

From Currie to Picot: History, ideology and policy in New Zealand Education

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ABSTRACT

The Picot report, *Administering For Excellence: Effective Administration In Education*, was published a quarter of a century after the Currie report on education of 1962. During that time, the national consensus on education that Currie celebrated has visibly evaporated. Growing social, political and economic difficulties, together with accumulating evidence of persistent inequalities in education, have led to potent radical and marxist critiques of the system, and more recently an incipient 'New Right' has also begun to emerge. The Picot report of May 1988 may be interpreted as a high-level initiative to acknowledge and respond to these differing criticisms of the education system. It has thus abandoned the liberal-progressive assumptions associated with Currie. But the report also represents an important attempt to restore public confidence in the ability of the state education system to create social equality. In this latter sense it is squarely in the dominant tradition of educational policy in twentieth century New Zealand. The present article will seek to locate the Picot report in its historical and political contexts, and to indicate Picot's likely implications for the future.

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The ideology of the Currie report

The Currie report on education in New Zealand was an influential policy statement, providing as it did the framework of recommendations for the subsequent Education Act of 1964 which remains on the statute books to this day. In the character of its general outlook on education in New Zealand

it was no less significant. It expressed and reinforced what it took to be a national consensus about the development, aims and role of the education system. In retrospect it seems fair to interpret Currie's outlook in terms of an ideology that had special cogency in the 1960s. Three closely related themes of the Currie report are especially relevant to our discussion: first, that equality of opportunity for all was the central aspiration of New Zealand education and of the community at large: second, that the education system was progressing steadily toward the realisation of this principle: and third, that state activity was benevolent and should be employed to encourage the further progress of this system.

The Currie commission had accepted as a 'reasonable working premise' Peter Fraser's famous statement of intent as Minister of Education in the Labour government in 1939 'that every person, whatever his level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has 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.'¹ According to the report, the community as a whole supported this objective.

Indeed,

Nothing that has been said or written in evidence before the Commission has given any grounds for believing that there is in the community any large body of sentiment opposed to the ideas expressed by Mr Fraser, nor in the 22 years that have passed since he made it has there been any movement – social or political – which would suggest any retreat from this viewpoint. Rather it might be claimed that the influence of the second World War and its aftermath have strengthened this sentiment as one of the dominant democratic ideas of the New Zealand community.²

Overall, it concluded, 'In New Zealand egalitarian feelings still exert much of their former power and the trend is still towards uniformity, the avoidance of special privilege, and equality of status and opportunity.'³

Secure in these values and in their general acceptance, the Currie commission saw the education system gradually evolving towards their practical realisation. It was on this basis that it sought to respond to the doubts and public criticisms of its own day, especially over problems of staffing, 'modern methods' of education, growing costs, and special issues such as state aid to private schools. By and large it attempted to allay concerns, while allowing the need for further development in particular areas:

Although there are areas in which changes and improvements are needed, ... by world standards our system may reasonably be claimed to be a good and, in some respects, an advanced one, comparing not unfavourably with those in other leading countries in the Western world and reflecting credit on those who have contributed to its development over the years.

It found 'much to admire in the achievements of our school system and in the devotion to their work shown by the vast majority of teachers'.⁴ It traced the growth of 'aspirations towards equality'⁵ from the origins of state schooling in the late nineteenth century, to the achievement of universal secondary education which, it claimed, had largely overcome the continuing problems of coordinating the various aspects of the education system. Especially since 1938, according to Currie, there had taken place a 'great advance in educational opportunity', although 'much remains to be done', especially in the secondary schools.⁶ The primary school system had apparently 'reached a stage of maturity at which little more than internal changes are to be expected'. Meanwhile, 'The secondary system continues to expand rapidly both through extension into rural areas and through an increase in the length of schooling. The end of this development is not yet in sight. In most cases the present system is capable of adaptation to meet these needs'.⁷ The commission pronounced itself satisfied that despite the special difficulties of what it called, with a fine disregard for both arithmetic and demography, a 'minority'⁸ - those in rural communities, those in rapidly expanding cities, the Maori people, and the physically and intellectually handicapped - education would continue to develop slowly and by consensus toward a completely fair system on the basis of its already established principles.

