

ONCE MORE ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Much confusion surrounds the battle over public education. Those who defend public education from privatisation do so on weak grounds which cannot ensure its survival. They adopt cultural or political arguments detached from the working class struggle and incorporated in bourgeois hegemony. That is, they defend state education by appealing to non-market values in a period when the market values openly dominate. Or they appeal to the independence of the state from the market and the possibility of parliamentary reforms that will restore public education.¹

On the other hand those who attack public education can easily counter these arguments by citing the failure of 'state socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe and inefficiencies and inequalities in the NZ and other state education systems.² They can also invoke *The Bell Curve* which points to education programmes making not one jot of difference in raising the levels of the lower classes who must therefore be naturally less intelligent.³

They get away with blaming teachers and bureaucrats and make blatantly false appeals to individual choice as a way of overcoming these 'problems'. In a period of social change and instability, the appeal to value-laden notions of democracy, community and civil society can be used to demolish the opposition and justify the destruction of an important social gain under capitalism.⁴

To successfully defend state education as a major social gain, we have to understand it correctly. It is no good claiming that public education arose out of an idealistic concern to benefit humanity in the abstract. Or, as the official history puts it, quoting Peter Fraser, "a right, as a citizen, to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers".⁵ If that were true, how do we account for the apparent inhumanity that leads to the demise of public education and the denial of the individual's full potential?

Nor is it any good to fight cuts in education on the basis that education should be a public good and not a commodity. Most of the 'leftish' opposition to the reforms has taken this line — failing to understand that public education is not a sort of 'state socialist' enclave against capitalism, but owes its existence to generalised commodity production and exchange, inherent in capitalism. Therefore rejecting education as a 'commodity' is not a matter of moral preference or political correctness.

Of course education should be a public good but which 'public' is going to make it so? The only 'public' that can do so is the working class which by socialising the means of production, distribution and exchange can socialise education. Therefore the 'public good' defence is an extremely weak defence of public education because it surrenders from the start the necessity to see the struggle over public education as part of the class struggle, and succumbs to an analysis which is captured by capitalist hegemony.⁶

To fight and win the defence of public education we have to first identify who the public education enemy Number One is, and then plan a strategy that can mobilise the vast majority of society, the working class, behind education workers who are in the front line of the struggle.

REPRODUCING LABOUR-POWER

For at least two decades marxists have advanced the view of public education, along with domestic labour, as a means of reproducing the labour-force. This is to say that public education contributes to the reproduction of the commodity labour-power.⁷ Properly understood, under capitalist production, labour-power is the commodity which produces more value than its own value and is therefore the sources of surplus-value and profits. Marx in *Capital* refers to the reproduction of labour-power in the home as a 'private' activity outside capitalist production, that capitalists can safely leave to the "labourer's instincts of self-preservation and propagation".⁸

However, since Marx wrote *Capital*, capitalism has developed and its demands for skilled, and trained labour-power have required further education outside the home. In that sense, public education is a partial 'socialising' of privatised education done in the home. But just like education done in the home, public education administered by the state is not commodity production as such. We therefore have to ask: why in a commodity producing economy is public education not a commodity? This is all the more important to answer since labour-power, which education serves to reproduce, is itself a commodity.

The answer is not the liberal one, that state production is outside the market and therefore non-commodified.⁹ To say that is partly true, but very misleading. It is true that public education is not a commodity in the sense that it is produced privately by capitalist enterprises. But it, like domestic labour, does contribute to the production of the commodity labour-power, and therefore its value. This is to say that public education (along with other state reproduction of labour power — health, housing, benefits etc) is a special form of productive labour since it helps, train, maintain or reproduce the value of labour-power as a commodity. However, since it does not add surplus-value to the value of the commodity labour-power, it is strictly speaking not productive labour, but productive labour of a 'special kind'.¹⁰

Nor is the answer the neo-marxist one, that the state's cutbacks in education to reproduce labour-power is irrational or arbitrary (i.e. unexplained). To say this is to say that in matters of major reforms capitalists do not act to advance their class interests. We have to explain why it is in the class interests of capitalists to make recourse to public education at one time and not another. The answer is that in some historical circumstances, public education, while not as cheap as domestic labour, is cheaper than privatised education. Under these conditions, neither domestic labour nor privatised education is sufficient to meet the reproductive needs of capital for the training of productive labour.

