

Educational research and higher education

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ABSTRACT

My task is to attempt to make a case for a certain type of research in Higher Education without committing the sins of *ex cathedra* preaching, or the indignity of speaking for others. First I outline the background to the proposal - essentially the approaches to, and changes in, educational research which have been evident in Auckland University's Department of Education, and the changes we have undergone, or are undergoing in education in New Zealand. Second, in relation to the universities, I indicate what we might have learned and heeded from the attacks upon the British Universities in the 1980s. Finally, I make some suggestions for the approach to the type of research which we will need in the future, I believe, as protection against further similarly ill-informed and ideological attacks upon the universities.

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Tihei mauri ora

Taku whanau - Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau

Nga mana - nga waka

Tena koutou katoa

Ko koutou - ko ahau

Ko ahau - ko kotou

Kia ora

According to the British historian, Brian Simon¹, the origin and development of the inaugural lecture is far from clear. But that was not the only problem:

Nor has it always been an honoured one at Oxford and Cambridge ... professors quite often feeling that they had done what was required of them, were never seen again in a lecture hall.

Furthermore:

the inaugural lecturer is endowed with an extraordinary privilege; he(sic) may hold forth, *ex cathedra*, to a captive audience, forbidden by custom to question or barrack - a situation the average teacher can hardly hope to enjoy Clearly the temptations are great.

I have little doubt that you will inform me later if I have succumbed to either of these temptations!



Brian Simon's inaugural lecture is to be found in a collection of such lectures by educationalists which, if they do not fall into the *ex cathedra* category, present arguments for certain approaches and certain priorities in education, based upon the particular professor's interests and theoretical stance. Such prescriptions need not fall into the *ex cathedra* class but they do exemplify the traditional intellectual's totalising stance. Certain people - intellectuals or theorists - know what is best for us as individuals or as a society or state, and it is their role to articulate this 'truth' to us. This has been a traditional role of intellectuals - e.g., from Voltaire to Sartre. However there is a certain indignity, I believe, in trying to speak for others, be they oppressed groups (well known by Maori in New Zealand), or my colleagues within the university.

Therefore my task this evening is to attempt to make a case for a certain type of research in Higher Education without committing the sins of *ex cathedra* preaching, or the indignity of speaking for others. First I outline the background to the proposal - essentially the approaches to, and changes in, educational research which have been evident in Auckland University's Department of Education, and the changes we have undergone, or are undergoing in education in New Zealand. Second, in relation to the universities, I indicate what we might have learned and heeded from the attacks upon the British Universities in the 1980s. Finally, I make some suggestions for the approach to the type of research which we will need in the future, I believe, as protection against further similarly ill-informed and ideological attacks upon the universities.

Educational Research

What counts as research is a fiercely contested issue at present in the tertiary sector of education. What counts as educational research, or important or "real" educational research ' has bedeviled education for several decades. It has caused fierce debate and filled numerous pages of international journals. I do not intend this evening to add to that list of navel gazing which has attempted to settle the issue, *a priori*, by appeals to such things as scientific methodology. Instead I will look at the type of research which education departments have traditionally undertaken and the new concerns which have arisen in this University's Department of Education.

The history of education departments in New Zealand universities is quite unique. Unlike their counterparts in British and North American Universities they have been formally divorced from the professional preparation of teachers. That was not always the case but the "formal" separation of the training colleges and the universities in the 1920s was, I believe, a tragic mistake. Departments of education in the universities, potentially an important pivot between the liberal education of teachers and their professional induction, became part of the liberal arts/ social science offerings of the universities.

The major consequences of this separation for the practice of education were:

1. a formal separation between the theory and the practice of education;
2. little formal input by the universities into the selection of teachers and college of education curricula;
3. a mismatch in normative theory, or philosophy of education, between theoreticians and practitioners, and between the universities and the State Department of education; and finally,
4. the unintended, but effective, relegation of the university departments to advisory and service roles to educational practice.

