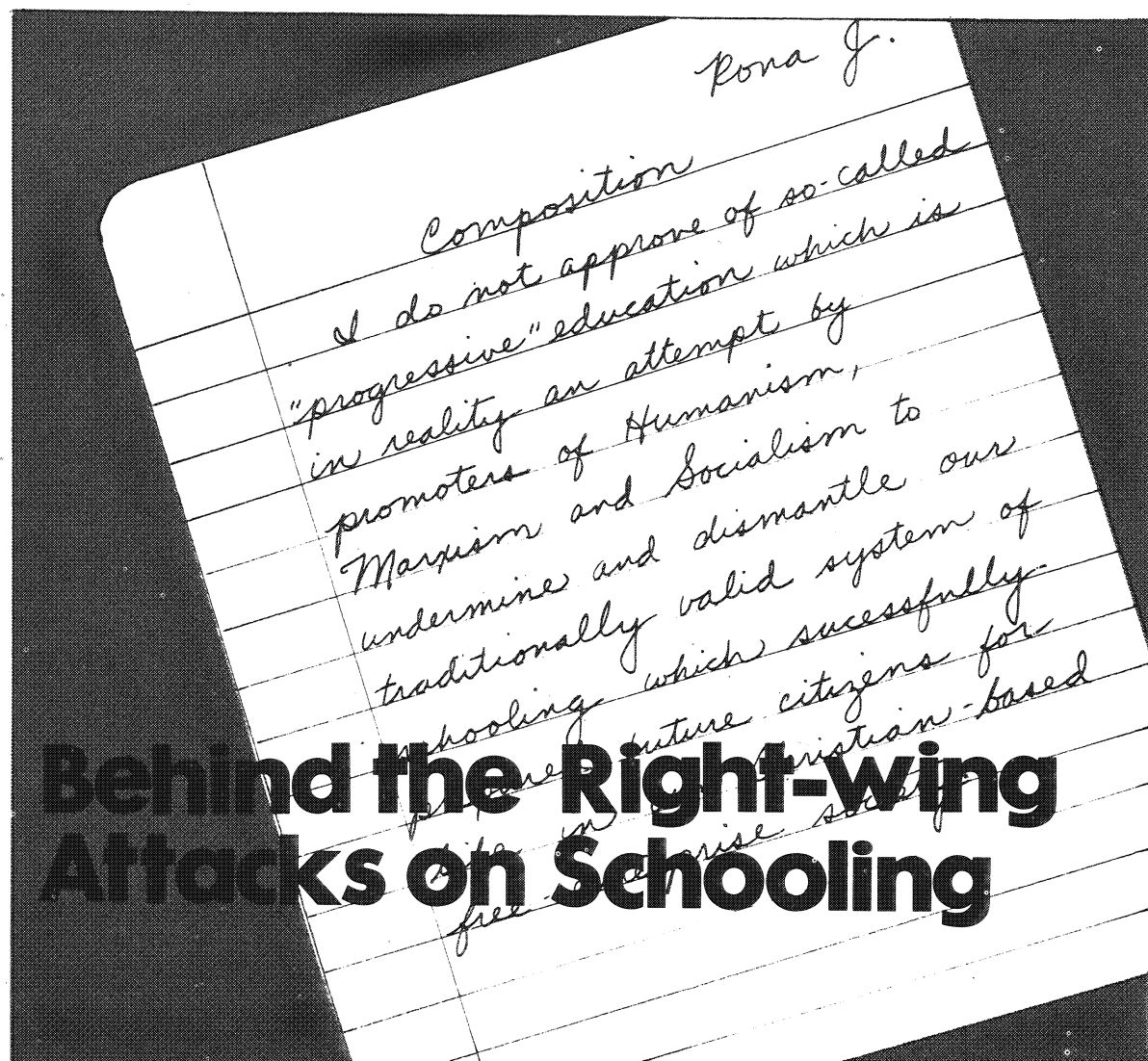


Radical Education Dossier

8



Autumn 1979 \$1.00*

8

RADICAL EDUCATION DOSSIER

Contents

-
- 4 John Freeland —
STOP! CARE to COME and PROBE the Right-
wing PIE — Behind the Attacks
- 4 John Freeland —
STOP! CARE TO COME and PROBE the Right-
wing PIE — Behind the Attacks
- 8 Simon Frith —
Education and Industry
- 12 David McCallum —
Teacher Unemployment (1) —
The Supply and Demand Hoax
- 15 Michael Presdee —
Teacher Unemployment (2) —
Selection, Rejection and Social Control
- 20 Peter Masters —
Blaming the Victims — Teachers and Discipline
- 23 Robert Mackie —
The Bourgeois Backlash or
Who Killed William Tyndale?
- 26 Frances Brown —
A Women's Place is in the . . .
- 28 RED REVIEWS
-

March, 1979.

Number 8 has been compiled and produced by Sam Altman, Clift Barnard, Janet Kossy, Sara McPherson, Carol O'Donnell and Peter Wilson.

Copyright for all material rests with the contributors and Radical Education Publications. Permission to reproduce must be sought from the editorial collective, PO Box 197, Glebe, NSW 2037.

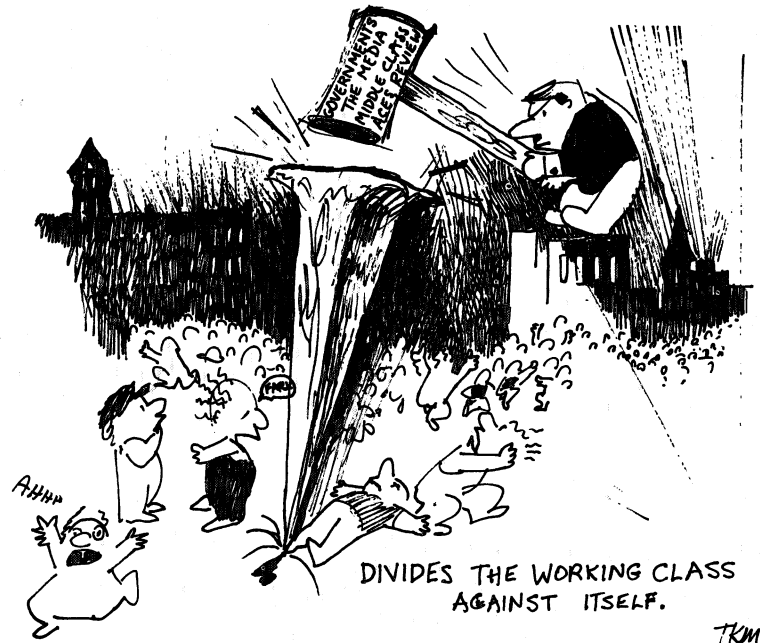
Typesetting: Propaganda, 660 0037.

Printing: Thumb Print, 5 Knox Street, Chppendale 2008.

*Recommended and maximum retail price only.

ISBN 0314-6251.

THE RIGHT WING WEDGE



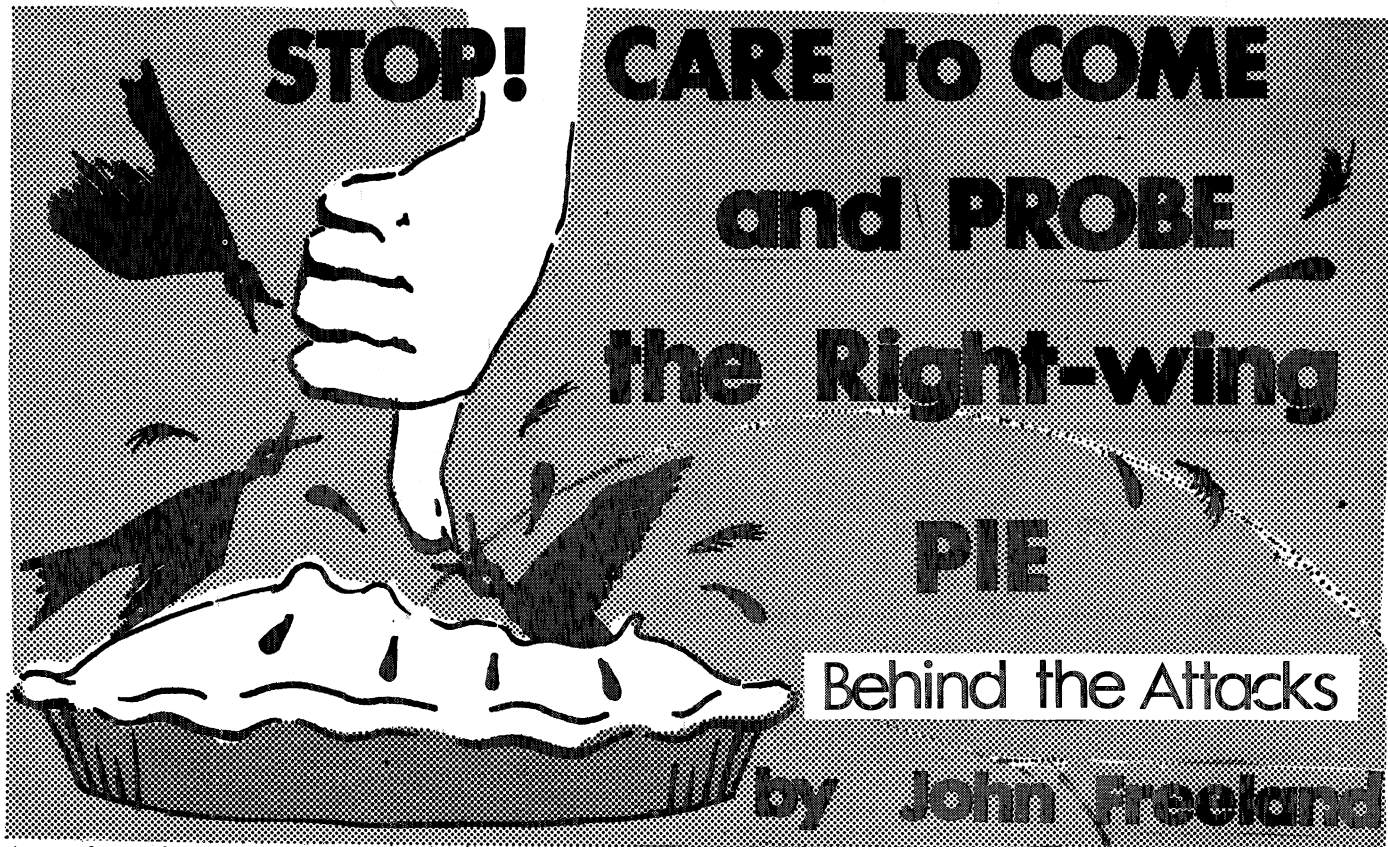
The right wing has made big inroads into schooling recently. Teachers and schools have been blamed for youth unemployment; 'standards' and 'discipline' are claimed to be declining; progressive new teaching methods have been criticised.

The response of liberal educationalists, teachers' unions and parents' organisations has been largely ineffective — piecemeal rearguard actions, just hoping to hold the line. And this is largely because these groups have not worked out how the right wing attacks are linked to the economic crisis. We must understand how youth and teacher unemployment flow from technological and structural changes in the economy before we can defend ourselves against the cuts in spending on health, welfare and education which governments throughout the capitalist world are foisting on working people.

If capitalism is to recover from the current recession, the State must secure a redistribution of profits away from labour and towards capital. This requires a compliant labour movement. In the field of schooling, that means teacher unemployment and the threat of it to keep those already employed in line.

If present practices in schooling can be discredited, so much the better — the resistance to cutbacks is lessened. If massive, long term youth unemployment can be blamed on schooling, so much the better — that justifies the cant about standards, about liberal social studies courses, and about anti-sexist programs.

RED 8 seeks to stimulate the much needed analysis of the right wing attacks. Some of the key issues and events in the 'great debate' about schools are examined and related to economic, political and ideological factors. We hope that this will initiate a coherent Marxist reply to the attacks by drawing together struggles which need to be seen as parts of a whole.



A significant feature of the current attacks on liberal based schooling practice has been the ability of extreme right wing Christian fundamentalist groups to represent the interests of employers. These groups have proliferated in recent years and it is important to understand their ideology, their practice and their national and international connections with the political right.

Of all the organisations (see box) the most significant are those based in Queensland, especially those coming under the umbrella of Rona Joyner's twin groups STOP and CARE. Their significance lies in three facts: firstly, the alarming success of the right wing attacks on schooling in Queensland; secondly, the fact that it is Rona Joyner who has provided most of the material for the attacks in other states; and thirdly, the fact that Rona Joyner has developed a logically coherent and consistent moral, political and social ideology. She combines this ideology with an effective political practice to exploit the fears of people made insecure by recent changes in the family and schooling, by the economic recession, by technological change and by the growing demands of women, blacks and migrants.

The STOP/CARE Ideology

Unlike conservatives who largely accept the present and reject the future Rona Joyner rejects the present as well. This dual rejection leads her to be a committed political activist.

'It is not the role of the school to fit children into our society as it is now — it's a rather sick society, and therefore I feel the education should be geared towards preparing children to become citizens of a better society.

(R Joyner, *Stop Press*, March 1978)

It should be noted that her dual rejection of present and future, while being a political disadvantage in the long boom to 1974, is a political plus at the present time. It provides a valuable point of ideological communication with people who are threatened and insecure.

The direction of her activism is provided by her adherence to a rigid Christian fundamentalism.

'... the point at issue is what is right and wrong — what God has to say on these matters . . . A school cannot serve two masters. It cannot serve the God of the Bible and the god of the humanist, which is human reason.' (ibid)

Might is not right — RIGHT IS MIGHT! It is not numbers that count, but whether our cause is right and just. It is always true — that ONE WITH GOD is a majority.' (ibid)

Thus the core of her ideology is a belief that all knowledge and wisdom are to be found in the words of the Lord in the scriptures, and predominantly in the Old Testament. Flowing from this assumption is the belief that she possesses the correct reading of the scriptures, that she is only the mouthpiece of the Lord.

'What they overlook, of course, is that this battle is God's, not mine. They have **earthly** resources, but **we** have **Christ**.' 'STOP & CARE is nothing more than an earthly instrument that the Lord appears to be using at this time to do his will.' (ibid)

In passing it is worth noting that this view of divine intervention is shared by Mrs Bjelke Petersen.

'The Lord leads and guides in wonderful ways . . . They were going to put him (Joh) out after two years. But someone told him so he could organise his forces, and I think he probably reinforced his position. This was God's work. Tom Lewis wasn't told. He just turned up in NSW and they tossed him out.' (The Bulletin, 1/10/77)

Rona Joyner combines the assumption of divine intervention with a selectively literal reading of the Bible. She totally accepts the creation myth (she opposes the teaching of evolution) and the notion of original sin. The only way to salvation is through total acceptance of **her** Lord; through one's total subjection to **her** Lord; and to deny existence outside **her** Lord. All those, including humanist christians, who reject **her** all knowing and

all-powerful Lord are the epitomy of the anti-Christ, they are equally evil and are to be condemned to Hell.

Flowing from this is a total rejection of all human knowledge based on reason and science and an explicit rejection of the principles of democracy — 'one with God is a majority'. As such, Rona Joyner is an authoritarian reactionary activist and the extent of her organisations and the less formalised support she can muster on specific campaigns make her representative of a dangerous social and political force in Australian society.

Equally explicit in her brand of non-sectarian fundamentalism is a blatant heterosexism and racism.

'The only accurate and appropriate information regarding the right interpersonal sexual behaviour that is available to the human race is to be found in the Bible.'

(Rona Joyner, 23/9/74)

'If homosexuality was not an unnatural perversion of the procreative act, then sodomy should normally result in creation of life.'

(Rona Joyner, letter to *The Queensland Times*, Ipswich 15/9/76)

'Among them (the schools using MACOS) are aboriginal centres of learning at Mornington Island, Weipa North, Bamaga and Aurukun Mission. And that's where the eskimos (in the MACOS course) are doing so much harm. The film (on eskimo life) is concerned to a large extent with spiritualism. Our aboriginal people are just coming out of paganism and into the light of Christianity. This sort of thing is dragging

them back to the world of evil spirits again.'

(Rona Joyner, *The Sunday Sun*, 26/9/77)

Last, when applied to the arena of schooling, Rona Joyner's religious fundamentalism and reactionary political ideology becomes a dogmatic assertion of traditional syllabi and pedagogy.

'Can we make children learn?