In New Zealand this was the case during the post-war boom. Capitalist production grew behind protective walls which allowed it to use relatively backward technology and labour-intensive methods. Full employment required a healthy, skilled labour force. The public

provision of education, health etc became the preferred means of ensuring the mass education of wage-workers. It was a cheaper means of reproducing the labour-force than private education because public education did not have to make a profit.¹¹

LAW OF VALUE SUSPENDED?

It is important to this argument to recognise that the operation of the law of value is partially suspended by public provision. The law of value states that the value of commodities is equal to the socially necessary labour time expended in their production.¹² The law of value normally operates through competition to redistribute surplus-value as profits to enterprises that are the most efficient producers. Hence only that labour-time that is socially necessary (meaning the currently average productive labour) enters into the price of a commodity. This means that the more efficient producers get larger market shares and expand at the expense of the less efficient producers.

With state monopoly provision, the law of value does not operate directly to increase productivity. It is this fact that the capitalists choose to highlight when they want to privatise education. The lack of competition means that there is no incentive to improve the productivity of education provision. But even so, under the right conditions, state monopoly provision is cheaper than private provision because it does not claim the full value of the product. Therefore the capitalist buys labour-power as a commodity on the market for considerably less than the actual value of labour-power (or labour-time) used up in producing and reproducing it. Thus the surplus-labour of education workers passes to the capitalist in a form of subsidy via the lowering of the cost of labour-power.¹³

This subsidy is analogous to that provided by privatised domestic labour. Here the family wage reproduces domestic labourers while the unpaid contribution to the reproduction of labour-power goes as a subsidy to the capitalists. In terms of labour costs, it is clear that domestic labour is the best option for the capitalist, since domestic workers are not covered by unions and unlike public sector workers cannot fight to keep pay parity with private sector workers. That is, the privatised sector of domestic labour is almost totally removed from the operation of the law of value. Hence when conditions no longer require mass education, one solution for the capitalists is that of reprivatising education as part of domestic labour.¹⁴

However unlike domestic labour, public education, while not directly driven by the law of value, is still subject to it. It is not outside capitalist production. So long as the conditions suited to mass public provision exist, (i.e. a large productive labour force to be trained and reproduced) the costs to the employers of funding public education (which comes out of surplus-value and hence is a drain on profits) will be less than the benefits of subsidised education. It will be in their interests to use public provision. Therefore, public education, in the last analysis is provided by the state on behalf of the capitalist class to maintain labour-power for the purpose of the appropriation of surplus-value. It ceases to be in the interests of capitalists only when the underlying conditions change and public education costs more than its benefits.

It follows that the social gains won through public education while immensely important in terms of skilling and developing the culture of the labour force, are ultimately dependent on the willingness of capitalists to pay for it. This will have particular consequences for women teachers. The position of women teachers in a time of crisis for capitalism exposes the pivotal relationship for capital of their dual role as wage workers and domestic workers. Women were drawn into social production during the post-war boom, the period of capital accumulation. However, they worked a double shift, retaining the responsibility for domestic labour in the home. Although their domestic labour is done apart from the social allocation of labour, it impacts on women's role in paid work.

Women's late entry and incomplete integration into the paid work-force has made women workers more vulnerable in the current recession. Job segregation is a factor in this vulnerability. Although the range of jobs for women has increased, so has their concentration into traditionally feminised occupations such as teaching. We argue that it is because teaching is socialised domestic labour, that it is seen as a 'natural' occupation for women.

