

the extent to which it is meeting expectations is subject to continuing scrutiny.

While much of the Council's work is produced with the secretariat, individual Council members make substantive contributions from time to time. They are, however, part-time, with other responsibilities (apart from the chairman) though the convenors receive honoraria for specific time commitments. Many Council members may feel they are not always able to be as closely involved with the full-time activities of the secretariat as they would like. Secretariat members attempt to keep Council members informed through formal arrangements by which Council and secretariat have liaison responsibility with different organisations, and through informal personal contacts. But compromises often have to be drawn if another paper war is to be avoided.

The Chairman, as a full-time worker alongside the secretariat provides an important link between Council and secretariat, while the director, with his responsibility for management of the work programme, provides another. Actual working methods within the secretariat tend to be informal and unhierarchical and secretariat, chairman and Council members have easy and frequent access to each other. The importance of group discussion and exchange of ideas in this environment should not be underestimated. The interaction among secretariat members plays an important part in the process of planning.

The nature of the organisation and its closeness to policy, together with the sensitive nature of some of the policy matters with which the Council has been involved (e.g. employment policy, energy issues, taxation reform) mean that there are some restrictions on the way in which the secretariat operates. The working environment cannot be completely detached from wider social and political considerations. While some may see this as a limitation, it should be viewed as an acknowledgment of reality. An organisation charged with advising

governments will presumably wish to have this advice accepted, therefore recommendations cannot be formulated in isolation from day to day policy concerns or longer-term manifestos. The difficult questions for such a policy research group are when and where to comment publicly if they believe short-term political decisions are in danger of precluding, or adversely affecting, longer-term planning strategies.

To have impact, these longer-term strategies must be developed on the basis of vigorous intellectual standards, using the best available information and techniques. A major part of the work of the Planning Council should therefore comprise quality analysis which will be acceptable to the most critical professional audiences. The commissioning of individual research exercises and publishing of the results by the Council (which may not necessarily endorse them) is one way in which the Council has sought to have important and controversial issues debated publicly. For Council papers as a whole there will be compromises necessary from time to time. The urgency with which governments seek policy guidance; the time which can be devoted to continuing study of a particular set of issues given staff and resource constraints will affect these compromises. Output will, overall, be characterised by a mixture of "pragmatism and professionalism".[9]

The concept of a multi-disciplinary group applying its collective abilities to the study of strategic issues is important and desirable. The practical aspects, however, sometimes limit the extent to which the ideal can be achieved.

As Dror has pointed out, techniques for single problem analysis are well-established; techniques for the study of a range of multifaceted problems are not so well developed. The Council has found this in its work which has included the preparation of two "integrated" documents. The first, Planning Perspectives received a tremendous positive response throughout New Zealand. Its publication was followed by extensive Council speaking engagements, and consultations with many groups, including school children, churchmen, women's

groups, business leaders and political party representatives. The second, Directions (published in April 1981) also seeks to approach New Zealand's future in an integrated manner. Its impact has yet to be assessed.

It has not been easy producing these integrated studies. This is partly a matter of availability of data: "hard" data for economic analysis is relatively easily available, but the development of social indicators in New Zealand is in its infancy. Moreover, documentation of social processes is a much more qualitative and impressionistic procedure than for economic processes. Mixing approaches creates some tension within the secretariat. Those working in established disciplines, notably economics, tend to resist the introduction of the more impressionistic social policy orientations. Techniques to deal with these issues are still relatively undeveloped. At the same time there is a recognition of the complexities of the issues with which modern societies are grappling - as Dror commented this is one of the justifications for the establishment of organisations such as the Planning Council. The report Employment: Towards an Active Employment Policy showed an awareness of these complexities. Not only were the problems of economic change and structural adjustment deal with but so were matters associated with the changing participation rates of men and women in the labour force; needs for training and child care; changes in the educational system and the social problems of unemployment.