It is the last point which is my first concern this evening because it influenced the direction and the research methodology which this Department in the main took. In the 1930s the application of normative theory about the education of the whole child and the placing of the individual child at the centre of educational practice, required knowledge about individual children and the ways in which individual children learned. This knowledge was to be obtained essentially through educational psychology and those normative theories, supported by the individualist social policy

of equality of opportunity and mono-cultural assimilationist policies for Maori, drove our research agenda. But it was driven from outside. When I came to Auckland in 1973 I was one of three of the fifteen members of academic staff in the Department of Education who either could not or would not teach in the general area of educational psychology.

This research agenda has made, and continues to make, major contributions to the practice of education in New Zealand. You are probably more familiar with the work of my distinguished predecessor, Professor Dame Marie Clay, but I would refer you also to the calendars of the University and thereby my colleagues and former colleagues each of whom has made similarly valuable contributions to the practice of education.

By 1987 this research agenda had been supplemented considerably, and particularly in the areas of research which look critically at the relationships between schools and society and what schools do, as opposed to what they profess to do. All of this research challenged the normative redemptive theories upon which educational practices had been based. I choose the date of 1987 because in that year a Policy Studies Group was formed within the Department, and it was this group which was to adopt the educational journal *Access* and devote the 1988 volume to a critical critique of the proposed 'reforms' for New Zealand schools. The research agenda of this group is concerned with critical approaches to normative educational theories in the areas of race, gender and class. This research has been particularly assisted by the University's support in appointing two Senior Lecturers in Maori Education.

I am not saying that before 1987 research in the Department had been undertaken uncritically. But I am saying that in the main it had been undertaken within the general parameters of what my colleague Professor Roger Dale in his inaugural lecture called the redemptive framework of the Enlightenment, the belief that education could cure our social ills and improve individuals and society, so that it was a question of education being an important means to those ends. The general ends themselves were seldom in question. This type of research is technically oriented, and tends to produce a split within the individual theorist or researcher, so that the theorist or researcher comes to regard social and political reality as extrinsic to the production of the technical products. If interest is expressed in social and political concerns it tends from this viewpoint to be through membership or affiliation to groups, parties or service organisations, but without the unification of these two types of activities.

Nor am I saying that this technical research activity is not important. I would stress its crucial importance for it is fundamental to our survival. But I would also deny that it sets the standards for all research or that the knowledge generated is the only kind of legitimate knowledge. Nor is this form of research merely technical as a total world view is presupposed.

I am saying that knowledge and interests must be connected. It is the explicit affirmation of the connection of knowledge and interests that makes theory critical, rather than technical. It is an essentially practical interest in the ability of human beings to consciously and actively determine their own ways of life that guides critical theory. And this practical interest must not rest at the level of intellectual criticism but must involve practice.

Finally I am not saying that the traditional research based agendas that feature in our department cannot themselves also become critical. Recent work in psychology, for example the very questioning of the notion of the developing child, illustrates this possibility.

It is this broad two pronged and critical research agenda which is now progressing through the Department and which will, I hope, characterise our teaching and research output in the future. It is this broad agenda too which we will bring to our teaching in the new B.Ed. Degree. This degree, apart from the obvious professional benefits for teachers, will I hope help to address those first three areas of concern which I raised above, namely the improper divorces between theory and practice of education.

What we do not have within this policy studies group is a person whose specialist focus is tertiary education. Herein lies a tale - worthy now of development.

Background to the Tertiary Reforms

In New Zealand we are undergoing unprecedented change in education. A university Department, School or Faculty of Education should be in a unique position to comment on this change.² One would hope that it would also be able to participate in such changes.³ But unfortunately any such participation has been of a limited nature. There are a number of reasons for this.

First, to date, the changes have mainly taken place outside the tertiary sector. However changes in the tertiary sector have been proposed and implementation through legislation is imminent. Whilst the universities will be part of these changes, it can hardly be said that we have participated in the initiation and planning of them. Rather we have been forced, for a number of reasons, to react to proposals imposed from without, essentially by Treasury, whose intellectual inspirations seem to be neo-liberal, individualist economists. Our 'participation' prior to the first version of the Education Amendment Bill was more like that of the guilty person ascending the scaffold to a planned execution. I am not of course saying that we have not struggled. There has been a probing defence at the 'trials', denunciations from the scaffold, and at the time of writing this lecture, if the death sentence has been commuted, the long term ideological struggle may have been lost. In my view we were not as well prepared for that struggle as we might have been, and we did not read the warning signs early enough.