Segregation within the education sector intensifies the gendered aspect of wage labour. This is most evident in the primary sector, where the students are the least independent from the home. Of teachers in the primary sector 74% are women and they cluster around jobs with lower earnings and status. The crisis has impacted on these women teachers. With cuts in social spending, they have suffered disproportionately from job loss and casualisation (72% of part-time teachers are women). These women are pushed back into their 'natural' role as domestic labourers, demonstrating their usefulness to capital as an industrial reserve army.¹⁵

Employing casual workers is convenient for schools in a time of diminishing state funding. With the removal of zones, schools now compete for students, and employment of casual teachers is a buffer against insolvency for schools but means insecurity for teachers. The government scheme of Parents as First Teachers is a marker for this casualisation, signifying an intensification of domestic labour. NZEI¹⁶ argues that the scheme is drawing government funding away from state education in kindergartens, into privatised domestic education or private kindergartens. Support for parents as early childhood educators reconstitutes education as domestic labour.

Thus capitalists will only continue to pay teachers' wages so long as they are, in their terms, 'productive'. This for marxists means precisely, that it is productive labour of 'a special kind' that continues to maintain a productive and non-productive labour force necessary for capital accumulation. As soon as this is no longer the case we can predict a strong move by capitalists to reduce spending on education and towards its further privatisation.¹⁷

Why? Capitalists are not motivated by concern for humanity. Humanity is raw material in production. If it does not produce profits then humanity is expendable. About a decade ago in the first issue of *Access* one of us wrote that the situation in New Zealand was one where we could expect cuts in social spending to occur. Capitalist production was no longer profitable, had to be restructured, and in the process go high tech to increase labour productivity. Restructuring meant the end of the protected economy and with it the welfare

state and much of public education. It also meant the capitalist class going on the ideological offensive to sell its reforms to the public.¹⁸

NEW RIGHT IDEOLOGY

The first major thrust in this direction took place under the Fourth Labour Government. The pressure to corporatise schools into business-like enterprises began with the Picot Report.¹⁹ The moves towards corporatising tertiary education followed under the new National government, consolidating with the Todd Report.²⁰

These were entirely predictable moves to cut state spending to reduce the drain of public education on profits when capitalist firms no longer required a mass education system. As we have seen the crisis was not in itself the result of high wages, or the social wage, as the New Right ideologues claimed, but of falling profits, exacerbated by high taxation going on 'unproductive' state spending.

However, the New Right had to cover its tracks. It went on the ideological offensive. It could not admit that it was in the interests of protected industry to rely on public education up until the 1970's without itself taking the blame for excessive public spending. It had to pass the blame off onto state servants and the 'left' whom it identified as the middle-class 'beneficiaries' of public education. It attempted to set up teachers and public servants as the enemy of parents and taxpayers. They, and not the employers, were held responsible for a costly, inefficient and unresponsive education system.

Birch's²¹ rationale for moves towards privatising education are based on the need to present the new reforms as in the interests of individual teachers. He wants teachers to change their 'mindset', to accept the new economic policy and adapt to the 'new labour market environment'. By introducing flexible conditions for the labour market, the Employment Contracts Act has played a significant role in improving productivity and making New Zealand internationally competitive. We need to be 'more successful overseas to be secure at home'. In the new set of conditions, employers can deploy their 'human resources' better, while for individuals better performance will be the basis of better conditions.

Birch's intention for teachers to embrace individual contracts has met with resistance from teacher unions. Since the passing of the Employment Contracts Act, the primary and secondary teacher unions have fought to retain collective contracts and resist bulk funding of teacher salaries. As well as Birch, the Education Forum (which is closely associated with the Business Round Table) has pushed to abolish bulk funding and put all teachers on individual contracts. Teachers have seen bulk funding as a cost cutting measure: through bulk funding to individual schools, teachers will be divided, their collective bargaining strength undermined.

Teachers associate bulk funding with government moves to privatise state schools, or to set up other private 'providers' for industry based skills. The 1995 budget's increased funding to private schools, signals this turn.

