

## Starship education: Enterprise culture in New Zealand

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### ABSTRACT

In this paper I will concentrate on providing a brief review and critical comment on three of the related elements in the emergence of the notion 'enterprise culture' in Britain and New Zealand. One element is the rise of the notion in the British context and its comparison with the more liberal German interpretation, the second is the Porter Project, while the final element is the Education for Enterprise Conference. The critical review is prefaced with an introduction to the 1991 Budget demonstrating the way in which the notion of enterprise underwrites the Government's economic strategy and recent policy changes in education.

We can either be slaves of technology, with high unemployment and foreigners providing us with our technological products and services, or we can adapt and face the future with confidence.

This is not Star Trek stuff; this is New Zealand over the next three to four years.

Minister of Education, Lockwood Smith, 1992

### Introduction

Education is one of the newest starships in the Government's policy fleet. My choice of metaphor is not entirely frivolous. Education thus conceived symbolises an optimistic future based on the increasing importance of science and technology as the engine of economic growth and the means by which New Zealand can successfully compete in the global economy in years to come. Contrary to Lockwood Smith's assertion, the flight mission will take, at least, a Generation to complete and the ship is to be driven by a highly-educated, technological and managerial elite.

The metaphor also captures and up-dates something of the past popular iconography that surrounded an ideology which motivated American educational reformers in the 1960s during the 'sputnik' 'catch-up with the Russians' debate, the 'Space Wars' scenario of the 1980s, and the more recent Japanese threat to American enterprise. As a metaphor for the discourse of the 'post-industrial' 1990s - in the era of the so-called 'new world order' of the end of the cold war, arms de-escalation and peace treaties - the focus has shifted away from exploiting fears of imminent destruction in superpower rivalry to the role that the new information, computer and communicational technologies (among others) can play in the game of increasing national competitive advantage. The emphasis on possible economic decline in face of international competition and the need to 'catch-up' with nations that have overtaken us occupies centre ground.

Such a discourse is perhaps less naive, optimistic and forthright than it once was, given the uncertainty of the prospect for continuous economic growth, of its ecological sustainability, and of its democratic potential for re-distributing wealth. It is also both more strategic and effective. The dominance of Treasury and Business Round Table new right ideology in the thinking of successive governments has led to a massive state asset sales programme, the privatisation of health and education, the commercialisation of the Housing Corporation, the restructuring of the core public sector, and the introduction of deregulation and user-pays policies across the board in a wholesale commitment to principles of the 'free' market. This agenda has set the scene and the time is now ripe for a more deliberate and sustained attempt at cultural reconstruction. At the heart of this attempt is the notion of 'enterprise culture' and central to the notion is the importance of reconstructing education so that it will deliver the necessary research, skills and attitudes required for New Zealand to compete in an increasingly competitive international economy. 'Education for Enterprise' - the title of the recent Prime Minister's Conference held at the Beehive in early February this year - has now become the basis for considering the following questions: How can we improve the responsiveness of educational institutions to the needs of enterprise? What is the Government's role in promoting better links between education and enterprise? How can secondary schools best prepare young people for future working life? And, how can we improve the quality of training by enterprises?

Note that the term 'enterprise' here retains none of its traditional sense of a difficult undertaking, one that requires readiness and courage. The word is used as a simple and popular substitute for 'business'. This construal of enterprise in future-oriented terms nicely deflects concerns about the extent and rate of present unemployment and the enterprising spirit that thousands of New Zealanders display at the present moment, just surviving and trying to make ends meet on a precarious and minimal income in an increasingly unsympathetic social environment. The Round Table, for instance, in a report leaked to the news media, recently has called to raise the age limit of the Domestic Purposes Benefit to 25 years, to cut back the dole, and to further privatise education and health.

There is a savage irony in the fact that new right, having caused massive redundancies in the state and private sectors in their attack upon 'big' government and their pursuit of the goal of low inflation, and having 're-designed' the welfare state, should now turn around to level criticism at both the education system and the welfare state for creating a 'culture of dependency'.