Currie regarded the role of the state in this continuing process as entirely benevolent. Just as the state had ensured the appropriate character and early development of the education system, so it could be relied upon to intervene in the interests of fair and equal provision in the future. If anything, according to Currie, the state, in the guise of its main educational organs the Department of Education and the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (CNZCER), was too reticent in correcting the imbalances that remained. For this reason it called for a stronger role to be assumed by the Department of Education. It affirmed that 'much needs to be done to make teachers better informed of departmental views on a wide variety of subjects connected with school organisation and teaching methods'.⁹ The Department was also, it suggested, very well situated for the essential task of putting before the public simple and clear descriptions of the facts of education and of how the system works'.¹⁰ Currie therefore recommended that some officers of the Department should specialise in publicity and information. Other recommendations such as the establishment of a curriculum development unit within the Department of Education may also be related to this faith in the strength and wisdom of the state apparatus of education. Currie's view that the NZCER should take a more prominent role than hitherto in testing and evaluation testifies to the same conviction that the state was generally beneficent and neutral: that is, above the various interests involved.

The general perspective of the state education system that Currie put forward is a familiar one for historians of education in nineteenth and twentieth century societies. In many cases the historians themselves have shared a similar belief, charting in an uncritical and unproblematic manner the gradual progress of national education systems under the paternal eye of the state towards the creation of an 'educated democracy'.¹¹ But it was a view that was especially prevalent in New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s. State welfare reform in the interests of social equality was widely regarded as a central and distinctive aspect of New Zealand's national identity. Keith Sinclair's *A History of New Zealand*, first published in 1959, well articulated this received view. According to Sinclair, the state experiments of the Liberal government in the 1890s, and the construction of a welfare state especially under the Labour government of the 1930s, reflected a 'democratic and egalitarian aspiration, that yearning for what was later termed "social justice"', and constituted 'the main element in the New Zealand tradition'.¹² State education represented one of the most important features of this 'aspiration' and 'tradition'. At the same time, New Zealand society in the postwar era appeared essentially stable, as the nation's exports maintained a high overall standard of living and its politics were relatively uncontentious. In these circumstances, thorough criticism of state and social institutions was taken by many to be inappropriate, even dangerous or subversive. Thus the historical, political and social context of the 1960s led many educational commentators and historians to celebrate the gradual progress and potential benefits of public education in New Zealand. Phoebe Meikle's remark in a review of post-primary education at that time that 'the post-primary schools have become adult New Zealand in microcosm' could be safely assumed to be intended as a compliment to both parties concerned.¹³ In the same spirit, another prominent commentator, Des Minogue, could claim without irony that 'The growing enthusiasm for more and more education is an inevitable concomitant of the deeply rooted tradition of social, political, and economic egalitarianism'.¹⁴ Few were prepared to contest such a view or the inherent desirability of this situation.

The Currie report was probably the most important education policy statement to reflect and encourage these views. Although it could portray public education as non-political in character, it was itself a key instrument in transmitting an ideology that sought to satisfy clients, sponsors and the population as a whole about the value of state education. In concentrating on the gradual progress and high ideals incarnated in the education system, it either failed to face up to issues and aspects that failed to fit in with this perspective, or effectively marginalised them. The impact of schooling on different social and ethnic groups, the significance of differing views on the role of education, and the social implications of such devices as secondary school zoning, were contained as potential sources of dissension and conflict. But such realities, despite the comfortable and even



complacent rhetoric of the Currie report, were bound to surface eventually. When they did so, the political and social impact was all the more profound.¹⁵

The radical challenge

The 'consensus' or dominant ideology of the 1960s came under growing pressure from two very different kinds of radical challenge over the following two decades. First to develop in any strong form was a radical left-wing critique that highlighted the continuing inequalities of education and the often less than beneficent role of the state. In the 1980s a 'new right' perspective also began to gain ground, challenging the historic ideals of the education system no less than the character and effects of state involvement. The effect of both types of critique, separately and together, was to undermine the confidence in the character and development of public education that Currie had encapsulated.

