The Politics of Colonial Education in New Caledonia

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to William, Irène, Toui and Jessie, the future of Kanaky.
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Glossary

Political Parties

ACF  Association des Canaques en France
AJCP  Association des Jeunes Calédoniens de Paris
FI   Front Indépendantiste
FLNKS Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste
FULK Front Uni de Liberation Kanak
GFKL Groupe des Femmes Kanak et Exploitées en Lutte
GKF  Groupe des Kanak en France
LKS  Libération Kanak et Socialiste
PALIKA Parti de Libération Kanak
RPCR Rassemblement Pour la Calédonie dans la République
UC   Union Calédonienne
UJC  Union de Jeunesse Calédonienne
UMNC Union Multiracial de Nouvelle-Calédonie
UPM Union Progressiste Melanesien
USTKE Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Kanak et des Exploités

Educational Qualifications, Programmes and Institutions

ALC Association des Lycéens Canaques
ALEP Annex de Lycée Professionnel
BCP Baccalauréat Professionnel
BEP Brevet d'Etudes Professionnelles
BEPC Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle
BESD Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement du Second Degré
BTN Baccalauréat de Technicien
CAM Certificat d'Aptitude aux Fonctions de Moniteur
CAP Certificat d'Aptitude Pédagogique
CAP Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle
CEAP Certificat Elémentaire d'Aptitude Pédagogique
CEG Collège d'Enseignement Générale
CEP Certificat d'Etudes Primaires
CEP Certificat d'Etudes Professionnels
CES Collège d'Enseignement Secondaire
CET Collège d'Enseignement Technique
CM2 Cours Moyen Deuxième Année
DEUG Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales
DNDB Diplôme Nationale du Brevet
EPK Ecole Populaire Kanak
FEP Fins d'Etudes Primaires
GKF Groupe des Kanaks en France
IUT Institut Universitaire de Technologie
LEP Lycée d'Enseignement Professionnel
MFR Maison Rurale Familiale
ZEP Zone d'Education Prioritaire
Chapter One

Introduction

The French Pacific territory of New Caledonia was thrust into the international spotlight in the 1980s by a resurgence of organised and widespread resistance from the indigenous Kanak population. In 1986, the United Nations General Assembly voted to recognise the essentially colonial nature of the relationship between France and the indigenous Kanak people and the consequent Kanak right to independence. Two years later, in an action which was widely condemned and which claimed over nineteen Kanak lives, France ordered a commando unit to storm a cave on the island of Ouvéa where French military personnel were being held hostage. Weeks later, through an agreement known as the Matignon Accords, leaders of the Kanak independence movement were persuaded to abandon a grass-roots resistance strategy in favour of working cooperatively with France for the peaceful and stable "development" of New Caledonia.

The significance of these events and their implications for the future of New Caledonia can only be understood by reference to the historical context from which they arose. Although there has been considerable variation in the form by which it has been expressed, conflict has been the constant factor in the relationship between the French colonial authorities and the Kanak people since the New Caledonian mainland was annexed by France in 1853. This tension has influenced and has in turn been shaped by a number of real and perceived factors including politico-military strength, strategies for socio-economic development and deep-rooted cultural concerns.

This thesis is an examination of the particular role that education has played in the development of colonialism in New Caledonia. The focus is on the role of education in the developing relationship between the colonised people and the colonial power. It will be shown that France's education policies closely paralleled its political objectives in New Caledonia. Similarly, the changing Kanak attitude towards education can be seen to reflect changes in their political aspirations and developments in their anti-colonial struggle.
1.1 Thesis Rationale

This thesis is an original study of an important subject. Ward [1982] and Dorno [1984] have both acknowledged that apart from land, education has been the arena most strongly contested by the protagonists in the struggle for independence. Despite this, the issue of education in New Caledonia, and Kanak education in particular, remains remarkably under-researched.

An extensive bibliography of research papers and theses on education in the Pacific that was compiled in 1977 [Coppell] contained only one reference to New Caledonia. That research, a Diploma of Education paper [McConnell, 1974], consisted of a purely descriptive account of the workings of the French school system at that time in the territory.