The notion of 'enterprise culture', designed for a post-industrial economy of the 1990s, can be seen in post-structural terms as the creation of a meta-narrative (Lyotard, 1984) - a totalising and unifying story about the prospect of economic growth and development based on the triumvirate of science, technology and education. This master narrative which projects a national ideological vision, differs from past 'stories'. It is not based on any attempt to re-write the past, to redress power imbalances or socio-economic inequalities. Unlike the social democratic alternative it does not adopt the language of 'equality of opportunity' or 'bi-culturalism'. Questions of equity and social justice have receded under the economic imperative. This new meta-narrative is based upon a new vision of the future. The language used to sustain this vision is one of 'excellence', 'high quality education', 'innovation, improvement and upgrading', 'achieving more with less', 'technological literacy', 'information and telecommunications revolutions', 'telecomputers', 'international marketing', 'management', 'skills training', 'performance', 'efficiency', and, of course, 'enterprise'.

The code words 'enterprise' and 'enterprise culture' are the major signifiers of this new discourse. At one and the same time they provide the means for analysis and the prescription for change: education is a key sector in promoting national economic competitive advantage and future national prosperity. In the past there has been too much emphasis on social and cultural objectives and insufficient emphasis on economic goals in our education system. Henceforth we must invest heavily in education as a basis for future economic growth by redesigning the system so that it meets the needs of business and industry, with a focus on management goals, information-

handling goals, communication goals, problem-solving and decision-making goals. The economic imperative is over-riding: 'we need to improve our performance simply to hold our competitive position'. If we do not, so we are told, further decline is inevitable.

As the narrative has grown it has also transformed to encompass new features, jettisoning the crude attack on education, on educational standards, on the professionalism of teachers, to include 'concessionary' arguments and give the appearance of a more balanced appraisal: we do have 'one of the highest standards of literacy to be found in the world today'; 'teaching must be valued'; 'too few of our Maori and Pacific Island people are represented among those achieving higher education qualifications'; 'competition and cooperation'; 'education and enterprise'; and so on.

The sources of the narrative are international in inspiration, domesticated for the local market. They include: the recent Porter Project Upgrading New Zealand's *Competitive Advantage* (Crocombe, 1991), which is informed by Michael Porter's theory of international trade; the notion of 'enterprise culture' as it has developed through various phases in Britain under the Conservative Government; OECD publications on the new technologies and human resources development; and, more widely, elements of the burgeoning literature on post-industrialism and 'the information society'. Local initiatives have included: the creation of an Enterprise Unit in the Prime Minister's Department; the setting up of the Enterprise Council by the Prime Minister; the organisation by the New Zealand Employers Federation of a Schools Industry Links Development Board; the Young Persons Enterprise Scheme operated by the Enterprise New Zealand Trust; and, the recent Enterprise and Education for Enterprise Conferences.

In the remainder of this paper I will concentrate on providing a brief review and critical comment on three of the related elements in the emergence of the notion 'enterprise culture' in Britain and New Zealand. One element is the rise of the notion in the British context and its comparison with the more liberal German interpretation, the second is the Porter Project, while the final element is the Education for Enterprise Conference. The critical review is prefaced with an introduction to the 1991 Budget demonstrating the way in which the notion of enterprise underwrites the Government's economic strategy and recent policy changes in education.

## The 1991 budget

The Budget speech of Ruth Richardson focuses clearly on 'A Strategy For Enterprise' based on three objectives: the reform of the labour market; the re-designing of the welfare state; and managing fiscal problems. The first was supposedly accomplished under the Employment Contracts Act (1991). The second involves the move from universalistic premises to the targeting of social assistance and reduced levels of social spending. The third, which is heavily dependent on the second, focuses on reducing the external deficit.

Underlying the Budget and the Government's enterprise strategy is the explicit assumption that our education and welfare systems have failed us (see Minister of Finance, 1991: 20 & 26): they have allegedly created a 'culture of dependency'. The answer to these problems at the broadest philosophical level is to develop an enterprise culture based on a form of individualism promoting concepts of 'choice' and 'greater self responsibility'.

Education is regarded as 'a key investment in our economic future' and the Government is committed to providing 'an environment that enables businesses and individuals to develop internationally competitive and innovative skills' (ibid: 20). In this context much is made of the Study Right scheme (see Peters et al., 1992), investment in research and development, the re-organisation of public sector research, and initiatives to support a more competitive private sector. The Government also has decided to devote some \$50 million to help unemployed people establish small business operations. Regarding education and Study Right the Government makes a great deal of the idea that in a time of budgetary constraint it is spending more on education this year than last - indeed, even more than on debt servicing. Government spending has been re-directed

'towards areas important for longer-term economic growth and security, including: larger commitments to investments in education, skills and research and development' (ibid: 41, emphasis in the original). Clearly, the government's economic strategy for the next three years depends upon education, science and technology. The education policy document entitled *Investing in People: Our Greatest Asset* reiterates these claims. The Foreword by the Minister of Education begins with the assertion that the government came to office with a clear policy 'to enhance educational achievement and skill development to meet the needs of the highly competitive, modern global economy'. It continues:

Studies, like the Porter Project, questioned the relevance of our current curriculum with its excessive focus on social issues and poor preparation for the competitive world. It confirmed other recent studies that show inadequate skilling in technology compared with other qualifications (Minister of Education, 1991: 1).