Yes, we can, if we begin by making them listen in Church and during Bible studies at home. The same Holy Spirit who teaches adults also teaches children. The habit of concentration and learning must be instilled and the younger the better, for children (sinful by nature) are opposed to many things that are for their good, including the achieving of knowledge, maturity and wisdom. The scriptural method of educating children is teaching by rote, memorising, and learning from the examples of history, especially Bible history which was written for our admonition.'

(Rona Joyner, source unknown)

Thus we have the basics of Rona Joyner's moral, political and schooling ideology. To understand her political effectiveness however, it is essential to examine her national and international political connections.

Joyner's Political Network

Rona Joyner's point of departure from narrow religious fundamentalism to her activist and reactionary political practice can be seen in her connections with people such as Mary Whitehouse and her advocacy of publications of the John Birch Society.

THE ORGANISED RIGHT AROUND EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND AND NEW SOUTH WALES

Group	Leader	Location
Society to Outlaw Pornography (STOP)	Rona Joyner	Brisbane
Campaign Against Regressive Education (CARE)	Rona Joyner	Brisbane
Parents of Tertiary Students Association		Brisbane
Committee on Morals and Education (COME)		Gladstone
Parents Campaign for Responsible Education		Townsville
Festival of Light	Fred Nile	Sydney
Parents Responsibility of Better Education (Parent Probe)	Shirley Hamilton	Sydney
Parents in Education (PIE)		Baulkham Hills
Concerned Parents		Baulkham Hills
Parents' Rights in Education Planning (PREP)		Baulkham Hills
The Australian League of Rights	Eric Butler	
The Australia Way Association		
The Australian Heritage Society		
Ladies in Line Against Communism (LILAC)		
Women's Rural Action Committee		
The National Civic Council	Bob Santamaria	
Brisbane Men's Committee		
The Australian Council for Educational Standards (ACES)	Leonie Kramer/Harry Messel	Melbourne
The Queensland Council for Educational Standards		Brisbane
Campaign to Raise Educational Standards		Brisbane
Community Standards Organisation		Brisbane
Women's Action Group (WAG)		Brisbane
The Anti Marxist Education Committee		Brisbane
Catholic Women's League		
Catholics United for the Faith		
Christian Mission to the Communist World		

While it is unknown whether or not Joyner has any formal links with the John Birch Society, STOP & CARE actively publicise and distribute books such as *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*, *The Naked Capitalist* and Garry Allen's *New Education: The Radicals Are After Your Children* published in the John Birch journal *American Opinion*.

The argument presented by the John Birch Society is that there is an international conspiracy, masterminded by socialists and communists but with humanist and capitalist complicity, to secure world power. The common Australian variant of this argument is that the same conspiracy is really the product of 'international Zionism'. It is this view which has been associated with the Australian League of Rights and its various front organisations such as The Australian Heritage Society and Ladies In Line Against Communism.

This conspiracy theory has significant links with the right wing attacks on liberal schooling practice in Queensland in particular. One of the earliest attacks made on MACOS¹ in Queensland was made by D. G. Shelton in *Education for What?* in 1974. The attack was made in terms of MACOS being an integral part of the international Zionist/communist/capitalist conspiracy. Furthermore, the Australian League of Rights has been prominent in the campaign against MACOS and SEMP¹. When the Queensland Teachers Union took SEMP materials to Chinchilla as part of its campaign, LILAC organised approximately 200 people to attend the public meeting and support a motion congratulating the Queensland Government for banning both MACOS and SEMP.

It is but a short and logical step for Rona Joyner to accept the conspiracy theory perpetrated by the far right. Her fundamentalism proclaims that the only legitimate source of knowledge, authority and power is God. All who deny this perspective and seek to develop human knowledge based on reason (human resources) and all who seek human authority and power (in the name of human causes) over other human beings are performing the work of the anti-Christ. They are all (from the Christian humanists to the communists) part of the secular humanist socialist conspiracy.

It is this line of thinking which forms the basis of Joyner's attacks on MACOS, SEMP, sex education, progressive pedagogy and most social science education. Joyner derived many of her arguments from Gary Allen's article which she has distributed

widely in Queensland. Allen argues that there is an international Marxist conspiracy to create a collectivist world government and that subversion of schooling is the means to this end being utilised in the west. Implicated in this conspiracy have been Cecil Rhodes, Fabian Socialism, John Dewey, Andrew Carnegie, J. D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford, Jerome Brunner, Benjamin Bloom and B. F. Skinner. The argument against MACOS is that it is an integral part of this conspiracy developed by Brunner under the auspices of the US National Science Foundation (NSF). The NSF displayed its true conspiratorial colours when it developed a school biology course which taught evolutionary theory.

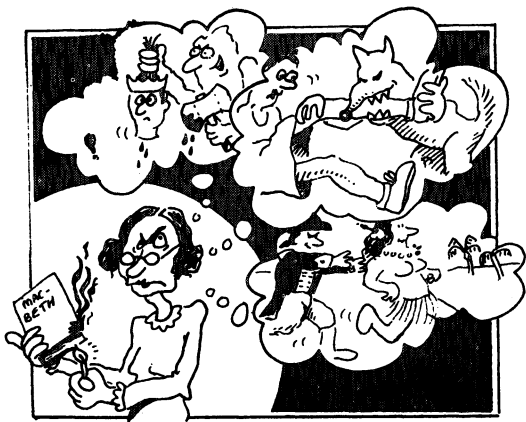
Joyner's attack on MACOS had been well rehearsed in the US before it became an issue in Australia. The detailed information backing the attacks was furnished by a Mr. George Archibald, a senior research person in the US Congress. On June 20, 1977 he wrote a letter to a Mr. P. Clements of the New Zealand Concerned Parents Association, outlining the specifics of the attack on MACOS. Included with the letter were a number of articles highly critical of MACOS for being anti-Christian, secular humanist and mind twisting in the interests of one world government. The letter and the articles found their way to Rona Joyner in Brisbane and were subsequently used as the basis of the anti-MACOS campaign by her organisations, by the League of Rights and by Dr. Rupert Goodman, patron of the Brisbane Men's Committee, a front for the National Civic Council.

Subsequent to her Queensland campaign the same materials provided the basis for Parent Probe's attacks on both MACOS and SEMP in New South Wales. Furthermore, Goodman spoke at a Festival of Light conference on social science education at Macquarie University in August 1977. Rona Joyner has also made a number of speaking tours of rural regions in New South Wales. As well as Rupert Goodman's ties with the Festival of Light Mrs Joyner has developed a close association with that organisation. Mary Whitehouse's speaking tour of Australia in 1978 was co-sponsored in Queensland by FOL and STOP & CARE. Similarly, in 1977 the visit of Texan 'text book watcher' Mrs Mel. Gabler, was sponsored in New South Wales by FOL and in Queensland by STOP & CARE. Both women were guest speakers at functions hosted by Mrs Bjelke-Petersen.

As well as these connections Mrs Joyner distributes materials emanating from numerous right wing groups in the US such as Christian Crusade, Network of Patriotic Letterwriters, Good Neighbours, Christian Family Renewal Books and The Independent American.

Joyner's Political Appeal

Given the nature of Rona Joyner's moral, political and educational ideology it appears improbable that her campaigns could have been so successful. In fact for a long time they were not. For a number of years she travelled Queensland conducting her propaganda campaign to little obvious avail. She did, however, succeed in establishing a number of related organisations such as the Committee on Morals and Education (COME) in Gladstone and Parents Campaign for Responsible Education in Townsville. Further, she established valuable contacts with the established right wing networks which had been operating for years in some regions (the League of Rights on the Darling Downs) and more recently in other centres (the Conservative Clubs established in provincial cities in Queensland during the Whitlam years). She also worked very effectively to develop a loyal following among older women by addressing meetings of concerned women and citizens and local church gatherings.



1 MACOS (Man A Course of Study) and SEMP (Social Education Materials Project) are both teaching kits containing written information, slides and audio cassettes.

However, with the onset of the international economic recession in 1974 the socio-political climate shifted significantly to the right, which was to her advantage. In the latter phase of the long boom there had been an international upsurge of social criticism associated with the 'new left'. There had been significant structural change in the economic sector and this was accompanied by social changes which were seen to threaten traditional social institutions such as the family, the church, the RSL as well as the traditional, narrowly defined moral orthodoxy. Towards the end of the boom rural and provincial Australia were found suffering from the effects of the rural recession. The economic recession then exacerbated these pressures. One effect of this was that work was no longer assured for the young or seen as secure for the employed. Small petit-bourgeois producers were also severely affected and many provincial and rural enterprises collapsed.

As a consequence then, wherever people in provincial and rural Australia turned, the secure world of work, of steadfast moral standards and traditional social institutions was under severe challenge: The traditional conservative stance of accepting and defending the present became obsolete. People no longer wanted to perpetuate the present into the future: they wanted to return to past securities, to the mythical golden past. These broad economic and social changes in Australia had the effect of creating a conservative endorsement of Rona Joyner's rejection of both the present and future.

Furthermore, the contradiction between the liberal ideology of the autonomous, free and equal subject and the lived experience of most people was made more glaring and intolerable by the recession. To many people every aspect of their daily lives was an assertion that to the system they were nothing, that they were irrelevant and replaceable. To accept this and to simultaneously retain their adherence to the liberal ideology of the individual thus became increasingly difficult. The classic right wing conspiracy theory plays on these subjective feelings: the world is presented as a conspiracy of the big and powerful against the poor and small. It is in this sense that Joyner's reactionary fundamentalism strikes a chord with traditional conservative agrarian and fundamentalist populism in rural Australia.

Given the increasing subjective feelings (and they are based on the material reality of most people's lives) of alienation, isolation and powerlessness, Joyner's ideology and practice offers two more points of contact and relevance. Firstly, her fundamentalist belief that the only road to salvation is through total subjection to the Lord (her Lord) offers an affirmation of people's lived experience. They are nothing and it is only through being nothing before the Lord that they can become something through the Lord, by doing the Lord's work on earth. '... this battle is God's, not mine'. This is the second point of contact. Rona Joyner is an activist and she offers many people a moral and political objective and a means to attain it — but only through the Lord.

There is a general religious revival in the West coinciding with a crisis of international capitalism: a revival taking many forms ranging from eastern mysticism to the born again Jesus movement. Its source is structural change which creates insecurity. Its offer is security, identity and salvation whether it is in the name of Jimmy Jones or Rona Joyner. The Joyner variety finds its support among the traditionally conservative older population of rural and provincial Australia. When mobilised this population can form a significant social and political force.



Rona Joyner and the organised extreme right in Australia have succeeded in doing just this.

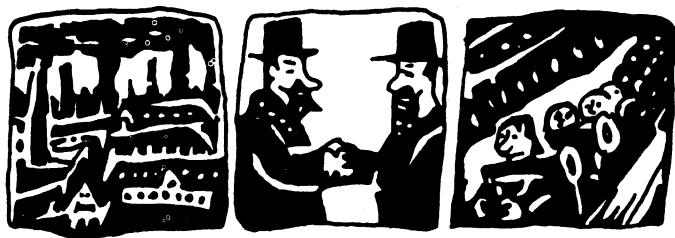
Within this overall right wing assault schooling has been a major target. The liberal progressive reforms of the past ten years, the failure of schools to produce equality of opportunity, the obvious failure of credentialism and the utilisation of schooling by feminists and other social reformers combine to raise the right's hostility. The right recognises the ideological importance of schooling and it is determined to join in battle with all the humanists and socialists who presumably seek to take over the world through schooling.

That these attacks effectively combine with the campaigns being waged by the secular groups such as ACES is obvious. That the overall attacks on liberal schooling effectively serves the present interests of employers is also obvious. Capital requires a significant restructuring and redirection of schooling to ensure that it more adequately caters for the industrial requirements of the economy. This restructuring and redirection is made more easy if the ideological ground has been prepared, if liberal schooling has been discredited in the public mind. That this process is proceeding and succeeding is again obvious. It is up to the left to develop an effective counter.

Useful References on the Right

- Allen, G. 'New Education: The radicals are after your children', *American Opinion*.
- 'Broadband', 26/9/78; 29/9/78; and 25/10/78. *Australian Broadcasting Commission*, Sydney.
- 'A.C.E.S. Review', *Australian Council for Educational Standards*, 1973.
- Cox, C. B. and Boyson, R. (eds), 1975. *Black Paper 1975: The fight for education*, London, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.
- Freeland J. 1979, 'MACOS and SEMP in Queensland: a case study in ideological class struggle', *Intervention* No 12.
- Ray, J. J. (ed) 1974. *Conservatism as Heresy*, Sydney, Australian and New Zealand Book Company.
- Richmond, K. 1975. 'The League of Rights: a study during the period of the ALP in government', in Scott, R. and Richardson, J. (eds) *The First Thousand Days of Labor Vol 1*, Canberra, CAE.
- Schelton, D. 1974. *Education for What?* Brisbane Conventor Press.
- Smith, R. and Knight, J. 1978, 'MACOS in Queensland: the politics of educational knowledge', *Australian Journal of Education*, Vol 22 No 3.

Education and Industry*



by **Simon Frith**

conceals a much wider process of reorganising the roles of state and industry in the preparation of young workers.

The 'great debate' on education has revolved around a belief that something has gone wrong with the relationship between schools and industry. In the words of Richard O'Brien, chairman of the Manpower Services Commission (UK), it appears that, '... the expectations, aptitudes and attitudes of young people are often out of balance with those of employers and the world of work.'

I want to discuss the causes and effects of this perceived lack of fit between supply and demand in the labour market.

The dominant argument in parliament, the media and the educational establishment is that the problem is *educational*: schools are 'failing', they are not doing efficiently the job they're supposed to do. The Right explain this in terms of bad teachers, progressive methods, and the general lack of school discipline and purpose. The Left explanation points to scarce resources, the cuts, overcrowded classrooms, stropky kids rejecting irrelevant bourgeois control. Both explanations assume some sort of continuing breakdown in the school process itself.

Most teachers, by contrast, argue that nothing much in schools has changed. What appears to be a problem is just that, an appearance. The educational 'crisis' is a myth sedulously fostered by irresponsible newspapers, anti-comprehensive reactionaries, and a Labour Government hoping to shift the blame for the economic consequences of its policies on to schools. The great debate, in other words, is a purely *political* ploy.

Both arguments fail to treat the central topic of the debate, the relation between schools and industry. The first argument, focussing on what's happening inside schools, leaves unquestioned the notion of industrial 'needs'; the second argument, denying there is a substantive problem, leaves unquestioned the existing ways in which schools prepare and sort out their pupils for the labour market. To answer these questions we need to look at the *economic* argument. From this perspective the great debate is not a political smokescreen — schools really aren't doing what industry wants. But this doesn't mean that schools themselves are the source of the crisis. The problem is, rather, that industry is making new demands on education; the changes involved are changes in the labour process.

We can't understand current educational discussion without reference to youth unemployment and to the state's realisation that youth unemployment is a permanent feature of the British economy. What's happening in schools can't be separated from what's happening in FE colleges and job centres; the education debate must be related to the training debate, to the rise of the Manpower Services Commission (which, whatever the cuts elsewhere in the education service, is the recipient of more and more state funds). The great debate on education, in short,

The Effects of Youth Unemployment

The most dramatic problem posed by the young workless is law'n'order — the state has to deal with fears of social and political unrest. But the educational problem, the central concern of the Manpower Services Commission, for example, is employability. The state has to ensure that the young unemployed will be good workers, whether in general terms of discipline or specific terms of skills, when they do eventually get jobs. The immediate consequence of youth unemployment is that the transition from school to work lasts a long time. School leavers no longer get immediate work experience and so schools and training programs have to become the source of the work ethic; the state is held responsible for the processes of work socialisation that used to be a normal part of leaving school and getting a job. Some of this responsibility is born by the MSC, but schools are also expected to put a new emphasis on vocational preparation.

What is at issue here is not only schools' usual role in the classification and licensing of labour, but also a concept of education as direct preparation for work. Schools have to instruct in attitude as well as skills: in preparing their pupils for the local labour market they have to prepare them to accept the available jobs. The stress is on 'realism' — work experience schemes are as important as lessons in Maths and English. All teachers have to become career teachers, assessing their subjects and their pupils with reference to job opportunities. In the words of Coventry LEA's working party on the education of 14-19 year olds, the approach to academic subjects must rest on,

'... a definition of those basic skills of literacy and numeracy needed for competence in the normal industrial and commercial work situations.'

