

REVISITING TOMORROW

1977 – 1991

NEW ZEALAND AT THE TURNING POINT



Image above: New Zealand Planning Council members and staff – First meeting on April 5 1977. Photograph from Archives New Zealand. Back row from left: Ted Thompson, Peter Wilding, R.W. Steele, Mervyn Prohine, Don Brash, Rangitiki-Matangi, Robin Irvine, Brian Picot, Ken Piddington (Director), Noel Lough. Front row from left: Claire Drake, George Gair, Sir Frank Holmes (Chair), Kerrin Vautier, Anne Delamare.

About the Commission for the Future and the New Zealand Planning Council

McGuinness Institute, 30 October, 2019

In 1976 the Task Force on Economic and Social Planning published the report *New Zealand at the Turning Point*. It highlighted New Zealand's urgent need for direction in significantly changing times, and the need to reconsider how to encourage 'widespread involvement' in New Zealand's planning processes:

'An important aim of the Task Force recommendations is to provide for widespread involvement in the planning process. Up until now, participation by certain groups in the direction of the nation's affairs has been much less significant than is desirable, and, indeed, than is necessary to obtain a sufficiently wide range of opinion when planning about the future.

In this regard appointments to planning bodies and related agencies should reflect the very great potential of women in the management of New Zealand life, as well as the contribution which will come from the tangata whenua and members of minority ethnic groups. The Task Force also believes the trade union movement should be persuaded to play a much more active role in planning at all levels than has been the case in the past' (Task Force on Economic and Social Planning, 1976, p. xvi).

On the recommendations of this report, the Commission for the Future and the New Zealand Planning Council were formally established under the New Zealand Planning Act 1977. The Commission for the Future, while neither a planning body nor having a gov-

ernment advisory role, was 'concerned with long-term possibilities, a thirty year time frame, and with setting an agenda for public discussion and debate on possible futures for New Zealand' (Hunn, 1981, p. 2). The New Zealand Planning Council was 'a focal point for consultation about trends, strategic issues and policy options in New Zealand's medium term development', and intended to advise 'Government on the co-ordination of planning and on choices of priorities in development' (Hunn, 1981, p. 2).

The two organisations had influential, albeit short, lifespans, and published numerous reports on key issues for New Zealand's future. See excerpts on page 2 and the full list on page 4. They were given an ambitious mandate to explore how to embed long-term strategy and planning in New Zealand's public policy. The diagram below demonstrates how the New Zealand Planning Council and Commission for the Future were envisaged to fit into New Zealand's 'information flows' (Task Force on Economic and Social Planning, 1976, p. 350).

The Commission for the Future was controversially disestablished in 1982 under the Robert Muldoon-led Third National Government, while the Planning Council was disbanded in 1991 under the Jim Bolger-led Fourth National Government. See excerpts of key legislation on page 4. The legacy of both organisations was a blueprint of how foresight can be embedded into public policy.

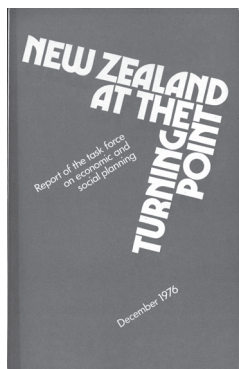
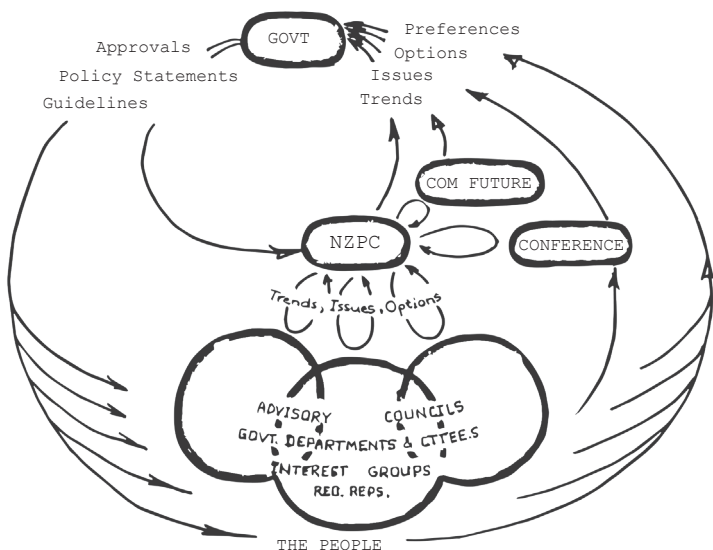


Image left: Diagram from the Task Force on Economic and Social Planning's 1976 report 'New Zealand at the Turning Point: Report of the task force on economic and social planning', showing the information flows and organisations related to New Zealand's public policy.

THE PLANNING COUNCIL

Putting a new product on the market

FRANK HOLMES

NZ Economist, April 1977 Issue

Now that the new Planning Council is preparing to get into its stride, I feel something like a businessman whose company has put him in charge of a subsidiary to market a new product. There is certainly the same challenge and excitement, as well as the corporate spirit of a good sales team.

I find however that a lot of people are cynical about our chances and we can expect some consumer resistance.

How, they ask, does the product differ from what has been marketed before? Isn't the Planning Council merely making a great song and dance about a simple packaging operation? Hasn't someone just done a paint job on the old NDC?

These are good questions and I don't intend to duck them. For one thing we aim to involve a lot of people in the planning effort. And the Government has committed itself to support the new structure.

Having advanced the argument that open information flows are crucial to good planning, I want in this article to give an honest description of the product.

A pilot test

In a sense, we have already done our pilot marketing test. When I was asked to lead the Task Force on Economic and Social Planning last year, it offered a ready opportunity to get out and talk to the consumers, the people whose input is needed for any widely-based planning for New Zealand's future development. And if you go back to the report which we put out you will see that it can be read as an evaluation of the likely market response.

I believe it also contains a full description of the product itself — about a quarter of the 400-odd pages are devoted to the actual mechanisms for planning and the procedures which we thought would best match consumer demand.

Sir Frank Holmes is chairman of the New Zealand Planning Council.

*National Development Council (NDC)

There was a good deal of consumer dissatisfaction with some aspects of the older products. The opening chapter tells the reader what we heard about them:

The main complaints were the lack of a satisfactory mechanism for co-ordination—'planning in compartments'—and inadequate links between the planning and the crucial decisions made by the Government—'planning in a vacuum'. Not enough time was put in to a dispassionate analysis of key issues and policy options about which choices had to be made. The discrepancies which emerged between targets set and outcomes achieved did not seem to lead to changes in either targets or policies. Some of the planning bodies became more occupied with lobbying and negotiations with ministers on short-run problems than with serious medium-run planning.