### The rise of enterprise culture in the British context

A notable feature in recent years within the British context is the way in which the emphasis on the introduction of the new technologies has given way to a more general discourse that represents issues of economic and institutional reform in 'cultural' terms (Keat & Abercrombie, 1991). Increasingly, questions of national economic survival and competition in the world economy have come to be seen under the Conservative government as one of cultural reconstruction. The idea of an 'enterprise culture', as Keat and Abercrombie (1991: 1) state, 'has emerged as a central motif in the political thought and practice of the Conservative government in Britain'. The task of constructing such a culture has involved remodelling institutions along commercial lines and encouraging the acquisition and use of enterprising qualities. Thus, and in accordance with this ideology, both the welfare state and the education system have been criticised for leading to a 'culture of dependency'. Keat & Abercrombie (1991) see the ideological function of the political rhetoric of enterprise as a particular interpretation to make sense of the kind of economic and cultural changes that have been described under the banners of post-industrialism, information society, postmodernism and post-Fordism. Morris (1991) traces the genesis and development of the concept of enterprise from its beginnings in the thinking of the Centre for Policy Studies, in the link between Christianity and the 'new Conservatism', and in the work of Lord Young. He distinguishes three phases, the latest of which he christens 'partnership in cultural engineering'. The third phase, which represents a massive cultural reconstruction, has concerned policies involving 'unprecedented government intervention in education (at all levels)' (1991: 34-35).

By contrast Schwengel (1991) provides a snapshot of a more liberal German conception in comparison to the British emphasis on 'enterprise'. 'Kulturgesellschaft' is a 'softer' focus, containing a utopian element which also attempts to provide 'a framework for cultural change beyond corporatist state regulation' (1991: 42). The emphasis on cultural solutions to the problems of the 1990s here is worthy of mention. 'Kulturgesellschaft' is based on 'promoting direct and early interaction between economy and culture' (ibid). Unlike 'enterprise culture' it relies on public sector leadership. Schwengel comments:

Kulturgesellschaft seems to mark a middle way between the 'soft' debate on aesthetic modernism and postmodernism, and the 'hard' debate on internationalist post-Fordist competition in the world market, ecological crisis and the dramatic risks of a class war between the north and the south (1991: 139).

The emerging German solution, thus, also centres on a cultural answer to the issues of rapid technological change and the structural dominance of the service sector but it is less directly ideological and gives more space to the public sector. In a passage which deserves quoting in full, Schwengel writes:

We may have a post-Fordist theory of production, technology and consumption; we may understand the change from organized capitalism to disorganized institutions of regulation; we may understand the transformation of modernist texture into post-modernist figuration. But we have no alternative, political symbolic centre as a necessary fiction. A new theory of modernization, which will be one of the most decisive intellectual battlefields between the right and the left in the 1990s, has explicitly to conceptualise the difference between social modernization and political modernity. The discourses of enterprise culture and *Kulturgesellschaft* are already providing arguments for both sides (1991: 148).

There is strong evidence that aspects of these debates have become important in New Zealand. The Porter Project (Crocombe et al., 1991), for instance, focuses very strongly on the notion of enterprise culture and the way in which the remoulding of the education system is necessary to this end (see below). The Minister of Education (1991: 8) has also picked up on this theme, commenting on the way 'imperatives of the modern world require a new culture of enterprise and competition in our curriculum'. In the New Zealand context this kind of rhetoric has, to a large extent, both grown out of and been supplemented by a Treasury-driven emphasis on notions of consumer sovereignty and contestability. The concept of consumer sovereignty provides a particular interpretation of the link between subjectivist theories of values and the market which do not respect the integrity of cultural practices in the public domain. Keat makes the following apposite remark:

The judgements made by democratic citizens are not regarded, at least in theory, as mere expression of personal preferences, but as resulting from a certain kind of critical engagement with the issues involved in the political sphere. But this is something that requires the acquisition and exercise of a number of skills and capacities, and hence also the availability of a wide range of cultural resources that provide, as it were, the necessary basis for relevant forms of 'educative experience'. There is thus a crucial role for certain cultural practices in contributing to this process, whose significance is itself at odds with any purely subjective theory of values (1991: 228-9).