Maurice Kogan has noted that in Britain in the 1970s. 'From consensus between politicians and the school system itself, education became a cockpit of many of the political issues that have emerged in Britain since the war.'¹⁶ A similar process took place in New Zealand as an increase in economic, political and social difficulties helped to stimulate discontent over the character of the education system. Economic instability threatened overall living standards and also cast doubt upon New Zealand's cherished tradition of social equality. By the 1970s it was hard to ignore 'indications of difference, based on differential access to power, wealth, and status'.¹⁷ Some went so far in reacting against the increasingly unconvincing rhetoric of equality as to argue that 'we are neither egalitarian nor a democracy and that parliament is without power, a sham'.¹⁸ Alongside this sharpened sense of social class division, two other issues also asserted themselves to heighten concern about the realities of inequality: gender and ethnicity. The rights of women climbed the political agenda, just as the rights of Maoridom and the deprivations of urbanised Maori became central concerns of the 1980s. In 1974, Ian McLaren could still emphasise the egalitarian and non-political character of education in New Zealand.¹⁹ But in this changed context, education came to seem not so much a cause for celebration as a root of conflict; less the fount of equality than a major source of inequality.

Overseas educational research combined with these changes in New Zealand society and politics to inspire more thorough and radical critiques of the character and role of education in New Zealand than had been attempted hitherto. Conflict theories of education, research into how modern schooling had tended to reproduce rather than reduce social inequalities and structures, a new focus upon the interests and motivations underpinning public education, posed a formidable challenge to the liberal assumptions about schooling that had previously seemed so convincing.²⁰ The 'new' sociology of education focused on the ways in which schools maintained the dominance of particular forms and types of knowledge, and how these processes explained the persistence of social and cultural inequalities in the wider society; 'revisionist' historians discovered that the origins and early development of schooling were based not on benevolence and humanitarianism but on social class interests and the disciplinary goals of the state.²¹ This kind of approach began to have an important influence in New Zealand by the late 1970s. Richard Bates, a leading sponsor of the 'new sociology' in New Zealand, argued that there was 'widespread evidence of the association of social class background with both educational achievement and occupational aspiration, and that 'In this respect New Zealand's experience closely parallels that of other Western countries.'²² By the mid-1980s, John Codd, Richard Harker and Roy Nash could contend that 'As the current fiscal crisis has deepened, the egalitarian rhetoric has become increasingly transparent and so incapable of sustaining the illusion that schooling is politically neutral.'²³ The role of the state came under increasing scrutiny, as did the character of the education system in maintaining inequalities based on gender and ethnicity.²⁴ Historians also began to revise previously accepted notions of how and why the education system had developed over the past century, Roy Shuker going furthest in criticising state hegemony and the reproduction of social and economic divisions.²⁵

Thus, by the 1980s a well developed left-wing critique of New Zealand education had done much, to undermine earlier confidence in the soundness and progress of the education system. At the same time, a second type of radical challenge, from the direction of the 'new right', began to pose no less of a threat. This right-wing critique also gained strength from the contemporary conflicts of New Zealand society. Like the left-wing analysis, too, it sought to interpret for the New Zealand context recent international trends in education: in this case the dominant tendencies in policy as distinct from those of research. In the United States, as Ira Shor has shown, a 'conservative restoration' took place from the late 1960s onwards, pitting 'quality' against 'equality', stressing the demands of 'excellence' and 'high standards'. According to Shor, 'Such political vocabulary dominates discussion in a conservative period. It helps authority disguise the real intention of strengthening hierarchy... The standards of the elite are posed as undebatable, the only language in which to judge the situation, a universal rather than a class-specific evaluation.'²⁶ The important policy statement *A Nation At Risk*, issued in 1983, emphasised the dominance of these concerns, which tended to supersede and marginalise earlier criticisms about inequality. Stanley Aronowitz and Henry Giroux conclude that 'the new education debate has little to do with fulfilling the American dream of social equality; justice is quite beside the point for the new conservative reformers'. The main concern of such reform, they suggest, is 'the changing world economy and the new international division of labour', for which schools are considered as producers of human capital.²⁷

The ascendancy of a 'new right' in education has been equally evident in Britain in the 1970s and 1980s. The 'Great Debate' on education, launched by Labour prime minister James Callaghan in 1976, soon led to the assertion of standards, excellence, parental choice and productivity, especially after the election of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government in 1979. During the 1980s, successive secretaries of state for education, notably Sir Keith Joseph and now Kenneth Baker, pursued a radical 'new right' agenda. Both Joseph and Baker expressed reservations over some of the schemes favoured by their most radical lobbyists, but in essence they achieved a major reorientation of the aims and character of public education. This has culminated in the Education Reform Act of 1988.²⁸ More broadly, it has sanctioned what John Quicke describes as a 'hegemonic project to construct a political discourse through which the authority of the state and traditional social values can be restored'.²⁹ The former prime minister, now Lord Callaghan, has come forward to disclaim parentage of these new developments.³⁰ But it is undoubtedly true that he was the original sponsor of a movement over which he had ultimately no control.