The energy of educational bureaucrats seems to be devoted at present to this definition, to the development of tests for teachers and pupils, to schemes for monitoring schools' successes in meeting the needs of the labour market.

The intention is to fit schools more firmly into the set of institutions in which young people are prepared for work. The traditional distinction between education and training is being blurred. This process is not always smooth — the DES and the MSC work in an uneasy partnership, LEAs are wary of the educational activities of the Training Services Agency — but neither is it simply rhetorical. If schools won't play their part in their pupils' transition from school to work, an alternative state training system is now ready and willing to take their place.

The Causes of Youth Unemployment

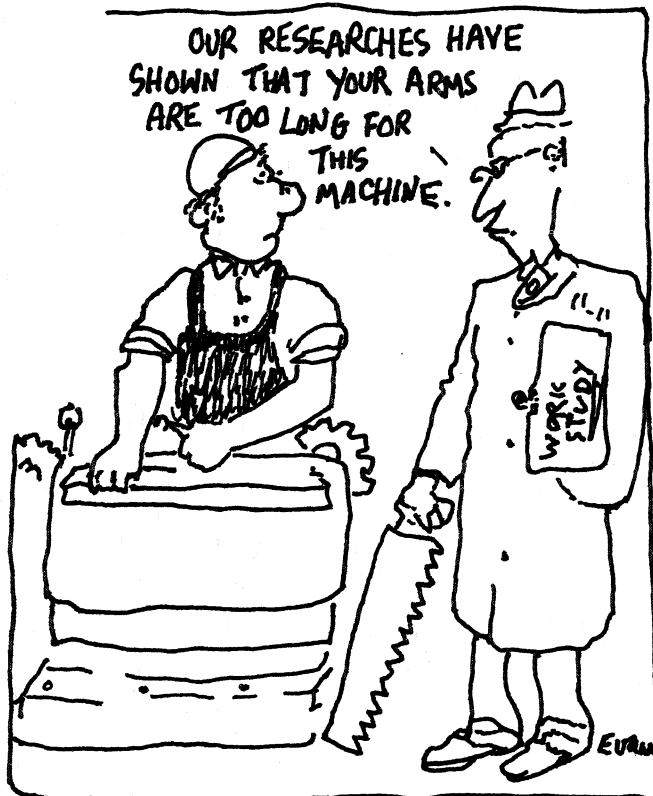
The government's investment in training schemes has an obvious political purpose. By removing the young workless from the unemployment statistics the youth unemployment problem

* Reprinted from *Schooling and Culture*, No 2, Summer 1978.

appears to be solved; unemployment statistics are so fetishised that their reduction equals improvement by definition. It is important, therefore, to remember what the statistics are measuring: a crisis of accumulation to which capital is responding with 'the reorganisation of the material conditions of valorisation — ie by changes in the labour process'.

The question is why youth has been especially affected by current changes in the labour process. Youth unemployment has always been a matter for political concern (there were schemes like those of the MSC in the 1930s) but in previous recessions the problem didn't have much educational impact because the young workless seemed to be a normal proportion of the total unemployed. They were not especially at risk and the solution to their problem was to restore employment levels as a whole. Today, in contrast, the government clearly believes that youth unemployment is a specific problem and a permanent one, likely to remain whatever recovery the economy as a whole may make.

Young workers are particularly vulnerable in the labour market for a number of reasons. Unions' successes in preserving existing jobs for their members and the Labour Government's Redundancy Payments and Employment Protection Acts have meant that the recession's effects have been concentrated on recruitment policies. Unions have also won relative increases in the wages of the young and unskilled so that school leavers, the labour market's new recruits, increasingly compete on almost equal wage terms with adult workers. The short term effect of the recession, in other words, is that school leavers are having to compete for jobs with experienced workers without any longer having a market advantage as cheap labour. At the same time, long term changes in the labour process are reducing the number of jobs open to the inexperienced, casual labour of school leavers. The problem for the state is that it is increasingly difficult for inexperienced young workers to get jobs, but without jobs they can't get experience.



Employers' reluctance to employ school leavers (the immediate cause of youth unemployment) reflects, at least in part, their judgement that the qualities associated with experience are not those produced by schooling. Schools have lost legitimacy as job licensees and, whether standards are going up or down in terms of academic learning and exam passes, employers are increasingly unwilling to accept that school success guarantees work success. This is the reason why the 'needs' of industry cited in the demands made on schools as a consequence of youth unemployment are expressed in terms of a *critique* of current educational practice.

This critique has two components. Firstly, schools are blamed for Britain's shortage of skilled labour. In terms of crafts, this suggestion is ridiculous. The underlying cause of skill shortage is, in fact, the trade cycle; the shortage derives from the contradictions between individual employers' short term interests and the long terms needs of the economy as a whole. Bad times for capital mean a declining number of apprentices and trainees: firms have less immediate need for their skills and less spare cash available for their training: when sales are falling, industrialists are loth to do anything that may affect their price position or benefit a competitor. When the economy picks up, it inevitably does so with a shortage of trained and skilled workers. It is precisely for this reason that employers are compelled to do without skilled labour, to change their labour processes, to deskill. To quote the Coventry manager of the Employment Services Agency, writing on this problem:

'It might be prudent also, at an early stage, to review a whole range of jobs where skills and experience are very desirable qualities but for which, on closer examination, there may be alternatives . . .'

The concept of skill shortage is misleading, and the educational point actually rests on a distinction between 'general' and 'specific' skills. From the employers' point of view the problem is not a shortage of craft workers but of a labour force with the general ability to learn, adapt to change and accept training and retraining. The MSC asked employers to assess the effects of technology on employment in the next ten years and found that,

'There will be a need for broader based skills. A need which existing methods of craft training are unlikely to satisfy if they're continued in their present form — in the confines of traditional definitions of skill . . . training will be needed to enable many skilled workers to do more than one job during their working lives.'

The skills involved are those 'which do not need to be learned in an industrial atmosphere and which can be profitably integrated with college teaching in an educational setting'. What is being demanded from the 'skilled' worker is not a specific task ability but a general set of attitudes.

The second component of industrialists' critique of education is their assertion that school leavers are ignorant. On the one hand, school leavers are believed to be illiterate and innumerate: half the employers in the Holland Report's sample referred to the declining calibre of their young recruits in terms of basic education. On the other hand, school leavers 'don't know what work is about': the MSC calls for an improved schools career service, for the 'familiarisation' of teachers with industry; the Schools Council has set up its own Industry Project: the DES is suddenly obsessed with the 'education/work interface'.

This second point — pupils' ignorance of work — is easily dealt with. What is at issue is not ignorance but knowledge: what really worries employers is that their young workers know all too well what their jobs will involve. The problem is

again one of attitudes. In the words of one manager, school leavers are too often 'over-aspirated (sic). The schools do not want to turn out production operatives'.

On a closer reading, it turns out that the comments on the 3Rs are also entwined with an argument about attitudes. The Holland Report links them with simultaneous comments about poor motivation, and it is in practice difficult to separate problems of ability from problems of self-discipline and application. The criticism of schools for producing 'ignorant' workers is simultaneously a criticism of schools for producing unwilling workers. In the words of the MSC:

'Most employers share a low opinion of school leavers. They are particularly critical of the lack of willingness and poor attitude to work, especially among those doing apprenticeships. The ability of the young to read and write competently or to do simple arithmetic was also mentioned by employers. On the other hand they believed school leavers showed more maturity and independence than five years ago.'

Employers themselves believe that school leavers today are different than they used to be but what is more evident is the change in labour demand. Young workers have always been characterised as casual, irresponsible, poorly motivated, and quick to change jobs. What is new is the employers' expectation that school leavers should have the sense of responsibility and commitment usually the products of experience. This expectation is partly a result of the employers' power in a buyers' market, but, more importantly, it also reflects changes in the labour process, changes in the modes of labour control.

The basic form of control of workers in the labour process is the 'dull compulsion' of capitalist economic relations. The worker works in order to live; there is a directly perceived relationship between the work done and the wage received. Wage rewards are used not just for immediate sustenance but as a secure income on which families can be raised: commitments taken on outside work entail an instrumental commitment to the labour process itself.

From this point of view the economic control of young workers has always been problematic – they don't have long term leisure or family commitments. Their restlessness, readiness to chop and change jobs for 'trivial reasons', their immunity from the constraints of long term instrumentality have always featured in discussions of the transition from school to work. What is new is not these attitudes but, firstly, the availability of adult workers who can be so controlled and, secondly, the lack of occupations in which the young's attitudes don't matter because other forms of labour control operate.

In the past, unskilled, unqualified school leavers were used in casual occupations in which their control depended on direct discipline and supervision. Such occupations are now being reorganised. As employers cut their work force, there is less spare labour power to provide either on the job training or continuous supervision: firms find it preferable and cheaper to recruit workers who don't need such training or supervision, who are already reliable and self-disciplined. Casual labour is becoming 'semi-skilled'.

Craft skills are also being reorganised and apprenticeships, the usual way into work for qualified school leavers, are losing their meaning. One of the functions of apprenticeship is the instillation of craft pride, itself a form of work discipline. But such craft control is being replaced by a different logic of skill, in which the skilled workers' self-discipline rests not on their marketable craft qualifications, but on an employer-dependent role in labour hierarchy, on their acceptance of 'responsible autonomy', on their flexible and co-operative attitudes.

Young workers today enter a labour market in which there are fewer and fewer openings for either skilled craftspeople or for unskilled casual labourers. The dominant demand is for generalised, semi-skilled labour power. The shifting employment opportunities resulting from the rise of service occupations, technological changes in production, the decline of small firms mean, too, shifting modes of labour control. It is in this context that the young compete unequally with experienced adults.

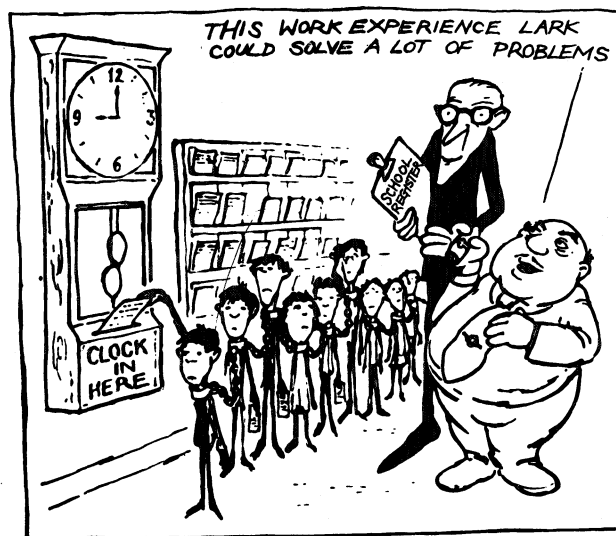
They lack commitment and discipline and 'realism'. These are the qualities which schools have 'failed' to instill. These are the qualities which have to be instilled by the state, as it takes on responsibilities for the now lengthy period of transition from school work.

Implications

My description of the relationship between the labour process, youth unemployment and education is simplified and too general but, nonetheless this is the relationship which teachers must consider in their response to the new demands being made on them. There are two positions, in particular, that need discussion.

The most common teacher response to the great debate has been to resist demands from industry in the name of teacher autonomy. Such autonomy rests on notions of professionalism – teachers know best what can and should happen in schools – and liberal education – schooling is a moral and cultural process which mustn't be sullied by crude utilitarian concerns. The difficulty with this position is that it ignores the ways in which schools are already organised around labour selection and socialisation. What is new in the great debate is not the demand for industrial relevance, but the definition of what is relevant.

Claims to teacher autonomy rest on false premises. They are also, in some respects, reactionary. Current educational discussion, for all its hyperbole, has raised questions about schools and society that socialist teachers have to answer. The problem is to do this without being isolated within the education system. One of the most depressing aspects of the great debate is how little contribution to it has been made by working class and socialist organisations outside schools. The rhetoric of the debate gives trade unionists, for example, as much right as employers to define industrial needs but, in practice, they have accepted employers' definitions of the situation without challenge.



In this context, teacher autonomy may be the only politically viable response to a debate in which all definitions are controlled by the state. But it doesn't need to be a purely defensive position. There are contradictions in current policies that need exposing. For example:

- 1 One of the implications of current changes in the labour process is that school leavers are over qualified as well as under qualified. There are signs (clearest, as usual, in the Thoughts of Rhodes Boyson) that existing forms of school grading will be replaced by a new form of selection in which the top academic streams and bottom remedial streams will be removed for special attention, but in which everyone else will have an identical basic curriculum. The object of schooling won't be to place pupils in rank order but to ensure that they all leave school with identical skills and values (and, as Boyson suggests, if they achieve these by age 15 they may as well leave then). This development poses problems for the usual ideology of equality of educational opportunity; in practice the MSC, for example, treats youth unemployment as a male problem (though girls are actually worse affected). The assumption seems to be that women's labour is domestic labour, that their lack of job experience and opportunity doesn't matter much. The same sort of contradiction is likely to be involved in any development of a common curriculum. Such a concept would involve taking the rhetoric of sexual equality seriously — girls would presumably get the same basic education as boys. What effect would this have on schools and employers in practice?
- 2 Teachers should work to switch public attention from the school process to the labour process. At present, employers are getting away with blatant mystifications of their demands: there is little connection between the skills they say they need and the tasks young school leavers can expect to perform. Now that the debate is focussed on schools and industry, the idiocy of the capitalist labour process needs publicising.
- 3 The educational system isn't only about labour production; it is also functional for capital in its production of knowledge. Changes in the labour process must be related to technological and managerial changes. They depend on a supply of specialist scientific and technical workers and there are contradictions between the skills and attitudes such workers need and those employers are currently demanding from school leavers (of the problem of 'over-ambition'; recent debates on the education of engineers and managers).

The second position that needs discussion is the claim that the call for industrial relevance can be countered with the concept of working class relevance: socialist teachers, the argument goes, should be devising working class curricula, responding to working class needs. The difficulty is to decide what this means in practice. It isn't helpful to assume that bourgeois schools simply impose themselves on a given working class consciousness. Much of the so-called culture of school 'resistance', for example, is in fact providing its own forms of preparation for domestic and unskilled labour. The assumption of the primacy of existing working class values ignores the role of teachers in the struggle against racism and sexism: the problems of a feminist teacher confronted by a bottom stream fifth year girls and boys are not going to be solved by the rhetoric of 'working class relevance'. The concept of the working class fails to take account of the divisions within the class —

sexual, racial, occupational, cultural. Teachers must understand the labour process not only to understand the real meaning of industrialists' demands but also to appreciate the complexities involved in the definition of working class needs.

* Reprinted from the British magazine, *Schooling & Culture*, No 2; Summer 1978. Art Department, ILEA. Cockpit Arts Workshop, Galeforth Street, London, NW8, 8EH.

Glossary

FE = Further Education
MSC = Manpower Services Commission
LEA = Local Education Authority
DES = Department of Education and Science

SOCIAL ALTERNATIVES

A NEW INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

Focusing on Social Change and Alternative Strategies

EDITORIAL BOARD

Bruce Dickson, Bruce McKinlay, Margaret Smith, Ralph Summy

ISSUE 1: Includes Lawrence Jones on *Nonviolent Defence*, Ted Wheelwright on *A New Economic Order*, Margaret Smith & Anne Maclean on *Homeless People*, Nadine Hood on *New Family Structures*, Ian Lowe on *Energy Options*, Peter Koepping on *Carlos Castaneda*, J.P. Narayan's *Prison Diary* and a poem by Kath Walker.

ISSUE 2: Includes Ivan Illich on *Alternative Health-care*, Pam Gorrington on *Self-help and Drugs*, Meg Smith on *Women's Health Centres*, Sugata Dasgupta on *No Poverty Third World*, Richard Fotheringham on *Alternative Theatre, Maria, A Migrant* by Joan Knowles, *Beyond the Mechanical Mind* reviewed by Laurence Browne, Thomas Shapcott poem, drawings and artwork by Brenda Lewis and Matt Mawson.

ISSUE 3: Includes Bobbie Galloway — *Uranium and the Media*, Romesh Thapar — *Wanted: A New Information Order*, articles by Sally Stockbridge and Barbara Alysén on *Australian Films*, Frank Moorhouse *The Conference as Communication*, Rita Cruise O'Brien *Media Imperialism in the Third World*, David Biggins examining *Social Responsibility in Science*, David Crossley on *Lifestyles and the Environment*, Dennis Altman on *Social Science Versus Imagination*, R.D. Laing on *Birth*, Eva Cox on *Beware the Call of Nature*, poems by Maureen Watson and Graham Rowlands.

