

covers. In a concise foreword, Priestley Thomson recalls memories of father Allan and grandfather GM. Their scientific contributions are commemorated through the Thomson medal awarded each year by the Royal Society of New Zealand. As the author intends, this book ensures they will also be remembered for their human qualities.

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'A Fair and Just Solution'? A History of the Integration of Private Schools in New Zealand. By Rory Sweetman. Dunmore Press in association with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and the Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools, Palmerston North, 2002. 323 pp. NZ Price: \$34.95. ISBN 0-864694148.

IN HIS INTRODUCTION, the author describes this book as having told 'how New Zealand politicians and educationalists searched for and found a local solution to a problem that bedeviled much of the English-speaking world'. The 'problem' was the longstanding and perplexing question of state aid to private schools that had assumed major proportions by the early 1960s. The 'solution' was the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act, 1975, which permitted private schools to enter the state system.

'A Fair and Just Solution'? A History of the Integration of Private Schools in New Zealand is a timely account of the process of negotiation and legislation that produced the compromise solution of the 1975 Integration Act. There is much to commend in this book. The history of the state aid issue, particularly as it impacted upon the Catholic schools, is traced clearly and logically. The first three chapters trace the historical evolution of the state-aid controversy in New Zealand. Chapter one charts the lengthy period from the passage of the 1877 Education Act until the setting up of the Currie Commission in 1960. Deadlock between proponents of secularism and those who supported specific provision for some form of religious education resulted in an Act that rejected state aid whilst supporting compulsory education. Ironically, this ensured the growth of a separate Catholic education system along with rival lobby groups aiming to either overturn the 1877 solution, or to maintain it. Chapter two turns to the crucial decade of the 1960s, when the question of state aid became acute for the 12.5% of children attending private schools, the vast majority of whom were Catholic. The relative position of Catholic schools had worsened since the 1940s. A number of factors came together to precipitate a crisis in the 1960s. A.E.C.W. Spenser's unpublished interim report on the organization of Catholic education in New Zealand (1972) indicated that these included a diminishing pool of religious teachers, demands for increased provision of secondary schooling for Catholic children, and parental pressure to improve standards in line with developments in the state system. Many Catholic schools found themselves falling well behind state schools in terms of teacher-pupil ratios, buildings and facilities. The introduction of school fees and the increasing recruitment of lay teachers were but symptoms of an increasing Catholic educational dilemma in this period. Chapter three examines how the New Zealand Labour Party in particular became an unlikely champion of the integration concept, focusing particularly on the key roles of party leader Norman Kirk and education spokesman, Phil Amos.

Chapters four, five and six constitute the academic core of this book. Drawing upon significant archival material, they collectively focus on the making of the Private Schools Conditional Integration Bill, its passage through the House, and eventual reception in the community at large. Chapter four deals with the crucial State Aid Conference. As the author describes it, conference delegates faced and overcame a number of difficult and contentious issues, any of which could have derailed the process. These

issues included the appointment of teachers, the conditions for enrolment, ownership of resources, and the control and governance of integrated schools. Chapter five turns to the tortuous aspects of presenting the compromises reached by the conference to the various interested parties, the drafting of the bill, the passage of the bill through the house, and initial reactions to it. Chapter six concentrates on the various reactions to integration in the wider community. To some extent, the Act became a political football in the decade immediately following its passage. Various reviews were proposed, resulting in the 1977 Integration Amendment Act under National, and then the Integration Conference of December 1984 under Labour, neither of which fundamentally altered the spirit of the original legislation.

The author points to the 'brief window of opportunity' that enabled the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act to be passed. He concludes that had the Act not been passed, progressive increases in state aid would have allowed the Catholic school system to retain its independence. However, the cost would have been progressive hikes in school fees, leading to increasing exclusivity. New Zealand would thus have followed the Australian model whereby two systems, public and private, uneasily co-exist, along with many anomalies and inequities. This book therefore supports strongly the view that integration provided, and continues to provide, a fair and just solution to a complex educational, organizational and moral problem. Moreover, the belief that a separate Catholic education system provided the necessary socialization into Catholic values is one that has a long history in the Catholic community.

Neither view is challenged here. Sweetman's account of the history of integration is essentially a story of problems overcome by the application of reason, good will and commonsense. Hence, it provides a legitimization of not just the solution, but also of the process that directly led to its adoption. The photograph of the last meeting of the writing group provides a clear example of the author's primary focus on policy processes. The group is in white collars and ties. Catholic and non-Catholic, they are essentially middle-aged, good middle-class chaps, with only the female secretary standing out in a patterned frock. Those who for various reasons opposed either process or solution are consigned, perhaps inevitably in this type of approach, to the sidelines of history. This then, is essentially a view of educational history and a problem that is largely finished business.

The book will be well received by those interested in the history of Catholic education in New Zealand. The style is eminently readable. The author succeeds in his goal of explaining the genesis of the idea of integration and how the legislation was made, passed and implemented. The narrative is supported by detailed archival research and more than 50 interviews with principal players in the integration story. Yet a number of key stories remain to be told; most especially the role of religious teaching orders in the integration process. These will have to wait for a future account. Furthermore, the author touches on but does not engage with issues that are certain to stoke the fires of controversy for future historians. Central among these are questions about the historic relationships between Catholics and the wider New Zealand community; in particular the consequences of the Catholic community's 100-year preoccupation with state aid and the role this preoccupation may have had in perpetuating the fractiousness and mistrust that characterized exchanges between the parties for the greater part of the twentieth century.

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