These important precedents, together with the growing perception on the part of many parents, educators and politicians that education has failed to live up to its inflated promises, have begun to shape a potent 'new right' critique in New Zealand also. The ingredients and preconditions for such a development have been present for some time. Even in the 1960s there were many sceptics who found Currie's optimism insufficient and even dangerous, many parents who looked to schools to restore 'traditional social values', many politicians who hoped to enhance the 'authority of the state'. The ability of Merv Wellington to pursue an uncompromising right-wing education policy, against the wishes of most educational professionals and pressure groups, in the early 1980s suggested both a potential reserve of support for such a policy and its likely future direction.³¹ The National Party fought the general election of 1987 with a high profile education spokesperson, Ruth Richardson, and a strongly worded education manifesto entitled, with no acknowledgement to its American counterpart, *A Nation At Risk*. It was suggested that 'Education is the issue in this election which most starkly presents the collision of New Zealand's traditional egalitarian ethos with the new competitive market culture.'³² Hugh Lauder has gone rather further than this, arguing that 'irrespective of which party holds office it is reasonable to assume that Right wing educational policy will be on the agenda for some time to come'.³³ It was ironic but true that the education system, its myths exploded and rationale undermined by powerful left-wing criticisms, was now all the more vulnerable to attack from the Right.

The ideology of the Picot report

The Picot report sought to respond to and accommodate the radical criticisms, of both types, that had developed since the 1960s. It was therefore much less complacent about various aspects of the education system than the Currie report had been, and not inclined to embrace Currie's theory of gradual progress. Picot was also much more sceptical of the role of the state, which Currie had seen as so benevolent and unproblematic. On the other hand it shared with Currie, and with Peter Fraser, a strong conviction that public education had important potential social benefits. It seems most apt to describe Picot as a major attempt to assert a 'neo-liberal' stance in New Zealand education. But its chances of success in its medium-term educational, social and political objectives would appear at this stage to be somewhat bleak.

The officials of the Department of Education have generally attempted since the 1960s to maintain sufficient common ground and continuity of policy to administer the education service on its established lines, while seeking to accommodate or defuse the most damaging criticisms that have arisen in that time. The Educational Development Conference report and public discussion of 1973-4 comprised an early episode in this endeavour³⁴ Bill Renwick, director-general of education under both Merv Wellington and Russell Marshall, represented this often uncomfortable mixture of continuity and accommodation in classic form. As research officer for the Currie commission in the early 1960s, Renwick had seen the prevailing ideology of education at close quarters. In the late 1970s and 1980s he presided over its dissolution. He was acutely conscious of this changing context: 'A taken-for-granted world has become problematic', he noted, ironically enough in the Sir George Currie Lecture for 1979.³⁵ Renwick was active and imaginative in seeking ways to respond to this new situation without dismantling the system as a whole or destroying its values, but appeared increasingly uncertain as to whether this would be possible: 'The net that was new in 1946 is now an old one. Can it be refashioned to do more effectively in future what it was intended to do? Or must it be replaced by a new one?'³⁶

An explicit theme in such discussions was whether a new 'myth' could be constructed to justify public investment in education in the way that the ideology associated with the Currie report had done before. One prominent commentator, Jack Shallcrass, suggested that without such a myth to exert a 'hold on the popular imagination', 'we will inevitably stagger on from one expedient to the next without direction or purpose'.³⁷ This was also a central concern for a veteran observer of education in New Zealand, C.E. Beeby. Assistant director of education in 1939 when Fraser had been minister, director of education still when the Currie commission was appointed, Beeby was now keenly aware of the declining potency of the 'myth' that he had helped to promote and sustain. According to Beeby, 'Fashions come and go, and we may or may not learn from them, but educational myths, if they are deep-rooted in the community from which they spring, are the very means by which an education system matures.'³⁸ He pointed to a 'search for a new myth' to replace that which Currie and Fraser had expressed, and saw 'equity', or 'equality of results, equality of outcome', as a likely successor to the myth of 'equality of opportunity'. But he also anticipated 'much professional and public discussion before it is accepted in some form'.³⁹ It was this 'new myth' that David Lange sought to forge after the general election of 1987. Identifying himself with Peter Fraser, Lange made himself minister of education in the hope of fostering a similar but updated 'myth' about the character and role of public education.