SOCIAL ALTERNATIVES — ORDER FORM

All correspondence concerning contributions or subscriptions (\$8.00 per annum) should be addressed to:
The Editors, SA, Dept. of External Studies, University of Qld, 4067.

AUSTRALIA

Name _____

Address _____

State _____ P/code _____ Country _____

Individuals:	\$8 for 1 year	\$16 for 2 years
Institutions		
and Libraries:	\$12 for 1 year	\$24 for 2 years
Single Copies:	\$2.50	

Subscriptions are on an annual basis and cover the cost of surface mailing of four issues.

Cheques and money orders should be made payable to SOCIAL ALTERNATIVES.

Teacher Unemployment (1)

The Supply and Demand Hoax

by David McCallum

Many students completing pre-service teacher education courses in 1979 are likely to face unemployment in 1980. This gloomy outlook has been predicted by a number of recent government reports on teacher supply and demand in both the primary and secondary divisions right across Australia. This article argues that education ministers, when dealing with the problem, are not grappling with some 'natural' disaster using the limited means at their disposal: on the contrary, they are engaging in a particular form of state intervention in education, supporting a specific relationship between education and employment so as to serve the interests of dominant economic groups. By concentrating on overall staff-student ratios and insisting that these are 'adequate', they obscure the fact that a great many special needs remain unmet and that great inequalities exist between different types of schools or schools in different areas.

Teacher Supply and Demand

The Commonwealth Minister for Education, Senator Carrick, stated in January 1978 that by 1985 Australia would have reached 'a gross over-supply of teachers . . . in numbers, an over-supply something in the order of between 30,000 and 60,000'.¹ This prediction first appeared in the Schools Commission Rolling Triennium Report of July 1976 and was the outcome of a particular rationale associating falling birth rates, a decreasing teacher resignation rate and the concept of an adequate staff-student ratio.

Accepting the two factors of birth rates and resignation rates, what pertinence have staff-student ratios to the problem of teacher unemployment?

Two aspects of this question are crucial: class sizes, and distribution of resources between types of schools.

In May 1976, the Commonwealth Department of Education produced a draft report examining the question of teacher 'supply and demand'. The report states:

'The assessment of demand calls on the one hand for the preparation of enrolment projections, and on the other for assumptions to be made about the level of recurrent funds likely to be available for schools in the future and the pattern of allocation of these funds between teachers and other items of recurrent expenditure.'²

To achieve the target pupil-teacher ratios selected by the Karmel Report in 1973 (ie 19:1 in primary schools by 1982, 12:1 in secondary schools by 1984), the draft report predicts that 'total demand for teachers is projected to grow at a rate of about 2½ per cent per annum (till 1986) compared with a rate of about 5 per cent per annum in the period 1970-1975'.³

However, the Karmel Report was not primarily interested in pupil-teacher ratios because of their implications for class sizes. The social democratic thrust of the Schools Commission programs was directed to removing broad disparities in educational provision at the national level. Now national figures of teacher numbers versus enrolments give little indication of actual class sizes. For example, while the overall staff-student ratio in one government secondary school in 1975 was 15.2:1, over any given week 85 per cent of class groups contained 16 or more students, and a quarter of the classes had more than 30 students.⁴ In other words, even if the Karmel goals were likely to be achieved (which they are not) there would still remain large sectors of the school system with not enough staff to meet student needs.

Looking more closely at ways of meeting those needs, the Karmel Report stressed that, while there is no evidence to indicate that smaller classes generally facilitate learning,

' . . . it believes that group size should vary according to the particular activities in which students are engaged. Moreover, pedagogical practices such as the open classroom and differentiated staffing have made arbitrary standard sizes inappropriate.'⁵

Hence the Karmel Committee laid down no specifications for desirable numbers of teachers on the grounds that

' . . . it believes strongly that the allocation of additional resources is a matter for the schools and the school system concerned, on the grounds of there being positive advantage in these decisions being made at the work face in the light of local conditions.'⁶

Unequal Achievement

Apart from the question of class sizes, the draft report compiled by the Commonwealth Department of Education made its assessment of the likely future demand for teachers on the assumption that the levels of the distribution of achievement between *types* of schools will remain fairly stable. In 1975, for example, only 28 per cent of pupils who began their secondary education in government schools were actually completing it (ie 72 per cent had left before the end of high school in that year), compared with a figure of 88 per cent in independent, non-Catholic schools⁷. The report assumes that these levels are not expected to change significantly in the next several years. It is well established that students from independent schools are vastly over-represented as a percentage of the total population in tertiary education, in high-status occupations, and in positions of power in Australia. Since 1975, of course, the Fraser government has diverted millions of dollars away from state schools and into private schools. In other words, the Fraser

government, through the Commonwealth Department of Education, in assessing the likely pattern of teacher 'demand' until 1985, has not only presupposed a continuing inequality of educational outcomes between the state and private sectors of education, it has actively worked to increase it.

Needs of Schools

On the criteria adopted by the Karmel Report, what indications do we have of how things are 'at the work face on the light of local condition'? The Victorian High Schools Principals' Association surveyed its schools in 1977 and presented a view contradicting that given by federal and state education ministers. Firstly, class sizes varied significantly according to the location of schools. For example, a group of schools in the Balwyn area had average maximum class sizes of 19 compared with those in the Monash area of 25. Secondly, teacher shortages were recorded in nearly all subject areas (except Physics and Chemistry) and particularly in English, non-remedial Maths, Physical Education and Library. All schools indicated a shortage of staff to teach remedial English, Maths and Migrant English, the shortage being most severe in metropolitan areas.

Further, a survey conducted by the Technical Teachers' Association of Victoria in 1977 documented teacher shortages in all subject areas (except Integrated Studies) but particularly in Humanities, Maths and Science, Physical Education and remedial and migrant programs.

Finally, the Report of the National Survey of Conditions in Schools⁸ prepared by the Australian Teachers Federation in 1978 presented the following table indicating the perceived needs of students in Victorian schools, particularly in the literacy/numeracy areas.

Percentage of students perceived by teachers to need extra help but not receiving it.

Type of School	Migrant English	Remedial Number	Remedial Reading
All schools all areas	58.7	62.6	51.7
1 and 2 teacher schools			
All areas	33.5	50.6	49.6
Outer metropolitan	89.1	86.4	93.3
Small country	23.0	49.3	47.7
Primary schools			
All areas	59.1	75.9	58.0
Inner metropolitan	37.0	84.2	48.5
Outer Metropolitan	64.2	73.6	57.7
Medium country	79.6	84.5	69.2
Small country	23.1	72.7	61.3
Secondary schools			
All areas	60.7	58.2	50.5
Inner metropolitan	37.1	89.7	63.2
Outer metropolitan	69.0	61.4	62.3
Medium country	100.0	31.8	8.7
Small country	100.0	31.4	11.4
Technical schools			
All areas	48.0	35.8	34.7
Inner metropolitan	36.1	77.8	63.0
Outer metropolitan	57.1	12.2	11.9
Medium country	64.5	55.6	57.8
Combined Primary/Secondary schools	77.4	65.0	74.6



'Or, as a long shot, you might try for a job in teaching.'

The table highlights the pressing needs of outer metropolitan schools following a drift of migrant population to these areas, not matched by a movement of specialist teachers.

It must be pointed out that the level of teacher unemployment, which began to be felt in earnest in Victoria in 1978, is a direct consequence of the 1977 state budget, which, among other things, forced the Department of Education to impose a ceiling on teacher recruitment.

To sum up: where politicians and others quote staff-student ratios to argue a position of 'adequate' educational provision, there is a tendency to camouflage areas of real shortage and non-provision of special needs while at the same time justifying particular forms of state intervention in the funding and control of education. Intervention has taken the form of denial of employment to teachers, a transference of funds from the public to private sectors of schooling and an acceptance of continuing disparities in the distribution of achievement between state and independent schools.

Education and Work

In general the educational doctrines which accompany reduced funding and teacher unemployment take the following form: because schooling is not providing the type of 'employable' young person presently required by industry, schools must tailor their curricula and methods to correspond more closely to these requirements. The claim is made for greater concentration on basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the production of a more efficient and adaptable worker.

A feature article in *The Australian* newspaper expressed the problem thus:

'Young people are leaving school, particularly high school totally ill-equipped to face the real world where people have to use whatever it takes to claw their way through life . . . everyone spoken to in the commercial and industrial world says the same thing: school leavers are generally badly educated, poorly motivated and over expectant.'⁹

Mr. Colin Young, national marketing director of Key Personnel, on teachers commented:

'A lot of teachers bonded themselves to the education department because it was the only way they could get to university. This was in the days when students paid to go to university. They figured they could get a degree, do a few years teaching, then do what they liked. They were radicals who have passed on their thoughts to students. They say why bother to work for big business, making big profits to send back to America through the exploitation of the little people.'¹⁰

Mr. Ian Spicer, director of the Victorian Employers' Federation agreed:

' . . . such teachers were in a minority, but employers noticed at times there were pockets of resistance among the young against working for big companies. These pockets were localised and often pinpointed where schools were staffed with teachers holding that type of view.'¹¹

Senator Carrick has also been persuaded. He told the Young Liberals at Adelaide University in January 1978 that 'many people are questioning the relevance of education to modern day demands . . . current measurement of education showed that skills were not good enough'. The Minister announced the establishment of a national inquiry to look into all aspects of teacher training 'to find out the quality and quantity of teachers we need . . .'

' . . . we are not looking at a quantitative approach to education. Before we try to come to terms with our arithmetic, we have to know the quality of teachers we need.'¹²

The reader of *The Australian* was encouraged to conclude that young school-leavers were unable to find jobs because they were 'unemployable'; that is, the skills they possessed rendered them unsuitable to employers. But school-leavers *alone* are not to be blamed for that, because their teachers ('radicals' and others) failed to transmit the necessary skills. The article also represents pupil resistance to the demands of dominant groups in the society as the pedagogic effects of 'radical' teaching. 'Radical' teachers are presumably those who pass on to their pupils ideas which are contrary to those needed to make

students employable. 'Radical' teachers will therefore be banished in the interests of youth employment!

How seriously do we treat these statements? Taken together, they begin to cast light on the real relation between education and work, and how a crisis in capitalist production becomes articulated at other social levels such as the education system. Our dominant education ideologies represent schooling as a rational selection process in which those with 'brains' and 'application' will move 'naturally' upwards in the meritocratic pyramid and be rewarded accordingly with good jobs and wages. While jobs are available at different levels of the pyramid, the rationality of schooling is not very likely to be fundamentally questioned. But with high unemployment, many more students now seriously doubt the extent to which success in school will lead to a more favoured position in the distribution of life-chances, and hence further demands are placed on teachers as agents of social control in schools. When the ideological struts of institutional power are weakened, the latent repressive functions of that institution tend to emerge. Capitalism's tendency towards labour segmentation (divide and conquer strategies) sets workers against workers on the basis of sex, ethnicity and age, and becomes articulated at the level of the school in dividing teachers from pupils and teachers against teachers.

Teacher unemployment cannot be understood merely as an outcome of arbitrary laws of supply and demand, or in accordance with dominant education ideologies. The tightening of entry into teaching imposes a form of discipline on teachers themselves. By forging divisions both within schools and between schools and the wider society, the responsibility for the economic crisis becomes deflected from the nature of the economic system to the failure of students and teachers.

References

- 1 *The Age*, Melbourne, 6/1/78, p 1.
- 2 Commonwealth Department of Education, unpublished report, Canberra, May 1976, p 2.
- 3 *Op. cit.*, p 3.
- 4 McKinnon, K., Schools Commission Report: Rolling Triennium 1977-79, Canberra, July 1976, p 18.
- 5 Karmel, P., *Schools in Australia* (The Karmel Report), Canberra, May 1973, p 64.
- 6 *Op. cit.*, p 62.
- 7 McKinnon, *op. cit.*, p 104.
- 8 Australian Teachers' Federation, *Report of the National Survey of Conditions in Schools*, 1978.
- 9 *The Australian*, Melbourne, 14/1/78, supplement p 1.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 *The Age*, *op. cit.*, p 1.

RADICAL EDUCATION GROUP

RED G

Holds monthly public meetings on relevant topics, eg:

Resources for Youth Unemployment

Permanent/Part-Time Work for Teachers?

Deskilling, Changes in Labour Processes — how should schools respond?

Puts out meaty monthly Newsletter with background material on current affairs and activities.

Organises Annual Education Conference.

Develops and collects radical resources for use in classrooms.

Contact: Peter [02] 514 274.

Teacher Unemployment (2)

Selection, Rejection, and Social Control

by Mike Presdee*

The teacher unemployment situation in Australia is fluid, and estimates may have to be revised rapidly if there are movements in resignation rates, pupil-teacher ratios, birth rates, or even if there is an economic upturn; but that there will exist a 'pool' of unemployed teachers for some time to come is accepted and even thought by some to be desirable. If we can expect the 'pool' to be around at least until the early 1990s, then we can also expect that these conditions will be used by educational administrators in their efforts to guide and control education. This must in turn have a 'conserving' effect on the way the whole educational world goes about its business. Education, inextricably bound to the state, is one means by which political hegemony is maintained for the ruling class: it is part of the essential 'consent' mechanism of capitalism.

Schooling systems need to be able to weed out those teachers who will not support the dominant order rigorously enough or who may attack the system at times of crisis. The whole phenomenon of unemployed teachers becomes crucial, and any attempts by administrators to explain this weeding-out away under the guise of the eternal quest for the 'Good Teacher' must be demystified. Already in the draft terms of reference for the National Inquiry into Teacher Education, recently announced by Senator Carrick, the legitimisation of such a quest appears as a primary task, for the opening paragraph reads:

To examine, report and make recommendations on the effectiveness of teacher selection and education in producing good teachers for Australian schools, both government and non-government, including preschools.¹

The present crisis originated with the expansion of teachers colleges in the early seventies, which was aimed at plugging the teacher shortage 'gap', as it was then perceived. In 1972 most states were suffering staffing problems, with ministers reporting the necessity to import large groups of overseas teachers. Then, in early 1973, when immediate staff problems had been alleviated, it was realised that it would not be long before the teachers colleges would be producing more teachers than the states were willing, or able, to afford. (It should always be remembered that the teacher supply problem is not primarily a case of too many bodies: it is rather a question of lack of funds to pay those who want to undertake the socially-useful task of teaching.) These warnings were lost in the rush by colleges to keep up the numbers of teachers they were producing, for on the same day as Hugh Hudson, the South Australian Minister for Education, was warning of a teacher 'surplus',

the Commission on Advanced Education in Canberra was recommending that \$206 million dollars be spent on CAEs for further expansion².

Australia was now in the grip of a classic stop-go situation, where the solution to over-supply was to shut down excessive production whilst the process of expansion was still in motion. A succession of inquiries ensued. In 1974 Professor P. H. Partridge began to look at the 'rationalisation' of colleges in Western Australia. He reported in 1976, when he moved to Victoria. His report on the Victorian situation was released in March 1978. Tasmania had invited Professor Peter Karmel to investigate its system in 1975: his recommendations were presented in April 1976. In 1978, Dr Don Anderson released two vital chapters of his report concerned with amalgamations of colleges in South Australia, followed later by the rest of his report. And in New South Wales, the Butland Report made recommendations to the Higher Education Board on possible amalgamations and closures of inner-city colleges in Sydney (see RED 4).

All these measures will take time to slow down teacher supply, for merging educational institutions is a tricky operation in the best of conditions, but with a threat of Australia-wide redundancies involving academics, it is obvious that 'survival' will be the main aim of college administrators and teachers alike. More importantly, there could be a tendency for colleges to try to please employing authorities by supplying them with students 'trained' in the way that state education departments require.

I want now to summarise the unemployment situation in all the states and to look more closely at South Australia, where I have examined not only the level of teacher unemployment but its effects on trainee teachers.

Western Australia

It is estimated that there are between 700 and 1 000 unemployed teachers at present, with a possibility of nearly 8 000 unemployed in 1985 (see figure 1). It is, of course, difficult to obtain accurate statistics without an exact definition of an 'unemployed' teacher. However, if we include all who are qualified as teachers but not employed in this capacity the figure in Western Australia would be well over 1 500, a major proportion of these being married women, nearly all of whom are restricted in regard to the locations in which they can be employed.

