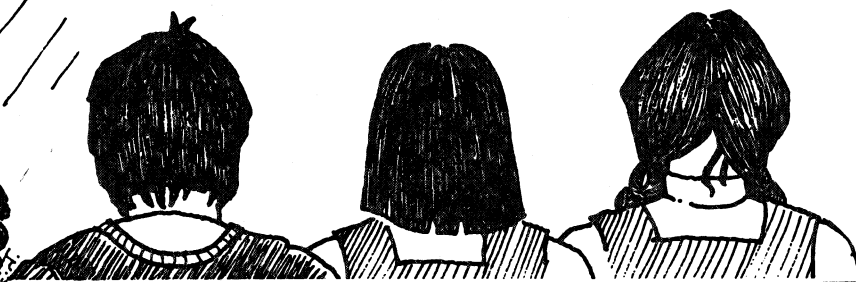


Radical Education Dossier

7

TODAY'S LESSON

- THE ROLE OF MIGRANTS/EXPERIENCES OF MIGRANT CHILDREN
- THE GALBALLY REPORT UNDER THE MICROSCOPE
- COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION
- THE QLD. BANNING OF SEMP & MACOS
- MULTICULTURAL CHILDCARE
- THE MULTICULTURAL CON
- + REVIEWS & RESOURCES



Spring
1978
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Radical Education Dossier

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October, 1978

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What's at the Bottom of the Melting Pot?

Most studies in the education of migrant children make little attempt to explain their educational disadvantage in terms of the role migrants occupy in the Australian work force. The implicit assumption is that inadequacies are the unfortunate result of ignorance, irrationality and bureaucratic inefficiency which can be remedied by more information and humane action by a government which tries, perhaps imperfectly, to represent the needs of all Australians, native or otherwise.

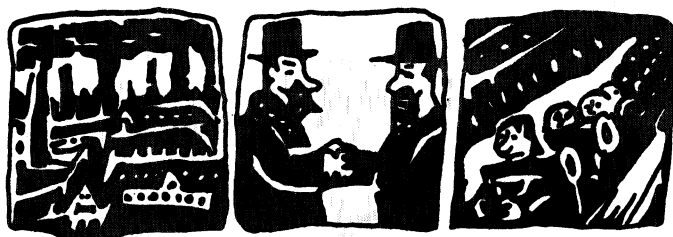
RED 7 argues that migrants were brought to Australia as a cheap, mobile and docile labour force and that educational disadvantage is directly linked to the government's and the schooling systems' role in providing "factory fodder". The issue exposes some Australian myths about migration, migrant education and multicultural education and shows how government action, or the lack of it, has consistently served the interests of the Australian ruling class.

In the area of multicultural education there has been plenty of official talk and almost no action. *RED 7* argues that migrant gains depend on migrant strength and struggle and that rhetoric about multicultural structures will be translated into action only when class and ethnic interest force that change.

RED 7 examines some of the multicultural rhetoric, points out its contradictions, and looks at some possible ways forward.



Making the Link- The Economic Role of Migrants and the Experience of Migrant Children in Australian Schools



by Carol O'Donnell

In 1947 less than 3% of the Australian population was of non Anglo-Saxon extraction. By 1975 25% of Australia's population had been born overseas and over 15% were either of non Anglo-Saxon origin or the children of at least one parent of non Anglo-Saxon origin. In 1975 over 25% of the total work force were employed in manufacturing and a high proportion of these workers were migrant women. The Jackson Report on Australian industry comments that migrants usually do the dirtiest, least skilled menial tasks. The report states:

Women are a quarter of the work force and in some sectors eight out of ten. Little attention is paid to their special needs, particularly of the two-thirds who are married. The married migrant woman in industry is trebly disadvantaged.¹

Katz once said of American public education that it was "universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratically arranged, class biased and racist"². He argued that all these functions are closely related and derive from the role schools play in teaching values and skills which help to reproduce the class structures and personality structures appropriate to capitalist expansion. This article takes a brief look at post-war migration to Australia and the economic position of women workers of Mediterranean origin* in particular. It attempts to relate the school experience of the migrant child to the role that she or he will play in the reproduction of the capitalist economy, and shows how the schooling system, in purveying the dominant race, class and sex ideology, can hardly be the ladder to upward mobility that liberal ideologues long for. Instead, schools teach the self concepts and attitudes appropriate to the class, race and sex of the future worker.

The Economic Function of Australian Post-War Migration

The post-war period was the long boom of Australian capitalism and the growth and expansion of industry necessitated large scale planned migration. In 1945 the Department of Immigration was set up to "initiate the longest phase in Australian planned migration since the convict settlement"³ to prevent the expansion of capital being hindered by serious labour shortages. The first groups of migrants to arrive were British, Dutch, Germans and East Europeans. They reached a peak by 1960, and since that time the major new arrivals have been mostly Italians, Greeks and Yugoslavs.⁴ The change in migration patterns is partly accounted for by the economic recovery in Europe and the formation of the European Economic Community. Refugee migration decreased and Northern European migrants were less ready to make the long journey to Australia as the labour situation at home became more favourable.

It is well to remember that encouraging migration is not an altruistic gesture, but a planned strategy aimed at providing a cheap labour force for an expanding capitalist system. If we keep in mind this prime reason for migration, and are aware that state policy fundamentally serves the long-term needs of capital as a whole rather than "the people", then the plight of migrants in Australia has a clear and cogent explanation.

Migration aids capitalist development in many ways besides providing a labour force essential for the development of capitalist production. The new arrivals were important to swell the domestic market as high labour costs meant that Australian capitalists could not turn to an export market for expansion. Migrants afforded the Australian state a considerable saving in expenditure on education and training by providing a "ready made" labour force, already qualified and of an age to engage in production.

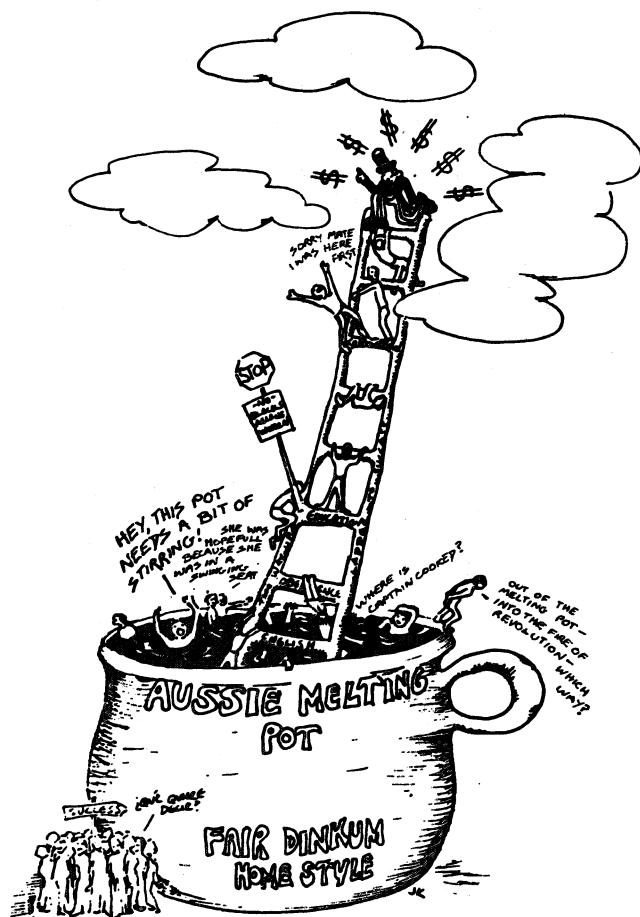
Indigenous workers derived certain advantages from migration during the long boom. Migrants were assigned the most unpleasant, unhealthy and worst paid jobs, and this afforded Australian-born workers the chance of "upward mobility" into the labour aristocracy. Many earlier British, Dutch, German and East European migrants achieved a similar mobility, but the later groups of Italians, Greeks and Yugoslavs remained "factory fodder" whose class and cultural backgrounds forced them into the lowest paid and most repugnant work roles. On the other hand, massive migration allowed the creation of a reserve army of labour, a group who are out of work or not in regular work and who are often desperate to get it. This reserve army of labour threatens the rest of the work force by tending to hold down wage levels and undercutting the bargaining position of those who have jobs. The ready identification of this threat with other nationalities, distinguished in easy ways from "Australians", together with the lack of unionisation of many migrants, led to racial antagonisms as an outlet for conflicting economic interests. Racism, like sexism, is an ideology which divides the working class and is thus in the interests of big business. Its expression is understandably strongest in times of economic recession and increasing unemployment and job competition.

The government rationale for migration was one of "nation building", accompanied by stressing the importance of keeping Australia safe from the "yellow hordes" or the "red peril". This "populate or perish" rationale for capitalist expansion also subscribed to the idea of the "melting pot", i.e. that although each wave of immigrants takes its turn at the bottom of the

* This term is used in preference to "Southern European" so as to include people from Lebanon, Cyprus, Turkey etc., along with Greeks, Italians and Yugoslavs.

socio-economic ladder, it will, as its children become assimilated, become distributed throughout the higher levels, finally becoming economically located on the same "merit" principles as apply to the native born. Supposedly, education is a key factor determining this final equitable distribution. Predictably, in Australia as in America, later waves of migrants have, as the Rev Jess Jackson put it, not melted, but "stuck to the bottom of the pot". In periods of rapid economic expansion, when there has been a major need for recruitment into the middle class, when there has been a need for new, responsible Australians to fill the industrial and service sectors, there has been relaxation of barriers and the degree and amount of mobility have increased. When the boom ends, the doors of entry into the middle class constrict. The present cutbacks in education play a part in this process of constriction.

"Melting pot" ideology is not to be rejected only because it doesn't work. Even if an equal percentage of Australian and migrant children had the change to "make good" in Australian society, the essential problem would still remain — that vast profits are made from the exploitation of the labour of huge numbers of people. Equality of opportunity is undoubtedly desirable for all racial groups, but the struggle to achieve it must be linked to a wider struggle to do away with an economic structure where capitalists profits are made for a small class by a large group of people who work for poor pay at boring and repetitive jobs in unhealthy conditions. The liberal race for upward mobility and equal opportunity is only part of the struggle if that upward mobility merely means that someone else takes their place at the bottom of the heap.



Labour Market Segmentation and Migrant Women

Power and Collins⁵ have shown that migration has not led to a "melting pot" in Australia, but to a labour market stratified according to sex, ethnic origin and race. The stratification is not totally rigid and is affected in minor ways by economic and social changes; however the following labour hierarchy can be perceived: Australian men, male migrants from Northern Europe, male migrants from Mediterranean regions, and then the same order for women, followed by Aboriginal men, with Aboriginal women at the bottom.⁶ Typically, each of these groups is situated within a relatively separate segment of the labour market. The allocation of jobs on the basis of race and sex has been affected by the various waves of migration to Australia. By filling the lower paid, more routine jobs, migrant men accelerated the movement of Australian born men to higher levels in the occupational structure and similarly, within the female labour force, women of Mediterranean origin performed the same function for Australian-born women.

Modern capitalism requires an underpinning of "shit workers" and more privileged workers seek to avoid these positions by higher education and training. Mediterranean women, together with Aboriginal women, are the most economically exploited group in the Australian labour force. The extensive study of Melbourne migrant women workers done by the Centre for Urban Research and Action (CURA) demonstrated repeatedly the appalling conditions, long hours, and poor pay suffered by these women whose labour is the mainstay of Australian industrial profits. The report notes:

... [they] get to work around 7.30 a.m. where they often spend their day in stifling, dirty, smelly, cramped conditions working at monotonous, demeaning routine jobs (sewing pockets, packing meat, on process lines) which are physically and mentally demanding because of work systems that encourage payment per item of production. Many women work in social and cultural situations where there is hostility to migrant workers and where they often have little communication with anyone apart from those who speak a similar language. They have little contact with either unions or management and often think the two are the same. Migrant women work in physically and socially oppressing conditions and they have no way of communicating their thoughts and feelings regarding their situation.⁷

The CURA study found that factory health conditions were often appalling. In the meat industry women worked in cold, draughty conditions on concrete floors slippery with water and blood. In metal and electrical trades industries dust was common and ventilation poor. In other industries there was the continual smell of chemicals, the noise of machinery, unguarded machinery and excesses of temperature. Fire escape facilities were often inadequate and canteen and eating areas were inadequate or nonexistent.⁸ The women worked under highly regimented systems, and were often timed in toilets or called by whistles. They complained bitterly of being treated as animals and not humans, and resented the time and motion study men who kept check on the pace of work and the use of every minute.

In the CURA study employers usually described the work as repetitive, unattractive, boring, mentally tedious and monotonous, but usually qualified this judgment with the observation that migrant women were well suited to this kind of work and even enjoyed it! For example:

It's not hard work. I get no complaints. It's an ideal job for women to do because there's nothing skilful or hard in it

The women are suited to these jobs because they can sit at the machine all day doing the same thing. If they were more intelligent or better educated they would become bored or go round the bend. But this class of person is suited to the job. These women come from peasant type backgrounds.

It's not hard physically. It is mentally tedious work but that doesn't seem to worry them. They know no different.⁹

The Australian Government Commission of Inquiry into Poverty came to the same conclusion as the CURA study; that the overwhelming percentage of migrant women work for economic survival. The fact of poverty overcoming disinclination can be seen in the Commission finding that over two thirds of the Mediterranean women who do work would gladly stay home if their husbands' wages were sufficient to support the family. The Inquiry into Poverty points out that many migrants have travel loans to repay; most have arrived with insufficient household necessities; they pay more for housing than Australians do; and many of them have to purchase tools of trade or suitable clothing for the climate or the job. Australia has largely recruited Southern European and Mediterranean migrants from unskilled or peasant backgrounds and has placed a strong emphasis on the migration of entire families. As a result, the Commission notes, men with the responsibility for a family enter the work force in large numbers in the lowest earning groups¹⁰. Their needs are so great that they are very vulnerable to extreme economic exploitation, and many migrant families avoid poverty by overtime, taking on second jobs, and most importantly, by ensuring that women work, contrary to cultural preference, and often in situations where child care facilities are non-existent or regarded as inadequate. As the CURA study notes, "the women hate the work, but they have no other choice."¹¹

The "Migrant Problem" in Education

How does schooling fit into this overall economic picture? Martin points out that until the late sixties there was officially no "migrant problem" in education and up until 1968 no state was collecting systematic information about the educational standards, experiences or problems of migrant children¹². Throughout the fifties and most of the sixties, the accepted view was that migrant children were successful and happy in Australian schools. But migrant groups, teachers and parents, were gaining sufficient strength to force the authorities to examine this rosy assumption, and some recognition of how the schooling system discriminates against migrant children began to emerge.