Today, the education policy of ACT New Zealand represents the logical extreme of New Right solutions. It aims to transfer the provision of education entirely to the private sector through education vouchers. This shift is couched in the now familiar ideology of individual choice, itself premised on the fashionable view of individuals as citizens in civil society. This has to be seen as part of the ideological ascendancy of the international bourgeoisie who self-consciously counterpose bourgeois civil society and citizenship to the failed 'totalitarianism' of state socialist solutions.

The success of New Right appeals therefore depends on the widespread acceptance of the bourgeois ideology of the market as the best provider and individual choice as the basis of democracy and freedom.²² The failure of Social Democratic and neo-marxist responses to undercut this appeal is due to the fact that they too are trapped inside the framework of bourgeois hegemony. They too accept the legitimacy of the market (modified in some way) and of individual choice. Let's explore the limits of each in turn.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC IDEOLOGY

The problem is that capitalism presents itself as an equal and sharing society. Marx introduced the concept of commodity fetishism to explain the inversion of capitalist exploitation at the point of production as equal rights in the sphere of exchange.²³ Social democrats believe that if capitalism is not caring it can be made so by state intervention. For example, Peters, Marshall and Massey (1994: 265) deny that reality can be reduced to individual competition in the market.

Obscured in this notion of individualism and education are the beliefs that knowledge is shared and the outcome of agreement and social interaction; and a more traditional belief that education is not only for the good of the individual but also for the good of society, where society is construed not merely as a collection of individuals but as a cohesive, intrinsically social, community. Contrasted here are the notions of society as an atomistic, fragmented, hedonistic collection of self-interested individuals, and that of society as a community based upon shared interests, public goods, and the notions of altruism, empathy and respect for persons.

But this is sheer wishful thinking — utopia. Social democratic intervention in the market cannot escape the rule of the law of value any more than it can avoid nasty, brutal and short-tempered individuals. It cannot modify the law of value indefinitely. Notions of altruism, empathy and respect for persons are just that — notional. The fate of Keynesian economics with the end of the post-war boom proved this. Keynesian techniques directed at moderating the business cycles were themselves the outcome of a tendency towards crisis. Such an intervention was predicated on the assumption that the cause of crises was underconsumption and that this could be corrected by state intervention. The state could be effective in countering crisis because the state was held to be neutral. Crises could be avoided or lessened by boosting consumption through wage increases including the expanding social wage (health, education, housing and other social spending etc).²⁴

The Social Democratic dream of a caring capitalism therefore rested on the false belief that these interventions, including public education, would moderate market forces and suppress crises. But these interventions failed in the long run, because falling profits put pressure on social spending and enforced cuts in public education. More importantly, the restructuring of protected industry to compete internationally dispensed with full employment and the need for comprehensive, free education. From here on education for those in work is cheaper if privatised as fee paying, and for those out of work, reprivated as domestic labour.

The Social Democrats deny this. They do not recognise capitalist exploitation other than the deregulated market and they wish to return to regulation as soon as possible. They claim that New Right ideologues sabotaged reforms to cut social spending and boost taxation. For them it was a power play in the part of multinational capital to take our sovereignty and our assets and reap super-profits. Public education was therefore sacrificed at the altar of multinational capitalism.²⁵

NEO-MARXIST IDEOLOGY

The radical neo-marxists are a more sophisticated version of Social Democracy. They talk of class exploitation and cite Marx as the leading authority on this.²⁶ Of course Marx is only part of the answer because most of his work is now out of date and capitalism has moved into new phases and formations, or modes of regulation in its recent history. Weberian sociology is added to the mixture. And then we have post-marxism too. All adapt to the market and remain trapped in bourgeois hegemony. For example rational choice marxism with its neo-ricardian economics, argues in a period where structural constraints on individual choice are intensifying, that change is located at the level of individually choosing agents. Workers 'choose' to be free from any ownership or control of society's productive resources, and they 'choose' to survive by selling themselves to those who do own or control those resources.²⁷