* The data gathered for this paper came from a research project conducted with the co-operation of students in the 'Politics and Education' course at Murray Park CAE in Adelaide.

Figure 1
Federal Report of Supply and Demand of Teachers 1978

	Excess of Teachers					
	1978 planned ptr	Primary		Secondary		
		1985 constant ptr	1985 planned ptr	1978 planned ptr	1985 constant ptr	1985 planned ptr
NSW	1 350	10 650	6 750	1 800	8 600	5 800
VIC	1 700	11 200	6 000	850	13 850	8 750
QLD	600	4 550	3 200	150	2 000	- 150
SA	1 050	4 450	4 050	1 400	5 500	5 300
WA	850	7 000	5 500	600	4 650	3 600
TAS	nil	650	100	nil	250	- 350
ACT & NT	50	300	n a	150	450	300
Aust.	4 800	38 800	25 950	4 950	35 200	23 300

Selection

Procedures for selecting first-year-out teachers are based on the following criteria in rank order.

- Ability, as demonstrated by academic results during training, consolidated teaching marks during practice teaching (with special weighting on the term practice in final year, lasting 10 to 12 weeks).
- Willingness to accept appointment to any location in the state.
- Economic circumstances — those with dependents would be considered ahead of those without.

The WA Department claims that the first criterion is the major one, with the other two being deciding factors in borderline cases. This is disputed by the Teachers Union who find it difficult to believe, when they have found the top students of two CAEs among the unemployed. Interviews conducted by panels of superintendents provide the final decision on 'suitability' for employment, students then being placed on probation for two years, at the completion of which an agreement must be signed showing willingness to serve anywhere in that state. This has resulted in many married women remaining as temporary teachers, which makes them even more vulnerable in times of unemployment. Married women are therefore heavily disadvantaged by both categories (b) and (c) of the WA Department's criteria for employment.

Northern Territory

For the first time the Northern Territory has a surplus of teachers *wishing* to teach in the Territory, there being 800 applicants for 100 positions in 1978. Efforts by teacher organisations to improve staffing levels have failed and future efforts are being concentrated on action at the school level.

Tasmania

There is virtually no unemployment among teachers, although this may become a problem in the future.

Australian Capital Territory

Again it is difficult to assess real teacher unemployment; however, at the beginning of 1978 there were 300 job applicants with the Schools Authority. A recent advertisement calling for registration of unemployed teachers drew 50 responses, suggesting that the actual level is far higher. Action by teacher organisations is again aimed at raising the staffing levels in ACT schools.

New South Wales

The NSW Department of Education has 3 500 to 4 000 teachers on the books applying for jobs. This number would include 1 500 recent non-bonded graduates. Of these job applicants, 1 250 have joined the NSW Teachers Federation. In addition there are 900 primary and infant and 1 500 secondary teachers in schools who are being held 'in reserve' for transfer to cover resignations.

The problem in this state is a massive one that will continue to increase into the 1980s (figure 1). The Teachers Federation has made unemployment its top priority and is continuing its struggle to raise staffing levels.

Victoria

Unemployment appears to be greatest among primary teachers, with about 1 200 of these teachers seeking work and a further 850 secondary teachers in the same position. The number of teachers actually employed at present is greater than that which the government has set, leading to no more teachers being employed in 1978. This will affect actual teaching situations as teachers leave during the year without their positions being refilled. An unemployed teachers' association has been formed in Victoria with facilities being provided by the VTU.

Queensland

There are approximately 800 unemployed teachers in this state at present, along with what is described by the Education Department as an excess of *employed* teachers above the quotas set by the government. As in Victoria, this has led to a reduction of the numbers of employed teachers rather than an increase. Teachers in Queensland have been involved in a long struggle over curriculum content with the state government who are seen as using the unemployment amongst teachers as an industrial weapon in an attempt to block teachers from taking a stand on the political bearings of MACOS and SEMP³. This struggle against total government control over the content of education illuminates the true relationship between politics and education with unemployed teachers in Queensland rightly perceiving the existence of a pool of unemployed teachers within that framework. In their Unemployed Teachers Newsletter they state:

'It is in the context of such dictatorial government attitudes towards education that teacher unemployment must be examined. We all remember the Premier's warning about the 700 unemployed teachers "around the ridges" ready to replace any practising teacher who dared step out of line.'⁴



Selection

The current department policies concerning preferences for employment are:

- 1 First preference is given to new graduates or holders of state scholarships.
- 2 Sole supporters of families, male or female.
- 3 People willing to teach anywhere in the state.
- 4 Single males or females.
- 5 Married women.

As in Western Australia, married women are the most disadvantaged in the fight to gain employment and are unceremoniously dumped into the last category, with many in a de facto relationship being most likely trapped by category 3. Further, many women in positions at this moment are frightened to leave, fearing that they will be unable to rejoin the service after absence, and for this reason are postponing the beginning of a family until they are more certain of being able to return to a secure position.

South Australia

Last year there were over 1 000 teachers unemployed with 2 599 applications being received and 1 116 appointments made by February 16, 1978⁵. Since that date there has been a large number of short term appointments made, heralding a new management technique of the use of a 'buffer' zone of contract positions that gives administrators 'flexibility' but is seen by teachers' associations as another probationary year and not to be encouraged. The extent to which this unemployment will expand is seen again in the Federal Report (figure 1) where it is estimated that there could be 10 000 unemployed teachers in South Australia by 1985.

The situation for employment for 1979 is acute with morale amongst students at an extreme low. There is, in the colleges, an air of impending doom amongst students, who have given little thought to how they will approach possible unemployment when it comes, preferring to meet it with a veneer of bravado.

Selection

Selection in South Australia is now by interview, and first priority becomes again the quest for the 'good teacher'. Both the Director and Minister of Education have made repeated statements that suggest that the existence of a pool of unemployed teachers puts South Australia in a *favourable* position, for it can now select teachers rather than be forced, by shortages, to take all comers.

The SA Department has devised a selection procedure based on information given on application forms, which is affirmed and explored by interview. Each part of this procedure is quantified and a list in order of merit is drawn up for use in the actual awarding of appointments, given that other variables such as mobility, age range, subject area, have been fulfilled. No details are known as to how these areas were quantified other than that a 5-point A-E system was used; however, some idea was given as to the criteria used:

- a Academic qualifications — here it was not just the extent but quality and relevance to teaching that were important.
- b Potential for teaching skill — college exit reports were used, along with personal references.
- c Personal interviews — the interview was used . . .
 - i to clarify information already received, and
 - ii to assess the personal qualities of the interviewee.

The 25 interview panels each consisted of two principal education officers who assessed the applicants on each of the criteria and made recommendations with a final quantified result.

The implications of the system are clear. The emphasis placed on qualifications by the Department is detrimental to students embarked upon the more 'academic' courses and will favour more 'practically' and 'educational studies' orientated courses. Indeed, I have found that there is already movement within colleges away from 'general' study areas to the more practical 'education' areas, as demanded by the Department (see figure 2). Inevitably the 'education' grapevine has relayed to students the advantages to be had if the 'right' subject areas are selected; and what is more significant is that already first and second year students are acting on these 'vibrations' and beginning to set in motion the 'conserving' process within education.

Figure 2

2nd Year Students:

Major Courses of Study (Murray Park CAE)

Category Label	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (percent)
Ed. Stud.	111	56.9
Sociology	14	7.2
Philosophy	2	1.8
Lit. and Dram. St.	12	6.2
History or Aust. St.	5	2.6
Geography	3	1.5
Psychology	12	6.2
Science	6	3.1
Art	4	2.1
Music	5	2.6
Hum. Mov. St.	16	8.2
Other	1	.5
Total	195	100.0%

The criterion of proof of 'teaching potential' was the most controversial issue in selecting applicants for 1978. Students' unions objected strongly to the concept of the 'good teacher', but to no avail for, although a compromise was reached whereby teaching practice results could be literally 'covered up' by the student, such reports were used and colleges were criticised by the Department for obstructing selection procedures.

answer any question
however irrelevant..



even let
ourselves
be
interrupted..



then we
discovered
we were
losing!



Students have responded accordingly by showing their willingness to do extra teaching practice, in an effort to show their keenness to become teachers, and also to build up their contacts amongst heads and deputy-heads, whom they can use in future years as referees (figure 3).

Figure 3

Question		
What positive steps will you take to help ensure that you will get a teaching post at the end of your studies?		
Answers	Number	%
Category a Do well, conform, work hard	84	40
Category b Do more teaching practice than required. Take a more practical approach.	58	27
Category c Prepared to teach anywhere	17	8
Others	47	25
Total	206	100

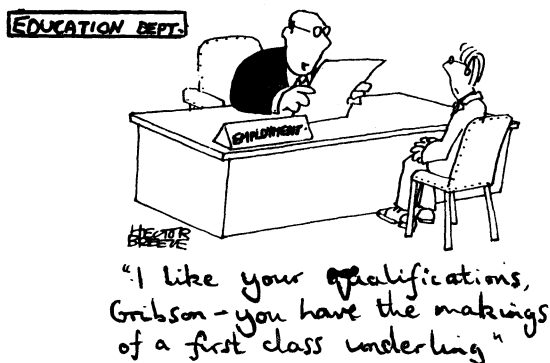
Figure 3 shows how students are scaling down their 'intentions' and 'aims' to a more pragmatic approach to tertiary work: 40 per cent of first year students verbalised this approach into category (a) by stating that they thought that 'doing well', 'conforming', 'behaving' would be a positive approach to their employment prospects. The purchasers of educational labour in South Australia, the Education Department, are in a buyer's market where they can demand educational frills and compliancy. This has resulted in a high level of pessimism amongst students: of 206 students questioned, 120 replied that they were not confident of getting employment. Most of these students are hedging their bets by planning to study for a fourth year in an effort to ride out the unemployment storm, there being an exceptionally high 70 per cent of first-year students at Murray Park CAE planning to do fourth year studies.

Education: There is Another Way
Extracts from
RED BOLOGNA.

- translated and printed by Sydney Education Branch C.P.A.
- offers wider perspective on the current debate on the role of education in contemporary capitalist society.
- available from Intervention Bookshop, Dixon Street, Sydney. \$1 and postage.

NON-SEXIST LESSONS, PROGRAMS, IDEAS WANTED for a forthcoming collection of materials for use in high schools. Ring or write:

Janet Kossy
8/54-56 The Boulevard
Petersham 2049.
Ph: 569 6977



Unemployed Teachers

The Murray Park research group managed to question twenty unemployed teachers to ascertain reasons for their failure to get employment, and also some 30 successful applicants. Unemployed teachers in South Australia are now well organised under the banner of 'Employable Teachers of South Australia', so that the employing authority and the public are reminded that these are not the 'dregs' of teaching but fully-trained, competent teachers, wishing simply to teach.

The unemployed felt that their failure was mainly due to political reasons or marital status and lack of mobility. This has certainly been so in some cases, with the Department of Education using every rule and regulation in a very inflexible way.

Questions asked of people in interviews ranged from: 'Do you have the usual Greek mind?', 'Would you push unionism in schools?', 'Do you agree with "words" for punishment?', 'What will you do if you don't get appointed?' and 'Would you and your husband be prepared to live in the country?' to more professionally-oriented questions such as: 'How would you design a Year 1 Maths program?', 'What would you do on the first day of term one?' and 'How would you conduct a language program?'.

These questions have been relayed back to present students, who, no doubt, will interpret them and learn from them in order to work out their professional tactics.

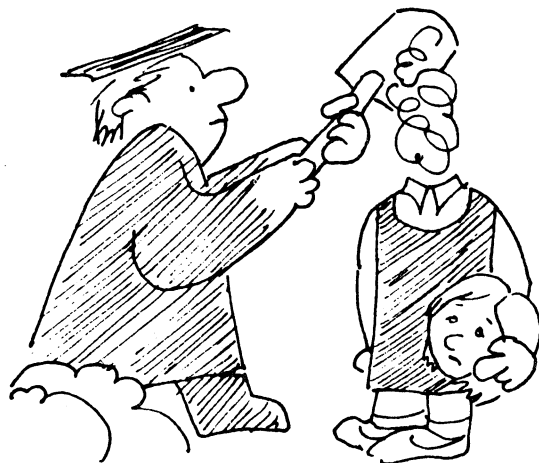
Meanwhile, the system churns on. Huge cutbacks in intakes to preservice teacher education courses are under way all over Australia. Because of public awareness of teacher unemployment, there are signs of quite a steep fall-off in applications for entry to those courses. And this, naturally, holds the potential for another 'shortage' in a few years' time. But whatever the instabilities and uncertainties which may send their shock-waves through the system in the years immediately ahead, there seems little doubt that the attacks on teacher autonomy and course content will continue. The use of 'internships' — ie the year of supervised experience for newly-graduated teachers — *could* be a way of improving the quality of teacher education courses. But it could also become a mechanism for delaying permanency, sacking teachers and creating vacancies, thus ensuring compliance in those who remain. The emergence of a reserve army of teachers means that the process of selection and rejection will appear from now on as natural and necessary.

References

- 1 See draft terms of reference for National Inquiry into Teacher Education.
- 2 Adelaide Advertiser, May 9, 1973.
- 3 Report on Teacher Unemployment in Queensland, by John Freeland. QTU. See also RED 7.
- 4 Venceremos No 1, QTU Unemployed Teachers Co-ordinating Committee, p 3.
- 5 SA Hansard, February 21, 1978, p 1645.

Radical Education Dossier

looks at schooling differently



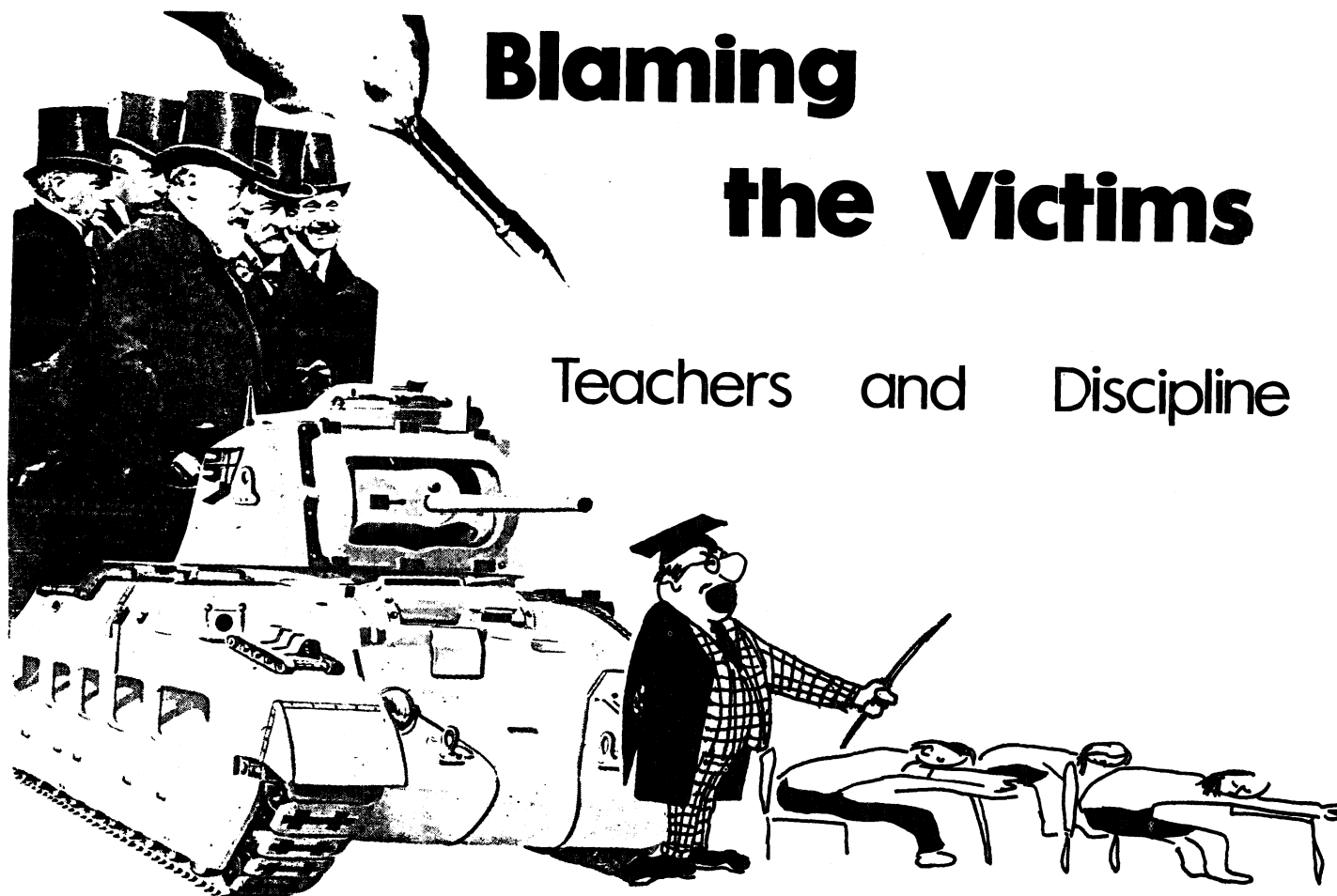
Catch Up With The REDs

(Use the Order Form on the back cover.)