The complacent attitude towards the progress of migrant children in Australian schools can partly be explained in terms of the class and cultural origins of the earlier groups of English, Dutch and Eastern European migrants. Martin argues that these people came from higher socioeconomic strata and a culture which allowed their children to assimilate more easily than did the children of later arrivals. Migrant disadvantage is arguably more a question of class than of race.

By the '70s the long boom was over and the decline in Australian manufacturing and the rise in unemployment were to curb immigration and make chances of upward mobility even more remote. Under these circumstances it became patently obvious that schooling was not fulfilling the task mapped out for it by liberal ideology, i.e. providing a ladder for upward social mobility. By the 1970s there was official recognition by the Schools Commission that equality of access to schools of

roughly equal standards (in itself a pipe dream) would not give students equal opportunities for success. Fensham, Price, Martin and a host of others were pointing out that the dominant ideology, which the school curriculum and climate inevitably reflect favours middle class, male, Anglo-Saxon children. Liberal studies tended to come up with results which backed up the Marxist contention that:

... [the school] legitimates economic inequality by providing an open, objective and ostensibly meritocratic mechanism for assigning individuals to unequal occupational positions.¹³

The state that embarked on the programme to bring out migrants as factory fodder to swell industrial profits then sent the children of these migrants to second rate urban schools where they were tested in their ability to conform to the demands of the dominant ideology. Roper stresses the material inferiority of schools in areas of high migrant density¹⁴. The Karmel Report documents the low academic achievement levels of migrant children and traces this to the middle class, Anglo-Saxon bias of the school environment. The Schools Commission Report, *Girls School and Society* demonstrates that the typical Mediterranean migrant girl is triply disadvantaged — by her class, her race and her sex.

School as a Preparation for the Factory

Migrant school children are disadvantaged by their class position in many ways. Firstly, both parents will probably work in order to keep the family unit solvent, so the opportunity to learn from parents is lessened. Whilst 70% of children whose parents are of Australian origin attend pre-school only 24% of children of non-English speaking migrants attend pre-school according to a Melbourne study by de Lemos¹⁵. The economic and cultural factors which account for this thus limit the child's chance of success in the primary school system. The Mediterranean migrant child's class position also means the family will have less money available for books, holidays, extra tuition, and all the other material aids to learning.

The school curriculum and the teachers themselves usually expect and reward only middle class language and behaviour patterns, especially at higher school levels where qualifications for employment and entrance to tertiary institutions are being handed out. The Karmel recommendation that schools suit the class and cultural background of the students may be fine while the students are at school, but you can't pass the H.S.C. or enter university because you're good at fixing cars or are skilled at ethnic dancing. The "Catch 22" is perfect — if the school curriculum is relevant to the child's class and ethnic background it will probably not allow him or her access to tertiary institutions. If it doesn't fit the child's background but is geared to the demands of tertiary entrance, she or he will serve out a lot of time in bored bewilderment, learning to feel a failure, good for nothing other than to be one of society's shitworkers. The assembly line workers of tomorrow are schooled in low self-esteem, boredom and the acceptance of their subservient position.

The migrant child is disadvantaged at school primarily because the institution operates in a language which is alien. Migrant children are faced with the enormous task of learning a language whilst at the same time learning the complicated concepts involved in studying mathematics, science or any other subject. Depression and frustration often give way to feelings of inferiority. It is common for children to go through a period when they lose their fluency in their native language before becoming fluent in English, and thus they experience great difficulty in thinking clearly and quickly in either tongue.

Because of the stress of adapting to Australian conditions, or overwork or money worries, the child's parents may be anxious, depressed or irritable and unable to give emotional support. The parents' ignorance of the school system and lack of English make it impossible for them to help with homework or give assistance with problems at school.

As Connell and Kieve have commented¹⁶, school age migrant girls often have to leave school to take up the domestic role that the working mother can't fulfil. Another source of pressure comes from the conflict between the sexual norms demanded of migrant girls by the peer group and those demanded by their families. The aspirations of female migrant students are found to be lower than those of males, and yet Taft found both sexes to perform equally academically. Sex role stereotypes at home and to a lesser extent at school prepare girls for domesticity and male dominance. They end up in factories to make ends meet, doing work even more repellent than that done by their male class counterparts.

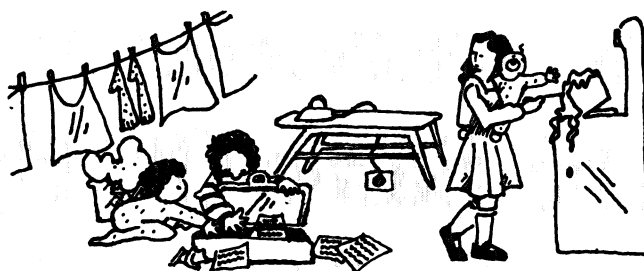
The Struggle for Multi-Cultural Education

The demand for better educational conditions for migrant children is a form of class struggle in the ideological domain. Struggling against cultural domination, through demands for multi-cultural education or migrant welfare services and radio stations etc., is linked to class struggle because it is the double disadvantage of class and race which allows migrants to be pushed onto the lowest rungs of the job ladder, in poorly paid, unhealthy and repetitious jobs, often without proper union organization; and their classification and categorization, economically and racially, segments the working class (often to the extent of open antagonism) – a process which aids capitalist exploitation.

There are some who would argue that the class struggle is the primary struggle and that therefore movements like the fight for multi-cultural education are diversionary, drawing attention away from the realities of class exploitation, hindering awareness of the need for working class rather than ethnic solidarity. Political awareness, however, tends to arise initially through issues that people are directly involved with and consider to be of immediate importance. One wastes one's breath in trying to convince people concerned about the whaling industry that class struggle is really where it's at, and yet by joining the fight against whaling one can show that Marxist analyses usually hold most water. The same is true for multi-cultural education. It may not, in many quarters, be perceived as part of class struggle, as the enthusiastic liberal rhetoric about harmony and consensus through cultural diversity demonstrates. Nevertheless, multi-cultural education is an important progressive issue and it should be a major arena for Marxist involvement in education.

Attempts to gain a better educational deal for migrant children should not be directed towards assimilating them into Australian culture, for such an approach will probably do the children a disservice. Their slim chance of success in the Australian educational race will inevitably be based on a choice between the language, values and cultural identity they have been brought up with, and the demands of the new culture. Even if she makes the break, the class and sex of the typical school girl of Mediterranean origin will disadvantage her severely in terms of her chances of gaining access through education to less unpleasant and more highly paid work.

With multi-cultural education the child is likely to find less conflict between family and school, between one set of values and another. The cultural patterns and identity are reinforced



and supported. According to the research carried out by Rado, the child could also be expected to be better adjusted academically and thus progress further. With multi-cultural education s/he will have a marginally better chance in the upward mobility race. As stated previously, however, the major problem with entering this upward mobility education race is not simply that the odds are so heavily against migrant and working class children winning. Because of the way capitalism is structured, for every winner there are a score of losers, forced into poorly paid and dehumanizing jobs. The primary struggle must be to change a system which exploits people, whether they are Italian, Greek, Anglo-Saxon or Aboriginal.

However, even if education systems could be radically transformed so that they served the needs of migrant school children they could not compensate for the effects of the class and race oppression operating outside the school. It must be noted too, that a radical transformation of schools in the interests of the exploited is impossible whilst a capitalist state exists which uses schools specifically as an ideological arm to reproduce existing economic structures. These qualifications regarding the limitations surrounding the struggle to change the school system do not mean the struggle is unimportant. It is no accident that a lot of official lip service has been paid to multi-cultural education whilst almost everything that has been implemented has been tokenistic in the extreme. Multi-cultural education is important in the ideological struggle so achieving it will be a long and hard fight. The campaign for schooling that serves the interests of migrants and workers is linked to other economic and political struggles for a better deal for the vast majority of people. Although education reflects existing economic structures and can never transform society, we must remember that class struggle takes place in the schools as well as on the factory floor.

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The Galbally Report (1)

The Same Old Hypocrisy

by Barbara Fitzgerald



A Migrant English teacher tells the sorry story of the services which were allegedly intended to teach immigrants the language of their new home, and points up some of the little-noticed frauds of the Galbally Report.

The Federal Government's provision for English Language teaching is best described as cynical tokenism. The frantic desire of hundreds of thousands of migrants to become competent in English is doomed to despair. It is not intended, and never has been, that they should be given the possibility.

Until 1968, the only English classes for migrants were the continuation classes — two hours, two nights a week, all levels in together, conducted in local schoolrooms, often with adults sitting at tiny children's desks. These classes were provided for under an agreement between Federal and State governments drawn up in 1951. In those far-off days, migrants arrived by ship, and there was some provision of shipboard English classes. Hence the name "continuation" classes. The 1951 agreement, now almost totally irrelevant, has yet to be renegotiated, no doubt because it served Federal and State governments so well in their "ping-pong" responsibility-shirking. "Continuation" classes are still the only form of English language tuition available for the vast majority of migrants.

In 1968, as a result of pressure from newly-arrived, professionally-educated Czech refugees, eight-week intensive courses of 360 hours were introduced for tertiary-educated migrants. Students were paid a small living allowance. At the end of 1969, pressure from other ethnic groups saw the introduction of part-time ten-week courses of 200 hours. For sub-professionals and tradespeople no allowance was paid. Further pressure led in 1973 to a full-time ten-week course being established (300 hours) for those who had full secondary education. A living allowance was paid. Full-time courses were seen by the Federal Government to be unsuited (sic) to migrants without full secondary education, the reason being that the curriculum was too intensive.

Teachers have been putting pressure on the Canberra bureaucrats (adult migrant education is still largely a Federal responsibility) to have full-time courses made generally available, pointing out that theories and methods of language teaching and acquisition have developed considerably over the last fifteen years. Methods, we have insisted, must be suited to students' backgrounds and needs and not vice versa. We have, of course, not had much success. The secondary education requisite serves the Federal Government as an excellent means of denying even this inadequate amount of tuition to the vast masses who do not meet this criterion. Even with the prerequisite, the waiting lists are long.

Capital investment was not mentioned in the 1951 agreement, as it was not an issue at that time. Neither government, therefore, accepts responsibility for it. As a result, the full-time courses just referred to are for the most part housed in condemned, decrepit premises or are obliged to go begging the use of a room here and another one there in technical colleges.

More Tokenism

Other gestures have been made. Courses of 36 hours have been introduced on the job in some of the bigger industries. This length is totally absurd, and the fraction of the workforce they cater for is minuscule. And the unions, who should have been applying strong pressure on the governments and employers all these years for some recognition of their migrant members' needs have usually taken refuge in ethnocentric suspicion. They have refused to acknowledge that the composition of the workforce has changed: 45% of the current industrial workforce is migrant (not all of non-English-speaking origin, of course). One hears the complaint that migrants are bad union members, or, indeed, refuse to join the union at all. Most people like to understand exactly what it is they are joining and to have the possibility of participating actively if they wish. Lack of English rules many migrants out on both counts. Some attempts are now being made to involve migrants and, though rather belated, are encouraging.

For the ladies at home, of course, there is the Home Tutor Scheme, established in 1974. It is a voluntary outfit. Volunteers, who are not trained teachers, visit the ladies in their homes once a week. Ladies and volunteer work have a long and respectable history of association and, while the Home Tutor Scheme may be valuable in facilitating social contact, one wonders who would foot the bill if it were suddenly to achieve its stated aim of "assisting in overcoming the reluctance on the part of migrant women to attend formal classes in the community" (*Migrant Education Program*, AGPS, 1976).

The Galbally Report

Late last year the Prime Minister set up the Galbally Committee to look into migrant services and programs. Yet another committee, at the taxpayers' expense, when the problems have been stated and reiterated in the Henderson Poverty Inquiry, the Jackson Report on manufacturing industry, the report of the Royal Commission on Human Relationships, etc., etc. (and the solutions so adequately stated in the 1975 Liberal-Country Party Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement).

The Galbally Report was tabled in parliament in June 1978, whereupon the recommendations, together with the proposed additional three-year funding were immediately accepted *in toto* by the Prime Minister. Such indecent haste should have given cause for concern.

The report is a brilliant example of liberal humanitarian rhetoric, which voices its concern that "all members of our society must have equal opportunity to realise their full potential and must have equal access to programs and services" (p.4). In the section on the needs of migrants, the report says:

We have concluded that the migrants who have the greatest difficulties are those who arrive here with little or no understanding of the English language and who remain at a disadvantage because of that . . . those who do not learn English continue to be at a disadvantage and often suffer considerably, through isolation from social contact and in many other ways. Moreover, it is these same people who are often not effectively reached, and sometimes not reached at all, by present services and programs. There is evidence quoted elsewhere in this Report and in other reports to suggest that nearly half a million of our population have these problems and that many suffer severe hardship because of them. (pp. 4-5.)

One can be forgiven for experiencing something of a feeling of euphoria on first reading the report. They're not only saying all the right things, they're also promising to do something about them! Somebody's finally got through to them! Here, at last, is the beginning of a new era! But when one starts to tackle the figures and tables, the euphoria abruptly changes to consternation.

A New Backlog

The report refers to a "backlog" of some 400,000 adult migrants whose English is below fluency level; 194,000 of these are products of the last decade. Some would consider these fairly conservative estimates. Be that as it may, the report goes on to emphasise the necessity of avoiding a recurrence of such a situation. The settlement program which is to provide, among other things, on-arrival English courses is to be the answer. It is to be "a preventive program designed to lessen the later problems migrants experience in settling here, and to lower the departure rate. We believe a balanced program to help with initial settlement, while expensive, is an essential and integral part of our immigration policy."