I do not wish to leave the impression that there was nothing good about the NDC. Many of the planning bodies used to advantage the relative ease of consultation in a country of this size. They brought businessmen, public servants, and academics into much closer contact to deal with issues of common concern. In some cases, they really came to grips with problems in a way that was just not possible through normal political processes. In particular, it was a home-grown structure and not an imported model.

So the Task Force saw the prospect of building on the good things which had been achieved from previous attempts at planning, and of creating a new and better-co-ordinated mechanism designed to meet the demands of the seventies and beyond.

We did not want to be gloomcasters, but as we looked at the problems which planners would have to grapple with we accumulated plenty of evidence about the need for a fresh start.

Whether it was the balance of payments, industrial relations, social welfare, attitudes towards women, ethnic groups, and others, we gained the clear impression that New Zealand was relying on outdated institutions and rigid procedures. We were entering the Grand Prix in a Model T Ford. Unless

there was some innovation, a mechanical breakthrough, we would be left standing at the start.

The NZ Planning Council which the Government has approved is different in several ways from the old NDC. For example, it has an independent chairman working full-time at the job. It will have its own secretariat which will be able to concentrate on planning issues, without being diverted to deal with short-time crises—an ever-present danger for a departmental secretariat. The initial authority is for six professional officers, which makes it evident that the council will be relying heavily on others in central government, local, and regional authorities and the private sector for the inputs needed.

The members of the council do not represent pressure groups, although their backgrounds of expertise and experience are representative of a wide spectrum of the best of New Zealand life and should help them promote the effective two-way consultation with many groups and individuals about New Zealand's future which the Government wishes the council to promote.

The Government has indicated its own desire for a strong link between the council and the Cabinet by making the Minister of National Development a member of the council.

What will the planners do?

The starting point must be to plot current trends and make an informed guess as to where they are leading. This is easier in some areas than in others and we all know that forecasts are bound to be wrong anyway. Perhaps the main contribution of disciplined planning is to highlight those areas where lifelong assumptions have to be revised.

- A serious deterioration in the terms of trade inevitably forces reappraisal of our existing industrial structure and of the efficiency with which we use resources in all our activities.
- Fertility and migration trends have radically altered the view we need to take of future population growth in New Zealand.
- Energy, or rather the assumed availability of cheap power, is another factor which has changed dramatically.
- Even the basic assumption behind social policies, namely that there is a single New Zealand lifestyle to which all citizens aspire, is now open to serious question.

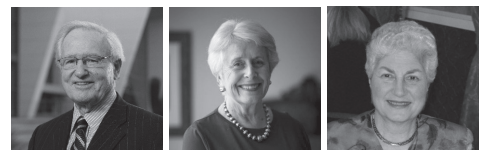
About Revisiting Tomorrow

Just as in 1976, New Zealand has now reached a new turning point. As the world faces increasing uncertainty, particularly when navigating issues such as climate change, it is vital that New Zealand moves towards embedding foresight and long-term thinking into robust public policy. The panel discussion on 30 October 2019 (see speakers on the right) and this newspaper were designed with these aims in mind.

This publication is a retrospective look into the Commission for the Future and the New Zealand Planning Council and how they attempted to embed foresight into New Zealand public policy. It is made up of a combination of McGuinness Institute work and news articles from the 1970s–1990s. The McGuinness Institute hopes that, by looking back at the work of previous future-thinking organisations, we can provide some insight and context for emerging initiatives such as the Infrastructure Commission and the proposed Climate Change Commission.

This panel discussion commemorates the work of the Commission for the Future and New Zealand Planning Council. Sessions are being videoed and will be available on the Institute's YouTube channel later this year.

A full list of references for this newspaper is available from the publications section of the McGuinness Institute website.



Rt Hon Jim Bolger Dame Silvia Cartwright Dame Beverley Waker



Peter Rankin Tāmami Kruger Amy Fletcher

Wednesday, 30 October 2019, 5.30 – 7.30 pm, National Library Wellington

The McGuinness Institute is very grateful to have had material donated to its James Duncan Reference Library from the New Zealand Planning Council and Commission for the Future over the years. The James Duncan Reference Library is open to the public by appointment.