- In RED 1:** **Sam Bowles:** If John Dewey calls, tell him things didn't work out.
Rachel Sharp: Is progressive education the alternative?
- In RED 2:** **Bob Mackie:** Freire, revolution and education.
Herb Gintis: The politics of deschooling.
 Replies to Bowles and Sharp.
- In RED 3:** **Sandra Alexander:** How to alter schools without really changing them.
 It's happening (a RED report on the Schools Commission).
Carol O'Donnell: Classroom practice for radical teachers.
Kevin Harris: Tvind: education on the move.
Sue Nash: Education and the needs of working-class kids.
- In RED 4:** **Christine Burvill:** The politics of compensatory education.
 A do-it-yourself I.Q. test.
Doug White: Ideological Quackery.
Greg Andrews: I.Q. and social class.
Jim Alexander: The old heredity-environment game.
 The politics of psychology: a reading guide.
- In RED 5:** **Lindy Dent:** Unemployment — some implications for education.
Keith Windschuttle: The gospel according to the O.E.C.D.
Ian Lennie: "It makes you feel so bad": youth unemployment.
John Davies: The H.S.C.: preparation for what?
Peter Stevens: The struggle against capitalist education.
- In RED 6:** **Ann Game & Rosemary Pringle:** An analysis of the Report of the Royal Commission on Human Relationships
Gail Shelston: Towards countering sexism in the teaching of English.
Lee Cataldi: At the bottom of the heap.
Monika Allan: Counter sexist strategies in school counselling.
Sue Wood & Janet Kossy: A survey of counter sexist material.
Carole Deagon: The politics of child care under capitalism.
Child Care Workers Action Group: Child care unravelled.
- In RED 7:** **Carol O'Donnell:** Making the Link — the economic role of migrants.
Barbara Fitzgerald: The Galbally Report 1 — the same old hypocrisy.
Tom Zubrycki: The Galbally Report 2 — a public relations gesture.
Cavell Zangalis: Not the Parthenon again, Miss?
Marcello Nuvola: Multicultural education — no progress without participation.
John Freeland: Malice in Bananaland.

Blaming the Victims

Teachers and Discipline



by Peter Masters

The unstable and contradictory character of capitalist society, especially marked in periods of crisis like the present, makes it ever likely to produce various forms of social disorder. Progressive critics of the social system recognise these for what they are – muffled and muted expressions of disappointment and rebellion on the part of those who are made to bear the cost of capitalism's capricious nature without ever feeling that they have any capacity to join constructively in finding a better way.

The effects of funding cuts and other regressive measures in schools, together with high levels of youth unemployment, make the present period a very unsettling one for young people in schools. We are hearing more and more from certain quarters about the need for tighter (more repressive) school discipline. This question is a very complex one for classroom teachers, but one we can't ignore.

The article that follows was written as a contribution to the debate over school discipline at the 1978 Annual Conference of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation, but we feel that it has a value beyond the limits of that context. We publish it now in the hope that it will stimulate further thinking about what has always been one of the prominent problems confronting the progressive classroom teacher.

PAGE 20

The promotion of 'Discipline' as a topic by the easily identifiable Right-wing is a tactic or vehicle to aid in the 'destabilisation' of the present strength of the Left in the Federation. We can learn from the experiences of the US and UK teachers' unions which have been through the same experiences some years ago. In Australia the attacks on schools have centred on the purported failure of schools to teach 'fundamentals'. The attacks have been squarely aimed at teachers and have attempted, indirectly, to win public support for the restoration of conservative ideas in education as well as reduced funding. That campaign seems to have had a lot of success so far: witness the failure of education to emerge as a big election issue in this period of falling funds 1974-78.

In the US, however, the attack has been through two phases. The first focussed on the alleged failure to teach the three Rs, but the controversy began to get out of hand and raise some questions about power, privilege, and bias in the curriculum, all of which had critical implications for the capitalist structure. A diversion was needed by the newly-elected, publicly-renovated Richard Nixon and his backers. Right-wing tracts on discipline, IQ, cultural deprivation (read depravity) all served to shift the burden of inquiry away from the schools and the system and onto the students themselves. Agnew seemed to be the spearhead: 'I believe restoration of discipline and order ought to be the first priority – even ahead of curriculum – in the schools of this country'. Unfortunately, according to a nationwide opinion survey he soon had a majority of Americans agreeing with him. So the second phase of the ruling class offensive simply switched from teacher bashing to kid bashing.

I believe that locally we are now seeing the beginnings of a Right-wing movement to attack kids and divert the 'blame' onto them. The added advantage to the Right in this tack is that teachers are easily recruited to the cause whereas they were the only effective opposition in the three Rs debate. After all, teachers know that the Right's propaganda about falling standards of literacy and numeracy is just empty waffle, and can muster the facts to support their views. But who will be in a position — who will be willing — to come to the defence of working class kids when they are attacked as undisciplined, uncontrollable and unteachable? The *Sun-Herald* recently featured large articles that had, among other things, a resigned teacher describing the horrors of teaching in the Western Suburbs. Some people thought these articles were pro-teacher. Actually they were anti-pupil; an attempt to shift the focus onto what is perceived as the evils of working-class kids.

The so-called movement to 'basic education' of course always has been a blind to increase authoritarianism in schools — for in reality establishing the three Rs proficiency in every child is a thoroughly radical concept and against the interests of the Right.

Strong discipline promotes the conservative version of the 'Good Teacher' myth. It gives the **appearance** of effective teaching while guaranteeing a non-delivery of knowledge in many cases (particularly working-class cases). Therefore even the kids interpret their failure to understand things as their own fault; pupils too have learnt to identify strong discipline as good teaching. They know therefore that their problems cannot be the teachers' fault, and the ensuing poor concept of self worth, even self hatred in some cases, is a necessary ideological prop for capitalism. It was Reich who identified in *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* that repression is the soil in which Fascist roots take hold.

New York is a good example of what can happen when teachers panic over 'discipline' and fall for the Right's invitation to push what they see as their own interests **against** the interests of their pupils. New York has more teachers than New South Wales controlled by one centralised bureaucracy and one controlling centralised union (UFT). In 1970 that union could have been termed mildly progressive. By 1972 it had wholly given way to conservative even reactionary elements. The change seems to have come about by the union giving way to teacher interest at the expense of pupils. The UFT pushed for and got, in this period, the right of teachers to determine which children remain in school. Children considered 'disruptive' would be placed in special classes or suspended from school. This appeared logical to teachers in improving the classroom climate and the Right had an easy victory. However, it was obviously anti-pupil, and parents' interests began to diverge from teachers' at this time. In siding with pupils, parents have remained a strong anti-teacher force in the US.

One of the prerogatives the NY teachers wanted and got was the right to nominate kids as 'disruptive' in order to be rid of them. This is a thoroughly retrograde step. 'It is obvious that many children labelled "disruptive" are simply not responding to the approaches being used with them. Classifying children as "disruptive" categorises human beings in a manner that undermines the encouragement of growth and development — the central role of the school. Human classification may make conditions better for teachers, but it results in a system of self-fulfilling prophecies, in which those classified as "deviant" are isolated and not expected to perform and indeed, do not perform as well as the "normals".'

The UFT successfully fought decentralisation, vouchers, community control, and increased parent participation and

thus increased its central power. Every Right-wing push was conceded to — the union was extremely united after 1972 and very strong — it opposed all progressive candidates on school boards while leaving ultra conservatives unmolested. Its own interests were wrapped up with the *status quo* and viewed pupils only as serving the interests of the teachers. Activist parent groups emerged to try and push the union into a more progressive path. In Syracuse, New York, the Coalition for Quality Education, a parent-pupil oriented body came into existence over a negotiation article in the teacher contract dealing with discipline. Under the article, teachers were given the power to use physical force in dealing with students, and to exclude students at the teacher's discretion. The adoption of the article over the strong protest of the Coalition prompted the parent group into announcing a school boycott and the setting up of their own schools. The teachers' association had announced a strike to go ahead if the article were stricken from the contract. A compromise was reached that reflected the superior power of the teachers. Parents retaliated by attributing discipline to lack of teacher quality and began to press for the lengthening of the probationary period of teachers preceding tenure. The period had been one year — the parents pushed for five and the union could only negotiate it back to three years. (New York teachers have in practice life long tenure.)

The parallel to be drawn in New South Wales is that in highlighting undiscipline the Right is able to alienate parents, undermine teacher credibility further and in a period of high unemployment create the doubts about tenure that are necessary to repress the service.

The greatest danger to the Federation in its consciousness-raising activities is that if the Right is victorious and similar patterns occur here as in the US then the strike weapon becomes defunct. Pre 1972 in New York immense success was achieved with the strike weapon as parental pressure pushed government into settling. With parents as the enemy however, 30 to 40 day strikes in New York have ended as disasters for the teachers involved, as the parents were quite prepared to sit them out with the government. The union has kept power by negotiation, arbitration and giving in to more and more Right-wing demands. The union was made safe for capitalism. The pupils and the progressives were the losers. The US governmental agencies have learnt how to deal with teacher strikes. Teachers, having lost support of parents, cannot exert political pressure; the government gains popularity itself by waiting teachers out.



The NY experience seems to show that by pushing teacher interest (discipline, external exams) over pupils and parents, teachers cut their own independent industrial throats.

We can learn too, from the English Experience, where of 450 000 teachers about one ninth are not unionised, the same percentage as New South Wales. There are nine unions. The discipline debate emerged there as a co-runner with the 'back to basics' brigade. The unions were already split and polarised and the debate has served to keep them that way. The largest union is the somewhat progressive NUT (National Union of Teachers) which with 250 000 members covers most rank and file teachers. The National Association of School Masters is the next largest and is unashamedly Right-wing, it covers bosses and promotions positions and excludes that 70% of the service who are women. NAS has a Right-wing satellite called the Union of Women Teachers — presumably they make scones for NAS meetings.

'On the salaries question the NAS is far more interested in boosting differentials than raising the basic. On educational attitudes an example of the difference between it and the NUT is that it stresses the influence of violence in schools at the risk of being alarmist, stresses fighting violence with violence (the cane): the NUT by no means overwhelmingly against caning has shown awareness that reports of pupil violence (misbehaviour) are often sensationalised and exaggerated — they have tried to stress that kids react to frustration and boredom — the London branch has passed that the cane should be abolished.'

Since 1969 a pressure group called 'Rank and File Teachers' within the NUT (based in London) has pursued a policy of

equalisation of salaries and democratisation of schools but have been able to make very little headway. There are six other small unions all representing heads or head teachers and all are reactionary — one which has 6000 members pledges never to go on strike. The fragmented union affiliations make it difficult for whole staff action and the advantages to the Right are obvious.

The UK seems to be an illustration of the fact that teachers who see pupils as a hostile group against whom they must protect their interests as much as they must against employers are likely to have fundamentally opposed educational and political attitudes to those who see their interests as ideally converging with pupils. The discipline emphasis pushes teachers away from pupils' interests such as non-streaming to teacher interest such as streaming (teachers claim this makes teaching 'easier' as they wouldn't know where to pitch lessons, etc) which is vital for capitalist interest to maintain and strengthen class divisions.

The discipline debate in NSW can be seen as the beginnings of an attempt to split, destabilise and polarise our union. The NSW Principals Association is making naive attempts in this direction already. With better legal advice they may become infinitely more dangerous.

I am arguing that this question must be seen as part of the generalised Right-wing counter-offensive which we are enduring at present. And I've tried to suggest the consequences which will flow if we are defeated by the Right-wing initiative. Working-class parents are the first to become the adversaries of the teachers as it is their children who are excluded from classes. The Left must support pupil's rights.



The Bourgeois Backlash

or, Who Killed William Tyndale?

by Robert Mackie

In October 1976 the British Prime Minister, James Callaghan, opened what he termed 'the great debate' on education. Ironically this was contained in a speech delivered at Ruskin College, Oxford, the so called 'trade union college'. Callaghan's concern was not the wider participation of the working class and labour movement in educational decision making. Rather it was to seek justification for his government's cutbacks in the public funding of schools, and to gain political mileage out of the Tory-led attack on alleged progressive and permissive educational methods. A similar motivation also lies behind the Wran government's seminar series, 'Is it Time for an Education Audit?', held during 1978.

Significantly, Callaghan's speech came barely three months after a public, judicial inquiry into events surrounding the strike at William Tyndale Primary School in Islington, a north London suburb. The connection between Callaghan's announcement and the controversy over William Tyndale is not accidental. For in the two years leading up to the Ruskin College speech the school was seldom out of the news. Indeed the British press had a field day with headlines screaming, 'How red are our schools?', and 'Tyndale teaches the three Rs — rebelliousness, rudeness and revolution'. In many ways the collapse of William Tyndale was seen by conservatives of all parties as presaging the final disintegration of British schooling. Certainly Callaghan had it in the front of his mind at Ruskin College when he spoke of parental unease at new teaching techniques, and the need to improve educational efficiency by re-arranging priorities around a core curriculum. It is against the background of this conservative assault on education in Britain and Australia that the significance of William Tyndale must be judged. Here we will outline, as clearly as possible, what actually happened at the school, and argue that its demise provides convincing evidence of the bourgeois backlash in education.

What Happened at William Tyndale?

William Tyndale Primary School, established in 1916, took its name from a martyr of the Protestant reformation and translator of the English Bible, and in that connection religion was probably the only part of the orthodox problematic which was not to figure in the ensuing furore. Early in 1974 it had approximately 250 pupils who came from a wide range of backgrounds. Like other schools in Islington it was worried by declining enrolments, although in the case of Tyndale numbers would need to fall to 80 before amalgamation or closure would be considered. The school's population was predominantly working class, with a sizeable proportion of very poor parents. Alongside these were an increasing number of middle class and professional families, who had recently moved into the area. In Australian terms Islington would be roughly comparable to Balmain in Sydney.

William Tyndale was one of several schools administered by the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), and controlled

by a board of managers comprising parents and teachers. It was divided into an infants' department, headed by Brenda Hart, and a primary department whose head, from January 1974, was Terry Ellis. In common with many other schools in the area Tyndale had experienced a large turnover of staff, and in 1974 the board of managers appointed a number of new teachers including Brian Haddow, Dorothy McColgan, and Jackie McWhirter, the teacher's union representative at the school.

The arrival of both a new principal and new teachers carried with it an almost inevitable desire to innovate and experiment. In British primary schools of the post-Plowden Report years such innovations would be child-centred and 'progressive'. Ellis, as principal, encouraged the staff to develop programs focused on the integrated day, team teaching, open classroom, and above all a conscious desire to give greater assistance to the school's working class students. In effect, Terry Ellis not only wanted William Tyndale to teach the basic subjects with efficiency, but also to forge close links with the surrounding working class community.

Since it gave rise to so much public vituperation, the philosophy lying behind these changes deserves some further elaboration. The Tyndale staff were acutely aware of the contradictions entailed in much so-called 'progressive education', particularly how more indirect means of teaching disguised ends wholly consonant with support of existing social relations. Tyndale teachers recognised that schooling is a matter of conditioning children into an acceptance of such modes of thinking and acting as society deems proper. Even more importantly they saw that the institution of school places teacher and taught in a false position. Where pupils' views are regarded as important, as they were at Tyndale, then it becomes much more difficult for teachers to adopt a dominating stance in the classroom. Ellis and his colleagues were seeking to diminish the resistance between teacher and student to a point where each could offer something of value to the other on an equal level.