It is indeed difficult to imagine how the very authors who penned the above statement, who pinpointed lack of English as the key problem in migrant settlement, could then, with seeming total disregard for consistency, recommend funding to provide:

- i. on-arrival English courses for only slightly more than half of the projected 60,000 who will require it over the next three years.
 - ii. only sixty hours of English over four weeks for all "elementary" students who, they indicate, would make up half the total number receiving on-arrival English.
 - iii. only 120 hours of English over five weeks for all "intermediate" students, thirty per cent of the total number receiving on-arrival English.
 - iv. three hundred hours over ten weeks for the remaining fifth, presumably the advanced students.
- There is certainly no policy of providing for everyone according to their needs here.

Some professionals and sub-professionals might be luckier. Another section of the report recommends that a special intensive English course (maximum six months) be trialled for professionals and sub-professionals whose occupations involve substantial public contact.

What is interesting about this recommendation is that it indicates that the authors of the report, despite considerable evidence to the contrary in other sections, do have some idea of what is involved in achieving competence in a language.

What exactly is the report recommending then? For those destined for the assembly line, unemployment or housebound isolation, sheer tokenism. The offerings are slightly less tokenistic as one goes up the social scale. Of course, almost half get nothing at all — a new built-in backlog! Even in the third year

of the program, the report recommends that only 75% of the target group will receive on-arrival English. The explanation for this probably lies in the table which shows that 25% of migrants return permanently to their country of origin. The authors seem to assume that, by some happy coincidence, the 25% who receive no English will be the 25% who return home. A self-fulfilling prophecy for the unlucky 25% perhaps, but what happened to the principle of equality of opportunity, openly espoused at the beginning of the report?

The ultimate deception lies in the fact that what the Committee has actually recommended for adult migrant English classes for 1978-79 is not an increase of \$790,000 as claimed but, in fact, a cut of \$1.178m. This is not evident from the tables unless one knows:

- that the refugee program has so far been funded separately;
- that \$820,000 were allocated to cater for five thousand refugees from October 1977 to June 1978.

The report allocates \$440,000 to cater for 8,000 refugees and other migrants from July 1978 to June 1979.

Could such a high-level committee have made a simple mathematical error? Speaking of mathematics, there is another very interesting table in the appendices which shows that assisted passages have declined from 131,868 in 1969-70 to 15,450 in 1976-77; where have these funds been redirected?

Conclusion

The Galbally Report draws attention, once again, to the problems. Its funding recommendations are not going to begin to tackle these problems. A whole generation of migrants has already suffered severe physical and mental hardship for a specific, identifiable, several times identified, rectifiable reason. They have more than made their contribution to Australian society. They have contributed enormously to its economic prosperity. Their primary and secondary education have cost Australia nothing. They have enriched its cultural life. It is useless to argue that the Adult Migrant Education Service has failed to teach the migrants English. The task has never been seriously undertaken. Continuing "failure" is inevitable until the funding is provided and the service is massively expanded.

A Canadian survey showed that it takes a migrant, on average, nine hundred hours of tuition to reach basic fluency in English. No survey has been carried out in Australia, but our longest course is about three hundred hours. The NSW adult migrant teachers syllabus committee findings agree with the Canadian estimate. The NSW Teachers Federation policy states that all non-English-speaking migrants should be entitled *by right* to at least this amount of English tuition. The policy further states that they should be paid living allowances equivalent to the basic wage to enable them to attend full-time classes on arrival (or as soon as it is convenient for them if they form part of the "backlog").

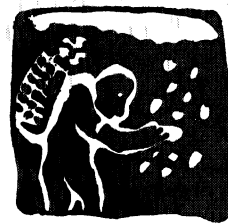
There are suggestions that the answer lies not in trying to teach the migrants English, but in multi-culturalism. One hopes that multi-culturalism, in the form of equal recognition of different cultures, will one day come about in Australia. Only the most utopian, however, could see it as anything but a very slow process in a society whose power structures are so rigidly monocultural, not to mention monosexual. Meanwhile, it is the migrants who must suffer the anguish of isolation, rejection, frustration, despair and eventually utter contempt for the hypocrisy of Australian "egalitarianism".

* * *

The Galbally Report (2)

A Public Relations Gesture

by Tom Zubrycki



The Galbally Report on migrant services and programs, tabled on May 30, 1978, is remarkable in so far as the Federal Government accepted its recommendations in total. One could speculate if a migrant had been commissioned to prepare such a report instead of an Anglo-Australian, whether it would have met similar unqualified reaction.

The guiding principles on which subsequent recommendations are based are set out in paragraph 1.7:

- a. all members of our society must have equal opportunity to realise their full potential and must have equal access to programs and services;
- b. every person should be able to maintain his or her culture without prejudice or disadvantage and should be encouraged to understand and embrace other cultures;
- c. needs of migrants should, in general, be met by programs and services available to the whole community but special services and programs are necessary at present to ensure equality of access and provisions;
- d. services and programs should be designed and operated in full consultation with clients, and self-help should be encouraged as much as possible with a view to helping migrants to become self-reliant quickly.

A superficial glance through the report reveals a very benevolent and concerned attitude to the problems experienced by migrants, as outlined by the guiding principles. However, on closer inspection of some of the recommendations, a basic paternalistic stance becomes apparent not that far removed from past policies of assimilation which have patently failed to meet migrant needs.

More importantly, one senses that behind all the liberal rhetoric very little hard cash is to be spent (particularly as six states are going to share in the national cake), and that the control of much of it is to be kept fairly and squarely in the hands of "experts", presumably of Anglo-Saxon origin. The aim of the exercise is perhaps to appear to be meeting ethnic community needs without actually undertaking such a costly and radical exercise.

Control of Resources

For instance, the report recommends that multi-cultural resource centres be established in appropriate areas over a three-year period. Forty thousand dollars is to be set aside for this scheme in the first year, rising to a total of eighty thousand in the third. This is a minuscule amount for eighteen centres! Apart from this, the whole notion of a "multi-cultural centre" raises some basic questions. Is it practical to set up these resource centres in various parts of the community as separate entities from already existing centres (e.g. the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre in Sydney), which already bring together Australians and immigrants? Many of the ethnic groups are run by men and would have difficulty in delivering appropriate services to meet problems like unwanted pregnancies and domestic violence. Intergenerational conflicts which arise within the family cannot

be expected to be handled by ethnic workers who reinforce the cultural values of the homeland and therefore work against successful adaptation to Australian conditions. Further, it must also be recognised that migrants are a very diverse group and cannot be served on a homogeneous basis. The centres, rather than helping to strengthen ethnic self-help, seem to lump all migrants into a cultural melting pot from which they emerge one and the same. Is this not just a sophisticated implementation of the universally discredited policy of assimilation?

There are other worrying features concerning the operation of these centres. They may, for instance discriminate against the smaller, less organised ethnic groups, the Portuguese, Timorese, Laotian etc. Because of limited funds (and lack of trained staff) these groups may miss out. They would be better served by larger regional or state-wide centralised resources. A contentious issue is how these centres are to be managed. According to the report they will be administered by government liaison officers and not by the ethnic communities themselves. This suggests a real anomaly in the report, which on the whole is quite supportive of the idea of self-help. On this last point, the report recommends \$0.4m should be provided through the Office of Child Care to enable the ethnic communities to employ up to 25 ethnic children's services workers over the next three years. It also recommends that \$0.37m should be spent over three years to enable ethnic groups to employ ethnic workers for the aged to work with elderly migrants and their families. Presumably these people would operate using the resource centres as their base.

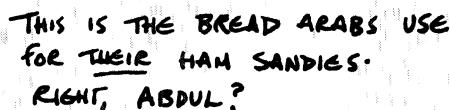
One of the great weaknesses of the report is its vagueness in delineating the concept of "multi-cultural education".

... Multi-culturalism is a broad concept (sic) and there are issues associated with the content, design and structure of multi-cultural education covering the whole spectrum of educational institutions which require expert attention ... (par.9.10)
... we recommend that a small committee of educators experienced in areas of cultural and racial differences be appointed to consult with State, Commonwealth and non-government authorities and to draw up within three months proposals as to how the recommended \$5m for multi-cultural education can be used most effectively in the three years ahead ... (par.9.15)

Just how and to what extent schools, education resource centres, ethnic and other community-based groups are meant to have access to this developmental phase is not mentioned in the report. The team of experts will decide and the state will once again pay lip-service to (and in fact control) community participation in the decision-making process.

Public Relations Exercise

The report certainly voices much concern that the principles of multi-culturalism be adopted in the school curriculum, but offers few practical guidelines. Acknowledging that ethnic identities other than one's own have a rightful place in schools is a far cry from accepting their relevance to oneself, and there



The small amounts of money involved, and the distrust of community participation in decision making, smell suspiciously of a public relations exercise. Ethnic communities are demanding their right to a multi-cultural education system but one can hardly expect a government, particularly the present one, intent on cutting back welfare and keep up profits, to accede to their demands.

Leaving aside the question of whether this report is part of a genuine attempt to reduce educational inequality, it must be realized that all such attempts, no matter how serious, have only a limited value while all the structures of capitalism outside of the education system still exist to disadvantage the children of workers. Education cannot compensate for society.

obstacle to the recognition of these qualifications. One could well ask the question: why make these courses available just to people qualified to provide community services, why not to all migrants coming to Australia?

The total amount that the government has committed itself to spending over the next three years to upgrade migrant services and programs totals \$49.8 million. Yet there seems to be a major gap between policy and implementation. A consultative infrastructure which involves government and non-government sectors is significantly absent. The government is giving categorical notice to its various officers to be seen to be implementing the program. It is therefore a fair bet that decisions made in a hurry will go against the migrant groups and fall well short of providing resources according to where real needs exist.

How much will actually be spent is another question. In the first year's running of most of the schemes the government is to provide 100% of the funds. In the subsequent two years, funding will be provided under the "usual cost-sharing arrangements with the states". It remains to be seen, however, to what extent the states do in fact pick up this recurrent expenditure and which schemes will miss out if they don't. Obviously the more organised ethnic communities will be in a better position if this situation does prevail. Lastly, Fraser has worked himself out a nice election strategy, because the majority of the available funds (\$26.79m) are earmarked to be spent in the final year of the three year of the three-year scheme.

Galbally and his committee have in the report given recognition to the positive role that ethnic organisations must play in the development of a multi-cultural society. Only time will tell whether the report is merely a public relations gesture attempting to disguise the same old desire to keep migrant communities in Australia impoverished and powerless. With the Fraser government in power and economic recession here to stay one can't help being suspicious.

The World in a Classroom (Compiled by Chris Searle, paperback, \$4.95.) A book to combat racism in schools containing the writings of East London students about their own experiences in a multi-racial society.

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Not the Parthenon again, Miss?

by Cavell Zangalis

The whole question of multi-cultural education raises the issue of the rights of ethnic minorities and their participation in the education system. Migrants are still largely excluded from schools through language barriers and lack of knowledge of school procedures. Whilst the migrant population is still so inadequately represented among teachers, researchers, and authors of resource materials on migrants, who is to make the selection from their culture? When that selection is made by the dominant group, the culture is inevitably trivialized and its most important aspects ignored. As a result, we routinely present in schools non-controversial, non-painful facts and observations — which are not necessarily the most important elements of the experience in another culture. This is partly because, in an education system based on an anglo-conformist or monistic tradition, teachers fear that unless cultural conformity is achieved conflict and strife are inevitable (an assumption American experience challenges¹). They also feel that we can't afford to stir up inter-ethnic tensions derived from political situations in the country of origin — although many teachers don't even know what these tensions are. Yet they hope that ignoring what already exists will make it disappear. Such hopes are best described as escapist, and only foster ethnocentrism and a segmented society.

Ersatz Culture

Since there are so many wrong ideas about multi-cultural education around, it might be best to start by saying what it is not. Take this all-too-familiar example: the culture capsule approach.

"Today we are going to study Greece."

Groan, groan. "Not the Parthenon again, Miss."

"No, Stavros. Be quiet. Now, Greece is a country in the Mediterranean, where many of our migrants come from. The capital is Athens; the people speak a language called Greek. No Stavros, not ELLINIKA, Greek! They wear delightful costumes for their festivals, they eat . . . , they . . . etc, etc.

And the next week/month/term: "Now we study Italy. The capital is . . ." etc. Or how about the International Day, where all the "ethnic" children dress up and sing and dance and their mums bring the different foods for us to taste — an ethnic "One Day of the Year". After it is all over we have demonstrated our accommodation of cultural diversity and only had to muck up the timetable for one day.

This concept of multi-culturalism has also been demonstrated at a more official level, with city council backing and openings by dignitaries of Greek Week, or Italian Week, or International Festivals. Of course, we cannot deny that these are important beginnings in demonstrating the *legitimacy* of *expressions* of cultural diversity and the presence in our society of "different" people. But the furthest we seem to get is mere acknowledgement of the contribution of migrants in the development of the Snowy Mountains scheme, the vineyards in the Barossa Valley, cappuchino and restaurants, and of course industry. In the popular press you find the occasional article on "Greeks in

Melbourne", where you learn that they have some shops in Lonsdale Street. I keep waiting for a television programme on "How to eat spaghetti in the true Italian style", or an article in the weeklies on "How to look continental and fool your neighbours". One can search in vain for an analysis of how this changes Australia, what the economic implications are, for us and for the country of origin. What are the human dimensions, the social changes, the power structures?



Children of other nations share with us a rich heritage:
Standard Oil, Esso, Exxon, Ford,
General Motors, General Foods, Kraft,
Colgate-Palmolive, Celanese, Sanders,
Nationals, Helman, Am,

Language as Power

If it goes no further than this, the concept of a multi-cultural society will serve assimilationist objectives, in that only the veneer of a culture is seen to be acceptable. In fact, the dominant culture will allow regulated portions of the most superficial aspects of other cultures to be given expression, whilst their true essence — values and language — are ignored. As a first step towards an education which will really serve migrants, the school has to legitimize identity and difference so that they noticeably impinge on traditional school practice. Language is crucial here. Smolicz sees language lying "at the heart of most national cultures; if the language decays the culture supported by it decays".² Multi-culturalism, if it is to be meaningful, must have multi-lingualism as a component. This is a notion received by Australian institutions with a resounding silence or, at best, token gestures as documented in the Report of the Committee for the Teaching of Migrant Languages³.