DEFINING MOMENTS

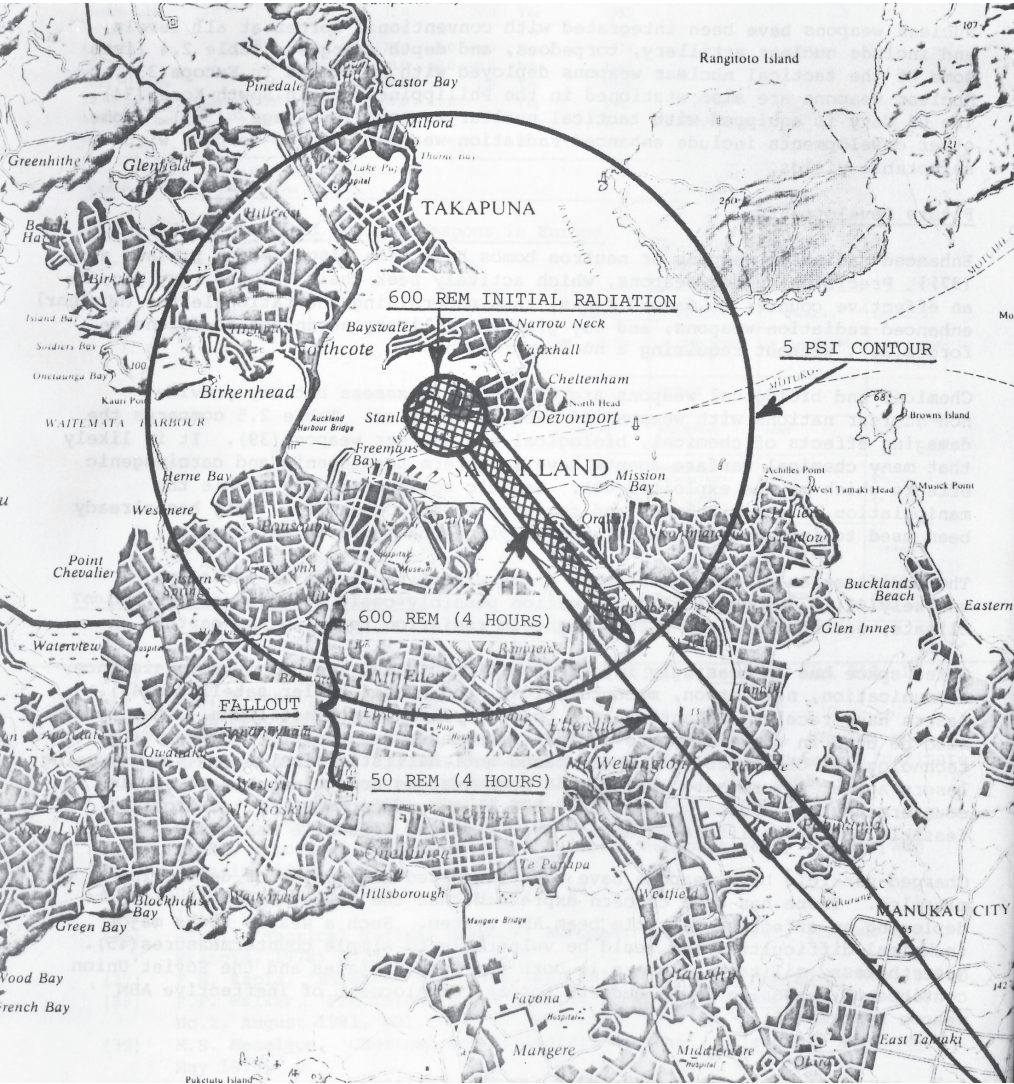


Image above: Diagram showing the posited effects of detonating a one kilotonne nuclear weapon in central Auckland, taken from the 1982 report 'Future Contingencies: 4. Nuclear Disaster'.

Future Contingencies: Natural Disaster (1982) A focus on climate change

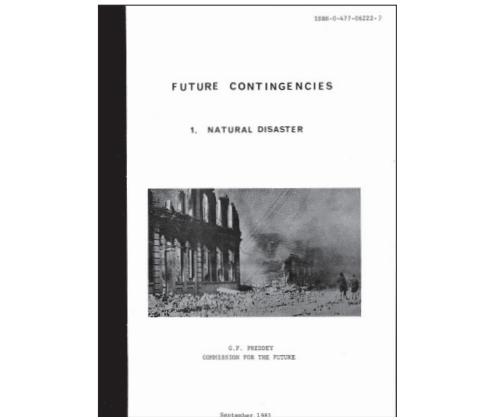
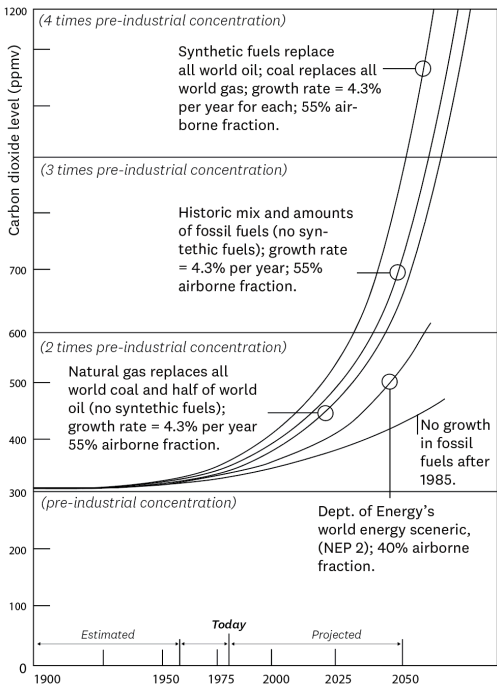
McGuinness Institute, 30 October, 2019

George Preddey published the report *Natural Disaster* in September 1981 for the Commission for the Future. It is part of the Commission's 'Future Contingencies' series (subsequent reports were *Societal Disaster*, *World Economic Disaster*, *Nuclear Disaster*, and *Summary Report for wider dissemination*).

Natural Disaster focuses on 'two kinds of natural disaster which (in the writer's perception) assume special importance for New Zealand, but which do not yet receive adequate recognition': 'climatic change' and 'tectonic disaster' (p. 7). He then examines their implications for agriculture and energy, the two sectors seen as the most likely to be affected (pp. 25–27).

As per the conventions of futures thinking, Preddey's report directs the reader's attention to 'possible future disasters' (p. 3) which, in the case of climate change, are summarised by *The Global 2000 Report to the President*. Published in 1980 by the Council on Environmental Quality and the US Department of State, *The Global 2000 Report* broadly outlines three possible scenarios for the climate by the year 2000: no change, a warmer climate, or a cooler climate. Preddey considers the latter two scenarios in *Natural Disaster*.

Drawing on *The Global 2000 Report*, Preddey discusses the relationship between energy strategies and the atmospheric carbon dioxide levels projected from 2025 to 2050. This is illustrated by the graph below.



In *Natural Disaster* Preddey draws several key conclusions grouped under various headings below.

The inadequacies of contemporaneous models of climate change and global warming:

'(5) There is not yet any definitive observational evidence that increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are having any effect on present climate. There is, however, considerable agreement among climate modellers as to the long-term consequences (a global warming), even although [sic] it is recognized that the models themselves are inadequate in important respects [...] This consensus should be accorded some consideration by policy makers in agriculture and energy' (p. 67).

The nature of observational evidence as to the effects of increased carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere hinders the ability of scientists to predict global warming:

'(6) The long time delay predicted for the atmospheric response to increasing carbon dioxide levels is capable of accounting for the present lack of observational evidence in support of a global warming' (p. 67).

Need for international cooperation:

'(10) In the (improbable?) event of international co-operation to avert a potentially disastrous global warming, countries like New Zealand, with biomass or solar options, may come under international pressure to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels' (p. 69).

Viewed through the prism of 2019's climate emergency, the McGuinness Institute considers Preddey's work in *Natural Disaster* to be significant as it demonstrates consideration of the impact of increased atmospheric carbon dioxide as far back as the 1980s; yet as time has passed, these considerations have remained unheeded.

Image left: Graph from G. F. Preddey's 1981 report 'Natural Disasters', demonstrating five different scenarios for the world based on various atmospheric carbon dioxide levels originally published in 'The Global Report 2000' (p. 18).

Future Contingencies: Nuclear Disaster (1981)

McGuinness Institute, 30 October, 2019

Nuclear Disaster is the fourth report in the 'Future Contingencies' series, discussing the implications that nuclear disaster would have for New Zealand. *Nuclear Disaster* provides an in-depth exploration into the possible causes and effects of nuclear war, and the contingencies New Zealand may need in the aftermath of such a crisis.

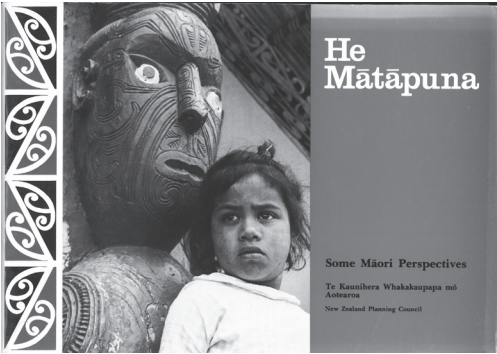
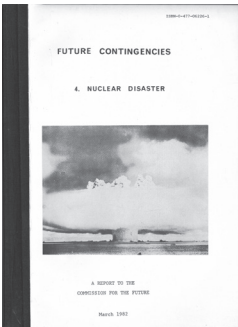
Nuclear Disaster notes in its 'Illustrative Attack Scenarios for New Zealand' section that:

'The primary purpose of these scenarios is to put the effects of nuclear weapons into a New Zealand perspective. The attacks described are considered unlikely (but not implausible) at the present time. Over the 30 year time horizon adopted for this [Commission for the Future] report, changes in New Zealand's strategic significance, and improvements in delivery systems, may change this assessment (New Zealand is presently outside of

range of Soviet land-based systems)' (p. 23).