Second, the traditional preserve of University autonomy, might be seen as the main example of what Treasury was to refer to as capture in education.⁴

This notion was developed elsewhere and is perhaps another of the ideas grasped by Treasury which, according to the economist Brian Easton⁵, were not critically assessed. The claim that is of particular interest is that the providers of education have captured resources to further their own interests, thereby acting against the interests of the consumers - students and parents. Salaries, research and efforts are directed towards the development of ideas and provider support services rather than at the teaching learning interface. In spite of the fact that there is little evidence for any such claim⁶ it has surfaced in the reform literature and, more recently, in the paper commissioned by The Business Round Table and prepared by Stuart Sexton of the British based Institute of Economic Affairs.⁷

Third, and for a number of reasons, all sectors in education had seemed resistant to change. For example the time from conception to execution of change in New Zealand education has been notoriously long. Arguably the process from conception to implementation of the social studies syllabus in New Zealand schools took thirty five years. Rear guard actions against this syllabus particularly by historians (and rightly in my opinion) had prolonged the implementation of this change. More recently considerable discussion has taken place on the reform of the curriculum for schools but few concrete prescriptions have emerged. For whatever reasons then Government was in a hurry and did not seem to welcome either consultation or participation by the affected parties in education.

Fourth, the proposed changes in education have been presented as substantive reforms in education. Assertions to the effect that our education system was inefficient, failing in a variety of areas (quality, basics and preparation for the world of work) and failing to address issues in the areas of gender, class and ethnicity, were advanced as reasons for change. Ironically these arguments came from all sides of the political spectrum. There is little evidence on the quality, and preparation for the world of work issues to support these claims - indeed if anything the evidence suggests the opposite. On the equality issues the case is clearly established. But whether educational institutions alone should be held responsible for those failures is far from clear.

These changes have been represented as administrative changes, masking in their language the ideological underpinnings particularly the economic theories of the 'new right' concerning choice and the operation of the free market. As the traditional guarantor of truth and disseminator of knowledge the universities did not appear to grasp the realities of the power/knowledge nexus so that Government at a particular point in time was able to assert 'truths' about education. Not only lay people but also teachers accepted these changes as reforms. Allegedly unable to put our house in order on these issues we were ignored and excluded from the original proposals.

In my view the universities were not as well placed initially as they might have been either to defend themselves in this struggle or to take the initiative. There may be many reasons for this but I wish to look at three which are, I believe, relevant to the case that I am making for a particular type of research in Higher Education.

First, in the universities, we have not been particularly reflective upon our activities. By this I do not mean that we have not given thought to our teaching, research and institutional structures. do not mean that we have not thought about equality and access to the University, for we have. As results of these deliberations we can point to advances, e.g. in the areas of Women's Studies, Labour Relations and Maori Education. Some might object that these are too little and too late. Whether that is the case is not of concern here: my point is that we have been able to think about these issues and act constructively.

What I am trying to say can best be illustrated by my own example. As a person employed to teach and research in philosophy of education my original efforts were directed at exploring the paradigm of philosophy of education formulated, in the main, by the British philosopher R.S. Peters.⁸ But the sort of reflective activity which I did not engage in for some time was to turn back upon my position, and the position of the universities in which I worked, to reflect upon the world view that this paradigm served and to apply this paradigm reflexively to my own work conditions. I was too busy working within the paradigm to be able to articulate whose interests were being served by this scholarly immersion.

When I did take this turn it was, uniting knowledge and interests, to move towards critical theory. But it was to rest at the level of intellectual criticism, and not engage in the practice, until I worked on a decision making procedure with the Public Service and, more recently, worked as a privileged member of Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau.

It is this general form of reflective and reflexive activity that we are not as good at in the universities as we might be.

Second, within the Western world, and perhaps continuing in the vein of the Enlightenment, there has been the notion of the development and improvement of humanity through the development of reason. Inured in the almost continual expansion of the universities since the 1960s the development of rationally autonomous individuals, free from the authority and dogmas of others, seemed only to be just around the corner. Here the universities occupied a key role in the search for knowledge, particularly in developing knowledge of this rationally autonomous person through the burgeoning social sciences and through the liberal arts. What was forgotten or ignored was that this knowledge was itself the outcome of certain power plays. The universities did not expand just in the thirst for knowledge but rather from a thirst to power. Knowledge did not develop autonomously but because it was needed. And what is needed now is a new kind of knowledge and a new kind of person - adaptive rather than autonomous and trained rather than educated.