With the completion of a second integrated policy document, the 1981-82 work programme is focusing on more specific subjects. At the same time, monitoring of work already published and the study of individual sectoral planning exercises within a comprehensive national framework will provide opportunities for evolving new techniques which may be more appropriate for an integrated approach.

The work programme for 1981-82 has a task force/team emphasis and will encompass:

- studies of planning in the public sector;

- the preparation of an agenda for tax reform ;
- a study on coping with, and curbing, inflation;
- strategic issues in the rural sector, including social concerns;
- exploration of social implications of economic policies;
- advice to the Government on progress on regional planning and its links with national planning.

In addition consultative and educational work will be developed further. The pressures created by such a work programme on the Council and secretariat (which will remain at about its present size) could be quite formidable.

Planning for the Medium Term and Looking at the Future

The New Zealand Planning Act has linked the New Zealand Planning Council with its responsibility for medium-term consultative planning with the Commission for the Future, a group concerned with the longer-term (around the year 2000). To some extent, this can create problems for both organisations. On the one hand, the Planning Council has a relatively short time horizon and therefore is closely related to actual policy decisions which are being taken by the Government. On the other, although the Commission for the Future is looking further ahead, in the light of the lead times of some major development activity, for example, in energy or urban growth, decisions which are being made now could well pre-empt our options not only for the medium-term but even for the period at the end of the century.

To avoid conflict in the work selected by the Council and the Commission the two organisations have agreed to consult on their work programmes and are in fact required by the Act to present these to the Minister each year. Nevertheless, it is often easier to agree on an issue in principle than in practice and there are areas where there could appear to be duplication of activity. The difficulty is for each organisation to

establish priorities when crucial issues such as employment attract their concern.

Issues for Consideration

There is no single model suitable for every country seeking good inputs to policy-making. The question of how far scientific analysis can be divorced from political realities will remain. Perhaps of greater concern is the extent to which a body which is not independently funded can retain an independence in its publications. The right to publish, if not carefully used, could be seen as the right to self-destruct.

For some, there would appear to be limitations on a policy research group which gives advice but cannot ensure its implementation. The extent to which implementation is achieved will vary according to the excellence of the research advice, its political acceptability and the will of the government in power to carry out the advice.

In the final analysis, political will, as Dror contends, is crucial. Unless governments make a commitment to approaches which are going to ensure better long-term planning and policy-making, no matter how superb the analysis and how extensive the public debate, the role of the policy research group will be limited.

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APPENDIX 1

FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE NEW ZEALAND PLANNING COUNCIL

Functions and Powers of Council

1. The general functions of the Council shall be:

(a) To advise the Government on planning for social, economic, and cultural development in New Zealand.

(b) To assist the Government to co-ordinate such planning.

(c) To comment to the Government on programmes for social, economic, and cultural development in New Zealand, and to recommend the priorities that should be accorded to them.

(d) To act as a focal point for a process of consultative planning about New Zealand's medium-term development.

(e) To foster discussion among those agencies (Government and private) concerned with planning, particularly in the economic, environmental, social and cultural fields.

(f) To submit advice to the Government on links between planning at the national and regional levels.

(g) To prepare reports on any matter affecting the economic, social, or cultural development of New Zealand.

(h) To submit any report prepared by it to the Minister if it thinks fit.

(i) To recommend that any report submitted to the Minister under paragraph (h) of this subsection be laid before Parliament.

(j) To publish documents on planning topics which in the view of the Council merit wide consideration and debate.

(k) To consider any other matter which is referred to the Council by the Minister or which is relevant to the proper performance of the functions mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (j) of this subsection.

2. The Council shall have such other functions, powers, and duties as are imposed on it by or under this Act or any other enactment.

3. The Council shall have such other powers as may be reasonably necessary to enable it to carry out its functions.

Source: New Zealand Planning Act 1977

APPENDIX 2

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ECONOMIC MONITORING GROUP

1. To report from time to time on the extent to which important economic objectives, such as higher standards of living, full employment, stability of prices, economic growth and a sustainable balance of overseas transactions are being achieved.