Nuclear Disaster also notes that:

'the point has been reached "where the catastrophic possibilities that lie latent in nuclear weapons are very likely to be exploited, either by design or by accident, by misinformation or miscalculation, by states or by subnational groups, by lapse from rational decision or by unauthorized decision"' (p. 33).



He Mātāpuna: Some Māori Perspectives (1979)

McGuinness Institute, 30 October, 2019

Collaboratively produced by Māori writers for the New Zealand Planning Council, *He Mātāpuna: Some Māori Perspectives* discusses the inequalities and hardships of Māori in a Pākehā environment through the authors' recount of their lives and experiences. The book's purpose is to look at how the New Zealand Planning Council can best incorporate the Māori viewpoint and narrow the margin of inequality, place Māoritanga at the forefront of planning and policy-making and ensure collaboration with Māori to achieve long-term success.

Frank Holmes notes in the foreword that the 'authors (were) unanimous in the

judgement that Pākehā institutions and Pākehā procedures have not provided a satisfactory framework for the achievement of Māori goals' (p. 8).

He goes on to say that Pākehā values cannot be 'the sole basis of planning and policy-making' (p. 8).

Robert Mahuta shares his thoughts on the future, noting that there is a clear difference between the Pākehā experience and Māori experience, each having their own 'vested interests' and values (p. 20).

He also suggests that the two keys to success in society are money and education, and that these are needed to create change (p. 20). Mahuta believes the quickest way to create change 'is through intellectual advocacy' and that an intellectual revolution of our young Māori is

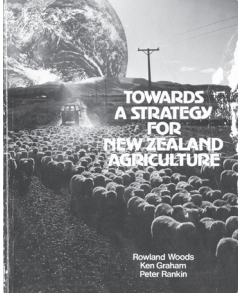
needed to achieve long-term systemic change. He concludes that:

'What we have to do is take the same kinds of risks that our tūpuna did when they climbed into their canoes and sailed into the unknown. This voyage into the future is unknown for us. There is strength in this venture if we have firm allies who are committed to the same course' (p. 21).

Tilly Reedy's view of the sort of future she wants is also included:

'I would like a future where people will accept me for what I am – a woman, a Māori, a member of the Ngāti Porou tribe of New Zealand; accept me for my differences as much as my similarities; respect me and what is mine, my differences as much as my similarities; recognise that I am human with all the strengths and weaknesses of a human being; concede that my spiritual beliefs, my need for my taha Māori and all that that embodies, cannot be separated from me.

What I ask for in my future are those things that I am most willing to give – to accept and respect people for what they are not what I would like them to be' (p. 47).



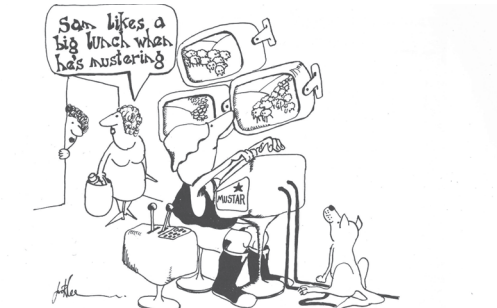
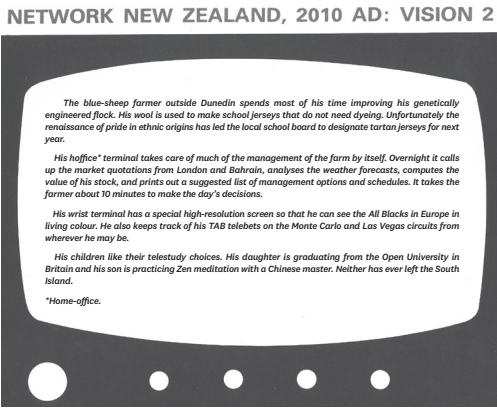
Towards a Strategy for New Zealand Agriculture (1984)

McGuinness Institute, 30 October, 2019

This report aims to assist agricultural interests by developing an analytical framework as a basis for strategic decisions:

'Trends in world demand support an optimistic view of the future for agricultural exports but major changes have been occurring in the pattern and structure of world demand and trade. Difficulties encountered by New Zealand have arisen largely because the agricultural sector has not adjusted rapidly enough to those changes and the future of New Zealand's agricultural industries depends critically on their ability to demonstrate more flexibility in responding to the changing demands of world markets' (p. 175)'.
'(175)'

Network New Zealand Communications in the Future (1981)



From Birth to Death (1985)

McGuinness Institute, 30 October, 2019

From Birth to Death was the first report produced by the Social Monitoring Group (SMG) for the New Zealand Planning Council. It was one of the first of its kind, in that it used the 'life event approach [...] as a framework for the presentation of data to allow a range of human experience to be covered' (p. 5).

From Birth to Death notes that its objectives are 'strongly influenced' by the Social Development Council:

1. to ensure all people a standard of living sufficient to meet basic human needs, through an equitable sharing of resources
2. to provide adequate care (physical, social and psychological) for all those who are handicapped by age, temporary or permanent illness or incapacity, or suffering from crisis or disruption in their lives
3. to give all people access to preventative and curative health care and to encourage the adoption of a

healthy lifestyle

4. to ensure personal security and security of property, giving emphasis to the prevention of crime

5. to promote full participation by all people in decisions which affect their lives, and to set up structures to ensure this

6. to guarantee the individual freedom and autonomy to the extent that this does not conflict with the rights of others

7. to ensure that all people have worthwhile occupation suitable to their capabilities

8. to provide educational and recreational opportunities for all people, appropriate to their potential' (p. 12).

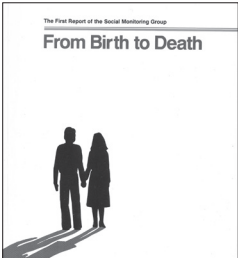


Image middle left: An envisioned advertisement from the year 2010, imagining how communications might affect New Zealand life 40 years into the future. Taken from the 1981 report 'Network New Zealand: Communications in the Future'.

Can we plan for the year 2000?

The Dominion, November 3, 1977.

By SAM PENTECOST

IN AN editorial on November 3 about futures and the Commission for the Future, The Dominion performed a useful public service.