Third if we were aware of changes in the British Universities we did not seem to believe that this could happen to us. Gloomy leave reports from our colleagues, British newspapers, and the Times Educational Supplements were available to us. But why did we not act? Why were we lulled into inactivity until it was almost too late?

Two reasons occur to me. First, in the 1980s we have become more conscious of ourselves as a nation in the South Pacific, as having a unique identity and future not necessarily dependent upon

European values and the English language in particular. If this has been a long and tortuous path, it is I believe capable of further realisation. Second, the 1980s has been a period of Labour government. If the first term of their administration adhered to some expectations: especially their avowed social concerns their redefinition of the role of government and the relationship between individual and the state, leading now to these educational reforms, has not. But in the mid 1980s when we should have been preparing to fight against what can only be seen as a move towards privatisation of education in New Zealand, there seemed to be little cause for alarm. We were culturally unique, if still a little unsure as to what this meant (for Pakeha anyway), and politically and geographically far from Thatcherism.

The British Experience

What might we have learned from the British Experience?⁹ The attack which was launched in 1981 on the British Universities was ostensibly about cuts in expenditure. In spite of the claims of the junior minister responsible for higher education, William Waldegrave, that policy on this matter had no ideological intent and that it was derived simply from the need to cut public expenditure, this was clearly not the case. Yet as Rhodes Boyson, Waldegrave's predecessor and contributor to the notorious Black Papers had seen, there could be positive 'benefits' from such cuts, even if the cuts were predicated simply on economic grounds and in considerable ignorance of their effects. It was soon apparent that it was to be 'an open season of political fantasy'.

Under the guise of excellence, the University Grants Committee administered the cuts in ways which clearly indicated that excellence existed essentially in the areas of science and technology. Sir Keith Joseph as Minister of Education pursued the social sciences relentlessly and devoted a great deal of time to attempts to convert higher education into part of the market economy, and in attempts to persuade the universities to join him 'in a monetarist's play school'. It was clear that the liberal academic objectives set by the Robbins Committee in 1963, and adopted by the then Conservative government, had been rejected.

The rejection of this liberal policy can be identified in various ways. First the imposition of full fees upon foreign students represented a new policy of little Englandism. Second, the cuts were used as a culling process in the areas of the humanities and social sciences and money was subsequently made available for research posts in the areas of research favoured - e.g., in such areas as operations research and biochemical genetics. The restoration of this money for favoured areas indicates that the cuts were not purely led by expenditure problems. Third, there was a restructuring of the boundaries between the Polytechnics and the Universities. In controlling entry to the Universities by pressing for higher entrance standards not only were the hopes and aspirations of entering the universities dashed for even more people than before, but also in not controlling admission to the polytechnics and in imposing cuts upon them, many students who would have obtained second class degrees in the universities were consigned to academically different institutions. The rights of the universities to accept those people whom they thought could be enhanced was withdrawn, and narrow academism replaced wider social notions of the renewal of opportunity and the recruitment of a wide range of students. There were attacks on tenure, amalgamations of small institutions in the public sector, though not in the case of the private sector where the University College of Buckingham received its charter and assurances from Government that students would be eligible for local authority grants. Cuts in staff and attacks on tenure led to the need for new appointments to ensure continuity.

The whole episode exhibits the Thatcher government's lack of faith in public institutions. Whereas traditionally Conservative administrations saw the need for public institutions to provide coherence in society, Thatcher's government believed in the power of the market to advance the economy and to provide the incentives which, if they were to keep people happy were also to keep them productive and controlled. Here the British philosopher Richard Norman¹⁰ identified the new

right economist F.A. Hayek as the intellectual inspiration of the Thatcher administration. It is important, as he may also have influenced New Zealand Treasury, to briefly consider his views, particularly those on education.