In the current climate of a reduction in education spending, staffing priorities must be challenged to demand staffing to introduce the main community languages of a school for

mother-tongue maintenance and extension, and second-language introduction. This representation in staffing of the main groups of any school community is a very important measure, since education is still one of the power institutions which is seen to exclude migrants. Insistence on staffing (including ancillaries) representative of community composition can bring about communication with parents in the strongest language of the family through reports, notices, interviews, newsletters, counselling and so on. It can also make for more *relevant* recognition of important festivals and observances among the school population. Most importantly, it can assist the realization of both the instrumental role of the school (by reflecting demographic reality) and the educational role (by improving kids' academic performance).

Obviously, we need to ensure facility and instrumentality in the national language. But it is important for migrants themselves to understand that English can be a vehicle for social control. We may observe a parallel with Quebec, where the Francophone population came to see their particular identity represented in their language, so that the struggle for French became a rejection of American and Anglo-Canadian economic dominance through English.

Resisting Cultural Imperialism

In attempting such change processes in schools, there are other considerations to be made. We are hindered by the commercial culture of our time, which promotes a bland "monoculture of youth": one which excludes difference, fosters immediacy and consumption, and shuts out concern for the future and the past. As a result of such pressures to conform, children of migrant parents, particularly adolescents, are often resentful of their parents' culture, which identifies them as "different" from their Anglo-Australian peers. Parents in turn feel this pressure and reinforce the factors of commercialism which act on the children to be "acceptable". Moreover, the stereotyping of ethnic groups by this society is usually based on a notion of Italians in Italy, Turks in Turkey, and so forth. We must be aware of the cultural change which is occurring and not force a stereotyped identity on students or their parents. At the moment we do not seem to allow the mix, but demand a choice of one or the other.

Understanding Migration

Even if our concept of multi-cultural education were to be one of education sensitive and responsive to cultural diversity within our society, with an aim of encouraging acceptance, tolerance and contact across cultures, we would not have advanced very far. How many schools include an understanding of migration as an essential part of a Humanities or Social Studies course? Yet Australia has the largest percentage of population born overseas of any country apart from Israel.

The argument that high migrant density schools are ones in which inter-ethnic tolerance and cross-cultural understanding occur through a "rubbing-off" process is, I believe, a myth. These are largely the inner city and industrial working class schools where the economic insecurity of our time, which threatens jobs, in fact heightens prejudice. Migrants, especially the newer migrants, are seen to weaken the precarious security of those already here — a situation which is not relieved by the Federal Government's announced intention to increase the migration programme. It is in these schools that a positive approach to a study of migration, its economic and social aspects and its human consequences, must be most urgently undertaken.

An education system which does not accept multi-cultural education as an integral part of educational philosophy must be seen as reflecting government immigration policies, which were, and still are, based on the economic needs of the ruling class of this country. Schools, then, continue to prepare the child to function in the dominant culture and to accept the social system. Australia is a multi-cultural society in demographic terms only, until migrant education is redefined as education to serve the needs of migrants. That will only begin to happen when migrants and progressives succeed in imposing these three demands upon the system: the right to genuinely multi-lingual schools, with appropriate staffing and representative structures; the right to a culture which comes from the people, and is not foisted on them by the mass media; and the right to learn the *real* history of migration in Australia.

References

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2. Smolicz, J.: *Education News*, Vol.15, no.1, 1975.
3. Report of the Committee for the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools. AGPS, 1976.

Some Resources

Multi-Cultural Resource Booklet: Graduate Diploma in Inter-Ethnic Studies and Education. Melbourne State College, 1977. \$1.35 including postage to: Secretary, Curriculum Studies Department, Melbourne State College, 757 Swanston Street, Carlton 3053.

Selection Guide and Review Bulletin: (Greek and Turkish books, Arabic and Serbo-Croatian Term 3). Postage 40c from: Multi-Cultural Curriculum Resources Project, 123 Church Street, Richmond 3121.

Newsletter of the Migrant Resources Centre (contains listings of translations, cassettes, etc.) Annual subscription \$5.00 from: Free Kindergarten Union, 383 Church Street, Richmond 3121.

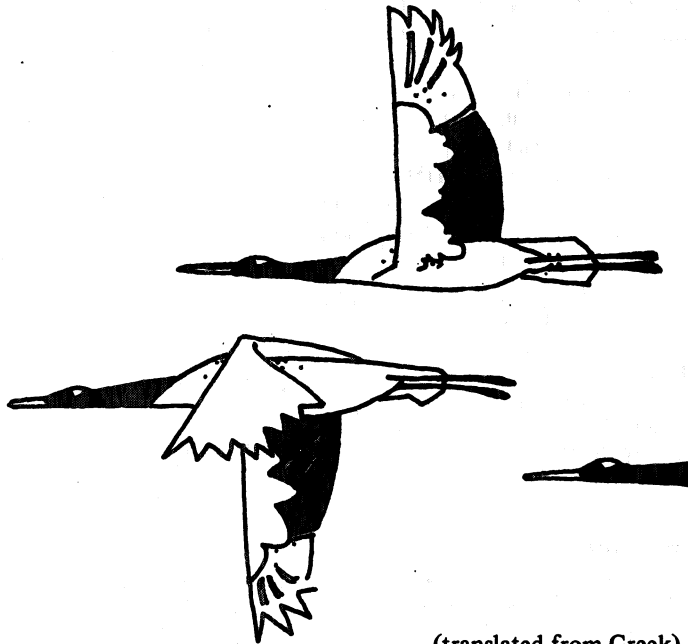
Resources for Schools: Multi-Cultural Education by Nancye Stanelis (Adelaide). Schools Commission, 1977.

Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies by Joseph Banks. Allyn & Bacon, 1976.



- NAME ?
- MARCELLO MASTROIANI.
- GOOD, WE NEED EXTRAS FOR THIS
YEAR'S PRODUCTION.

Migratory Birds



(translated from Greek)

— dedicated to migrant students I taught as an E.S.L. teacher in my first year teaching at an inner city school in Sydney.

There was no time for you to build your nests
on the crystal mountains near the mother-springs.
There was no time to enjoy
the music of your own speech,
to suckle the secrets of your own language.
Multi-coloured and carefree fledglings,
your mothers carry you in their warm embrace
to the distant summer lands of their dreams.

In the dark cells of the light-cloisters
where the owls hold the wires,
frightened and bewildered
you forget the signs of your own voice,
because the birds here sing differently,
and kookaburra-laugh
at the sounds of your song.
They don't understand the rhythm of the migrant —
Narcissus is their Idol.

With the scales of superficial logic
they measure the cells of your brain
and mark your wings.

The pharisees of Minerva
make steps to the light —
barriers for your young mind.

And you gaze with awe
at the rope-ladders of knowledge
and you don't dare to step ahead.

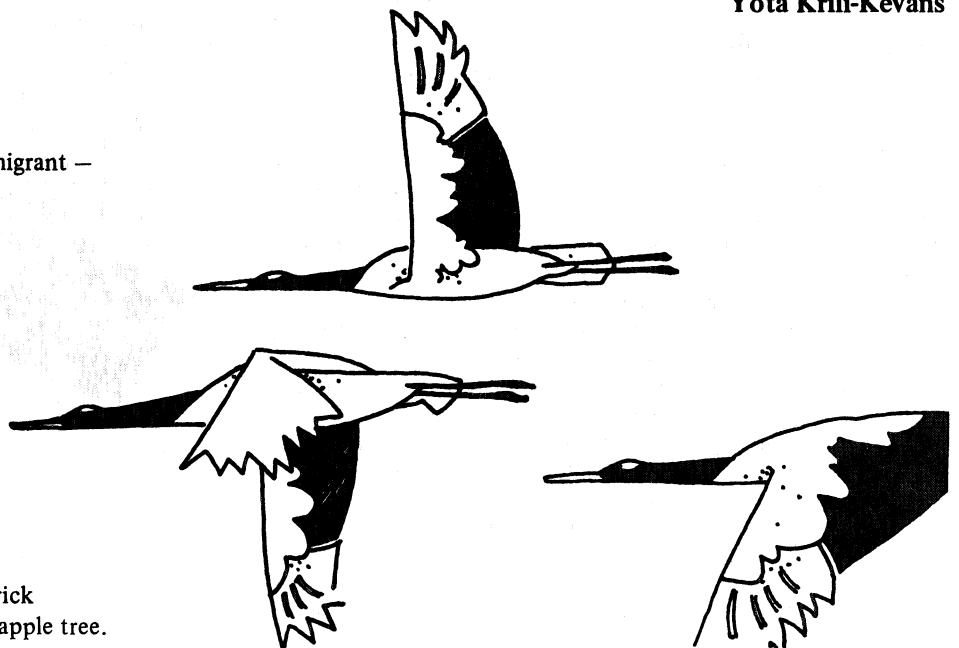
My heart breaks when I hear you say:
"Never mind, Miss, it is easier for us
not to climb."

And you don't realize that everything is a trick
so that only the cuckoos may perch on the apple tree.

Ivan, they took away your voice
and you always stood speechless in front of them.
You believed that it was in your nature to stammer.
A! what a consolation to see you
engraving in wood the dreams of your soul.
And you, Aristides, with the proud eyes
you wanted to be a surgeon,
to salve pain with your slender fingers,
you used to say as you looked around in despair:
"I'm stuck on the last step, Miss,"
and only your imagination soared unbound.
And Nèbil who wanted to be a pilot
— and the owls chuckled at his innocent dreams —
now with clipped wings he clips tickets
for a measured distance.
Boris with his golden hair
and his heart a rose,
who could heal sorrows with his smiles,
roves the streets now and begs for work.

Tender swallows of dispersion
in the markets I greet your smiles,
your early-wakened eyes
red from lack of sleep,
the despair that hangs from your eye-lashes.
And from speeding wrecked up limousines
your eagle-eyes greet me.
Caught in the glittering net of the spider
on the poker-machines
and in the dazzle of the nightclubs
your hearts flutter.
And I who administer the pharisees' charity
and teach you how to parrot,
I gather the griefs of your lives
and your eyes' warm tears
— pearls of your tender souls,
and your amputated dreams.

Yota Krili-Kevans



To the Adopted Mother

I came to you without knowing you,
but I held stored within me
the strength of love and of dreams,
and a chest on my shoulder,
full of choice possessions
heirlooms of a long tradition.
Full of light and songs,
songs of joy and sorrow,
sweet-scented from love
gold-embroidered with the toil of life.
Full of dances that soar in the air
and spread fires in the heart.
Full of dreams thirsty for life
all expectation and certainty,
for a house bathed in the sun
for a piece of honest bread.
and with reverence I placed them
in front of you, my adopted Mother,
but you did not feel for me
only with words you praised my work,
the treasure of my heart you did not desire
— I'm only the adopted child of your necessity.

Together with my other brothers
Salvatore, Hermann and Nazim
and your own children of the working class,
who talk to us with their eyes
and we with smiles,
we bent the iron, we drilled the earth,
we turned the rivers back
and built the dams.
In the scorching sun we gathered the fruits
and harvested the fertile vineyards.
On the line, standing without relief,
we fashion your machine-made products
and on the air like eagles
we build your skyscrapers.

Many of us never see the sun,
in the factories and the mines
from dawn to dark,
for the profit of bitter work.
Our dreams are gnawed by the gloom
and the horizon has become very small.
Many of us are maimed,
victims of toil and progress.
Many of us have buried the treasure of our soul.
In the nights drowning in our fatigue
we grope among the secrets of your language,
we stretch out our hand we open our heart
but we cannot articulate your words
and we remain marked in our exile,
branded by the sting of the wasps.
Our children do not know us,
they talk to us only with their eyes.
Circe has set a spell on them
and they don't learn our secrets.

It is time to open your heart,
for the wasps to be redeemed
for their sting to become perfume
and the darkness, light.
For us to build together in the fountain of love
And in the multi-coloured waters
to baptize our dreams again;
to build the tower of justice
that this land too may become a motherland.

Yota Krili Kevans

Multicultural Education-

No Progress Without Community Participation

by Marcello Nuvola

In words, everybody seems to agree that there should be multi-cultural education in Australia as soon as possible. Migrant children have a right, starting from infants and primary school, to keep their mother tongue and culture, while learning English and the other subjects. It is unfair that so many children should suffer from a crippling cultural shock and be branded as "less intelligent", when they hit a school system conceived for Queen Victoria's England, and, therefore, totally alien to them.

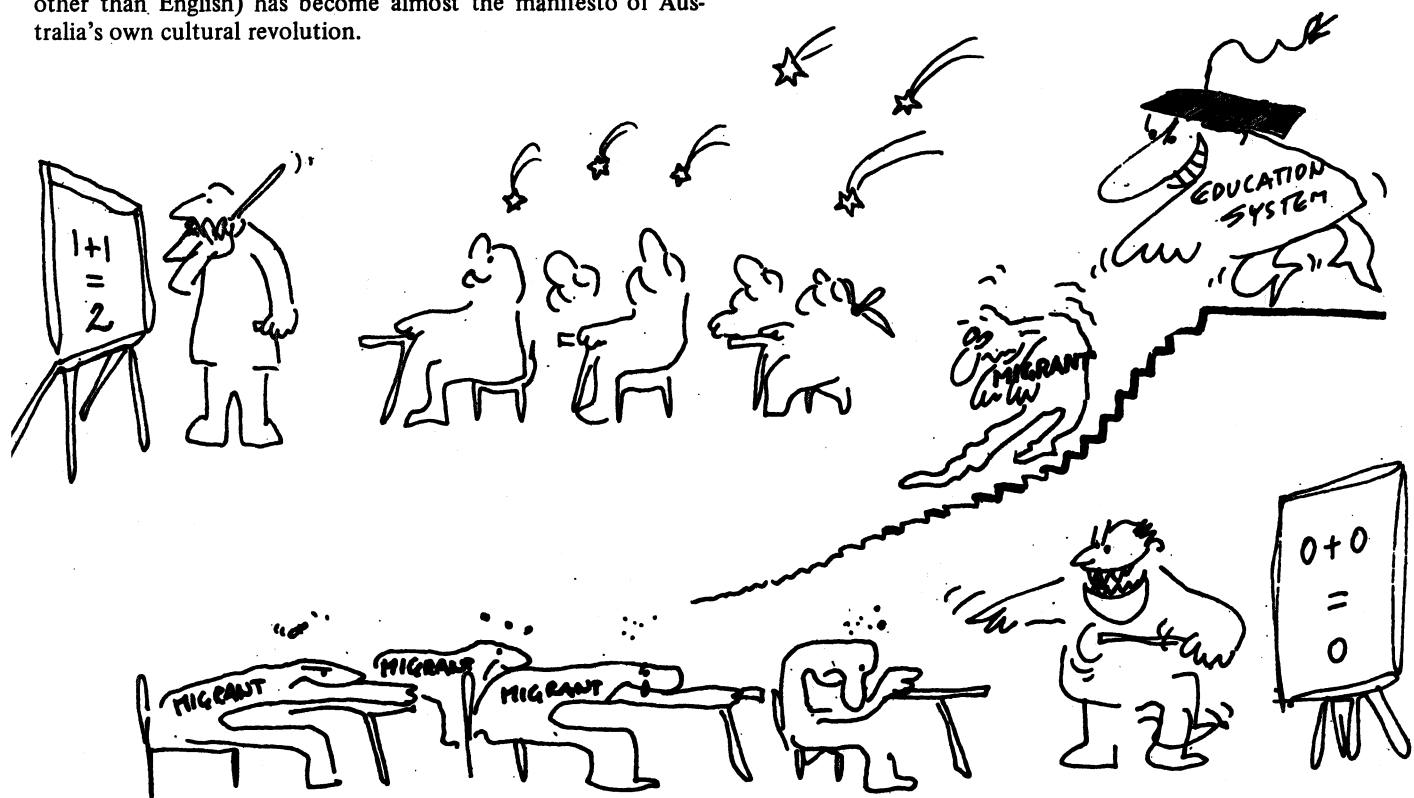
Linguists and educators have been saying it for years; more and more politicians have been learning to repeat it. Ethnic languages and cultures must be maintained for the benefit and the enrichment of the Australian society at large. Migrant children who are allowed to maintain their mother language at school can learn English faster and can integrate more easily into the Australian environment.