English-language edited collections of research on education in the Pacific have also been lacking in this regard. The two people engaged by Thomas and Postlethwaite [1984] to write the chapter on schooling in New Caledonia and the Society Islands were high-ranking French civil servants with responsibility for planning and implementing educational policy in France's overseas territories. Their account of Kanak education is predictably uncritical of French authorities. More recently, Tupeni Baba et al [1992] from the University of the South Pacific (USP) published a sourcebook on educational trends and developments in the South Pacific. The book covered eleven states in the region and foreshadowed a twelfth. However, because it was limited to countries served by the USP, New Caledonia was beyond its scope and is likely to remain outside it. Even without such limitations, the special issue of Comparative Education [Volume 29, Number 3, 1993] devoted to education in the Pacific omits New Caledonia, as does Gannicott's collection of papers on education and development in the South Pacific [Gannicott, 1990].

In the last two decades, only two substantive articles on education in New Caledonia have been published in English. One of these [Néchéro-Jorédié, 1988] was the transcript of an interview
about the *Ecoles Populaires Kanak*¹ (EPK) which stood as a chapter in an edited collection of essays on New Caledonia. The other [Wacquant, 1989], based on a study of a sample Nouméa primary school pupils, was an abbreviated version of a book published some years earlier in French [Kohler and Wacquant, 1985].

Only slightly more research has been published in French. Besides the above-mentioned book, the two other main studies have been Kohler and Pillon [1982] and Dardelin [1984]. These publications are now dated, being produced before not only the Matignon Accords but also the rise and fall of the EPK. Furthermore, they do not address the relationship between education and political struggle.

1.2 Thesis Organisation

This thesis traces New Caledonia's colonial history from the earliest French efforts to conquer the Kanak people through to the mid-point of the ten-year development process established through the Matignon Accords. It divides this history into a number of phases, each of which has a distinct pattern of colonial relations. It shows how the events of each period were shaped by those of the preceding one, and created the conditions for the emergence of the subsequent one. In the early periods, French colonial authorities were driven by the imperative to conquer the country, and this forced Kanak people into a defensive and reactive mode. In more recent times, Kanak people have taken the initiative to regain their sovereignty, with France reacting to defend its power.

In each of these phases, the role of Kanak education is examined from the competing pro- and anti-colonial perspectives. From the colonial viewpoint, it can be seen that since the early conquest phases when education was of virtually no importance, it has become steadily more important to French colonial strategy. It will be shown that while military superiority has always underpinned French rule, France's ability to conceal this fact and thereby establish a more hegemonic hold over the territory has relied increasingly on its capacity to convince Kanak people of the legitimacy of its

¹ Kanak Popular Schools, see Chapter Nine.
position of dominance and control in the area of education. It is because of the greater importance of education in recent periods that this thesis devotes more attention to them than to the earlier ones.

The challenge for Kanak people has been to gauge the extent to which it is possible to advance their own interests by participating in an education system which was introduced to advance colonial interests - and further, to discern what strategies would be required to achieve this aim. It will be shown that the strength of the Kanak challenge to French colonial education has closely reflected the strength of their challenge to the overall authority of French colonialism. This process is, however, complicated by the fact that whatever collective political strategies are devised with regard to education, decisions about whether and in what way to participate in established educational systems are ultimately made at an individual or family level. And there is an essential tension which is difficult to counteract between individuals' personal aspirations for themselves and their family and their collective aspirations for, in this case, the Kanak people in general.

Furthermore, in the context of a national liberation struggle, educational aims and strategies for achieving them reflect broader political, economic and socio-cultural considerations. That is, one's view of education will reflect one's view of the shape of the liberated society and one's analysis of the strategies required for achieving that goal. Thus, tensions over these fundamental issues have a tendency to manifest themselves in, among other things, debates over educational strategies and goals. In the case of the Kanak independence struggle, these tensions have revealed deep, but highly instructive debates which this thesis brings to the fore.