Hayek¹¹ argues from a fiercely individualistic position which descends, he claims, from John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith and Edmund Burke. He believes in the maximising of individual consumer choice in the free market economy, for only such an economy can guarantee individual rights and political liberties. For Hayek freedom (in the negative sense of 'freedom from') is the most fundamental of these rights. The only role for the state is that of maximising and protecting the operation of the free market. This minimal role for the state is argued also by Robert Nozick¹², but with different assumptions from Hayek.

This version of individualism is contrasted by Hayek with what he calls rationalistic or collective individualism which, he claims, always tends to develop into the opposite of 'true' individualism, namely socialism or collectivism.

True individualism is said to be primarily 'an attempt to understand the forces which determine the social life of man (sic)'. These forces are those which direct the behaviour of individual actions towards other people. True individualism is directed against collectivist notions of individualism which posit some directing mind or rational general will. Instead social relations and institutions arise as unintended effects from individual actions. The fundamental difference between Hayek's true individualism and collective individualism is that order is established in the former by the unforeseen results of individual actions in the free market, whereas in the latter, social order is traceable to deliberate human design. In the former case the place which reason plays in human affairs is rated rather lowly. Man is only partly guided by reason which, in individuals, is very limited and imperfect. Indeed, according to Hayek, there is an 'exaggerated belief in the powers of human reason ... if left free, men will often achieve more than individual human reason could design or foresee'.

There is little doubt that Hayek is advancing a social and an economic theory in which, he states explicitly, the notion of social justice is vacuous. This theory cannot be treated then as purely economic and hived off with some other social theory in which there are full blown notions of social justice added on (as perhaps in Picot and Tomorrow's Schools). If this type of theory has attractions for some its social and educational implications are, I believe, disastrous.

When he talks of education it is not surprising therefore that 'there is a need for certain common standards of values' because 'general education is not solely, and perhaps not even mainly, a matter of communicating knowledge'¹³. Indeed if 'all education must be and ought to be guided by definite values' (loc. cit.) then it is clear that these immersion processes will be non-rational. It would seem therefore that we are faced with an authoritarian approach to education, with both the knowledge component and the transmission of values controlled by non-rational factors, but which are essentially authoritarian, mono-cultural and assimilationist.

Further Hayek questions the amount of education which people should receive. He seriously questions whether it is necessary to make available to all the 'best knowledge which some possess' (ibid.), arguing that there is not much reason to believe that if it were, then a better society would be the outcome. However without notions such as social justice, which is for him a meaningless term, it is difficult to know what he means by a better society. The best knowledge should only be given to a few - those required by market forces. He is 'concerned' by the problems of Western Europe caused by 'having more intellectuals than we can profitably employ'. Furthermore, 'the existence of an intellectual proletariat who find no outlet for their learning is a great danger to political stability'. Clearly the notion of an education to the best of one's ability, regardless of race, gender, class and disability, is discounted by Hayek.

Norman's suggestion that Hayek is an intellectual inspiration for Thatcherism, does not seem to be far from the mark, as we can note certain parallels between the ideas of Hayek and the attack on higher education in Great Britain:

1. clearly the Thatcher government is committed to a market style social theory where, as in Hayek, social benefits follow from maximising market operations;
2. the abandonment of faith in institutions as part of Government's policing of the population - the move to the minimal state;
3. the absence of planning associated with the cuts almost presupposes a Hayekian notion of the benefits of the free market;
4. the alignment of research and higher education behind the market, to get the market 'right';
5. the 'driving' of research through Government views on usefulness, and Government's power therefore to determine what counts as knowledge;
6. the clear policy of education being no longer available to all for personal development to the upper level of ability;
7. an entirely instrumental view of education which bodes ill for the social sciences and the liberal arts.
8. a detestation for collective individualism, certainly for socialistic versions of it, and thereby no perceived need to consult with academics;
9. finally on equality we can note the similarities in the following quotations. First Hayek¹⁴:

From the fact that people are very different it follows that, if we treat them equally, the result must be inequality ... the equality before the law which freedom requires leads to material inequality ... The desire of making people more alike in their condition cannot be accepted in a free society as a justification for further and discriminatory coercion.

Compare this with a statement by Sir Keith Joseph, former Minister of Education and Science in the Thatcher government¹⁵:

That the pursuit of equality has in practice led to inequality and tyranny is not mere accident. It is the direct result of contradictions which are inherent in the very concept of equality. Egalitarians rely for the achievement of their objects on the coercive power of the State, as they are bound to do by the very nature of the human material with which they deal. A society in which the choices fundamental to human existence are determined by coercion is not a free society. It follows irresistibly that egalitarians must choose between liberty and equality.