In fact, multi-cultural education has long been a favourite topic of conversation in all good ethnic circles. "Foreign Languages" has definitely become the wrong thing to say; "Ethnic Languages" is barely acceptable, while "Community Languages" (a term impossible to translate in any language other than English) has become almost the manifesto of Australia's own cultural revolution.

In words, everybody agrees. Unfortunately, when it comes to multi-cultural education (and to many other rights of Australia's ethnic minorities), the well known "gap" between words and facts becomes extremely hard to bridge in NSW.

After years of talk about multi-culturalism, only a handful of primary schools have introduced ethnic languages; mostly on a temporary basis and relying heavily on voluntary and semi-voluntary support. Significantly, the most successful example of multi-cultural education in a primary school, the introduction of four ethnic languages at Newtown Primary, was stopped this year because government funding was not renewed.

In 1976 about 600 parents from the Western suburbs and other interested people collected hundreds of signatures in their own schools requesting the introduction of the Italian language. Subsequently, an Italian Parents' Committee was formed and organised various meetings and delegations to principals and other educational authorities. While there was a response from some principals to the parents' requests, this response has not been forthcoming from the authorities who are responsible for the concrete funding of programmes.



The pressure from ethnic communities for multicultural education is not new. This cartoon appeared in *La Fiamma* in April 1976 accompanying the first article of a weekly column pressuring for the introduction of ethnic languages in schools.

The New South Wales Minister for Education, the Hon. E. Bedford:

... you have the right to see that your culture and language are given equal recognition in what is and should be a truly multi-cultural society ...

... for too long in this State the special needs of migrant communities have been ignored. Your children have not been getting all that can be done to ensure that their heritage is recognized. This Government in NSW is determined to see that all areas of education are given their proper recognition.

(Address to the Public Meeting organized by the State Multi-cultural Education Committee, Town Hall Square, April 1977).

Reform within the NSW school system has not progressed beyond pure tokenism. A small Social Development Unit, formed last year to advise the Minister for Education on multi-cultural education and sexism has practically no impact on the entrenched bureaucracy of the NSW Education Department. In response to longstanding pressure from the ethnic community, The Department of Education this year introduced a Saturday School of Community Languages for secondary students, following a model which has been operating in Melbourne for over 40 years, and excluding major languages such as Arabic. The major area of need, at the primary school level, has been ignored.

The third "important reform" in the area of multi-cultural education has been a microscopic Teacher Exchange Scheme with Italy and (perhaps) other countries. The scheme has been proceeding at a snail's pace; it involves very few teachers and doesn't touch the main problem of the recognition and training of overseas qualified teachers already living in Australia, many of whom are unemployed or working in factories. The Department has done practically nothing to develop multi-cultural curricula and textbooks, or to encourage migrant parents to participate effectively in school matters.

The Federal Minister for Education, Sen. Carrick:

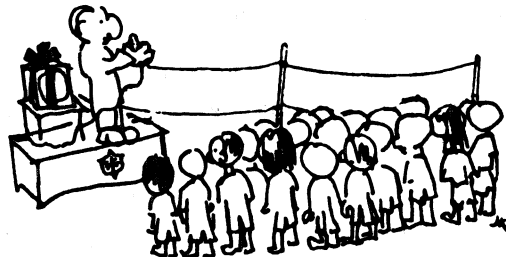
... the Government's policy on education is directed to an appreciation and understanding of the cultural diversity in present-day Australian society ...

... there must be changes in curriculum, new materials will need to be developed and most importantly, teacher education adapted so that teachers may become more sensitive and properly attuned to the major changes which have taken place (in our society) ...

(Letter to the Ethnic Languages & Cultures in the Primary/Infants School Workshop, March 1976.)

It is important to understand the reasons for this total lack of real progress. Multi-cultural education might be seen as a great vote catching issue, but for a bureaucratic system to produce real changes at a grass roots level it takes a great deal of money. Tokenism is all that can be expected, especially at a time when the federal government is channelling money from state education into private schools. Because of the great variety of ethnic groups in Australia, the problem of making any significant changes to the existing education system is extremely complex, and changes cannot be achieved without large-scale

community participation. The complexity of the issue and the lack of departmental interest in ethnic community feedback results in tokenistic forays into "multi-culturalism" which are an insult to the migrant communities they are supposed to serve. They will undoubtedly lead to a backlash against the politicians who had hoped to catch easy votes with empty promises.



AND THANK YOU TO OUR NEW AUSTRALIAN BOYS AND GIRLS FOR ALLOWING US TO BE DISADVANTAGED AND BUY THIS COLOUR TV.

Instead of producing any real change, the issue of multi-cultural education has largely provided avenues to personal power for a number of bureaucrats, academics and a whole legion of self-styled "ethnic representatives" who only represent themselves, and who, in spite of their words, are substantially opposed to any wider community participation and are favoured by the government largely because of their political conservatism. Because they are articulate in English, and because they have reached a "prominent" position in their community, (often by exploiting the more helpless migrants), these people are selected by the establishment as counterparts in a "dialogue" that is meant to sound nice but to lead nowhere. This "dialogue" has, in fact, many interesting analogies with the appointment of "local chiefs" in British colonies.

Dozens of committees, sub-committees, councils and task-forces; endless meetings, high-level delegations, "concerned" letters to newspapers, to politicians, to bureaucrats and to each other. A whole incestuous exercise which in fact aims at "defusing" the issue, by diverting and neutralizing real community pressure, and by creating alibis for the establishment.

For real change to be promoted, people's pressure is the only effective pressure. This pressure is particularly difficult to organize in the area of migrant issues, because of isolation and communication barriers. There is a great need for this special kind of community work, to educate migrants about their rights and to encourage them to participate more actively in the issues that affect them. It is slow and often unrewarding work that only dedicated ethnic activists can carry out.

The Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. N. K. Wran:

... within the Education Department we have laid down a new policy; the policy ultimately involves a requirement that all teachers are trained to qualify them in the education of migrant children, an increase in the number of teachers expert in languages other than English, an increase in the number of interpreters, a Teacher Exchange Programme with countries from which we draw our migrants and above all the adoption of the principle that languages other than English should be freely available to all students in primary and secondary schools.

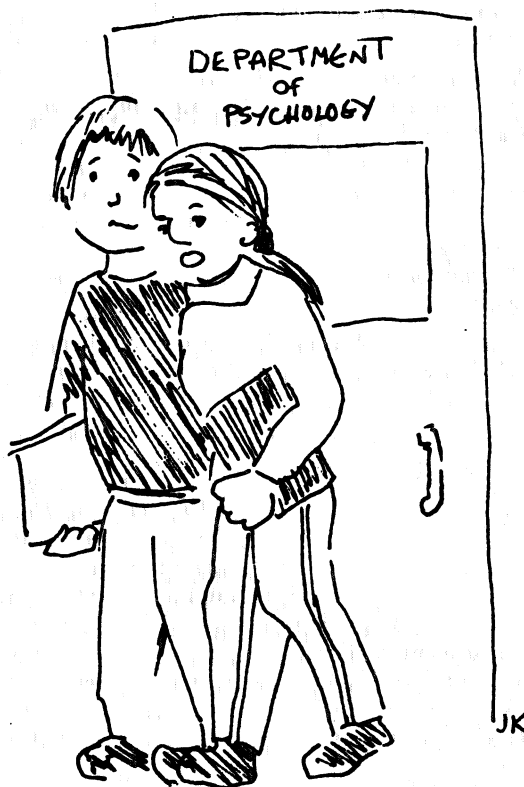
(Address to the "Education in a Multi-cultural Society" Conference, NSW Teachers Federation, November 1976).

F.I.L.E.F. (the Federation of Italian Workers and their Families) has been promoting the introduction of Italian into primary schools since early 1976, mainly through a series of public meetings and through the formation of Italian parents committees to operate in schools with a high density of Italian pupils. Other ethnic associations, such as the Yugoslav-Australian Association, have been operating along similar lines.

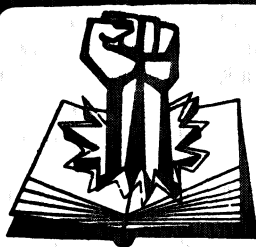
Early this year, about twenty progressive associations covering all major ethnic groups, formed the Federation of Migrant Organizations, with the immediate aim of waging a campaign for the introduction of community languages and cultures in the schools of high migrant density, through a series of public meetings and through the launching of a mass petition to the NSW Parliament.

Through such campaigns an increasing number of migrant parents are joining forces and becoming active in their respective schools, with the initial support of the ethnic activists of the Federation of Migrant Organizations. Whenever possible, press releases are issued to the ethnic newspapers to obtain the necessary publicity. This is the first time in NSW that grass-roots participation is being obtained on migrant issues, and that migrants of different ethnic backgrounds are being brought together on a struggle that is common to all of them.

It is slow and often unrewarding work, but this form of class struggle is necessary if any real change in education is to take place. Without this kind of direct militant pressure from workers the education system will continue to ignore the needs of migrants. It is only to be expected that without struggle, multi-cultural education will remain at the level of tokenism and promises; this is only consistent with the fact that Australia's immigration programme was set up primarily to provide cheap labour for Australian factories.



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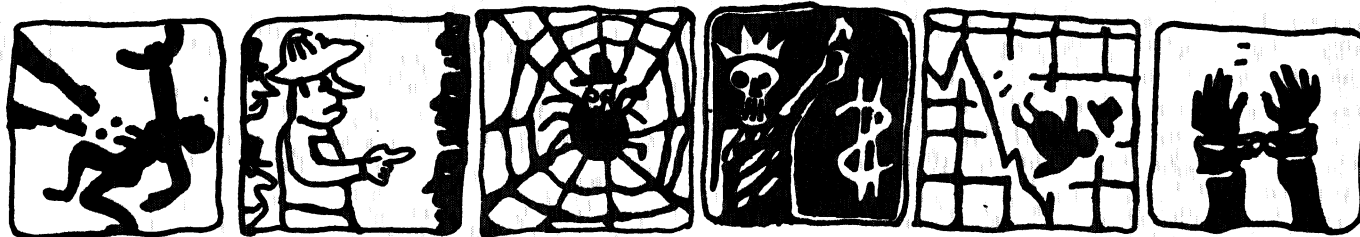
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Malice in Bananaland

by John Freeland

The Queensland Government's Parliamentary Select Committee of Inquiry into Education, coupled with its attacks on the MACOS and SEMP teaching programmes, highlights the reactionary nature of a regime which is a byword for racism and oppressive brutality throughout Australia. This article looks at the historical development which has made Bananaland the way it is.

The Queensland Teachers Union fears that the inquiry will be nothing but a grubby witch hunt; that its findings are largely predetermined, and will be implemented only if they are in accord with the Queensland Government's educational design; that the Government is intent on stopping all rational, educational debate and liberal educational development and intends to revert to a situation reminiscent of the days when the Department of Education was a Department of Public Instruction. These fears are behind the union's policy of non-co-operation with the Select Committee.

If, however, this policy is to be sustained publicly, it must be based on more than nebulous fears and gut reaction. The situation must be analysed and an understanding of the real intentions behind the Cabinet's fiat developed. To do this, we must place the function of Queensland schools in their social, historical and political context. Teachers, schools and schooling have been the subject of an historic conflict between conservatives and liberals. While there is broad agreement between these two political groups that schools exist to serve the society in which they are situated, by inculcating in the young the requisite skills, values and attitudes to continue the existing social system, there is considerable disagreement about how this is best achieved.

Conservative Argument

The conservative arguments are based on a belief that certain eternal truths exist, and that there exist historic and unchanging knowledges, skills and understandings, which must be taught.

When extended from the realm of education to the realm of economics the conservative education lobby's cry is for the "need" to teach the three Rs and to train and select students for their future roles in the workforce. Further, when this conception is linked with fundamentalist religious beliefs the outcome is a lobby working for an expansion of Old Testament religious education, rote learning and for a rejection of social science education.

Thus in Queensland at the moment there is a coalition of conservative educationalists, employers, parliamentarians and cabinet ministers, and fundamentalists effectively working for an emphasis on the Three Rs, traditional pedagogical styles and the teaching of job-specific skills.

Liberal Argument

Opposed to the conservative conception of the function of schooling is the liberal and liberal-progressive conception.

The liberal arguments are based on the assumption that children are either naturally good or at least that they are not naturally sinful.

Of more importance is the liberal belief that people have a potential to learn in a self-directed and co-operative manner. Students at schools should be encouraged to think critically about themselves, their situation and their society; they should be encouraged to participate actively in the processes that influence their life and their society.