The Dominion asked a number of questions, perhaps the most important of which were:

● Is it possible to look to the year 2000 with any degree of validity? and

● Is it a waste of time and money to continue with the Commission for the Future? These questions require answers.

If "to look to 2000 with any degree of validity" means "is it possible to predict the timing of those events which we would expect would interest us in that period", the answer is clearly no.

The problem here, however, is that there is a fundamental misunderstanding as to what futurists are trying to do.

Futurists do not claim to know what lies ahead and they are not trying to predict. They are not prophets.

● Two objects

For most researchers the future field has two main objects:

● To provide estimates of future possibilities, and

● To help society generally to recognise the longer-term (over 10 years) prospects and the potential for change.

Working at the period up to the year 2000 is trying to describe, for example, what is likely, if present trends continue; and to show society the range of feasible alternative futures from which we may, if we so wish, choose.

"There is a vast difference between letting changes occur and choosing the changes we actually want," de Jouvenal observed.

The futurist can help in the formulation of goals, and by describing the cost benefits of the various alternatives.

● Not sufficient

The editorial also argued that because Sir Frank Holmes's New Zealand Planning Council is studying the period 5-10 years ahead there is no need for the Commission for the Future.

The editorial assumes that it is sufficient to look ahead only 5-10 years. The fact is quite simply that it is not.

As the EEC's Europe Plus Thirty Report has stressed — "if decisions or actions taken now or in the near future can produce important consequences in the long term, the forecasts for a correspondingly long period are useful."

New Zealand needs 10-15 year forecasts if it is to be able to develop a coherent system of goals and strategies.

The Maiden committee's research team found it necessary to consider the period up to 2025. But energy planning in New Zealand is hampered by the lack of other long-term sectorial forecasts, let alone a clear indication of the goals of New Zealanders and this country's most likely futures.

As well as energy, urban and rural development, transport and education all involve major infrastructural investment, with consequences that can continue well over the 50-year mark.

Recent work in systems theory — a field in which the Commission for the Future is sponsoring New Zealand-related research — has demonstrated that complex systems often react to short and medium-term policies in the direction opposite to their long-term response.

A small nation like New Zealand needs, in fact, to pay particular attention to long-term planning, not only at home but also abroad.

In the face of dire necessity we are at present attempting to shift our trading patterns on to a more sound base.

● Focal point

But if we do not study as closely as possible the long-term goals, aspirations, and plans of our major present and potential trading partners, how are we to decide that what we produce they will want to buy?

Can we really afford to look only 5-10 years ahead?

The Planning Council advises the Commission for the Future have distinctly different sets of functions. It would not be sound administrative practice to have one body combining both roles.

The Planning Council advises the Government on the co-ordination of planning and on choices of priorities for development.

It serves as a focal point for consultation about trends, strategic issues and policy options for New Zealand's medium-term development.

The commission is less closely linked to the Government. It is not a planning agency.

The commission can best be seen as a look-out organisation and advisory body.

● Key task

It will among other things, monitor short and medium term planning to ensure that the long-term consequences are fully understood.

Exploration of possible alternative futures will be one of its key tasks, and it is charged with encouraging widespread public debate about them.

The Planning Council and the commission complement each other. Communication and co-operation between them will be strengthened by the Government's recognition of their complementarity, by the presence of Dr Robin Irvine (Vice Chancellor of Otago University) on the boards of both bodies, and by the planned co-location of both organisations' secretariats.

Commission failing in its objectives

The Evening Post, April 4th, 1981

THE COMMISSION for the Future has neither grabbed the attention of the Government nor the public.

It is right that the commission's own future should now come under scrutiny as its largely unobserved role in the community becomes increasingly apparent.

All the signs indicate that the commission is losing whatever faith the Government had in its deliberations. The Minister of National Development, Mr Birch, says no decision has been made to "do away" with the organisation, as claimed by the deputy leader of the Opposition, Mr Lange. But Mr Birch has not gone out of his way to give an assurance that the commission is here to stay.

Significantly, the minister states that there needs to be a strong linkage and constructive dialogue between those involved in medium term planning and those in longer term planning, and that there may be some value in having a stronger interlocking through the medium term planning functions of the Planning Council.

It has been recognised from the start that there could be overlapping in the work of the Commission for the Future and the Planning Council, and if sufficient interlocking has not been achieved by this stage it would indicate a failure on the part of one or both organisations to get together as they should.

The Commission for the Future has a multi-faceted brief with its sights fixed on 30 to 35 years ahead, and this must be one of the major reasons why it has failed to excite public interest. The

chairman of the commission, Professor Duncan, says the job of the commission is to do two things — to research into long term possibilities which might be significant to New Zealand and to make sure the public knows about it.

With so many contemporary problems engaging — and worrying — the community it must, however, be a daunting task for the commission to try to win the public participation it is seeking. And it would seem to be no nearer doing that than when it was launched.

In the longer term planning with which the commission is concerned, there is real danger that many of the conclusions reached will be more idealistic than practical and there are already indications that the commission is turning up this kind of philosophy.

While some of the activities of the commission have attracted commendation — such as the promotion of science fairs in schools — its general effectiveness must be called into question.

It has altogether too much on its plate to evoke confidence that it can make a credible job of any or all of its obligations.

We cannot ignore the future in the long term, but we have the Planning Council and other agencies, well versed in their subjects, available to do the job. We are not suggesting that the commission should be replaced by a growth of new organisations in the New Zealand mushrooming manner but that serious consideration should be given to the idea of incorporating the work in the activities of existing bodies.

Planning Council belt-tightening worries planners

Unidentified New Zealand newspaper, June, 1982.

A proposed reduction in the membership of the Planning Council is viewed with concern by the New Zealand Planning Institute.

In written submissions to Parliament's commerce and energy select committee, which is considering the New Zealand Planning Bill, the institute's president, Mr Wallace Ross, said it opposed the proposal in the bill to reduce the number of appointed members from 12 to six.

The Minister of National Development and the secretary to the Treasury also have a seat on the council.

Reduction in membership seemed inconsistent with the increasing responsibilities and value to the country of the council. It also did not appear to recognise the additional workload imposed on the council as a result of the dissolution of the Commission for the Future.

Any reduction was likely to frustrate the council's attempts to continue as an effective planning body.

Mr Ross said his institute did not support abolition of the Commission for the Future, which is also contained in the bill.

In other written submissions, Mrs Myra

Harpham, a former director of the Commission for the Future, suggested membership of the council, as contained in the bill, was "disappointing."

In the explanatory note, and in the speech by the Minister of Development, Mr Birch, in introducing the bill into the house, emphasis was given on the greater independence of the new council, said Mrs Harpham. She suggested a greater independence was unlikely to be achieved because: —

● Four of the eight members of the council would be on the Government payroll.