The Picot report was a substantial contribution toward this end. It made trenchant criticisms of the failings of the system, but combined these with a plan for reform which it claimed could help public education to achieve its social objectives. The structure of the education system, it claimed, was 'a creaky, cumbersome affair'. This, it added, was 'not the result of an overall plan or design, but has taken on its present shape by increments a accretion'.⁴⁰ Picot saw the system as too centralised, its administration as too complex and divided, and argued that a lack of information and choice, ineffective management practices, a widespread sense of 'powerlessness', and 'consumer dissatisfaction and disaffection', had resulted from these basic problems. The report concluded that

'Tinkering with the system will not be sufficient to achieve the improvements now required. In our view the time has come for quite radical change, particularly to reduce the number of decision points between the central provision of policy, funding, and services and the education delivered by the school or institution.'⁴¹ Picot had thus abandoned the liberal-progressive assumptions of the Currie report; but he had just as surely rejected Currie's confidence in the authority of the state. For 'effective administration' to be achieved, 'decisions should be made as close as possible to where they are carried out', and to this end the report determined that

Individual learning institutions will be the basic unit of education administration. This is where there will be the strongest direct interest in the educational outcomes and the best information about local circumstances. People in the institutions should make as many of the decisions that affect the institution as possible - only when it would be inappropriate should decisions be made elsewhere.⁴²

These administrative reforms, according to Picot, could have 'positive beneficial and exciting' social and economic consequences,⁴³ including for the most deprived groups in society. Public education would then at last fulfil the objectives upon which Picot claimed it should be based: first, that 'Every learner should gain the maximum individual and social benefit from the money spent on education', and second, that 'Education should be fair and just- for every learner regardless of their gender, and of their social, cultural or geographic circumstances.'⁴⁴

This was an appealing prescription for change that appeared to meet Lange's requirements. It set a novel and far-reaching agenda that sought to respond to the criticisms of both left and right, while retaining the criteria and objectives of public education that had been uppermost in the 1950s and 1960s. Lange expressed strong confidence in the generally positive characteristics of the education system, and equal faith in the possibility of peaceful and rational change. He reacted sharply to the pessimism of one critic. Roger Openshaw: 'He is right in asking us to question our assumptions. But I disagree with his pessimism. The answer is not to wring our hands and cry doom. The answer to overcome inequalities arising from gender, race, income or environment is to change attitudes and to introduce carefully-considered change.'⁴⁵ Such optimism and confidence, combined with his support for the established objectives of the education system, marked him out as a 'neo-liberal' as distinct

From either radical-left or new right. He was clearly hoping to draw the sting from both groups, partly by adopting a similar vocabulary to that employed by radical critics. He favoured 'equity', for example, but this was to be counterbalanced by a Concern for 'standards'. The aim apparently was to establish a *via media* that would regain general confidence in public education in New Zealand; a new 'myth', but one in the tradition of Fraser, Beeby and Currie.⁴⁶

In fact, though, Lange's optimism seems misplaced, even naive. There are at least four important reasons why Picot's recommendations are unlikely to achieve what the Minister of Education is seeking. First, administrative reform has major inherent limitations. The Currie report, indeed, made a valid point on this, to which Picot never really addresses itself. Currie suggested that 'The danger ... is not that the importance of administration should be overlooked, but that it should be overestimated, and that the advantages to be derived from a change in any administrative system at any point of time may be exaggerated.' This was because

Administration normally stops short at the classroom door. It cannot, of itself, transform or alter except in a limited way educational processes which depend on basic ideas of what should be taught to children and how instruction should be given ... Good educational administration is largely dependent on an active teaching body.⁴⁷

The implication of this is that reform of the curriculum and of everyday practices within schools, more important yet at the same time more difficult than administrative reform, will also be necessary in order to improve the outcomes of education. The most 'effective administration' in education in the world, on its own, will fail to achieve the objectives that Lange and Picot desire.