Thus the liberal educational lobby regards the three Rs as an essential aspect of the schooling process but not an end in itself. It argues for an opening up of teaching styles, a diversity of learning experiences and an emphasis on social science education. Further, the liberals argue that schools do not exist to prepare office and factory fodder.

It is important to analyse the effectiveness of the contending ideologies in the development of Queensland education.

Historically the liberal conception of education has its base in the broad liberal ideology as enunciated by people such as J. S. Mill and John Dewey.

In terms of social classes, liberal ideology was the product of the middle class in the industrial revolution and it is today the dominant ideology of that class. Queensland has never developed a significant bourgeoisie: it has always been the State with branch offices. The Australian bourgeoisie is concentrated in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and it is in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia that the liberal ideology, and the liberal conception of education, have been strongest.

Small Bourgeoisie

In Queensland the relatively small bourgeoisie is concentrated in Brisbane, and Brisbane has always been under-represented in Parliament. The majority of Queensland's population and the vast majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly represent electorates outside the metropolitan area.

On the other hand the conservative conception of education has traditionally been the preserve of, in Europe, the aristocracy and, in Australia, the small producer and the rural population.

Queensland is the most decentralised of Australian states and it is the small petit-bourgeois producer who dominates the country towns and provincial cities. It is the independent farmer who dominates the rural areas.

It is also these people who historically feel the pressures of economic change and crisis. They are the economic producers who cannot set their prices independent of the market forces to ensure a set margin of profit. Thus, whenever there is an economic crisis, it is the small producer, along with employees, who feels the pressures of costs.

It is therefore understandable that these producers place a large portion of the blame for their problems on the schools: the schools are not competent in the basic skills; they are not "producing" students adequately committed to the worth ethic; and they are not "producing" students with the job-specific skills required by the vast array of employers.

Similarly with the independent farmer: in rural areas the commitment to conservatism and conservative conceptions of schooling is compounded by widespread belief in eternal truths and in fundamentalist religious beliefs. In terms of schooling, these attitudes, values and beliefs are compounded by allusions to the "school of hard knocks". The rural population is suspicious of liberal educational conceptions.

Parliamentary Link

It is these social classes and groupings in provincial and rural Queensland which have dominated Queensland's Parliaments and Governments, both ALP and the National-Liberal parties. Because of this conservative dominance, education has been neglected: historically it attracts less per pupil expenditure than other states. The conservative mistrust and fear of education and knowledge was reflected for years in the fact that schools were administered by the Department of Public Instruction rather than by a Department of Education.

However, from the mid-1960s a significant change in the structures and processes of educational provision in Queensland took place.

The QTU became more concerned with professional questions, and this culminated in the union's publication, in 1970, of a detailed case for an Education Commission in Queensland. The union sought "a wider and deeper community concern with educational matters".

In effect the QTU was pushing for an extension of democracy into the area of educational policy development and implementation. It sought to reduce the political and bureaucratic controls and to increase public participation in the school process.

Control Eroded

Within the Department significant changes also took place. A perusal of the Department's annual reports shows that the liberal conception of education was finding greater acceptance among the administrators. The traditional Queensland pattern of tight political and bureaucratic control of the nuts and bolts of education was slowly eroded.

Scholarships were abandoned, and later the Radford system replaced the Junior and Senior public examinations. School syllabi were opened up and the education provision diversified. Teaching styles were similarly diversified with the provision of open-space teaching areas, the implementation of new syllabi which reduced the emphasis on "facts" and encouraged critical thinking, discovery learning and group learning, and the development of in-service training programmes.

In the area of educational decision-making a liberal demo-

cratic structure evolved. Direct control of various areas of education was diverted from the Department. Relatively autonomous boards and committees were established, (Board of Teacher Education, Board of Secondary School Studies, etc) and the Colleges of Advanced Education were granted autonomy.

Changes

These changes reflected the growing influence of liberal educational thought in the Education Department, the universities and CAEs, the QTU and among teachers. The generally buoyant economy in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the upsurge in social criticism and expectations, and the ideological and financial impact of the federal ALP Government were further elements which stimulated the liberal changes.

By the mid-1970s the structures of Queensland's educational provision were approaching the liberal democratic ideal.

Control and responsibility by the government were signifi-



WOGS COMING TO TAKE OUR JOBS!

cantly less than before the mid-1950s and were effectively diffused among various sections of the Department and a growing number of committees and boards. The influence of teachers, the QTU and of parents was increasing.

The changes did not, however, extend to the adoption of the social democratic conception of a desirable educational structure. There was no open commitment to the QTU's policy of an autonomous Education Commission largely independent of the specific government of the day and representative of the various groups concerned with education.

More importantly, the changes did not reflect changes in the educational thought of the majority of Queensland's population in the provincial and rural areas; nor did they reflect changes in the thinking of most National and Liberal members of the State Parliament.

Anti-education Lobby

Suspensions and fears of the new thought were fed by the growing economic recession (schools are commonly blamed for youth unemployment). The Education Department and teachers did not sufficiently trust parents who did not understand the changes. This increased the suspicions and fears, which the anti-education lobby in State Parliament, led by Bjelke-Petersen, was not slow to exploit. This lobby's aspirations are inherently anti-democratic: they seek to negate the changes of the past ten years, by threatening the existence of the various committees and boards, the safety of all areas of social science education,

and by proposing the return of external examinations. The number of teachers is being decreased while student numbers increase, the diversity of pedagogy is being attacked, and moves have been made to control who teaches, including veiled threats against married women teachers.

There is no doubt that teachers who express strong pro-government sentiments are secure. Equally, there is no doubt that teachers expressing anti-government sentiments teach under the threat of the sack for their "political indoctrination". Teachers who remain silent on issues relating to the Government are implicitly supporting it. That is what the Government wants: to stifle all opposition and critical thought. The attacks on education have occurred at a time when the Bjelke-Petersen government has trampled the democratic right to protest peacefully, threatens legislation to prevent trade unions from organizing, and has abrogated the rights of Aborigines at Aurukun and Mornington Island. The kind of thinking it does seek to encourage was exemplified by Rona Joyner, reported in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, March 9, 1978:

Children don't go to school to learn to think. They go to learn to read and write and spell correctly. They can start thinking when they're older and their minds are not being manipulated. A lot of teachers are in the hands of fellow-travellers. I have proof of it. The minds of our under 18-year-olds are being indoctrinated.

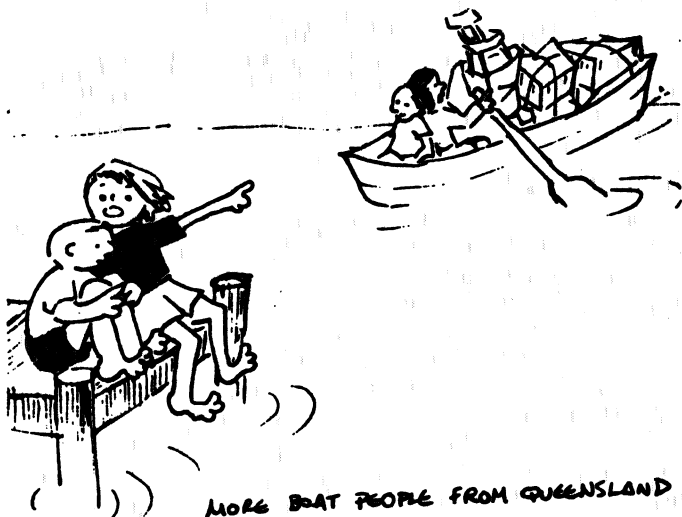
The establishment of the Parliamentary Select Committee was preceded by Cabinet fiat to ban MACOS and SEMP. These bannings created such an outcry from all sections of the community that the Government was forced to try to legitimize its actions. It proposed an inquiry into education, conducted by a committee of four parliamentarians and three educationists. There was to be no Opposition representative.

The Government's intentions were still transparently clear and the outcry continued. In an effort to mollify the objections, the Government announced the Parliamentary Select Committee of Inquiry. However, the underlying intentions remain the

same: to reduce the autonomy of the Education Department and teachers, and reduce the involvement of teachers and parents in the educative process. The Select Committee is just a cosmetic job.

It is in this light that teachers and the Queensland Teachers Union must decide on their response to the bannings of MACOS and SEMP and to the Select Committee. If the QTU and its members participate in the inquiry, they will be condoning it. This will legitimize the inquiry, along with that which has been done and that which the Government seeks to do to education and democracy in Queensland.

**This article first appeared, in slightly longer form, in the *Queensland Teachers Journal*. We are grateful for their permission to reproduce it.*



"... the powerful want no inside knowledge of them broadcast to the multitude. In consequence, it is only the weak and vulnerable whose lives, motives and attitudes are subject to unending psychological and sociological scrutiny: children, women, students, factory workers, the mentally or emotionally handicapped, and minorities who do not conform to the dominant political, economic or sexual ethos of the society.

You may, by contrast, search the textbooks in vain for penetrating empirical studies of the motives, attitudes and personality hang-ups of those who have great power to do damage to our society: generals, cabinet ministers, bishops, financiers, managing directors, owners and editors of major newspapers, heads of police forces and security forces, governors general, vice chancellors, professors, headmasters: all these are quite exempt from such 'scientific' probing and assessment.

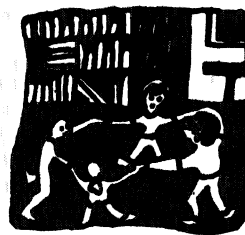
Western psychology and its theories have been built almost entirely on a study of the vulnerable, the powerless. Hence it is of very little use, except to the powerful. A radical sociologist, Martin Nicolaus, asked some years ago:

"What if the machinery were reversed? What if the habits, problems, secrets and unconscious motivation of the wealthy and powerful were daily scrutinized by a thousand systematic researchers ... were tabulated and published in a hundred ... mass circulation journals, and written so that even the fifteen year old high school drop-out could understand them and predict the actions of his landlord — manipulate and control him?" "

Alex Carey
Australian Psychologist
Vol 12 No 1 March 1977

A Multicultural Preschool

The Deborah Little Childcare Centre



One Sydney childcare centre is making a positive effort to maintain children's different cultural identities, and is at the same time cultivating in the children a truly multicultural awareness. At the Deborah Little Childcare Centre children are encouraged to use the language, games and music of their original countries; they are told traditional stories and they celebrate ethnic festivals. Each week's hot lunches include meals cooked in the manner of each of the different cultural groups.

Staff, parents and the larger community are all involved, and herein lies the reason for the centre's unusual success after less than a year of operation, as well as its difficulties.

Deborah Little is a long day facility catering for about 60 anglo-Australian and migrant two-to-five year olds in Dulwich Hill, an inner Sydney suburb.

Bilingual Teachers

Among the staff are three teachers who, as well as speaking English, speak Greek, Arabic or Spanish — the languages of the migrant children who attend the centre. It is worth noting that all of these teachers have overseas qualifications and experience — two of them in secondary teaching — which local education authorities have refused to recognize.

The role of the bilingual teachers is at the centre of the multicultural program at Deborah Little. They give lessons in the three languages to *all* of the children, coordinating content with the English language lessons and activities. If children are learning to differentiate shapes, for example, their Spanish lesson will include the words for the shapes being learned.

The ethnic languages are not only taught in actual lessons: all of the teachers and childcare workers at Deborah Little try to use a multi- or bilingual set of common phrases, questions, answers, commands, etc. for everyday interactions with the children. This reinforces multilingual and multicultural learning, and it also helps to validate the ethnic languages by showing children that the anglo-Australian teachers find it worthwhile to learn them.

The bilingual teachers are developing resources in songs, stories and activities in the various languages for use in this and other childcare centres and preschools. They also assist the monolingual staff in their relations with parents and the ethnic communities by interpreting cultural attitudes and values which might otherwise be misunderstood.

The bilingual teachers play a role as well in providing support and social services to families that use the centre. They attempt to link the local community to the health, welfare, educational, employment and legal agencies available; they help parents in filling in forms; and they act as interpreters at interviews.

Although clearly beneficial within the context of multicultural Sydney, the multilingual approach has run into resistance from some migrant parents. These have chosen to send their children to a government-subsidized centre, rather than leaving them to the traditional child-minding by grandparents, expressly so that the children will learn English now, and not be handicapped at higher levels of schooling. Such parents are

understandably worried when they see that their children are being taught to retain their first language. They need reassuring as to the educational value of not only early learning in English, but also of building confidence and pride in the child's original language, culture, and family.

Staff at Deborah Little are aware that for many families they are superseding the grandmother's role. Robbing from her her usefulness in the sphere of childrearing is likely to add to the already serious problems of an older woman who is living in an alien environment where she does not know the language and where her traditional skills and values no longer apply. The centre is concerned to incorporate the grandparents into its functioning, maintaining something of their role as child-minders.

Although grandparents have always been encouraged to spend time at the centre, staff have now learned that in the absence of a clearly-defined position and tasks such encouragement has not meant much. A weekly lunch for grandparents got a good response initially, but then dropped off. Staff hope that current success in getting grandparents to record traditional stories, songs and games for use in making resources will continue, and will help to return to grandparents something of their usefulness as educators of the children.

Decision-making

As is the case with working class people generally, people living in the area, both migrant and Australian-born, have had little experience of real participatory decision-making about their circumstances in the community. Hence there has been a need to progress slowly with plans for parents to have a strong decision-making role in the centre's operation. The first step was parent planning of social and fundraising activities. Involvement now extends to parents helping to choose the new childcare workers who will care for their children. It is hoped that in time a council of parents, community, and childcare workers will run the centre.

Ultimate control by the Municipal Council is a decisive factor, however. Community involvement in hiring of a new childcare worker might be acceptable, but changes in hours of operation, ages of children catered for, or hiring of a new director, for example, would most likely be deemed to be outside of the sphere of "community involvement".