2. To assess the implications of current and prospective short-term economic developments for the implementation of strategy for New Zealand's medium-term development as set out in reports of of the NZPC or statements by the Government.

3. To make recommendations from time to time on changes in policy which, in its opinion, would promote and sustain New Zealand's economic and social welfare.

APPENDIX 3

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS (July 1981)

NZPC Series		Price
No. 1	A Moment of Truth	free
No. 2	Regional Options	free
No. 3	Town and Country Planning Bill	free
No. 4	Planning Perspectives 1978-1983	$3.35
No. 5	Taxation Reform (Donald T. Brash and Graeme Thompson)	free
No. 6	Income Maintenance and Taxation (Paul Bevan, Avery Jack, John Jensen)	$3.00
No. 7	Working Together (Brian Picot, Claire Drake, Ted Thompson, Noel Woods)	free
No. 8	New Zealand and the European Community	$3.50
No. 9	Future for New Zealand Agriculture (Ian McLean)	$4.50
No.10	Australian Relationships with New Zealand (Frank Holmes)	
	Part I: Presentation to Study Group on Structural Adjustment	$1.00
	Part II: Some Reflections on a Visit to Australia	$1.00
No.11	Economic Strategy 1979	out of print
No.12	The Welfare State?	$4.15
No.12a	Public Expenditure and its Financing: 1950-1979)	$2.95

No.13	Implications of New Energy Developments (Norman Macbeth, Graeme Thompson, Chris Livesey, Frank Holmes)	$2.75
No.14	He Matapuna - Some Maori Perspectives	$5.30
No.15	Planning and the Regions	$3.50
No.16	Investment Issues (Donald T. Brash, Frank Holmes, Bill Smith, Graeme Thompson)	$6.75
No.17	Employment: Towards an Active Employment Policy	$5.25
No.18	Directions	$5.25
No.19	An Agenda For Tax Reform	$2.75

Planning Papers

No. 1	The National Development Bill	free
No. 2	Land as Turangawaewae: Ngati Whatu's Destiny at Orakei (I.H. Kawharu)	free
No. 3	Finding a Pathway to the Future: He Ara ki te Aomaarama (S.M. Mead)	free
No. 4	Whakatupuranga Rua Mano - Generation 2000: An Experiment in Tribal Development (Whatarangi Winiata)	free
No. 5	The Stabilisation Role of Fiscal Policy (R.S. Deane and R.G. Smith)	free
No. 6	New Zealand's Long Term Foreign Trade Problems and Structural Adjustment Policies (P.J. Lloyd and others)	$4.00
No. 7	Regional Development Objectives and Policies: An Appraisal (Claudia D. Scott)	$4.00
No. 8	Migrants and Their Motives (Rosemary Barrington and Judith Davey)	$5.00

No. 9	Puzzled, Pakeha? Some Reflections on He Matapuna (Ken Piddington)	free
No. 10	Forecasting the Economy in the Eighties (Eric Haywood)	$3.50
No. 11	Measuring the Cost of Government Services (Ian Ball)	$3.00

Reports of the Economic Monitoring Group

"New Zealand's Economic Trends and Policies"

Number 1 (September 1978)	$2.25
Number 2 (September 1979)	$2.10
Number 3 (April 1980)	$1.80
Number 4 (April 1981)	$3.50

The Publication Series

The Planning Council has two publications series in which it publishes its own reports and those commissioned from others. Originally all reports were published in the NZPC series. However, since NZPC No. 14 this series has been reserved for the reports of wide general interest (both Council and commissioned reports) which are marketed by the Government Bookshop. A new series - Planning Papers - is now being used for free issues and technical papers of more limited specialist interest.

The EMG series is used to publish reports of the Economic Monitoring Group. This Group operates independently of the Planning Council. Its task is to report from time to time on short-term economic trends.