Second, there is a vital difference between policy and practice. The recommendations of official policy, reasonable and rational through they may appear on the printed page, tend in practice to become distorted. Such distortion can take the form of subversion, deliberate or otherwise, on the part of interest groups whose responsibility it is to interpret national policy in their own local and school circumstances. It can also involve neglecting major aspects of the reform on grounds of expense or lack of applicability, so that the reform as a whole becomes ineffective, narrow, or divisive in its impact.⁴⁸ It has been a characteristic error of educational reformers in the twentieth century to assume that policy edicts will lead directly to the results that they intend. Picot's recommendations, which allow maximum scope for local interpretation, may well repeat this error, with unpredictable results.

A third problem is that the Picot plan is unlikely to appease or satisfy radical-left critics. There have already been strong protests, probably well founded, that Picot will do little in practical terms to promote social equality and will in some cases even intensify existing inequalities.⁴⁹ Thus the reform will be vulnerable to the charge that, like Currie before it, it fails in practice to live up to its inflated promises. In the longer term, however, perhaps a greater threat will arise from another quarter, that of the radical right, which constitutes the fourth major difficulty for the Picot reforms. If past experience in Britain and the United States, and the recent growth of a 'new right' in New Zealand, are any guide, the radical right will eventually seek to pursue its own interpretation of Picot into the classroom, the curriculum, the teaching force, the NZCER, and the Ministry. Administration alone, it may well be argued, will be insufficient to attain the goals of 'excellence' and of 'economic productivity'. Picot has thus the potential for being exploited and extended for more radical and divisive ends. This seems particularly the case in view of the influence apparently enjoyed by the Treasury and the State Services Commission which according to one member of the Picot commission, Dr Peter Ramsay, already 'have their tentacles well and truly entrenched in educational decision making.'⁵⁰

The Picot report itself is reminiscent of the early stages of the 'Great Debate' in Britain, rather than of full blown Thatcherism. Lange has much more in common with Callaghan and Shirley Williams than with Thatcher or even the more emollient Baker. But in retrospect the major significance of Callaghan's intervention and of the 'Great Debate' was as a prelude to and legitimisation of Thatcher's later radical reforms. It may well be that the good intentions of the current initiative in New Zealand will take us in a similar direction. The opportunity still exists for further initiatives to reform the system and update the ideology or 'myth' formerly attached to the Currie report. But it will require much more than the Picot report seems likely to provide if the centre is to hold.

Notes and references

1. Report of Commission on Education in New Zealand (Currie report Wellington, Government Printer, 1962), 6.
2. *Ibid.*, 11-12.
3. *Ibid.*, 218.
4. *Ibid.*, 6.
5. *Ibid.*, 71.
6. *Ibid.*, 12-13.
7. *Ibid.*, 171-2.
8. *Ibid.*, 16.
9. *Ibid.*, 35.
10. *Ibid.*, 126.