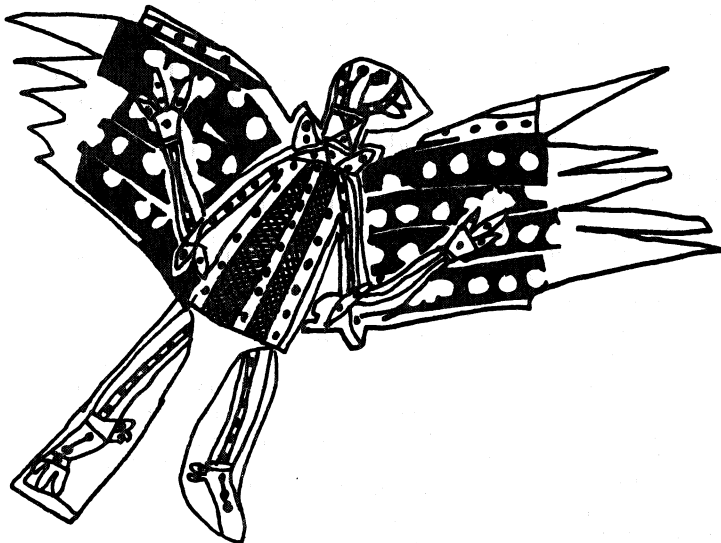
Real differences in values are inevitable in a multicultural facility, and these have sometimes led to significant clashes between families and teachers. Predictably, disagreements have stemmed as much from differences in class attitudes as cultural attitudes. Areas of disagreement have ranged from feeding habits to attitudes toward nudity, cleanliness, care of equipment, and the educational value of toys. The explicitly non-sexist policies of the centre have also proved a contentious issue.

Dealing constructively with such differences, making multicultural education a reality, and administering a childcare centre democratically and with full participation of parents, won't be accomplished without a great deal of work. But staff, parents and community connected with the Deborah Little Childcare Centre in Dulwich Hill are making an encouraging start.

Mornington Island

Yeah, I met him down in Sydney
A quiet sort of bloke
He seemed to take a lot of time,
To think before he spoke.
There was a kind of pride and dignity,
In the way he held his head,
And when I asked him where he came from
Mornington Island, was what he said.
He was average height, and wiry,
He could sing and dance and mime,
He had a kind of living magic,
And I watched him many a time.
He brought the kangaroo to life,
As he sat chewing, looking around.
You'd almost see his long ears twitch,
As he held us all spell-bound.
Or the hunter with his spear poised
Just before he nailed his prize,
All the dances and the stories,
Came to life before your eyes.
Dances he did, I'd never seen,
He sang songs I'd never heard
Of life and death and dream-time,
Trees and animals, and birds.
And in him I caught a little glimpse
Of what me and my kids had had
And I wished I could have handed down,
Things he'd got from his dad.
So we must write new songs and stories,
And create new dances too,
And as our kids grow, they will learn to know
Both the old life and the new.

Maureen Watson
Queensland

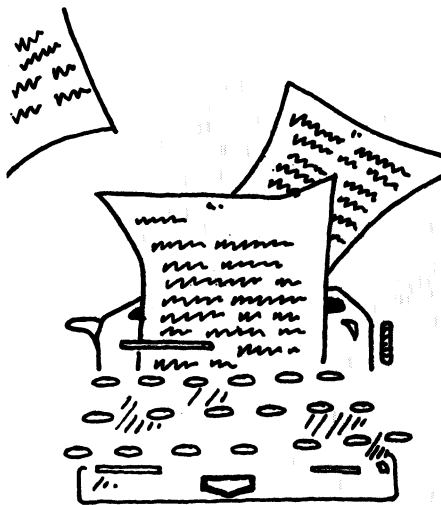


Fringe Dwellers

Fringe dwellers in a little country town,
Where we lived on the river,
And when we claimed land
That was rightfully ours,
They called us "Indian giver."
But they don't shame us
Or the Indians,
It's only themselves they shame,
And by their words you'll know them,
Better than by any name.
They worship their own kind of one-eyed god,
To condone their inhuman abuse,
And their god always lets the white man win.
And us black people always lose.
Maybe their god can't see us blacks
Cos we can't pray our troubles away,
Or maybe praying and christianity,
Is a game white people play.
Maybe we are forever doomed,
As the white stones count our loss,
As we rise and fall, and are crucified,
In the shadow of the cross.
Down the trail of broken promises,
Among the head-stones of our graves,
Where we buried our babies,
And our hopes,
While they sang,
"Jesus saves"

Maureen Watson
Queensland

RED REVIEWS



Fighting Racism

The World in the Classroom, by Chris Searle. Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, London, 1977. \$4.95.

Chris Searle's latest book is about the fight against racism in an East London secondary school where he taught for a time. It is also an affirmation of the multi-racial, multi-cultural nature of city schools and how this composition of students can be used as a force against oppression.

Searle reminds his readers that the school is the bourgeois institution of the State which not only condones the exploitation of the working class, but also, for its own economic interest and survival, divides the working class by promoting racism. Schools provide a ready made semi-literate and compliant labour force to serve industry and public services. They turn out black and immigrant labour to perform some of the dirtiest, most tedious and badly paid jobs in society.

Despite the purposeful under-development of working class minds by the school, Searle argues that classrooms can be transformed into political battlegrounds, where committed teachers can reject State licensed knowledge and replace it with ideas which affirm the strengths and aspirations of workers everywhere. Whilst the school, by itself, can never transform society, it is, argues Searle a battlefield of ideas, some dynamic some reactionary, and it contains within its walls "a huge uncommitted, dormant mass of political power" — a force which if made aware, can contribute to the transformation of the State.

Set against the provocative and bigoted racist doctrines of the National Front in Britain (sample slogan after the death of a Sikh boy in Southall, "one down, a million to go") the book describes how Searle, an English teacher, and some of his colleagues, formed a team to present to their students a variety of themes dealing with racial and worker oppression. The themes ranged from historical to contemporary situations in Britain, Europe, America and the Third World. Many of them centred on the happenings in the immediate neighbourhood of the school, and included incidents in the lives of the students. Paramount in this method of thematic teaching was the aim to expose the myths of racism by argument and discussion and the use of an impressive number of resources including speakers, films, novels, newspapers, TV, historical documents, music and poetry.

The book thus comprises stories, accounts of reconstructed events, poems, songs and plays written by students at the school over a two year period. Each chapter includes a theme which is described and discussed, plus a list of resources and a connecting commentary provided by the teachers concerned. One example should suffice to give the general idea.

Alarmed by the emergent fascist groups in Britain, particularly in poorer areas such as the East End of London, and prompted by government cuts in public services and rising unemployment; Searle and his colleagues decided to present the facts of Facism by describing the situation in Chile after the coup, and with particular reference to the life and death of Victor Jara. The students were told about Jara's childhood, his popularity as a folk artist and his murder by the fascists in the Santiago Stadium, after his hands had been broken whilst playing for other prisoners.

Jara's lyrics, in translation from the Spanish, were read and studied by the students. They played the songs from the 'Manifesto' long playing record, and they read in unison a choral poem, 'Victor Jara of Chile'. They were shown a film of the 'World in Action' TV programme made in Chile a few weeks after the coup, which documented the torture and repression of trade unionists and supporters of Allende and Popular Unity. The students wrote about Chile and Victor Jara, with Jara's own words and music playing in the background. Later the students read their work to Joan Jara who visited the school to talk about her husband and her own escape from Chile. Commenting on the response of the children in their written work, Searle says:— "The children had seen clearly through Victor's story, how facism hates and strives to frustrate music, poetry, love and freedom, how it kills the beauty it cannot distort and control. Their

sensitivity and affection for Joan Jara was as strong as their understanding of Victor's struggle and the agony of his people".

Harold Rosen has written critically of teaching that is solely designed to foster personal sensitivity and self exploration and which largely overlooks the social context of literature and language. He argues that such teaching incapacitates children, particularly those from working class backgrounds, when they are faced with brutalising jobs and empty lives. "Cushioned individualism so frail that it will melt in the heat of the production line" is how he expresses it, and he goes on to describe how such children jettison all the work of their school years as soon as they perceive its irrelevance to their ongoing work situations.



The kind of English teaching that Searle describes in his book is the best antidote I know for the kind of situation Rosen describes. Most thematic English books, whether aimed at primary or secondary age children, are full of largely meaningless exercises designed to motivate individual feelings and responses which look inward instead of outward to the real world and its problems.

I hope many teachers, and not just those engaged in English, will buy the book, read it and begin to act on its message, which is as relevant here as it is in Britain. I can't imagine teachers in NSW schools getting away with quite as much as Searle and his colleagues did in their classrooms, but it might be possible to adopt the same line of approach and adapt it to the Australian context. The uranium issue springs to mind.

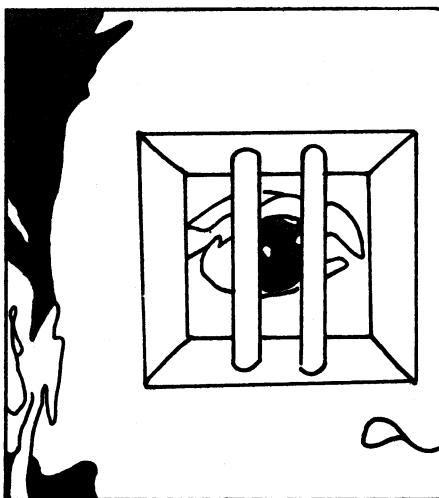
Searle is a committed Socialist, tough and uncompromising, in what he sees as the role of the teacher in working class schools. He wants to change the world and sees his students as the ones to accomplish it through their recognition of and acceptance of class solidarity that unites them in the struggle for a more just and humane world, a struggle that begins in the classroom.

Barbara A. Bee

School as Prison

Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, by Michel Foucault. Allen Lane, London, 1977. (Translation of *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la Prison*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975).

Most school children have referred to their schools, at one time or another, as prisons; and many teachers have complained that current classroom practices require them to act more as police than as educators. As Michel Foucault shows in his recent work, *Discipline and Punish*, comparisons of this sort cannot be dismissed as metaphorical expressions of resentment or discouragement. They must be taken literally, as intuitions of a fundamental equivalence at the level of disciplinary technique. In Foucault's book schools and prisons, asylums and hospitals,¹ factories and military camps, are all revealed as institutions which function to adjust their inmates to some



pre-given norm through the use of the same procedures: through confinement and control, through surveillance and documentation, through discipline and punishment.

It is the prison which provides the principal unifying theme of this study because Foucault sees in the prison the archetypal institution of our disciplinary society – a society organised around a continual assessment and adjustment of individuals in terms of their conformity to or deviation from some norm. But since the prison system as we know it did not become widespread until the early nineteenth century, Foucault asks how it came to replace the older feudal system of punishment by public torture and execution. To answer this question of 'the birth of the prison' Foucault devotes the middle third of his book to a brilliant analysis of the simultaneous development of techniques of disciplining in military, educational, and factory settings during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These included techniques of spatial control through new architectural designs to confine individuals

Telling it like it is

My family came to Australia from Uruguay because there had been a coup d'état and life had become impossible for the Uruguayan people, politically and economically. So many people were persecuted, jailed, tortured and killed because of their beliefs that municipal institutions were turned into jails for political prisoners.

When my family decided to come to Australia we were told that we would find work, good schools, kind people. "Life would smile for us". The reality was very different. My parents weren't able to find work even though both of them could speak English. Things also went badly for my sister, brother and myself at school.

At first we were sent to Special English classes, where we didn't have many problems since all students were migrants. However, as soon as I was sent to the normal classes, life became utterly miserable because of the language barrier and the insecurity it created; and the prejudice I found in most students and some of the teachers.

Some teachers obviously thought of us only as "factory fodder", which is, I suppose, what we were after all. Consequently, migrant kids had trouble getting enrolled into senior classes. Other teachers were really good and tried to help us, but they couldn't do much because they were too few and too powerless.

I was called "Wog", and, as were many others, I was bashed up. Nothing was done to stop these things. We expected the offenders to be punished or at least reprimanded, but nobody paid any attention to our complaints except to try to calm our anger.

My parents asked me not to leave school, but to keep on trying. After all they had come here looking for a better future for us, and this certainly was not going to be the case if I left school and went to work in a factory.

So I decided to go on to fifth form. My school life improved for awhile, and I got good results in my exams, but the violence which my third form sister was subjected to by the other kids proved too upsetting for me. Although I wanted to continue studying, school had become torture, and I finally left.

Now I'm just another "dole bludger". I put the blame not only on the school I went to, but on the whole system which neglects migrants and chooses to ignore their problems.

Monica Guimaraens

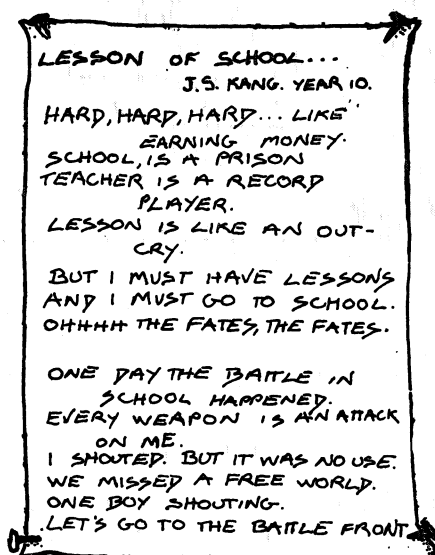
and isolate them from one another while allowing them to be constantly observed by a supervisor. They included techniques of temporal control through the analysis of complex activities into simple tasks whose rate and sequence of performance could be strictly regulated. And they included techniques of administrative control through procedures of examination and judgement, of record-keeping and measurement, of rewarding and punishing.

The historical conditions of these developments, Foucault points out, are well-known: they lie chiefly in the expansion of population and the expansion of economic production which occurred together in Europe from the middle of the eighteenth century onward. The need to impose order upon this unprecedented mass of humanity and to create from its raw materials docile bodies capable of labouring within a productive system of unprecedented scale, brought forth these coercive techniques of unprecedented refinement and subtlety. These techniques of detailed supervision, of training and repetition, of examination and correction, not only made it possible to apply controls, for the first time, directly to each individual body within the great mass of humanity, but they also produced human individuality itself as an object of knowledge.

The equation 'knowledge equals power' has been a key to our understanding of the natural sciences since the time of Francis Bacon. But for the so-called 'human sciences' — psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc. — the traditional wisdom has been, in Foucault's words, "that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended and that knowledge can develop only outside its injunctions, its demands and its interests" (p. 27). Foucault, however, sees precisely the same conditions applying in both the human and the natural spheres: "We should admit . . . that power produces knowledge," he writes, "that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (p. 27). The human sciences, which form the basis of every system of 'scientific pedagogy', can therefore be seen as both the products and the agents of the coercive, disciplinary techniques which operate throughout society and which find their most rigorous, concentrated and systematic application in the prison.