The philosophy evolved at William Tyndale was, essentially, democratic, egalitarian and non-sexist. It was concerned with social development and geared towards the activity, rather than passivity, of students. It made no false distinctions between 'work' and 'play'; rejected arbitrary standards of attainment and behaviour; asserted the necessity for children to think for themselves by encouraging the forming and expressing of opinions: to ask questions was far more important than to obey orders. Most schools push the 'bright' child and relegate to special classes those who show problems — a kind of dustbin policy. Tyndale chose to reverse this. Plentiful activities were provided for highly motivated middle class children, but a large part of Tyndale's effort was directed towards the economically deprived group. Nor, as part of its policy of democratisation, was the role of the head ignored. Terry Ellis rejected the autocratic concept of the principal's role, and introduced discussion of policy decisions by the whole staff acting as a committee. Staff partici-

pation in decision making at Tyndale was a significant shift away from the prevailing 'leadership principle' which held that the head's opinions carried more weight than those of class teachers. This eminently sensible procedure was later to be portrayed as an attempt to run William Tyndale like a revolutionary commune.

Unexceptionable as these policies may have seemed to many primary teachers, Tyndale's staff soon ran foul of opposition, not only within the school but also outside it. Perhaps the most pernicious opponent on the staff was Dolly Walker, a part-time remedial teacher and confidante of Rhodes Boyson, editor of *Black Papers* and Conservative spokesperson on education. Walker, more than any other single person, was responsible for stirring up opposition to Ellis both in the school and among the parents. Walker's first broadside was a four page statement pinned, Luther-like, to the staff notice board on May 22, 1974. Its tone was trenchant, even vitriolic, while its content was a staunch defence of schools as academic, highly structured and authoritarian institutions. For her the purpose of schooling was the production of a skilled elite nurtured on competition and hardened by public examinations. The appearance of this document outraged the staff not simply because of its reactionary posturings, but also because it ended with a threat to call a parents' meeting over the school's policies. Such a threat ran directly counter to the many hours Tyndale teachers had spent in a series of home visits explaining the new approaches to parents.

Walker peddled her condemnations of Tyndale far and wide, encouraging parents on the managing board to initiate a petition of protest to the ILEA. When a meeting was finally arranged for

parents and staff on July 9, Walker harangued the audience with a personal attack upon Ellis. This outburst rendered cool, lucid discussion of the school's policies impossible. In fact, Brian Haddow, the acting deputy head, and several of the staff walked out in protest. An atmosphere of mutual distrust had now been generated which was to prove impossible to dissipate.

Also in attendance at the meeting was Donald Rice, district inspector in charge of Tyndale. He told angry parent-managers who came to see him afterwards to 'cool it' and give Ellis until Christmas to sort the school out. Subsequently, that remark found its way back to Ellis and quite understandably it considerably augmented the staff's anxiety and paranoia.

Events now moved swiftly. After Christmas 1974, a group of parents led by Elizabeth Hoodless and Brian Tennant, both active in Islington Labour party circles, set out to make their grievances known. They collected signatures for yet another petition expressing concern at the deteriorating quality of education at William Tyndale and the rapid decline in the roll. At bottom, Hoodless and Tennant wanted Ellis, Haddow and the others dismissed. In response the teachers secured, in June 1975, support from the North London Teachers Association which passed a resolution discouraging other schools from admitting children withdrawn from William Tyndale. In addition the staff banned all visits from managers during school hours. The result was a statement by the parents, released to *The Times*, condemning the school and its staff. William Tyndale Junior School was now headlines.

Far too late to do any good, Harvey Hinds, chairperson of the ILEA subcommittee on schools, called a meeting on July 2 at County Hall of administrators, teachers and managers. Hinds



suggested an ILEA inspection of the school and a formal inquiry which could include the role of managers in the whole affair. Because Hinds was equivocal on this latter point, the teachers rejected the terms of the inspection and inquiry, and went on strike. Ellis and his supporters, the majority of staff, left Tyndale and established an alternative school with twenty-seven children in a church hall a few blocks away. Meanwhile inspectors and temporary teachers kept the original school going.

These dramatic events hastened the formal public inquiry which opened, in a room in County Hall, on October 27, 1975. It was presided over by Robin Auld, QC, who was asked to look into and report on the teaching organisation and management of the school. All of the main participants were represented by legal counsel, and increasingly the highly expensive proceedings took on the form of a trial. Under a virtually incessant blaze of publicity the Auld inquiry continued until January 1976, with the final report reaching the desk of Harvey Hinds in July.

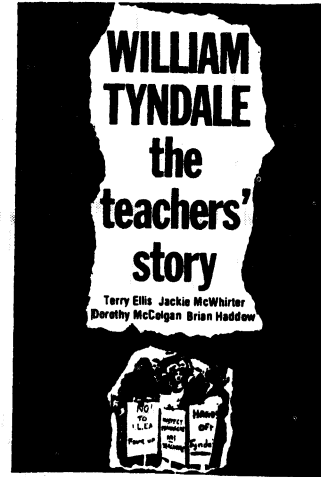
In his findings Robin Auld laid the main blame for the troubles at William Tyndale on Terry Ellis and Brian Haddow. This was because Auld took the view that the headteacher and staff must be in effective control of the school and accept responsibility for its aims, policies and methods. If things go wrong, as they did at Tyndale, then Auld's solution was that the local authority should act. In this connection he criticised Harvey Hinds and the ILEA for being dilatory in their support of Ellis, and tacitly encouraging parents to foment trouble. Hinds subsequently resigned from the ILEA. Similarly, the actions of Dolly Walker and the main parental activists were condemned as disgraceful. This was cold comfort for the teachers however, since Walker, having done the damage, had resigned at the end of 1974.

Faced with Auld's wide-ranging and trenchant critique of William Tyndale the ILEA's education subcommittee was quick to act. The infants' and primary sections were combined under Brenda Hart's headship, while Ellis and six other teachers appeared before a disciplinary tribunal to answer charges of misconduct, inefficiency, and indiscipline arising out of the findings of the Auld Report.

The Bourgeois Backlash

In Britain the William Tyndale affair has become the educational cause celebre of the seventies. Its significance goes much deeper than a simple clash between progressive and traditional teaching methods, despite Dolly Walker's attempt to isolate this as the only issue. Tyndale, under Ellis, established its priorities around shifting resources away from the privileged middle class, towards the disadvantaged and lower working class pupils. By doing so the Tyndale teachers pointed up a class conflict at the heart of 'progressivism'. They recognised that the main impetus for progressive methods, especially those enshrined in the Plowden Report, came from the tolerant, liberal, postwar middle classes. For the working class however, education meant discipline and the three Rs. So, when Walker and the *Black Papers* insistently proclaim falling standards, increasing illiteracy and the rest, it is not surprising that this should appeal principally to the working class, despite the fact that the *Black Papers* ideology is distinctly hostile to their emancipation.

In their endeavours to challenge the mere perpetuation of middle class expectations, and consciously provide additional assistance to children of working class families, the Tyndale teachers affronted bourgeois sensibilities. Their efforts were sabotaged by those parents on the managing body who detected that at Tyndale 'progressivism' was not being used to safeguard



the advantages of their children. Most managing bodies in English schools do little more than rubber stamp staff appointments, check the toilets, and make sure that schools don't burn down with the kids inside them. But at Tyndale aggressive middle class professionals — journalists, administrators, academics — joined the managing body as appointees of the Labour party. For Elizabeth Hoodless, Brian Tennant and others like them, the diversion of resources and lack of discipline over the poorer students meant the opportunities and work of their own children suffered. In this way their attack upon Tyndale teachers can be seen as symptomatic of a widespread and vocal bourgeois backlash in education.

Moreover, when Tyndale is considered in the context of Callaghan's plea for a 'great debate' it is clear that the bourgeois establishment is only too willing to join with *Black Paper* reactionaries in an attack on working class radicalism. Indeed the key actors against Ellis and his colleagues were important figures in the local Labour party branches. Given the massive cuts in educational expenditure made by Callaghan's government, the need to provide both justification and scapegoats, in the form of Tyndale teachers, is all too apparent. At the most fundamental level, the strategically crucial issue at the school was one of control. The Tyndale staff were forced to face the ugly fact that the Dolly Walkers of this world build their power base in the very class they were seeking to liberate. That many workers want schools to instill a fear of authority into their children is a problem to be overcome, not a fact to bemoan and accept. The powerlessness of the working class under capitalist schooling makes it a fertile breeding ground for reactionary ideology. Only the experience of real political power in a transformed society can overcome this. This is both the lesson of William Tyndale and the principal challenge confronting radicals in education today.

Note

This discussion of the Tyndale saga is drawn from several sources. There is the excellent account given by the teachers themselves in *William Tyndale: The Teachers' Story* by Terry Ellis, Jackie McWhirter, Dorothy McColgan and Brian Haddow, (Writers and Readers Publishing Co Op), London, 1976. Also there is the *Times Educational Supplement* report by John Gretton and Mark Jackson, *William Tyndale: Collapse of a School — or a System?* (Allen and Unwin), London, 1976, which is fuller in general background than the teachers' version but is distinctly hostile towards them. An article by Dave Bailey, 'Missing Out the Middle Classes' in *Radical Education*, 8, Spring, 1977, pp 9-11, has provided the basis for the current discussion. Least of all there is the self-justifying myopia of Dolly Walker in 'William Tyndale' which can be found in C. B. Cox and Rhodes Boyson (eds), *Black Paper 1977*, (Temple Smith), London, pp 38-41.

A woman's place is in the

'The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words the more modern industry becomes developed the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences in age and sex have no longer any social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour more or less expensive to use according to their age and sex.'
(Communist Manifesto)

'Machinery, by throwing every member of that family onto the labour market spreads the value of the man's labour-power onto the whole of his family.'
(Capital, Vol 1)

The process of technological change under capitalism has meant a continual increase in the specialisation and deskilling of work. New machines take over the jobs which workers used to do and are used to separate the functions of work and management. In the early auto industry, for example, a group of men would assemble a car. Today, their jobs would be deskilled, and each would stand on the line making some discrete, repetitive movement in the assembly process. With the increase in the use of machinery, the functions of management are continually concentrated into fewer and fewer hands, whilst for the mass of people jobs become more and more specialised, boring and repetitive. The job of the typist, for example, is being replaced by the word processor. Bank work becomes increasingly deskilled and repetitive.

The number of people put out of work by machines grows continually unless the scale of industry, both blue and white collar, can keep expanding and re-employ those thrown out of work by mechanisation. During the long boom in Australia, from 1945 to the late sixties, this kind of capitalist expansion was taking place. But now the boom has ended, and the increase in mechanisation, deskilling and unemployment is continuing at an unprecedented and alarming rate, and their effects will no longer be cushioned by expansion.

The Increase of Women in the Work Force

The ever-increasing process of mechanisation and deskilling is linked to the increased participation of women in the labour force. Under capitalism the job market is segmented according to class, sex and race and as many occupations formerly carried out by males become deskilled there is a tendency for female workers to be accepted into these work areas. For example, the work of a bank teller was once carried out only by men. The deskilling of the job has coincided with the entry of women into that area of work. An increasing number of women have entered the labour market since the turn of the century and they have usually been employed in the expanding service sector, or during the boom in the most deskilled areas of manufacturing. Their labour has been welcomed by capitalists because it is cheap and unorganised compared to male labour. Migrant women, for example, have become the backbone of the work force in Australian manufacturing because they provide

a highly manipulable pool of labour to carry out repetitive, poorly paid and unhealthy work. The maintenance of this cheap, unorganised pool of female labour helps hold down the price of unskilled labour as a whole.

Kolko documents an ever-increasing participation of women in the American labour force since 1900¹. He notes that in 1900 12% of the life of the typical American woman was consumed in the capitalist work process. By 1970 it had risen to 31%².

Whilst many Marxists and feminists have assumed that women enter the work force in times of boom and are pushed back into the home when jobs are in short supply, Kolko shows that this assumption is wrong. In fact, though the participation of women in the work force increases steadily through periods of boom, overall it increases even more rapidly in times of stagnation, even though both men and women are losing jobs in many areas. When unemployment or economic adversity strikes families traditionally dependent on the income of the male workers, the women in the family are driven into the capitalist labour process. In times of depression, the entry of women into the work force raises the consumer unit income of most working class homes and puts a floor under family incomes during periods of unemployment. Particularly in depressions, capitalists have ready access to a cheap, unorganised and often unskilled pool of female labour.

~~Home..~~ office...

The American situation described by Kolko also holds true for Australian capitalism according to a study by Power³. She shows that in the present recession women's employment has continued to grow while men's employment has fallen, and that structural changes in the post war Australian economy have led to a long term decline in male labour force participation rates and an increase in female participation in the labour force, particularly in the areas of clerical work, health and education. Power concludes:

'Women have also been able to find full- (and part-) time jobs in the recession more readily than have men. Employment has expanded in health, education and public administration and, because of the sex typing of jobs, these additional jobs have gone mainly to women. Thus, as in the Great Depression, occupation segmentation and the use of women to cheapen the labour process, has given women relative job protection in the recession.'⁴

This is not to say, of course, that some women are not losing jobs during the recession. The jobs disappearing tend to be in manufacturing, whilst those opening up are in the service industries. Whilst for better educated and experienced Australian women job opportunities have continued to grow, unskilled women and girls are in a bad position, as multinationals and some Australian manufacturers move their operations to countries where even higher rates of exploitation of the labour force are possible.

Part-Time Work

Part-time work is a rapidly expanding way for capitalists to control and wring more work out of the labour force, and women in particular are being employed. Gallagher notes that in June 1978, of the total number of part-time workers in Australia, women made up 78% and married women made up 70%.⁵ The introduction of part-time work during a period of high unemployment can be used to decrease the number of full-time jobs available because workers may be employed only during peak hours, or peak periods of production. Part-time workers are less likely to be involved in union activities and more likely to be a malleable labour force than are full timers. Part-timers will inevitably be forced into working at higher levels of intensity than full-time workers, and many fringe benefits won by labour can be cut away. Where there is no standard length of work week there is no standard measure of employment/unemployment/under-employment. The ramifications of the increase in part-time work for the working class struggle are frightening.

In the present period of recession women are moving into part-time work, often because their husbands have lost jobs or because their school-leaving children cannot find them. Over the past five years the growth in part-time work has been slightly larger than 44%,⁶ and this increase is a perfect example of the way capital, in times of recession, steps up its use of female labour in order to squeeze more productivity out of its workers and force down their conditions. An increased number of part-time jobs poses a threat to union organisation and many of the gains in wages and conditions won over the past fifty years. The woman who enters the work force because the value of her husband's pay packet has been eroded may cause the overall income of the family to rise, but the process allows the capitalist to gain two workers for what might otherwise have been the price of one.

factory...

These facts do not mean, of course, that women should return to the home; and anyway, as right-wingers are discovering, such a call has little impact in the face of economic imperatives. The increasing entry of women into the work force should be welcomed as a necessary part of the feminist struggle for equality and self-determination. However, the working class as a whole must fight to prevent female labour being used to divide and rule as has been the case in the past. The struggle for women to gain equal rights and an equal place with men in all aspects of society, in the education system, in the work place and the unions can only be to the advantage of the working class as a whole. Unless women fight for and achieve this equality, and unless men recognise the economic and social necessity for it, their labour will continue to be used to break down conditions and wages.

Part-Time Work and the NSW Teachers Federation

Given the major function of part-time work under capitalism it seems strange that any union should support it, but in fact the NSW Teachers' Federation looked at a permanent part-time work proposal as its main topic for Annual Conference in December, 1978. The choice of topic reflected an understandable interest by the membership in what on the face of it would appear to be simply a way of adding more flexible conditions to a job which has become increasingly inflexible now that teacher unemployment has locked employed teachers into

place. An instructive debate drew out many of the industrial problems involved, and the proposal was defeated. However, the union will continue to investigate the topic, and it is clear that an education campaign on the ramifications of part-time work will be necessary if rank and file teachers are to understand that a union demand for part-time work would be a mistake. The notion of permanent part-time work as a boon to women had been widely publicised previous to Annual Conference, but several feminist speakers explained that a view of it in the context of the present economic situation reveals just the opposite effect.

The Employment of Women and the Right-Wing Backlash in Education

In the face of the increasing employment of women in the Australian work force and the benefits which capitalism derives from their employment, the right-wing backlash against women in the media, and attacks on feminist education projects must not be regarded primarily as an attempt by capitalist interests to force women back into the home. The refusal to meet child care needs but the extension of part-time work means greater possibilities for the exploitation of the class as a whole and of women in particular. The cutbacks in funding to women's studies resources centres, to girls' careers projects, and to anti-sexist teaching projects, are primarily part of the overall process the Fraser government is adopting of diverting funds towards capital and against the interests of workers; part of the process of making the workers pay for the crisis.