11. Notable examples of this tendency include, in America, E.P. Cubberley, *Public Education In the United States* (1919); in Britain, G.A.N. Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press 1937; 2nd edn 1969); and in New Zealand. Ian and Alan Cumming, *A History Of State Education In New Zealand* (Wellington: Pitman 1978). For a more general version, see e.g. W.F. Connell, *A History Of Education In The Twentieth Century World* (New York: Teachers College Press 1980).
12. Keith Sinclair, *A History Of New Zealand* (London: Penguin 1959; 1980 edn), 188.
13. Phoebe Meikle, *School and Nation: Post-Primary Education Since The War* (Wellington: NZCER 1961), 5.
14. Des Minogue, 'Universal secondary education in New Zealand', in *World Year Book Of Education 1965, 'The Education Explosion'* London, Evans Brothers, 422.
15. For discussions of some of these underlying realities, see e.g. Gary McCulloch, '"Secondary education without selection"? School zoning policy in Auckland since 1945', *NZJES*, 21/2 (1986) 98-112; Barry Cocklin, David Battersby, 'Gender' the hidden agenda: a case-study in educational decision-making', *NZJES*, 22/1 (1987), 59-70; and Judith Simon, *Ideology In The Schooling Of Maori Children* (Palmerston North: Delta Monograph 1986).
16. Maurice Kogan, *The Politics Of Educational Change* (London: Fontana 1978), 51.
17. David Pitt, 'Are there social classes in New Zealand?', in David Pitt (ed.), *Social Class In New Zealand* (Auckland: Longman Paul 1977), 21. See also e.g. Sinclair, *A History Of New Zealand*, 'The uncertain seventies'.
18. Tony Simpson, *A Vision Betrayed: The Decline Of Democracy In New Zealand* (Auckland: Hodder Stoughton 1984), 276.
19. Ian McLaren, *Education In A Small Democracy: New Zealand* (London: RKP 1974).
20. Some of this research is reviewed in Jerome Karabel, A. H. Halsey. 'Educational research: a review and an interpretation'. in J. Karabel. A.H. Halsey (eds.). *Power And Ideology In Education* (New York: Oxford University Press 1977), 1-85; and Henry Giroux. 'Theories of reproduction and resistance in the new sociology of education: a critical analysis'. in *Harvard Educational Review*, 53/3 (1983), 257-93.
21. See e.g. M.F.D. Young (ed.), *Knowledge And Control* (London: Collier-Macmillan 1971); Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis, *Schooling In Capitalist America* (London: RKP 1976); Michael Katz, *Reconstructing American Education* (Cambridge. Mass: Harvard University Press 1987).
22. Richard Bates, 'Social class, education, and cultural reproduction in New Zealand', in Graham Robinson, Brian O'Rorke (eds.). *Schools In New Zealand Society* (Auckland: Longman Paul 1980), 259.
23. John Codd, Richard Harker, Roy Nash, 'Introduction: education, politics and the economic crisis', in J. Codd, R. Harker, R. Nash (eds.), *Political Issues In New Zealand Education* (Palmerston North: Dunmore 1985), 10.
24. e.g. Sue Middleton (ed.), *Women And Education In Aotearoa* (Wellington: Allen and Unwin 1988); Richard Harker, K.R. McConnochie, *Education As Cultural Artefact* (Palmerston North: Dunmore 1985); Walter Hirsh, Raymond Scott (ed.), *Getting It Right: Aspects Of Ethnicity And Equity In New Zealand Education* (Auckland, Office of the Race Relations Conciliator 1988).
25. See esp. Roy Shuker, *The One Best System? A Revisionist History Of State Schooling In New Zealand* (Palmerston North: Dunmore 1987). Also Roger Openshaw. David McKenzie (eds.), *Reinterpreting The Educational Past* (Wellington: NZCER 1987).
26. Ira Shor, *Culture Wars: School And Society In The Conservative Restoration, 1969-1984* (Boston: RKP 1986), 7.
27. Stanley Aronowitz. Henry Giroux, *Education Under Seige: The Conservative, Liberal And Radical Debate Over Schooling* (London: RKP 1986), 3. See also Marvin Lazerson et al, *An Education Of Value: The Purposes And Practices Of Schools* (Cambridge: CUP 1985).
28. For a strong left-wing critique of the current legislation, see Brian Simon, *Bending The Rules: The Baker 'Reform' Of Education* (London: Lawrence and Wishart 1988); Julian Haviland (ed.), *Take Care, Mr*

Baker! (London: Fourth Estate Books 1988) presents the varied advice sent to the Government on the issue of education reform.