What characterises neo-marxists is the rejection of so-called 'economic determinism'. Capitalist production is based on exploitation, but reproduction, by means of domination, of class relations is of equal importance. The state is understood after theorists, like Offe (1984), to serve both the production and reproduction of capital. State education is primarily involved in the reproduction of classes via curriculum, values, habitus etc. The popularity of Bourdieu as a theorist is due largely to his eclectic 'pragmatism' in avoiding economic 'determinism'. For him capital is transhistorical. It is 'accumulated labour' which can appear in any social form (e.g., capitalism, or 'Soviet-type' societies).²⁸

The problem, however, is that this theory is not neo-marxist as such but rather neo-ricardian. For Ricardo production was taken for granted as part of the natural economy. Limits to capitalist development were natural limits — soil fertility.²⁹ Capitalist production is therefore unproblematic since labour creates value. This of course became very problematic for capitalists who claimed entitlement to part of that labour as profits! Exploitation can only occur, therefore, in the process of exchange and distribution, that is, outside production as part of the process of reproduction. Hence the state can intervene and correct any unequal distribution and eliminate capitalist exploitation. But to do this, state power must first be

won. It is a site of struggle, as is the education system, which is one battle ground on the 'terrain' of the state.

Hence the battle for education reduces to a political and ideological struggle isolated from production (i.e., economic determination in the last instance). The role of the state in ideological domination is instrumental, it is a tool which can be taken over by whichever class is strongest. And whichever class is strongest comes down to the battle over ideas ('cultural practices'). Intellectuals who promote New Right ideas are winning at the moment, but counter-intellectuals who promote oppositional ideas can win if they organise, argue with greater clarity and continue the struggle. Neo-marxism then, is neo-ricardian economics plus cultural marxism. The result is a failure to analyse the underlying dynamics of capitalist development which underpin and ultimately determine cultural struggles.

It follows that neo-marxism is caught up in bourgeois hegemony. It cannot fight bourgeois ideology from an independent standpoint. It cannot explain why the cuts in education result from crisis at the level of production because it has eliminated this analysis as 'determinist'. It is therefore left with a cultural 'indeterminism' or contingency. This is why the neo-marxist left is forced to look for ideological conspiracies in global firms/corporations, the Business Roundtable or Treasury, to account for the reforms. Or they may resort to the falling out of thieves argument; the irrational capitalist cannot manage capitalism in their best interests. So this task falls to socialist intellectuals to use the state to manage the market. Hence 'market socialism' legitimises the market and the law of value as a necessary adjunct to socialism.³⁰

MARXIST SOLUTIONS.

Marxism clearly differs from the above state-centred reforms, but how does marxism differ from the New Right which also saw the need to cut state spending to restore profits? Roger Douglas in his 1981 book, *There Must Be a Better Way*, advocated cuts in social spending. *Unfinished Business*, his latest book, argues the solution on a more sophisticated ideological level as we have seen. Yet even the most sophisticated apologists for the capitalist class do not understand the real nature of capitalist society. They recognise what is in their class interests, but they genuinely believe the ideology of capitalism as an equal exchange society.

On the other hand marxists understand what makes capitalism move into crises. Crises result not from wrong policies, but the growing inability of capitalists to exploit workers sufficiently to maintain their profits. They also understand how capitalism passes off its crises as the fault, finally, of the working class, because capitalist ideology masks the real nature of class exploitation within a system which is itself opaque.

Far from advocating capitalists' solutions to crises, marxists advocate workers' solutions. That means defending the state provision of education along with all other forms of social spending.

Any fightback must involve women teachers as the education workers most vulnerable to cuts. Women teachers must defend their jobs against attempts to casualise or chop them. These jobs represent an historic gain for women during a period of capital accumulation. To

relinquish their role as paid workers during a period of contraction and crisis for capital, would push women back into the home as unpaid domestic workers. Education as socialised domestic labour would be re-privatised and the main burden of reproducing labour power would fall back on the family — intensifying domestic labour and the division of labour within the family.