While some British commentators have offered critiques of the notion of enterprise culture, others have provided more direct evaluations based on empirical data. MacDonald (1991) provides an empirical evaluation of the British Government's initiatives to turn so-called 'dependency culture' into enterprise culture' by focusing on the experiences of unemployed youth engaged in programmes based on the model of enterprise as self-employment in small business. His ethnographic evidence is important to consider given the fact that just such a scheme for New Zealand was approved for funding in the 1991 Budget. MacDonald interviewed 100 young adults who had taken part in various forms of enterprising activities in Cleveland, an area of high unemployment. He classifies them into 'runners', 'plodders' and 'fallers'. The first group (representing about one in ten) consisted of those who had businesses which appeared to be commercially viable, were soundly managed and likely to expand. The second group (roughly seven out of ten) were running businesses on a shoe-string with little hope of expansion. This group were highly vulnerable to market failure and survived on the basis of hard work and low wages. The third group (two in ten) had left enterprise culture after one or two years filled with disappointment and dismay. These experiences of enterprise are very much at odds with official rhetoric. MacDonald explains that such experiences are a necessary part of the market: most cannot succeed in the enterprise game by the very nature of the underlying economic rules.

In an interesting analysis Ritchie (1991) explains that among the increasing number of competing ideological versions of enterprise promoted through various schemes and initiatives in Britain, there is no clear, well-defined or measured notion of enterprise culture. What is more, most of these schemes are hosted by educational institutions and they appear to be more of an educational phenomenon than is sometimes realised. He argues that it is important to be able to differentiate between several enterprise cultures and to clearly understand how different models regard education *per se* before engaging it further.

## The Porter Project

The Porter Project has served to legitimise both aspects of past and existing policies - Rogernomics, the market oriented macroeconomic policy framework, the attack on the welfare state - and current policy initiatives. This function is, perhaps, clearest in the realm of educational policy. Speeches by the Minister of Education refer centrally to the Porter Project (and the Sexton Report, 1991) to legitimise the way in which 'imperatives of the modern world require a new culture of enterprise and competition in the curriculum', the need to give greater emphasis to a new core subject called 'technology', and the concern for internationally competitive academic standards (see Peters, 1992). In his recent speech to the 'Education for Enterprise' Conference, the Minister begins by quoting Porter:

I think there is a growing realisation and a growing acceptance that what Professor Michael Porter says is in fact correct. But there is one further element I would like to add that perhaps is reflected in this comment of Professor Porter, and that is more and more countries now realise the vital importance of education and that we need to improve our performance simply to hold our competitive position (Smith, 1992: 1).

Predictably, perhaps, Rick Christie (Chief Executive of the Trade Development Board), the Minister of Labour, and Brother Pat Lynch (Chair of the Principals' Association), in their keynote addresses to the conference, follow suit. Porter is appealed to, in guru terms, to sanction and implicitly define the notion of enterprise culture.

The Porter Project, published as *Upgrading New Zealand's Competitive Advantage* (1991) began as an idea at Auckland University's Graduate School of Business under Professors Brian Henshall and Wayne Cartwright in 1988. Graham Crocombe, an MBA student under Michael Porter at Harvard was an existing contact, who would later become one of the co-directors of the project. Porter (1990), a professor at Harvard's Business School, had made his reputation as a theorist of international trade and as a consultant specialising in improving international competitiveness. As Philpott succinctly states:

Success in international trade, in Porter's and Crocombe's view, has little to do with traditional comparative advantage based on Heckscher-Ohlin natural resource endowment, but everything to do with ruthless interfirm rivalry and competition especially in the domestic market together with innovation and human capital formation (1991: 275).