29. John Quicke, 'The "new right" and education, *Br. Jnl of Ed. Studies*, 16/1 (1988), 5.
30. *The Times Educational Supplement*, 11 March 1988, report, 'Sunny Jim breezes into the lion's den'; *The Independent*, 7 March 1988, report, 'Children victim of education dogma, Callaghan says'.
31. For Wellington's own account of the character and problems of education in New Zealand, see Merv Wellington, *New Zealand In Crisis* (Auckland: Endeavour Press 1985).
32. *New Zealand Herald*, 15 July 1987, report, 'Education curriculum unlikely to have narrower focus'. See also e.g. *New Zealand Herald*, 24 June 1987, report, 'Party looking to "thinkers" on education'.
33. Hugh Lauder, 'The New Right and educational policy in New Zealand', *NZJES*, 22/1 (1987), 3.
34. Educational Development Conference, *Improving Learning And Teaching* (Wellington 1974).
35. W.L. Renwick, 'Marrying the spirit of the age' (1979), in W.L. Renwick, *Moving Targets: Six Essays On Educational Policy* (Wellington, NZCER, 1986), 123.
36. W.L. Renwick, 'Forty years on in New Zealand education: a new net goes fishing' (August 1986), 25.
37. Jack Shallcrass, 'New myths and no mistakes', *NZ Listener*, 21 September 1985.
38. C.E. Beeby, 'Introduction', in Renwick, *Moving Targets*, xvi.
39. C. E. Beeby, 'The place of myth in educational change', in *NZ Listener*, 8 November 1986.
40. Taskforce to review education administration, *Administering For Excellence: Effective Administration In Education* (Picot report, Wellington, 1988), 22.
41. *Ibid.*, 36.
42. *Ibid.*, x1.
43. *Ibid.*, 98.
44. *Ibid.*, 3.
45. David Lange, 'Schools will change': commentary on Roger Openshaw, 'schools won't change', in *Set*, 1/1988, item 6.
46. *New Zealand Herald*, 23 July 1988, report 'Trim PM tackles "New Right"', gives an interesting insight on Lange's general political aims within which we may locate his education policy.
47. Currie report. 67.
48. For an example of how national policy can be distorted in practice see Gary McGulloch. 'The Norwood report and the secondary school curriculum'. *History Of Education Review*, 1988, in press.
49. e.g. *Central Leader*, 28 June 1988, report, '"Divisive", say educationalists, parents'.
50. *New Zealand Herald*, 25 July 1988, report. 'Professor reveals pressure put on Picot report'.

Education in New Zealand. Our education system reflects our unique and diverse society, which welcomes different abilities, religious beliefs, ethnic groups, income levels and ideas about teaching and learning. About our education system. Education in New Zealand is a student-centred pathway providing continuous learning progression and choice so that: students progress every year, and. However some schools have a policy of starting children at school together as a group at the start of each term (cohort entry). Most children stay at school until they're around 17 years old. The education system for schools is made up of 13 Year levels. Your child's primary education starts at Year 1 and goes to Year 8 (around 5-12 years of age). New Zealand has a shorter human history than any other country. Short, yes, but the amount of change this country experienced was pretty phenomenal. It all started with the Maori. Using awesome navigational skills to make their way from a Polynesian island they called Hawaiki to Aotearoa (New Zealand), they migrated to New Zealand in the 1300s. Early Maori history has been passed on through song and stories, as there was no early Maori written language. The Europeans didn't know New Zealand even existed until 1642. By using this website you agree to our Privacy Policy and terms of use within it which includes sponsored posts and affiliate links. Connect with us. Footer Global. The education system in New Zealand is quite simple and is divided into various stages. This is very convenient, as it allows you to gradually move along the educational ladder and at the same time retain the possibility of flexible choice. Pre-school education in new zealand. Children have the opportunity to go to kindergartens from birth and up to 5 or 6 years of age until they go to school. In New Zealand, there are several types of universities that offer professional education for their students. The state partially subsidizes higher education, so residents and citizens of New Zealand pay only about NZ \$ 7,000 per year, whereas, for international students, study costs more. A short history of new zealand. By Tim Lambert. THE MAORI. Meanwhile in 1877 free, compulsory education was introduced in New Zealand. In 1894 compulsory state arbitration labour disputes was introduced. In 1898 old age pensions were created. New zealand in the 20TH century. New Zealand was made a dominion in 1907. Meanwhile soldiers from New Zealand fought in the Boer War of 1899-1902. Many also fought in the First World War. Some 17,000 men from New Zealand were killed, a terrible figure considering the population was only around 1 million. Furthermore in the 1930s, like the rest of the world, New Zealand suffered from the depression. By 1933 about The education system in New Zealand is a three-tier model which includes primary and intermediate schools, followed by secondary schools (high schools) and tertiary education at universities and polytechnics. The academic year in New Zealand varies between institutions, but generally runs from early February until mid-December for primary schools, late January to late November or early December for secondary schools and polytechnics, and from late February until mid-November for universities.