Working women see their fight to retain jobs as reasonable. They will not accept easily their relegation to a domestic role. What is not so obvious, is the way these conditions are linked to the inner nature of capital. The subordinate position of women within capitalist social formations could not be overcome during the period of capital accumulation when the second wave of feminism was at its height. Women won limited reforms, such as equal pay in the public sector. Although the Equal Pay Act represented a concession by capitalists, it did not result in real equality of wages or status for women. Teacher unions on the offensive will use their collective strength to protect 'professional' education. But in a period where the ability of capitalists to make concessions is under severe constraint, workers struggling to retain conditions of work will inevitably confront capital directly.

While capitalists appear to pay for public education out of their taxes, it is in fact workers who create the profits out of which these taxes are paid. Therefore, while marxists expect capitalists to try to stop paying taxes when it no longer helps them make profits, they advocate that the working class tax capitalists to the hilt to reappropriate as much of their lost surplus-value as possible.

This is the proper basis on which to defend public education. It exposes the fetishised nature of capitalist social relations and the bourgeois appeals to individualism etc. It was paid for out of surplus-value appropriated from the working class not from individual 'taxpayers'. To do so means shifting the terms of the debate from that dictated by capital under the domination of bourgeois hegemony, to that asserted by class conscious workers committed to defeating the fundamental structures of capitalism. As soon as we do that it becomes clear that the debate over education confined to the bosses' agenda is already lost.

Social Democrats who argue that public education took itself outside the operation of the law of value are merely expressing the fetishised view of the state as class-neutral. Neo-marxists who resist the commodification of education are also arguing for the possibility of non-capitalist education in a capitalist society. Neither understand why the cuts have been necessary to the survival of capitalism. Neither see the solution as the ending of the capitalist system.

NOTES

- ¹ See Peters, Marshall and Massey (1994: 253) as typical. Their critique of the New Right is cultural. "The Neo Liberal answer of self-limiting government does not acknowledge the specific conditions under which state welfare interventionism developed in New Zealand. It ignores the way in which state agencies developed as part of the institutional fabric of society, the historical social-democratic compromise between labour and capital represented in the notion of the welfare state, and the political tradition of egalitarianism formed along the way. All of these are deeply embedded in the collective consciousness of New Zealanders. Further, to make the

claim that education as part of the traditional welfare state should be restructured in terms of the market is to ignore the proper theoretical context within which discussion of education should be developed and understood."

² See Upton (1984). See the Business Round Table agenda and Odd Eiken ex-Swedish Under-Secretary for Education, *National Business Review*, 18 December. p.6.

³ See Jacoby & Glauberman (1995) specifically the numerous references to affirmative action in education.

⁴ See Gareth Morgan in *National Business Review*, April 1995.

⁵ Peter Fraser's quotation, cited in C.E. Beeby, (1992: 124).

⁶ For example, all those influenced by Bourdieu fail to break out of bourgeois hegemony because they do not fully grasp the significance of public education in the production and reproduction of labour-power as economically determined in the "last instance". This point is elaborated below.

⁷ Bedggood (1980: 117). While Codd et al. and Bell and Carpenter appear to accept this position, theirs is a one-sided cultural perspective on reproduction.

⁸ See *Capital* Vol 1, p.537.

⁹ For example, Peters, Marshall and Massey (1994: 269).

¹⁰ Bullock & Yaffe (1975: 16) Labour power is a unique commodity. Where training takes place, the value of the labour power is raised. If this training is carried out capitalistically the trainee will directly absorb both the necessary and surplus labour time performed by the trainer. His/her labour power thus contains value and surplus value, which presents itself as a higher price to the purchaser of that labour power. Capitalists however can render themselves independent of labour power that contains surplus-value, by changing the process of production. For this reason the state will normally take over this sphere of "production" and ensure that only necessary labour is performed in it. This labour of training is part of variable capital but creates no surplus value...It is called productive labour of a special kind. Whether or not the increase in the cost of training reduces the rate of profit will depend on whether the rise in productivity resulting from training is sufficient to offset its costs.