Edwards (1991: 40) backgrounds the financial sponsorship of the project in New Zealand. Henshall and Cartwright met briefly with Porter in 1988 to discuss a Porter study of New Zealand and in early 1989 looked for sponsorship in New Zealand. Edwards comments that 'the political climate was helpful', both Mike Moore as Minister of Trade and Roger Douglas as Minister of Finance 'were known to be interested'. Eventually the Trade Development Board became principal sponsor setting a budget of \$180,000 which was soon to be lifted to almost a quarter of a million dollars. The project - after repeated delays, arguments over the Porter methodology and selection of New Zealand industries - cost \$1.75 million (a true example of enterprise culture!). Originally, the Porter approach was seen as only one framework, among others, to be used in the assessment of New Zealand's international competitiveness. It came to prevail as the only approach following the retirement of Henshall as director and his replacement by Crocombe who is reported as wanting 'to adhere absolutely, precisely to the Porter methodology'. This meant that resource-based industries such as fishing were excluded from study while sunrise industries were included. Other Auckland University staff who had been involved in the original project (Richard Brookes on kiwifruit and Don Scott on forestry) had their work rejected because it did not fit with the Porter method. Even Cartwright, in a newspaper interview, had said that he felt his research conclusions on the dairy industry had been moulded to fit the Porter thesis.

These doubts about methodology and ways of proceeding have been consolidated by Philpott who suggests that the report of the Porter Project relies excessively on 'management jargon, catch phrases, fancy flow charts, case studies and outright unproven assumptions' ... 'all at the expense of

proper scientific enquiry and hypothesis testing of the sort characterising modern economics'. He goes on to say:

Thus it is interesting if somewhat disturbing to contrast the Porter approach to that embodied in the vast amount of recent rigorous research work on explaining inter country differences in levels and growth rates of per capita GDP much of it stemming from the publication of the Summers and Heston (1988) 130 country data base ... (Philpott, 1991: 275).

In Philpott's view while there are 'some interesting and important microeconomic points made' there is also the 'danger that the Porter prescription will be regarded uncritically as a formula for achieving economic growth, especially given the Government support of the project and the public relations hype associated with the book's launch. He writes, in a passage that deserves quotation:

As is so often nowadays the case with work of right thinking consultants hired by Government, it has too much the appearance of all the points in the New Right's agenda being forced into the diamond framework and anything which cannot fit in there is rejected. Thus if sensible growth policy suggestions are made which are not 'diamond consistent', they would be dismissed (1991: 281).

Elsewhere I proposed a triple critique of the Porter Project: an economic, an ecological, and an educational critique (Peters, 1992). I shall not repeat those arguments here except to say that the Porter prescription, which argues that in order for New Zealand to be successful in terms of development it must become more 'innovation-driven' (rather than 'factor-driven') through sustained investment in 'human capital', does not provide anything other than a blanket assertion for the notion of enterprise culture. It does not provide any policy guidelines for such a notion, nor does it begin to analyse the notion in terms that might be helpful for establishing programmes. In terms of education the Porter report is systematically inconsistent for while it presents accurate data on low participation rates in New Zealand's education system, it laments the fact that there has been too much of an emphasis on social objectives at the expense of 'subjects with direct economic value', seemingly unaware of the high degree of differentiation among social groups which suffer most from low participation (eg Maori) or the relationship between social objectives in addressing this problem and better future economic performance. Further, -the report seems wedded to a form of human capital theory, which in terms of its policy applications, is seen as counter-productive, leading to a massive wastage of talent (Hughes & Lauder, 1991; Lauder, Brown & Hughes, 1990).

## The 'Education for enterprise' conference

The Prime Minister convened the one day conference on 12 February 1992 'to bring together leaders in education and industry to forge a vision of how these two sectors can better work together to upgrade the New Zealand economy'. The Ministry of Education's Summary of Submissions records that submissions were received from the following sources:

Individual in industry	21
Industry organisations	16
School sector	11
Government agencies	9
University sector	7
Polytechnic sector	7
Colleges of Education	2
Maori interests	2

Of note is the lack of representation or participation of anyone from a university education department and the relative preponderance of industry over education groups or, indeed, other

groups that might be said to represent the wider public interest. The three key themes to emerge from the submissions, as analysed by the Ministry, included the need for:

1. Processes to improve business sector input into the development and implementation of education policy at national and local level;
2. Mechanisms to encourage and coordinate business-education partnership activity at national and local level; and
3. Processes to enable the business sector to identify medium and long-term skills needs for education and training purposes.

This brief statement of key themes, however, disguises the degree of diversity of opinion, (often in terms of an industry versus education opposition) which vitiated the submissions. There was some disagreement over: the nature of the senior school programme (general vs. vocationally focused); standards of literacy and numeracy being achieved by school leavers; subjects, essential skills and attitudes; the role and value of 'benchmark' examinations; the responsiveness of the tertiary sector; the increased competition and contestability that has been introduced to the tertiary sector, and the funding of industry training programmes, among other issues.