● Both the Minister of National Development and the secretary to the Treasury are to be members.

● Eight members chosen as outlined in the bill could not hope to reflect the expertise and diversity of opinion in society, yet they were required to develop a programme relating to all aspects of New Zealand society, and with no constraints on the planning horizon.

Mrs Harpham said the planning council should be 12 members.

"This would allow a wider range of views to be considered and also ensure that the number able to attend any meeting was sufficient for the adequate conduct of its business," she said.

Mr Birch's suggestion of a small panel of specialists to offer advice to the council was not a suitable alternative, she said.

A small council, chosen in the manner described in the bill, would be more isolated from important sections of New Zealand opinion outside the Government from opinions inside.

Thus, independence would be most unlikely, she said.

Future group demise surprises

THE planned abolition of the Commission for the Future is particularly surprising for the timing of its announcement.

Minister for National Development Mr Bill Birch made the announcement on Friday last week, six days after election day.

The response in some quarters has been one of surprised speculation as to why a newly elected Government, still unsure then if it had a majority, should make a small statutory body the object of

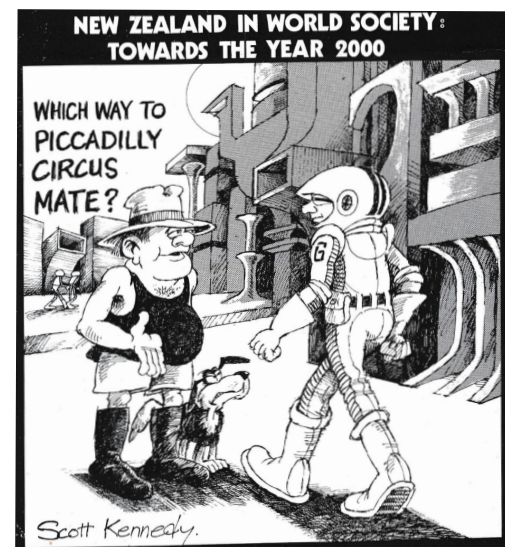


Image above: Article from New Zealand International Review 1978(4), by Peter Rankin. Artist: Scott Kennedy.

Commission may not have future

The Evening Post, April 2, 1981.

By Richard Norman

THE future of the Commission for the Future appears to be on the line.

At this stage the commission is "talking, not fighting" for its future, the chairman of the commission, Professor James Duncan, said today.

Government members who were looking at the operation of the commission had not made up their minds yet, he said.

The Minister of National Development, Mr Birch, said on Radio New Zealand this morning that he was concerned the commission was "not plugged into any assessment by the Government" of its work.

One option might be to provide some sort of link between the commission and the Planning Council, he said.

Another option which had been discussed was the handing over of much of the commission's work to universities. Members of the public might view this as "ivory towerish." If this approach were taken he would propose to found a privately funded commission.

"But I think it would be far better to have it within the government system, doing what may be an awkward job," he said.

"I see this as a major contribution to democracy."

Professor Duncan said he had very good relations with the Government. However he was critical of some of the work of the commission.

"Sometimes some of the

things have come out far too quickly, before people have had time to get used to the new ideas," he said.

A debate about armed neutrality and possible withdrawal from Anzus was perhaps overplayed, he said.

A report on alternative sources of liquid energy had perhaps not given government people much time to respond, he said.

"It takes time to educate. You can't do it in a hurry."

Some of the work had not been done with finesse, he said.

Asked why this work should not be seen as his responsibility as chairman, Professor Duncan said: "Ultimately the responsibility is mine, but you have to work with the people you have got."

Moving

The director of the commission, Commander Dick Ryan, said it was unlikely he would be with the commission through to the end of this year, because he had bought a property in the Bay of Islands and wanted to practise some of the things he had been on about in the commission.

"It's a question now of what the Government wants. The National Party set this thing up in the first place. If it's not what they want, they will restructure it."

"Personally I think future studies is a very important part of the new age we are in."

It was inevitable when putting up social and economic options that not all could concur with Government policy. If these options promoted public discussion and enabled people to make up their minds, the commission had been doing its job, he said.

A comment by the director of the London School of Economics, Ralph Dahrendorf, summed up the situation, he said.

It was that future studies would have to be a co-operative industry, because government and public servants tended to be "hermetically sealed."

"They can't afford to acknowledge that there are different paths down which they might go," Commander Ryan said.

Planning Council sees continuing useful role

By parliamentary reporter Lynne Walsh

The Evening Post, October 1982.

THE New Zealand Planning Council will continue as an effective body despite the depletion of its numbers, the reduction in its budget and its increased responsibilities.

That's the view of the new chairman of the re-constituted council, Mr Ian Douglas, following the council's first meeting last week.

The council, which was set up in 1977 to monitor trends, issues and options in relation to New Zealand's development, has been substantially altered as a result of legislation passed by Parliament last month.

The number of members appointed to the council has been reduced from 12 to six — although the total complement will be eight, as a result of the two ex-officio members, the Minister of National Development and the secretary to the Treasury, who have retained their seats under the new legislation.

The council's budget has been reduced from \$718,400 last year to \$630,000 for the coming year.

Perspectives

As a result of the abolition of the Commission for the Future, the council's responsibilities have been enlarged. Formerly the

council worked on medium-term perspectives while the commission concentrated on longer options.

The functions of the council have been revised to incorporate longer-term perspectives which used to be the responsibility of the commission.

When the legislation forming the new council was debated the Labour Opposition claimed the reduction in appointed members, combined with the reduction in budget, would lessen the independence of the council.

The Opposition also claimed the change in the function of the council — formerly it was charged with advising the Government, but under the new act it is simply to comment — was significant.

Mr Douglas rejects both claims. The new council would be as independent as the old one, he said.

"The point the Opposition was making related to the ratio of appointed members to ex-officio government members, which was formerly two to 14, and is now two to eight."

"But I don't see that as putting the council under any political pressure."

"The Government members, by my understanding, and by my admittedly limited experience of one meeting, were very careful about discussion in any area that they felt was sensitive by virtue of their position."

The ratio problem was one of perception, and would have no practical effect, he said.

Mr Douglas also disputed the Opposition claim that the functions of the council had been significantly altered.

"There's a pretty thin line between giving advice and commenting."

"I don't see it as a significant change... more as a subtle change of emphasis."

Mr Douglas believes the smaller council, which he said was the number originally recommended by the task force before the original council was set up, would allow the council to be more efficient.

There would now be fewer people to consult, and discussion around the table tended to be more expeditious with fewer people. The fewer people on the council would not mean a lowering of expertise.

Director lays blame for axe

New Zealand Times, April 18, 1982.