The Reforms in Education

A recent TVNZ/Heylen poll (May 10, 1990) revealed that most New Zealanders disapprove of the Government's educational 'reforms'. These alleged reforms have been described further by TVNZ as the silent killer of the Fourth Labour Government. Of particular concern to the Universities has been the Education Amendment Bill. This Bill has been opposed on a number of issues but we should note here the original proposals concerning: the raising of student fees; the new powers of entry and review; the abolition of the University Grants committee; the powers of Government in relation to charters and councils; the attacks on university teachers through a number of proposals but in particular the marginalisation of senates.

It hardly needs adding that these represent an attack upon the traditional notions of academic freedom and institutional autonomy which, it might be said, characterise the special nature of the

university, not merely as a unique teaching and research institution, but also as Bertrand Russell¹⁶ reminded us, its unique function as conscience and critic of society.

The bill has already been attacked within these walls¹⁷ and there is little need to repeat these criticisms. What I wish to do is to site these proposals into the Thatcherism and new right economic and social theory identified above.

The reforms proposed for the universities are but a direct consequence of the general restructuring of the public sector in New Zealand. Underlying the concern for improved public sector accountability is an instrumental economic rationality exemplified in the now dominant belief in the use of market forces to induce greater efficiency. Whereas complete privatisation of education is, at present, politically unfeasible we have instead a simulation of the market philosophy which involves a form of decentralisation and devolution of responsibilities to the individual institutions. This is not as marked or as clear in the case of the universities as it is in the other sectors. We should note that the Bill incorporates many of the features of the core reforms of the public sector.¹⁸ These are:

1. greater responsibilities for departmental heads or chief executive officer, coupled with greater rewards and penalties;
2. relaxation of input controls;
3. emphasis on the specification of outputs;
4. information systems to help assess performance.

Underlying these elements are three theoretical sources; principal agency theory; public choice theory; and a theory of contracting. These theoretical aspects are needed to ensure Ministerial control, the application of the theory of market exchange to all processes of voluntary agreement, and the control of institutions through the measurement of outputs - performance indicators.

It is within this theoretical policy context that the Bill must be seen.¹⁹ But less theoretically how do the proposed university reforms measure up with the British experience? I will consider this under each of the nine identified parallels between Thatcherism and the ideas of Hayek identified in Section I.

(1) The market style social theory. The fourth Labour Government has avowed commitments to equity and other social concerns, even if its programme of economic reform has been clearly influenced by 'unfriendly' economic thinking. In Hayek's views social theory is not to be understood independently of the economic theory, yet this has appeared to be the government's strategy. Thus equity issues, and their enforcement through charters and E.R.O. seemed to indicate a positive stand on matters concerning social justice.

However the Lough Report, *Today's Schools*,²⁰ seems to undermine earlier comments on the achievement of equity considerations. ERO has been substantially dismantled to be replaced by a complex reporting system (more performance indicators), and the concept of equity appears to have been replaced by that of equal access to education. This bodes ill for equality.

(2) The Absence of Planning. This hardly needs commenting upon as the very haste in which the reforms have been pushed through, with little or no idea of what the effects would be upon education, surely indicates that the commitment was ideological. ...the savings reported by Mr Gott²¹ of 17 million as a result of restructuring the schools is little in a budget of some 4 billion dollars. Already more than that amount has been 'drip fed' into the system to cure anomalies and deficiencies. Budget issues do not seem to have been the concern as such a small amount of money could have been pruned quite easily.²²

(3) Education for All. Here this government's stance is not clear, even if it has hiked fees for students. Proposals in *Today's Schools*, for example, to introduce international exams - to monitor

our performance internationally - certainly presage the reassertion of a mono-cultural bias which must lead to problems of access to the universities.