Foucault's analysis of these techniques provides an answer to his question as to why the prison system has been the predominant punitive institution since the nineteenth century. At the outset of the final third of his book he writes that the

general form of all these disciplinary techniques, "the general form of an apparatus intended to render individuals docile and useful, by means of precise work upon their bodies, indicated the prison institution, before the law ever defined it as the penalty *par excellence*" (p. 231). In fact, he continues, "how could the prison not be immediately accepted when, by locking up, restraining and rendering docile, it merely reproduces, with a little more emphasis, all the mechanisms that are to be found in the social body?" (p. 233).



The great strength of *Discipline and Punish* is its detailed analysis of the mechanisms of institutionalised systems of power, systems which permeate society rather than imposing external constraints upon it and which serve constantly to manufacture what Althusser has called 'practical ideologies'. The relevance of this analysis to an understanding of the political function of the school system is apparent throughout the book, even when Foucault is not concerned with specifically pedagogical techniques. The main weakness of this text, on the other hand, is the ambiguity of its political response to the systems of power which it analyses. According to Foucault, the political issue of the prison is the same as the political issue confronting society as a whole: in all spheres, he writes, "the problem lies . . . in the steep rise in the use of these mechanisms of normalization and the wide-ranging powers which, through the proliferation of new disciplines, they bring with them" (p. 306). This sort of assessment serves to identify a target but not to suggest an appropriate means of attacking it. This reticence may stem from Foucault's own basically anarchistic political position. In other texts his counsel is to distrust all power whatever and to oppose it on all fronts. "It is a long struggle," he writes;

"it is repetitive and seemingly incoherent. But the system it opposes, as well as the power exercised through the system, supplies its unity."² Such a policy of confrontation, which depends for its coherence upon the unity of the system it opposes, seems to promise, not just a long and repetitive struggle but an endless and misdirected one.

Discipline and Punish, then, offers very little in the way of positive political orientation. But as an analysis of techniques of social control it is a document of profound political significance.

Randall Albury

Notes

- 1 Foucault has dealt with these two institutions in detail in previous studies: *Madness and Civilization*, translated in 1961, and *The Birth of the Clinic*, translated in 1973.
- 2 From "Revolutionary Action: 'Until Now'", in M. Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977).



From Barbara Preston, Victoria:

The writers of the survey of counter-sexist material (*RED 6*, p.14) have clearly forgotten what the *Role Your Own* kit posters look like (that is, if they have ever seen them). They write, "the posters, in garish pink, black and white, may easily be dispensed with . . ." I am astounded. The posters are brilliant. The booklet is in "garish pink, black and white" (even though it looks O.K.), the only poster in those three colours has only small areas of the pink. Several posters are multi-coloured, a couple in black and white (including the "mask" poster which is on many a feminist household wall), others in orange, black and white. Teachers have found the posters very stimulating for discussion (and often dispense with the booklet . . .). The seven of them are among the best teaching posters I have ever seen in their aesthetic excellence and the ideas etc., they arouse in students. They are certainly not to be dispensed with! (And they're useful for the living room walls in between classroom uses.)

Abortion Guide

The Sydney Women's Abortion Action campaign (WAAC) has produced a booklet, *A Woman's Guide to Abortion: Why, How, Where*, which is available in the six major migrant languages: Greek, Italian, Arabic, Spanish, Yugoslav (Serbo-Croatian) and Turkish.

At the Sydney book launching on July 28, Yovanka Noussir, from the Yugoslav-Australian Information and Welfare Centre, spoke about the freer abortion situation in Yugoslavia. She said that Yugoslav women were very surprised to learn that, in Australia, they could not easily obtain a safe legal abortion – a woman's right in Yugoslavia.

The idea for these booklets originated in International Women's Year when two WAAC members went to Canberra to try to obtain a grant for a conference on abortion and contraception.

The IWY Government Committee considering this request was very impressed by the original English edition of *A Woman's Guide to Abortion: Why, How, Where* and suggested that this information should be available to migrant women.

WAAC then received a grant to cover the cost of the conference and the production of the booklets. Until July, 1978 WAAC meetings have involved some aspect of booklet production such as arranging for translations, typing, laying out and printing.

Now WAAC needs help with the last, and perhaps the biggest task – distribution. They would be very pleased to hear from anyone connected with a migrant group or community centre where the booklets are needed.

WAAC can be contacted at: Women's House
62 Regent Street
Chippendale NSW 2008
Phone: [02] 699 5281

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Red Notes

Contacts & Resources



We realise that what follows is in no way a comprehensive list of useful contacts and resources in the area of multicultural education. It has been included so as to provide a brief outline and overview of the sorts of contacts, resources, materials, activities and initiatives that are available or that are being developed.

* * * * *

Multicultural Resource Booklet (Melbourne State College 1978)

The booklet contains much useful material for teachers, including interpreter and translation services; health, welfare, legal and housing organizations; bibliographies and periodicals; multicultural and multi-lingual classroom materials; and suppliers. The information and contacts are restricted to Victoria but people in other states should look for similar organizations in their state or make inquiries in Victoria. What follows is a selection of the classroom material referred to in the booklet.

Black Resistance Centre — 3rd floor, 92 Little Roma Street, Brisbane, Qld 4000. Alternative literature on land rights, uranium etc. Cheryl Buchanan.

Androgynous Scarecrow Card Game — counter sexist, multi-lingual version of "Old Maid" — send \$1.70 plus postage (30c) to 'Scarecrow' 62 Relowe Cres., Box Hill Nth 3129.

Community Aid Abroad — (in your capital city). Third World and Social Problems kit. Plus: films, action packs, photographs, posters, speakers information.

From the Ethnic Press — A weekly selection of news and editorial opinion from Australia's foreign language Press. (Issued by the Department of Immigration & Ethnic Affairs.) (In your capital city.)

Multi-lingual Books: Multi-cultural Curriculum Resources Project Technical Services information for libraries. Review bulletins information on book buying and selection. Classroom materials and lists of parallel texts being published. Richmond Community Education Centre, 123 Church Street, Richmond, Vic. 3121. Tel: 421 411. Contacts: Robert Walker, Cavell Zangalis, Bruce Hurley, Nursel Akdemir.

Multi-lingual Social Studies Units — Dr Marta Rado, School of Education, La Trobe University, Bundoora. Tel: 478 3122.

SEMP Social Education Materials Project, Race & Ethnic Relations — (Heinemann Education Australia, 85 Arbringer Street, Richmond, Vic. 3121.) (Secondary level.) Comprises three packs.

- 1 Different Things to Different People.
- 2 Aborigines and Europeans.
- 3 Australia a Multi-cultural Society.

The main emphasis is upon multi-culturalism and challenges the adoption of racist attitudes; and the packs aim at correcting existing material found in schools, (contain books, tapes, support cards etc).

Some ideas of the sort of activities that are possible.

- An Italian girl (first generation Australian) is in the process of interviewing her grandmother on tape. We discussed our ideas, and the following week she submitted a list of questions she wanted to ask. I rounded out the list by adding such questions as "What did the girls do while the boys were working or at school?" and "What was expected of you when you married?" Her grandmother is in her mid-eighties and speaks an Italian dialect. Maria will translate the tape into English, and we will contact a library and/or Italian Women's group (I saw such a group marching on I.W. Day last month) and ask them to store the tape. Maria is beginning to realise the necessity of recording her family's history before it is smoothed over and forgotten through assimilation.
- Romy, a Chilean girl (first generation Australian) is interpreting a selection of works by Pablo Neruda and Victor Jara (both of whom she hadn't formerly heard). I have given her material on the role of Women in Chile, but it was her personal choice to pursue Neruda and Jara. As far as communicating and sharing with the class is concerned, Romy has taught her class and me about the machismo double standard by regaling us with one hilarious story after another, using her brothers, father, uncles, male friends as the cast of characters.
- An Arabic girl is reading the autobiography of Umm Kulthum, certainly one of if not the most famous Middle Eastern singers who ever lived. And who happened to be a woman. As a little girl her father dressed her in boys clothing, and her story is filled with sex role reversal situations, discrimination, etc. Fatima will write a short paper — her feelings and reactions, any parallels between her life and Kulthum.

There are numerous projects and lesson plans to be drawn up for those teachers who are interested in and energetic enough to do a little research. If you are a social science teacher about to embark on a unit about the desert, then talk about the role of women in desert-roaming tribes. If you are teaching economics, a lesson on Charlotte Perkins Gilman will easily lead to a discussion on the importance of economic independence for women. Whatever subject you are teaching — and to whomever — always ask "What did women do?", and build your approach around this concept.

* * * * *

Resources for Schools — Multi-cultural Education.

Schools Commission, 13 Ninth Avenue, St Peters SA 5069. Includes lists of books in English and other languages suitable for use in schools. Also lists bookshops, special projects, resource peoples.

* * * * *

The Committee for Non-sexist Education of the NSW Teachers' Federation is preparing a kit of posters and short articles about

women in countries from which there have been many recent migrants to Australia. The aim of the kit is to show to both migrant and Anglo-Australian students and teachers that women in these cultures are challenging traditional and oppressive restrictions, that the movement for women's liberation is world-wide. The posters and articles will be bilingual – in English and the dominant language of the country depicted in each.

The kit is projected for completion by Term I, 1979. For information, or if you would like to help with the project, ring Janet 51 3182 or Therese 82 3914, or write to the Committee for Non-sexist Education, NSW Teachers' Federation, 300 Sussex Street, Sydney 2000.

Community Resources

Community groups or agencies can often provide much valuable information about migrant groups and their concerns and activities. They are often very willing to help or are able to refer you to the services that might be required. But apart from any such direct material help the very process of making contacts with migrants and their organizations can serve to show that their language, culture, skills, knowledge and experience are considered valuable and a valid part of their children's education.

For NSW community contacts as well as teaching strategies resources, background reading etc. see the pamphlet *"Teaching in a Multicultural Community"* compiled by and available from Inner City Education Centre, 37 Cavendish Street, Stanmore 2048. Also available there are materials on *"Language is Learning"* and a set of lesson plans *"Ethnic Groups and Cultures"*.

For Victoria community contacts see *"Multicultural Resources Booklet"* available from Melbourne State College.

National Groups in Australia – A directory of ethnic organizations, ethnic press and government agencies dealing with migrants and Aborigines. Available from Australian Department of Social Services in your capital city.

Brotherhood of St Laurence – 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy 3065, telephone 419 7055. Research, surveys, studies on social, migrant and educational issues. Publications for sale, booklists, broadsheets for schools etc.

Chomi – Clearing House on Migration Issues – Library and resources on migrant issues (education, health, law, welfare etc.). Reprints, bibliographies, kits etc., available from *Ecumenical Migration Centre*, 133 Church Street, Richmond 3121, telephone 424 848.

C.U.R.A. Centre for Urban Research and Action – 124 Napier Street, Fitzroy 3065. All kinds of help and information for and about migrants. Survey study of migrant women factory workers. Publishes "Ekstasis" periodical on migrant issues.

Resource Teachers

Two grants have been made under the Innovations Scheme of the Disadvantaged Schools Program to employ specialist resource teachers.

The first involves employing a teacher to help develop resources for teaching Modern Greek at schools with high Greek populations in the inner city of Sydney. The second involves employing three teachers to develop English language based resources in science, maths and social science.

Greek language teachers decided that they needed help in developing materials for the new language and culture courses that would be relevant to their students' needs as residents of the inner city and as members of non-Anglo-Australian com-

munities. Teachers of science, maths, social science and E.S.L. (English as a Second Language) wanted to develop materials that exercised the language skills of their migrant students, while at the same time teaching them the concepts and content of these subject areas.

In both cases the resource teachers not only work on resources but also go from school to school working with the teachers there, helping them develop their ideas and trying out various activities and materials. This cross-school (and in the second case cross-subject area) contact and joint activity further extends the cooperative work that started when the teachers conceived these projects and wrote the submissions.

For more information contact Inner City Education Centre, at 37 Cavendish Street, Stanmore 2048.

Bilingual Program at North Belmore Public School NSW

The student population here contained a large group of recent arrivals from Lebanon, only some of whom were literate in their first language (an Arabic dialect). A teacher here, bilingual in Arabic and English, was able to teach them in their first language. This means that their conceptual development with relation to basic school subjects did not have to wait 1-2 years while they picked up their second language English. Often such children never really master enough of the second language and lose too much of their first language to be able to benefit from schooling at all.

Newtown Primary School – 1st Community School Council in NSW

During 1977 an Innovations Scheme Grant enabled the teaching of Community Languages at NPS. However, when these funds were not renewed in 1978 these subjects could no longer be taught.

As a result, a public meeting was called to discuss the needs of NPS and community involvement. Over 100 people, including parents, representatives of ethnic organisations, as well as teachers and representatives of the Department of Education attended.

A series of questions were put to the Department representatives including: "What does the Department mean when it says that it wants community involvement?" "Why can't ethnic schools have access to Government stores and discounts?" "Why can't the community have more use of school buildings and grounds?"

Further at this meeting a council was elected. It was made up of parent representatives of the different communities served by the school (including Anglo-Australian and Aboriginal), teachers, the Principal of the school and some local community workers.

The objectives of the council, some of which have already been attained, include more access to the school out of school hours by community groups; making suggestions to the Principal and staff and to the Department on what the community wants. This especially involves some say in the curriculum taught vis community languages and culture.

The significance of this development at Newtown Primary is that while community school councils are common in Victoria, South Australia and the ACT, this is the first attempt at such structure in NSW public school system. This means that it is not institutionalised (in fact it is not a legal body at all) and so far represents a genuine expression of grassroots community interest and involvement.

A Reprehensible Reprint



Mr Justice F. C. Hutley on the Legal Profession

(Extract from a submission to the NSW Law Reform Commission, April 24, 1977.)

"... If the maintenance of professional standards, particularly of integrity, which need to be above those of the general community, is of fundamental importance and it is desired to greatly increase the number of lawyers and to draw the increase from largely represented classes such as the aboriginals and migrants, an elaborate course of indoctrination will be necessary. The clan type of loyalty which I understand is the basis of such aboriginal and migrant morality is fundamentally inconsistent with the individual integrity which is required of a lawyer".



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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.

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Copy for RED 8 is needed by December 14, 1978; Copy for RED 9 by April 1, 1979.

Send contributions to: Editorial Collective,
Radical Education Dossier
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