By ROSEMARY VINCENT Times reporter

THE Government is closing down the Commission for the Future because it can't live with ideas that differ from its own, says director Mrs Myra Harpham.

She says the commission was set up as an exercise in participatory democracy, but the wide range of policies and philosophies put forward in its reports had obviously not been what the Government expected.

"Our brief was to study possibilities for New Zealand's social and economic future, and raise public debate on issues that might be important to that future."

"We did just that," Mrs Harpham said.

"Our reports have reflected a great variety of viewpoints and values, including those of capitalists, socialists, environmentalists, and so on."

"I think the Government probably expected the future possibilities turned up would be in a very small range around its own policy. It didn't like the

publicity given to the development of options that weren't its own."

About a year ago, Minister of National Development Mr Birch had indicated the Government was finding it difficult to live with the commission, then in existence for four years. He suggested Government funding be stopped in March this year.

In December came the announcement that the commission would close once the Planning Act under which it was formed was amended. It was suggested that the Planning Council, an advisory body to the Government, could take over its work.

Since then had followed an "incredible" four months during which the winding up of the commission, a small statutory body with a budget of \$300,000 in the last financial year, had been the subject of a lot of talk and paperwork between Cabinet, senior public servants, the Planning Council, and its own members and staff.

The commission could well have taken charge of its own winding-up operations, and for a while it looked as if that might happen, Mrs Harpham said.

Then came last month's controversial nuclear disaster report, after which the winding-up process was firmly taken over by the Government.

The commission is now operating with a skeleton staff until May 12, when its funding ends. It will exist in name only after that date, until the Planning Act is amended.

Speculation in some quarters suggests a strange coincidence between the release of the nuclear disaster report and the hurry to close the commission.

Mrs Harpham says the Government could have got its own report on nuclear war, and done what it liked with it. It could have kept it quiet if it wanted to.

"But the commission went ahead and published its own report, thereby reducing the power and mystique of Government and its monopoly on information. The whole idea is there are some topics the Government thinks it's more capable of talking about than anyone else."

"It's also possible that the release of this report — which suggests there's not

much possibility of New Zealand being affected by nuclear fallout — could lead people to think about international treaties. This could make some aspects of Government more difficult."

There were other commission projects which had been badly received by the Government, she said. One was last year's Televote. The majority of people taking part in this national exercise had opted for a good quality environment and had not supported the Government's Think Big policies.

Mrs Harpham, who took up her job last June, has a background in science and teaching and many years' experience as a director of a computer consulting company.

She said as a result of Government funding ending on May 12, some commission studies currently under way could not be published unless private finance was found for them.

These included Dr George Preddy's series on disasters that could befall New Zealand (of which the nuclear disaster report was part) and a futures kit aiming to improve people's ability to make decisions in an uncertain environment.

Other subjects that could have been more fully explored included the direction education was taking, the effects of new technology, and unemployment.

Government reform was something else that could well have been looked at. Western parliamentary-type democracy was nearing its end, and it seemed that in an increasingly pluralistic society the two-party system would have to change.

Mrs Harpham said it was not unreasonable for the Government to review a statutory body like the commission after four or five years.

"But this wasn't a review, it was a unilateral decision to end it."

She said hope for future studies lay with university, industry, and other groups around the country that were starting to do these studies themselves.

Unfortunately though, these groups were doing their studies for themselves and not to provide information to the public at large.

As the Planning Council was a Government advisory body, it also seemed it would study a narrower range of future possibilities if it took over the commission's work.



MRS HARPHAM... Government didn't like publicity given to development of options that weren't its own.

CLASSIFIEDS

<i>New Zealand Planning Act 1977</i>	
5. Functions and powers of the 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 focal point for a process of consultative planning about New Zealand's medium-term development:
(e)	To foster discussion among 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 public 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 conferred or 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.
6. Membership of Council —(1) The Council shall consist of—	
(a)	Not more than 12 members to be appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister, of whom one shall be appointed as Chairman:
(b)	The Minister:
(c)	The Secretary to the Treasury.
9. Functions of Commission —(1) The general functions of the Commission shall be—	
(a)	To study the possibilities for the long-term economic and social development of New Zealand:
(b)	To make information on those possibilities available to all Members of Parliament, and to publish such information for wider dissemination:
(c)	To promote discussion on those possibilities and information relating to them:
(d)	To report to the Minister on those possibilities.
(2)	In carrying out its general functions the Commission shall—
(a)	Give special attention to the long-term implications for New Zealand of new or prospective developments in science and technology; and
(b)	Have regard to prospective trends, policies, and events in New Zealand and overseas which could have important consequences for the country's future.
(3)	The Commission shall have such other functions, powers, and duties as are conferred or imposed on it by or under this Act or any other enactment.
(4)	The Commission shall have such other powers as may be reasonably necessary to enable it to carry out its functions.
10. Membership of the Commission —(1) The Commission shall consist of—	
(a)	Not more than 7 members to be appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister, of whom one shall be appointed as Chairman:
(b)	A Minister of the Crown to be appointed by the Minister of National Development:
(c)	A Member of Parliament to be appointed by the Minister on the nomination of the Leader of the Official Opposition:
(d)	A member of the Council to be appointed by the Minister on the nomination of the Chairman of the Council:
(e)	The Director-General of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.
<i>New Zealand Planning Act 1982</i>	
21. Abolition of Commission for the Future —(1) The Commission for the Future established by section 8 of the New Zealand Planning Act 1977 is hereby abolished.	
<i>New Zealand Planning Council Dissolution Act 1991</i>	
2. Commencement of Act —The New Zealand Planning Council Dissolution Act 1991 shall come into force on the 1st day of December 1991.	
3. Dissolution of Council —As from the commencement of this Act, —	
(a)	The Council shall be dissolved; and
(b)	All real and personal property of the Council and all rights and liabilities of the Council shall vest in the Crown

COMMISSION FOR THE FUTURE: COUNCIL MEMBERS 1977–1982	
1977	
Prof James Duncan	Dr Eddie Robertson
Silvia Cartwright	Beverley Wakem
Hon Roger Douglas (Labour)	
Prof Alan Frampton	
Dr Robin Irvine	
Malcolm Latham	
Norton Moller	
Hon Hugh Templeton (National)	
Beverley Wakem	
1978	
Prof James Duncan (Chair)	
Silvia Cartwright	
Hon Roger Douglas (Labour)	
Prof Alan Frampton	
Dr Robin Irvine	
Malcom Latham	
Dr Eddie Robertson	
Hon Hugh Templeton (National)	
Beverley Wakem	
1979	
Prof James Duncan (Chair)	
Silvia Cartwright	
Hon Roger Douglas (Labour)	
Prof Alan Frampton	
Dr Robin Irvine	
Malcolm Latham	
Dr Eddie Robertson	
Hon Hugh Templeton (National)	
Beverley Wakem	
1980	
Prof James Duncan (Chair)	
Silvia Cartwright	
Hon Warren Cooper (National)	
Hon Roger Douglas (Labour)	
Heather Little	
Norton Moller	