¹¹ As argued above, if public education develops skills but without adding surplus-value to its cost, it is clearly in the interests of capitalists to pay the wages of state teachers so long as they pass on productivity increases that exceed the cost of education for productive workers. It is equally clear that restructuring which creates unemployment, and/or a rise of unproductive workers, will see the costs of education exceed the productivity gains. Hence the shift to privatise education (in both senses - see below) will follow if the added costs of private education paid in wages to individual workers fall below that of taxes paid by capitalists to fund public education.

¹² "Socially necessary labour time" (SNLT) is the measure of labour-power expended under the normal conditions applying in each industry. Hence if workers are using outdated machinery they expend more labour-time and hence value on each commodity. This may not be realised in exchange and therefore is "wasted" and does not count as SNLT. Similarly, workers using the latest machinery may expend less labour-time and value to each commodity, hence in exchange the SNLT value will exceed the actual value. See Bullock and Yaffe and Paul Smith.

¹³ This 'subsidy' from unpaid labour is equivalent to the surplus-labour time that is referred to above. In this sense the liberal argument that education is a 'public good' misses the fact that public education provides this hidden subsidy to capital while masquerading as a state socialist alternative to capitalism.

¹⁴ See Bullock (1975) and Smith (1978). Paul Smith elaborates on how domestic labour, as labour that is not socially regulated through exchange, is not subsumed under commodity production. Domestic labour does not achieve equivalence with other forms of labour either qualitatively as abstract labour, or quantitatively as socially necessary labour.

¹⁵ For a discussion of women as a reserve army see Beechey (1978: 181 - 192).

¹⁶ See Rivers (1994).

¹⁷ Privatisation in both senses of private capitalist provision of education, and private provision of education in the home by domestic and or voluntary labour. For a full analysis of privatised production see Paul Smith.

¹⁸ See Bedggood (1982).

¹⁹ See among other articles our article in *Access* (1988).

²⁰ The Todd Report of the Ministerial Consultative Group, *Funding Growth in Tertiary Education and Training* (1994), continued the attack on public provision by advocating a move towards user pays in tertiary education. Government has implemented the recommendations to incorporate user pays fees, starting at the level of 20% of costs, and a student loan scheme which is repaid as a PAYE tax surcharge.

²¹ Minister of Labour Birch addressing annual conference of the Polytech teachers' union, ASTE, September 3, 1993.

²² See Novak (1995).

²³ For an explanation of commodity fetishism see Eagleton (1991: 84 - 88).

²⁴ Compare marxist approaches to the state: Bedggood (1972b) and S. Clarke (1992).

²⁵ For example, the Social Democratic panaceas offered by Labour and the Alliance. How can social democracy meet the class interests of the capitalists and the working class simultaneously? The open, deregulated economy dictates further cuts in social spending, including public education, to maintain international competitiveness. The scope for increased social spending is therefore becoming less and less.

²⁶ Bell and Carpenter (1994).

²⁷ Paraphrased from Tony Smith (1993: 117) in his critique of the claims of rational choice marxists, Elster and Roemer. See also Wood for a critique of the claims of post-marxists and rational choice marxists.

²⁸ See Bourdieu in Richardson, Ed. (1986: 241). Bourdieu is therefore a type of neo-ricardian, who naturalises production and labour as the source of capital, and then adds on numerous historically specific social, cultural and symbolic variables into an indeterminate, eclectic mixture in which the economic is not 'determinant in the last instance'.

²⁹ For a full account of the difference between marxism and neo-ricardian schools see Yaffe (1975).

³⁰ The revival of 'market socialism' can be linked to the collapse of the Stalinist states. The failure of so-called socialism is explained as the rejection of the market for the plan. Hence the rehabilitation of Bukharin, the Soviet theorist who advocated the importance of the law of value to socialist development. And hence the utopian schemes of marrying 'socialism' to the market to ensure its success that have followed the collapse of Stalinism. See Blackburn, (1991).

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