There was, however, also a number of prominent themes that emerged around the notion of enterprise culture. These included: the need for business to have a greater say in curriculum formation; suggestions for changes in the processes of teacher training and recruitment to reflect better the world of commerce and business; a variety of proposals for business-education partnerships and better representation of business in tertiary sector decision-making. There was emphasis on: performance output measurement of the tertiary sector in terms of more relevant economic criteria; opening up the education system to greater competition; support for Total Quality Management in tertiary institutions. Finally, there was a perceived need for a greater role for Government in identifying medium and long-term skill requirements, promoting targets for educational achievement, creating educational incentives to support business enterprise development, and reviewing educational funding to improve accountability or to promote economic growth-related outputs by institutions.

## Conclusion

As might be guessed in a conference of this nature - the way it was set up and its basic operating assumptions - no one really questioned the appropriateness of business as a model of enterprise for education. There was very little discussion of the notion of enterprise at all except in terms of creating closer industry-education links or modelling education on businesses. This blanket assumption is questionable in the extreme for a number of reasons. It promotes the simplistic view that business is enterprising by virtue of definition and that education is not. This assumption is erroneous because it assimilates all enterprise in business or industry to one type, yet the reality of the situation is that within the New Zealand business sector there is probably a range of different types of enterprise - some good and some bad, some involving high risk, some not, some involving sound management practice, some based on team work, some entirely individualistic, some based on a single talent or skill, some based on the right mix of skills, etc. In other words, the question of what elements make for the successful firm or business is an open one that permits a variety of answers none of which, I think, could be legislated upon or generalisable from, as the past authors of Theory K have probably realised. What meaning does the question of how enterprising is New Zealand business, really have? Is it possible to ask this question of governments? Does the blanket assumption mean that there is no such thing as enterprise in non-profit organisations?

If we accept that the notion of enterprise is not confined to business to be judged purely in terms of short term monetary gain then we might want to recognise other kinds of enterprise that will admit of notions of initiative, sustainable practices or simply survival in the crudest sense. If it is the case that enterprise is to be defined as business, pure and simple, then the conference should



be seen in transparent ideological terms and educators should vigorously resist the notion and its intrusion into education. The notion of enterprise culture can have a number of ideological interpretations, some might be enabling for education, others are pernicious. We must begin to sort out the former from the latter. In the Background Notes to the conference provided by the Ministry of Education under the section 'Objectives in Education' appears the following:

A four year study of ten important world trading nations found that 'education and training are decisive in national competitive advantage ... In every nation, those industries that were most competitive were often those whose specialised investment in education and training had been unusually great' (Porter, 1990).

The comparative analysis of nations, in terms of their education systems, might reveal how meaningless this statement is and how such comparisons are never innocent or neutral. It might also reveal the empty, ideological nature of a statement that does not take into account very different education and training regimes which characterise the world's most successful economies (see Dale, 1991).

Education may, indeed, be the starship of the future. It may, intelligently conceived, become the basis of the so-called 'new economy' providing the requisite skills, abilities, understandings and attitudes necessary for a post-industrial, information-based society. Yet the notion of enterprise culture as it has been presented at the recent 'Education for Enterprise' Conference, its sources and antecedents, will not provide educators or the business sector with the promise or the policy tools to achieve this new future.

An alternative agenda for pursuing a notion of enterprise culture which is more in line with a conception of social democracy might begin in a more grounded way with the study of the types of enterprise that presently exist in the private sector. It might turn the focus back onto the business sector to elucidate those models of enterprise which currently best service the needs of society and economy in New Zealand by increasing both the level of participation and the welfare of workers through collaborative decision-making and profit-sharing. In other words, enterprise culture, alternatively could become an agenda *contra* the Employment Contracts Act, 1991, for establishing the conditions necessary for a post-industrial democracy. It might identify how such models operate in different areas of the economy, in small and large scale concerns, in new and older industries. Only when educationists and the public more generally can see the benefits of 'enterprise culture' in this way, might the notion merit some further serious consideration.

As it is, the notion of enterprise culture has been construed in the narrowest economic sense. It has become part and parcel of a new meta-narrative which, in rhetorical terms, presents us with a vision of the future based on a story of the prospect of economic growth. This story, however, while allocating education pride-of-place, alongside science and technology, reflects the new right's 'creative' appropriation of the post-industrial literature. In essence, the discourse can be seen more as a 'post-industrialism of reaction' than one exploring the social democratic possibilities inherent in post-industrialism.

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