1978	
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1979	
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Duncan, J. F.	
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1981	
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of National Development, ex officio) (National)	
Bernard Galvin (Secretary to the Treasury, ex officio)	
1984	
I. G. Douglas (Chair)	
Prof C. A. Blyth (Deputy Chair)	
John Clarke	
Alf Kirk	
Peggy Koopman-Boyden	
Kerrin Vautier	
Hon Bill Birch (Minister of National Development, ex officio) (National)	
Bernard Galvin (Secretary to the Treasury, ex officio)	
1985	
I. G. Douglas (Chair)	
Peggy Koopman-Boyden (Deputy Chair)	
Prof Gary Hawke	
John Clarke	
Alf Kirk	
Kerrin Vautier	
Hon D.F. Caygill (Minister of National Development, ex officio) (Labour)	
Bernard Galvin (Secretary to the Treasury, ex officio)	
1986	
I. G. Douglas (Chair)	
Peggy Koopman-Boyden (Deputy Chair)	
Judith Reid	
Dr John Hayward	
Prof Gary Hawke	
Hon D. F. Caygill (Minister of National Development, ex officio) (Labour)	
Bernard Galvin (Secretary to the Treasury, ex officio)	
1987	
Prof Gary Hawke (Chair)	
Peggy Koopman-Boyden (Deputy Chair)	
Dr John Hayward	
Robert Mahuta	
Judith Reid	
Hon D. F. Caygill (Minister of National Development, ex officio) (Labour)	
1988	
Prof Gary Hawke (Chair)	
Peggy Koopman-Boyden (Deputy Chair)	
Dr Dick Bedford	
Marion Bruce	
James Crichton	
Dr John Hayward	
Dr Allan Levett	
Robert Mahuta	
Prof Anthony Rayner	
Judith Reid	
Margaret Tapper	
Hon D. F. Caygill (Minister Nominated by the Prime Minister, ex officio) (Labour)	
1989	
Prof Gary Hawke (Chair)	
Dr John Hayward	
Robert Mahuta	
James Crichton	
Dr Allan Levett	
Prof Anthony Rayner	
Margaret Tapper	
Dr Dick Bedford	
Jill Holt	
Michael Cullen (Minister Nominated by the Prime Minister, ex officio) (Labour)	
1990	
Prof Gary Hawke (Chair)	
Jill Holt (Deputy Chair)	
Dr Dick Bedford	
James Crichton	
Dr John Hayward	
Dr Allan Levett	
Robert Mahuta	
Linda Smith	
Margaret Tapper	
Hon Phillip Burdon (National)	
Chief Executives	
1977–1980 Ken Piddington	
1980–1981 John Martin	
1981–1982 Graeme Ansell	
1982–1990 Peter Rankin	
1990–1991 Bret Lineham	
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1978	
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1979	
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1980	
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1982	
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1983	
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1984	
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<i>The Government Deficit and the Economy</i> , Blyth, C. A., Hawke, G. R. and Smythe, D. E.	
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1985	
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<i>Employment and the Economy</i> , Rose, D.	
<i>Self Employment and Small Business</i> , Dwyer, M., Rose, D. and Sowman, R.	
<i>Young People, Education and Employment</i> , Catherwood, V.	
<i>The Foreign Exchange Market</i> , Hawke, G. R., Blyth, C. A. and Smythe, D. E.	
<i>From Birth to Death</i> , Koopman-Boyden, P., Scott, D., Abbott, M., Brown, P., Chetwynd, J., Haigh, D. and Williams, A.	
<i>The Regulated Economy</i> , Schmitt, G. J., Hawke, G. R., Low, A. and Ross, B. J.	
<i>Is Farm Support the Answer? A Policy Backgrounder</i> , Rankin, P. J. and Woods, N. R.	
<i>The New Zealand Population: Trends and Their Policy Implications, 1985</i> , Douglas, I., Bedford, R., Farmer, R., Khawaja, M., Lowe, J., O'Neill, J., Pool, I. and Poot, J.	
1986	
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<i>Labour Market Flexibility</i> , Schmitt, G. J., Hawke, G. R., Low, A. and Ross, B. J.	
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<i>Income Support for Young People</i> , Ferguson, D.	
<i>Voluntary Social Services: A Review of Funding</i> , Driver, S. and Robinson, D.	
<i>Economic Modelling in New Zealand – Proceedings of a Seminar</i> , Silverstone, B. and Wells, G.	
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5. Functions and powers of the 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 focal point for a process of consultative planning about New Zealand's medium-term development: (e) To foster discussion among 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 public 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 conferred or 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.	
6. Membership of Council —(1) The Council shall consist of— (a) Not more than 12 members to be appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister, of whom one shall be appointed as Chairman: (b) The Minister: (c) The Secretary to the Treasury.	
9. Functions of Commission —(1) The general functions of the Commission shall be— (a) To study the possibilities for the long-term economic and social development of New Zealand: (b) To make information on those possibilities available to all Members of Parliament, and to publish such information for wider dissemination: (c) To promote discussion on those possibilities and information relating to them: (d) To report to the Minister on those possibilities. (2) In carrying out its general functions the Commission shall— (a) Give special attention to the long-term implications for New Zealand of new or prospective developments in science and technology; and (b) Have regard to prospective trends, policies, and events in New Zealand and overseas which could have important consequences for the country's future. (3) The Commission shall have such other functions, powers, and duties as are conferred or imposed on it by or under this Act or any other enactment. (4) The Commission shall have such other powers as may be reasonably necessary to enable it to carry out its functions.	
10. Membership of the Commission —(1) The Commission shall consist of— (a) Not more than 7 members to be appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister, of whom one shall be appointed as Chairman: (b) A Minister of the Crown to be appointed by the Minister of National Development: (c) A Member of Parliament to be appointed by the Minister on the nomination of the Leader of the Official Opposition: (d) A member of the Council to be appointed by the Minister on the nomination of the Chairman of the Council: (e) The Director-General of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.	
<i>New Zealand Planning Act 1982</i>	
21. Abolition of Commission for the Future —(1) The Commission for the Future established by section 8 of the New Zealand Planning Act 1977 is hereby abolished.	
<i>New Zealand Planning Council Dissolution Act 1991</i>	
2. Commencement of Act —The New Zealand Planning Council Dissolution Act 1991 shall come into force on the 1st day of December 1991.	
3. Dissolution of Council — As from the commencement of this Act, — (a) The Council shall be dissolved; and (b) All real and personal property of the Council and all rights and liabilities of the Council shall vest in the Crown	

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