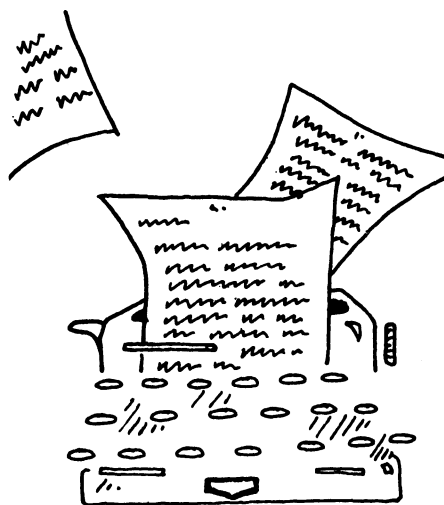
That the anti-feminist attacks of right-wing groups such as CARE and Parent Probe are taken up by governments and propagated through the media won't force women back into the home, but, of more interest to capital, it can pressure the already highly exploited female work force to feel even more guilty about working, so they will be prepared to work hard and be grateful for whatever pay they receive. The right-wing groups whose cause is seemingly championed by the press and the government see unemployment and social disintegration and identify working women as the enemy. They have little understanding of the economic imperatives built into the capitalist system and the way that the system demands the highly exploited and unorganised labour of women. The concern of these groups can be used, however, in the attempts to cut back welfare and education spending formerly aimed at women and to foster an ideology which blames women for the crisis and youth unemployment caused by capitalism itself. The ideological scapegoating of women, the government cut backs directed against them, and the pretence that they should return to the homes, allow capitalism to deepen antagonisms between male and female workers and to increasingly use the latter as a guilty, malleable, low paid but rapidly growing group.

References

- 1 Kolko, G, 'Working Wives: Their Effects on the Structure of the Working Class', *Science & Society*, No 3, 1978.
- 2 *ibid.*
- 3 Power, M, *Women and Economic Crises: The Great Depression and the Present Crisis*, paper delivered at the Women and Labour Conference, Sydney, 1978.
- 4 *ibid.*, p 6.
- 5 Gallagher, M, *A Critical Discussion of the Debate on 'Alternative Concepts for Organising Work'*, unpublished paper, Labour Resource Centre, Sydney, 1978, p 10.
- 6 *ibid.*, p 17.

by Frances Brown

RED REVIEWS



RECORD REVIEW

On the Steps of the Dole Office Door: songs and poetry of the Great Depression in Australia. Sydney, Larrikin Records, 1978. LRF-015. \$7.99 (\$4.18 to schools).

During the 1930s, Lady Game, wife of Sir Phillip Game (the NSW Governor who dismissed Jack Lang) visited one of the wretched humpy villages called Happy Vallies where unemployed workers were forced to eke out a living. She exclaimed that there was one jolly little humpy she would not mind living in herself. Any similarity to Tamie Fraser carrying around cracked bowls containing food for the underprivileged is purely coincidental...

The current depression has stimulated fresh interest in the 1930s, and in the experience of workers who remember capitalism's last major shakeout. This record brings together folk songs and popular rhymes of the period, and is accompanied by a booklet of explanatory notes which includes the words of each item on the record.

Although the economic position of most workers in advanced capitalist countries is better now than it was then, what is striking is the number of parallels evident in these songs between the problems of the two generations and their reactions to those problems. For

example, a recurrent theme in ditties like 'At Bankstown and at Newtown' and 'The Dole-Snatcher's Anthem' is police harassment and brutality, as the state shows its true colours and stops even pretending to be a neutral arbiter between competing class interests. Again, the use of the unemployed as cheap labour in so-called 'community service work' (ie doing the socially necessary welfare tasks which capital is no longer prepared to fund) finds a parallel in the recently-announced youth programs of the Fraser Government. One wonders how long it will be before reception of the dole is made conditional on willingness to scab.

Ominously, many of these songs express a sense of betrayal that the sacrifices workers made in World War One were rewarded with unemployment, poverty and degradation: they point out that it was only when a new war could be organised that money was made available once more to pay workers. Whether we shall be forced into another war to get capitalism back on its feet is a question progressive people have not thought enough about.

Although mainly associated with the depression years, some of the items, such as 'Woolloomooloo' predate the 1930s; others arose from specific historical events, like 'The Day the Bridge Was Opened'. Some, like 'The Battler's Ballad' derive from American country and western, and are sentimental and naive, while still others, like the superb 'Sandy Hollow Line', have a bitter, sardonic realism which shows working-class culture at its very best. The singing has an attractively spare quality; the backup music is simple harmonica or bushband.

One worrying point: where are the defiant depression songs of the seventies? Are they still being created, or has workers' culture been so completely overwhelmed by mass-media schmaltz? The ready absorption of punk into commodity production bodes ill.

For Social Studies, History or General Studies (not to mention Music) teachers, this disc will be a valuable resource in putting a point of view which is consistently suppressed. For anyone interested in proletarian history it is a fascinating and moving document. The accompanying booklet has a discography, references and the sources of the songs.

Clift Barnard

FILM REVIEW

Doled Out, available from John Whitteron, c/o Filmmakers Co-op, St Peters Lane, Darlinghurst Sydney.

Controlling Interest, available from the TransNational Co-operative, 5th Floor, 232 Castlereagh St, Sydney.

Two new films available for hire, *Doled Out* and *Controlling Interest* provide an entertaining lesson for high-school students (and teachers). These films were produced independently but presented together compose a useful impression of the micro and macro realities of contemporary capitalism. The actors in *Doled Out* are a number of unemployed people short on acting experience but long on humour. The film is about being unemployed and unemployable. It solidly dismisses the myth of the dole bludger and establishes Australia's wide-scale youth unemployment as a social phenomenon rooted in the present international crisis in capitalism and the capitalist demand for ever-increasing profit.

The film demonstrates that the young unemployed people of Australia are not bludgers on the social system but victims of it, and yet this ostensibly pessimistic theme is presented with an immense degree of enthusiasm, spontaneity and humour through a series of lightning jokes and situations. An important message is conveyed to the kids who really need to hear it in a way which avoids the common emphasis in such films on the misery and boredom of the unemployed individual. The actors themselves told the film crew what the film should be like — they said it should have no interviews, no statistics and it mustn't be boring. In one scene the actors play Australian business people anxiously watching from the windows of a stagnant corporation the action across the street in an American mining company. In another scene we see a young man literally beating the facts of capitalist exploitation into the head of the fellow dolee. The film's message is that if you're unemployed you're not to blame. In a constantly racy and funny way the real facts about capitalist exploitation are revealed.

The second film, *Controlling Interest*, is a good complement to *Doled Out* because it records the ruthless rationality of multinational profitmaking. Exploitation is not accidental but an inevitable and logical part of the capitalist system. As the chairperson of Castle and Cook observes: 'We're in business to make money . . . we are not in business primarily to satisfy society'. The grim outcome of this fact is demonstrated in Chile, Brazil, Singapore and in the heartland of capitalism, the USA. The film shows how the 'economic miracle' of Brazil is based on the super exploitation of its workers, how 'stable government' is necessary to and promoted by multinational firms, and how these firms can move across the globe in search of the highest possible rate of profit and exploitation.

Teachers wishing to hire *Doled Out* should contact John Whitteron, c/o Filmmakers Co-op, St Peters Lane, Darlinghurst, Sydney. *Controlling Interest* is available from the TransNational Co-operative, 5th Floor, 232 Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

Ian Colley

BOOK REVIEW

A Woman's Place: The Role of Women in Australian Society, by Nancy Genardini. Unit 11 in the 'Discussions' series. Lloyd O'Neil, 1978. 64 pp.

Australia's Daughters, by Rosemary Auchmuty. *Woman and Society/Man and Society* series. Methuen, 1978. 92 pp.

Circumstances are making it easier for secondary teachers to deal explicitly in their lessons with women's oppression. After years of pressure from feminist lobbies most states now have official reports and policies, a few paid personnel, and a Schools Commission project or two, all in the area of non-sexist education. One result of this official sanction (however nominal) is that teachers can more confidently, with fewer glances

over the shoulder, introduce a unit on 'Women in Australian History', 'Sex Roles and Society', or whatever. An abundance of resource books available from bookshops and specialist libraries has provided background material for keen teachers, and, more recently, kits and books for direct classroom use have been published. (See 'Kits, Kids and Consciousness', *RED* 6.)

Australia's Daughters by Rosemary Auchmuty and *A Woman's Place* by Nancy Genardini, both published in 1978, are Australian source books designed for use in Social Science, History, or General Studies courses, and would be suitable for Year 9 or 10 and over. Each is part of a standard school series, and are therefore distinguished from essentially 'movement' efforts like the AUS kit, *School Days . . .*, or *Role Your Own*.

A Woman's Place is a zappy collection of excerpts, quotes, newsclips, etc, from sources ranging from Caroline Chisholm to contemporary women's magazines and WEL. These are arranged under headings like 'Damned Whores . . .?', 'Motherhood - Dream or Nightmare?' and 'Women and Politics', with a clear, simple text,

Pre-World War I concept of secretary



Seamstress and her boss at work in a New York sweatshop (1888)



illustration from *A Woman's Place: The Role of Women in Australian Society*

**And if I say women are
more emotional than men
it's because they are!!!**



illustration from *Australia's Daughters*

occasional discussion questions and activities suggestions, and excellent, abundant and varied graphics. The fine graphic work makes the book appealing and accessible enough to be stimulating even to students who are daunted by masses of text.

It seems to me that some serious shortcomings mar this otherwise worthwhile book. Perhaps inevitably in a book aimed at stimulating discussion by raising a quantity of issues, there is an often superficial treatment of important and complex matters. Related is a tendency toward media cliché, eg the unforgivable topic heading for the section on the contemporary women's movement: 'Burn That Bra'. Most disturbing, however, is an underlying preoccupation with that familiar old liberal imperative of presenting both sides. Thus the reader is given equal time descriptions of 'the three main organisations' in the women's movement in Australia: the Women's Liberation Movement, Women's Electoral Lobby, and [for the sake of balance, one assumes!] the Women's Action Alliance. Included is the statement, 'They have much in common. They all want a better place in society for women. They differ however on what this involves, and the methods which should be used to attain their aims'. Presumably to the same end of impartiality, lists of positive and negative 'results' of the women's movement are given.

PAGE 30

This insidious textbook writer's (and journalist's) habit of presenting 'both sides' reinforces the myth that the reasonable path always lies somewhere in the middle: no matter which part of the spectrum of possibilities is included in the terms of reference. Fortunately, *A Woman's Place* consists of predominately pro-feminist material, so the path down the middle leads to a view that 'places the changing concept of a woman's role into the perspective of a continuing struggle for human dignity and fulfillment'. Slightly, but significantly, left of the status quo.

Australia's Daughters, like *A Woman's Place*, is a collection of excerpts from primary sources, but with more emphasis in this case on the history of women's position in Australia. Organisation is more systematic, and the lengthier (but still brief) selections are divided among five chapters covering women's identity, home and family, education and social conditioning, work, and liberation. The graphic style is subtler, but again excellent, with witty drawings by Victoria Roberts.

Australia's Daughters is distinguished by careful consideration of differences between conditions for different groups of women: eg rich, poor, country, city, migrant, aboriginal. Also, there is a clear awareness of the importance of organised struggle for gaining women's rights, both in the past and in the present.

The areas covered represent a fairly

'safe' selection which excludes the more controversial topics like sexuality, rape, contraception and abortion. Implied is the assumption that the single feminist goal is equal opportunity for women in an otherwise unchanged world.

Both *A Woman's Place* and *Australia's Daughters* chronicle the inequality inherent in the different roles women and men have played. It is to their credit that neither book falls into the trap of seeing the limited opportunities resulting from sex-role stereotyped expectations and behaviour as the only problem. But neither book adequately answers, or even raises, an important question which follows from the realisation that women have been, and are still, exploited, oppressed, and 'unequal': that is, which groups have benefited from 'woman's place' at a given time, and who stands to win and lose as the situation changes? Surely students must be taught to ask this sort of question if they are to learn to analyse the world in which they find themselves and if they are to gain the means to change it.

Radical teachers will be able to make good use of books like *Australia's Daughters* and *A Woman's Place*, but they still can't sit back and expect basically liberal books to cover the sticky issues and ask all the important questions.

Janet Kossy

ABOUT RED

RADICAL EDUCATION DOSSIER is produced and published three times a year by Radical Education Publications.

RADICAL EDUCATION DOSSIER examines the conflicts within schooling and education. It identifies the opposing interests involved in the struggle and works to develop strategies and tactics for change.

Our long term aim is to work towards further development of a socialist theory of education. Our immediate aim is to analyse the current process of education and to examine and explore the role of education in society.

The task is large and is open to all. We invite teachers at every level, students, parents and others interested in education to join the debate. Contributions should be concise, jargon-free and comprehensible to the non-specialist. **RADICAL EDUCATION DOSSIER** has a policy of using non-sexist language and requests that all contributors submit with this in mind.

Articles should not exceed 5000 words and those with a practical emphasis are especially sought. We also seek commentaries and information items up to 1000 words, as well as book reviews, letters, notices, contacts, news, photographs and cartoons. Please submit articles typed and double spaced.

RED 9 will centre on *The politics of community involvement*. **CONTRIBUTE NOW.**

Copy for **RED 9** is needed by April 1, 1979; Copy for **RED 10** by July 17, 1979.

Send contributions to: Editorial Collective,
Radical Education Dossier,
PO Box 197,
Glebe, NSW 2037.

Subscribe to RED

Complete, clip and mail this form to: **RADICAL EDUCATION DOSSIER**, PO Box 197, Glebe, NSW 2037, making cheques payable to **RADICAL EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS**.

Please enter my subscription to **RADICAL EDUCATION DOSSIER** (3 issues):

Name:

Address (for delivery):

..... Postcode

Enclosed please find cheque etc. for \$4.50, \$6.00 libraries and institutions (includes p. and p.)



BACK NUMBERS



Back issues \$1 each (includes postage). Circle issues wanted. I enclose cheque for \$.....

1

2

3

4

5

6

7



FOLK WAYS

AT LAST AUSTRALIAN
HISTORY WILL GET A FAIR GO
IN OUR SCHOOLS!

FOLKWAYS MUSIC STORE OFFERS
TEACHERS & STUDENTS LIVING
HISTORY AS TOLD BY REAL
AUSTRALIANS - ON RECORDS AND BOOKS

THE MOST INTERESTING MUSIC STORE IN
AUSTRALIA IS OPEN EVERY DAY 9AM - 9PM
(EXCEPT SUNDAYS 1PM - 5.30PM)

FOLKWAYS CARRIES THE ENTIRE LARRIKIN RECORD LABEL:

MAN OF THE EARTH - Songs and ballads of the Aust. Coal & Gold mining tradition; BUSH TRADITIONS - Field recordings of Australian traditional performers; NAVVY ON THE LINE - Songs & tunes from the traditions of the Aust. railway worker; OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN - blues & songs by Jim Jarvis; DIDJERIDU SOLO - Played by Wandjuk Marika; ON MY SELECTION - Contemporary folksongs by Phyl Lobl; STEAM SHUTTLE - Aust. folksong in an original setting; THE SHEARERS DREAM - Bush songs from the Bushwackers & Bullockies Bush Band; THE SPRINGTIME IT BRINGS ON THE SHEARING - Shearing songs by Gary Shearston with good notes; THE LADIES CHOICE - contemporary songs by Robyn Archer; WILD GIRL IN THE HEART - Aust. contemporary poems arranged & performed by Robyn Archer; BILLY OF TEA - bush songs by the Larrikins; ON THE STEPS OF THE DOLE OFFICE DOOR - Oral images of the Great Depression; REVIVED AND RELIEVED - Australian folk songs from Danny Spooner & Gordon McIntyre; HOT PLAST - contemporary political songs from Ewan Mac Coll & Peggy Seeger.

282 OXFORD STREET, PADDINGTON

SCHOOL ORDERS - official bureaucratic orders get special low prices (less sales tax). Send for our 'Folk in School' lists. Please forward lists of (A) Larrikin Records (B) Australian Books (C) Aboriginal & Papua New Guinea Music (D) Ethnic Music (E) History Teaching Records (F) Spoken Word (G) Mail Order Catalogue (costs you \$1.50 in stamps/cheque).

NAME SCHOOL

ADDRESS