(4) and (6) The Alignment of Government and Research. The collapsing of the concepts of 'education' and 'training', and 'research' and 'activity learning', that permeate the tertiary reform literature, and the assertion of government control of curricula in the national interest, do not bode well. This is presented as an area of contestation in line with free market objectives, but the potential for research monies to be directed away from the universities and into politically acceptable research elsewhere exists. This might be seen merely as making more explicit the connections between research and its 'market' and, as corollary, that the universities were complaining at losing part of their funding basis

(5) Institutions. There is little doubt that at the end of the day in these reforms, far from devolution of power and responsibilities we will have witnessed a considerable centralisation of power, through charters, the control agencies, and the control of inputs and outputs to the tertiary sector. We do not seem to be trusted.

(7) Consultation. The point has already been made that there has been little consultation with the universities. We have been forced to react and respond to proposals formulated elsewhere, and certainly not in any democratic joint formulation of new policy. As economist Brian Easton noted the reforms are an attack upon democracy.²³

(8) Instrumental View of Education. This point hardly needs to be made either, given the discussion above. Max Weber said of instrumental rationality that it was an iron cage:²⁴

No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or whether there will be a rebirth of ideas and ideals, or if neither, mechanised putrefaction, embellished with a sort of compulsive self-importance. For of the last stage of this cultural development it might well be truly said: 'specialists without spirit, sensualities without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilisation never before achieved'.

(9) Equality. We have already noted what Hayek and Joseph think of equality. Certainly in their thinking freedom must have priority over equality. However it would seem that our reforms are still concerned with promoting equality in some sense of the term.

In the reform literature the term first used was 'equity'. This notion surfaced earlier in New Zealand in Working Paper II for the Educational Development Conference (1973). In more recent literature it has been used as if it is different to equality of opportunity, in other cases as if it is not. Certainly one use seemed to hold that equity must not just be concerned with opportunity but it must also be associated with outcomes. In *Today's Schools*, however, 'equity' is dropped and is replaced in the reassertion of Government Policy as equal access to education. If this is now Government policy it represents a considerable shift, because equal access is very different from equality of opportunity and equality of outcome.

Today's Schools is dated April 1990. An earlier document which surfaced in New Zealand in February 1990 is the Sexton Report. This report was by Stuart Sexton of the (British) Institute of Economic Affairs for the New Zealand Business Round Table. Several of the ideas in Sexton are to be found later in *Today's Schools*; as examples, the proposals to free up charters the renegotiation of the roles of Boards of Trustees and Principals, the reduction of ERO, the reshuffling of the Ministry to get it out of operations, the Implementation Task Force and control of New Zealand standards by national and international exams. Apart from sustained attacks upon any notion that we have a unique South Pacific identity, attacks upon Maori and Maori language and a general notion of recolonization of New Zealand by business concerns and English as the language of instruction, Sexton has this to say on equality.²⁵

This requirement in the schools' charter for 'equitable outcome' is extremely dangerous and should be ignored.

And:

Let us just resolve to give every New Zealand child the equal opportunity to finish up unequal, according to that child's diligence, aptitudes and abilities (p. 76).

The response of the Vice Chancellor's Committee (Newsletter, May 1990) and the universities to the Education Amendment Bill has been to argue that it fails to implement faithfully policy announcements in Learning for Life II, severely erodes the autonomy and freedom of the universities, imposes a bureaucratic regime of monitoring in the name of accountability and blurs The distinctions between tertiary institutions particularly with regard to the notion of research. There are no doubt a host of departures from earlier policy statements (as indeed there are major differences in the policies expressed in Picot, Tomorrow's Schools and Today's Schools) as the Labour Government has dithered over its role in the provision of welfare and education in particular. What can be seen as a move towards privatisation in Picot, is reversed by the Education Bill of 1989, only to be reasserted in Today's Schools. This is exemplified in Today's Schools by the erosion of the potential ability of ERO to monitor equity considerations, and the further withdrawal of Government from the implementation of government policy. No longer will there be the close supervision of day to day operations in the schools. Explicit centralised day to day supervision is being replaced by consumer choice, competition and the self managing school. But centralised control will still be exerted through a very complex system of reporting and external national and international exams. Schools will be able to purchase services and advice in these matters, formerly given by Departmental Officers, as money will be released to the schools for these purposes.

At the time of writing the outcomes from the Select Committee hearing on the Education Amendment Bill and of the changes reported by the chairperson are not clear. Whereas some see these as something of a victory for the universities, others may not.

My major concerns remain over the direct controls by the Ministry through a refusal to reinstate something like the University Grants Committee, and the potential control of research, qualifications, entry standards and curricula. If it is not clear how all of these changes will affect the universities, what is certain is that the increases in retention and credentials in other sectors must make it more difficult for the universities to meet their expressed goals of better access for disadvantaged groups to the universities.

In the short and long term we should not expect these pressures on the universities to be relaxed. If we are to learn from what has happened in the other sectors we should expect something like the Lough Report, to assess the implementation of the 'reforms', followed by quiet orders in Council in the name of fine tuning, but to make whatever changes are required.

Conclusion

The conclusion which I wish to draw is that we could have been better prepared if we had had a researcher in higher education engaged in a certain type of research. My task is now to spell out what is involved in this type of research.

First it might be suggested that there exists already in the University a Higher Education Research Office and that research into higher education policy would be an appropriate task for that office and its officers. That indeed might turn out to be the case but I would not wish to preclude other possibilities. HERO in this University has provided a valuable service. HERO has assisted the University very considerably in its planning, by the production of important data, and in its teaching and learning by support and evaluation services. Furthermore, it has been able to identify and comment upon social trends in the University. However, what has happened in general has not been involvement in critical policy analysis and development but, rather, in the general and important service role already identified.



What we have identified above are policies directed at higher education - in the U.K. and in New Zealand. Those policies, as we have seen, are sometimes implicit, but where stated clearly so that their ideological status and potential are clear then it appears they are for 'limited' audiences, as e.g. in the Sexton Report. It requires some skill and knowledge to identify these policies, and to separate them from the surface grammar in which they may be presented. For example Picot carries the word 'administering' in its title, and much of the body of the report talks about administration, but it is deeply ideological, based upon something like Hayek's economic (and social) theories. It takes time and effort to locate such documents into the wider areas of policy where interests and power relationships can be identified.

This location requires an examination of received definitions of the problem(s), the identification of the problem in wider existing or proposed policy contexts, the tracing of the history of 'the problem' in official discourses, and the identifying of enabling or disabling structures through investigation of the wider social, political and economic contexts. In this way considerable reformulation of 'the problem' may occur. For example, I believe that the problem for the 'reforms' is not that of the reform of educational administration in times of economic stringencies, but rather how best to move towards self regulating educational institutions, and thereby to lay the groundwork for privatisation.

The research required does not fall into what has come to be called policy analysis for, in general, that tends to be ideologically driven. But it does require people with sound knowledge and understanding of social, political and economic theory, particularly those aspects which fall under the general notion of critical theory and a sound grasp of the problems in the western world caused by the advance of Weber's iron cage.

For us in the South Pacific this must also involve a grasp of the problems faced for their language, culture and general well-being of the indigenous people of the region and of Maori in particular in Aotearoa. This understanding and theorizing I do not see as distinct from those areas already identified but rather as forming an integral part. I would see this as involving a general theoretical thrust away from the 'true individualism' of Hayek and the 'new right' towards enabling notions of community such as that sketched recently by Michael Peters and myself in collaborative work with Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau. What these will be we cannot foresee. But what we can foresee are the long term debilitating effects for Maori of true individualism and the proposed recolonisation of New Zealand education as proposed by Sexton.

Any such research should be undertaken by an academic - i.e., someone who both teaches and researches - situated somewhere in a department in the university so that a purely service role is excluded. Where that might be is not so important as where it must not be.

One of the problems with any such appointment may be that individually we do not want some other person to tell us what tertiary education policy should be. That objection however is based upon two assumptions, both of which I wish to reject.

The first is that the role of the intellectual is to present a totalising world view that is both encompassing and universal. In my view there is a certain indignity involved in speaking for others. I have in mind something like Foucault's notion of the specific intellectual,²⁶ which is not to articulate for others, but to stand with the oppressed and to use the knowledge, skills and techniques available, or that are developed, to 'sap the power of the oppressor'.

The second assumption is that I would not see this person as working on policy in a vacuum but rather that it would be a shared activity through something like a Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education in which all members of the academic community could participate.

Finally, you must ask yourselves two questions:

First; Are there such people?

Second; Would the University appoint them?

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