The data upon which this study is based have been drawn from a wide range of sources. From the French colonial side, these include policy statements and embellishments of them from governmental authorities, principally politicians, government departments or leading civil servants. There is also extensive use and analysis of official statistics. From the Kanak anti-colonial side, the data come from two main sources: quotes from formal interviews, informal discussions and personal correspondence with a large number of Kanak people from a variety of backgrounds; and extracts from a range of documents including unpublished discussion papers, minutes of meetings
and conferences, and a great many limited circulation leaflets, newsletters and magazines.

Two conscious omissions should also be noted. First, the education of non-Kanak residents of New Caledonia is not discussed other than where it can be used to shed light on the central issue of the relationship between France, the colonial power, and the colonised Kanak population. One such example is the analysis of Kanak educational underachievement, where the issue cannot be adequately discussed without comparisons with non-Kanak achievement. The other main omission concerns Kanak people who actively identify with and promote colonial interests. The broad trends identified in this thesis are not invalidated by the fact that, at times of acute polarisation over the issue of colonial rule during the early conquest and recent resistance, a small minority of Kanak people sided with France.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Chapters Two and Three are essentially theoretical. They aim to establish a framework which can be used to apply to the study as a whole. Chapter Two examines theories of imperialism, nationalism and development. Drawing on a number of theoretical traditions, it proposes a multi-dimensional approach to liberation theory which can be used to analyse the struggle between colonial and anti-colonial forces in New Caledonia. This model makes it possible to define the contested terrain and analyse the tensions in colonial relationships around four key concepts: conquest, hegemony, survival and sovereignty (vide infra).

The two former concepts condition the orientation and strategy of the colonising power: conquest being the minimum required to establish colonial rule through a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence; hegemony being the point at which the complete compliance of the colonised population renders the exercise of coercive violence unnecessary. The latter two represent the corresponding dimensions for the struggle of the colonised people. Survival is the final point of resistance for the colonised people beyond which the colonising power would achieve hegemony. Sovereignty is the point at which the authority of the colonial regime has been overturned. For each side in the colonial conflict, it is the minimum positions (conquest for the colonial forces, survival for the anti-
colonial forces) which impose the strictest imperatives and provide the least scope for manoeuvre.

Chapter Three extends the theoretical discussion to education and, in particular, to education in the context of a national struggle against colonialism. It traces some central lines of thought about the relationship between an education system and the society of which it is a part, as well as arguments about the role of education as an agent of cultural imperialism.

Most significantly, it presents a framework which can be used to analyse the contested terrain of education, with direct reference to wider political, economic and social forces. It does so by giving a central place to what it calls the "citizenship" and "development" functions of education. The former concept builds upon the notion of socialisation, focusing on education's role in the transmission of values and attitudes. In colonial contexts, however, values and attitudes are defined by the contest between two incompatible notions of citizenship and the conceptions of nationhood of which they are a part. New Caledonia's colonial history has been marked by such a division between French and Kanak concepts of citizenship and nationhood, with a third "New Caledonian" variant emerging recently.

The "development" function of education involves training the right number of people with the right types of skills and abilities. Opinions as to what society needs in this regard vary according to the model of development to which one subscribes. Where there is conflict over development models, this surfaces in debates over education and training. Similarly, if a particular development model can be imposed, it sets limits on the training possibilities of an education system.

The model counterposes these social imperatives of an education system against the requirement that it respond also to personal aspirations. In other words, individuals who send their children to school have an expectation that their individual potentialities will be realised and that they will be able to achieve some degree of upward social mobility by obtaining an educational qualification.

The other key function of education is allocation. This involves the tasks of sorting out, screening, selecting and certifying students for adult roles in the labour market. The performance of these
tasks, however, embodies a tension between two requirements: meeting social imperatives (that is, the development and citizenship functions); and allowing the realisation of individual aspirations. Because of the inherent tendency for the former to prevail over the latter, social legitimacy depends upon the ability of the education system to allocate educational rewards and qualifications in such a way that the process appears fair for the individuals involved.

In a crisis of legitimation, the allocation function is usually the first target for popular discontent. However, it is severely limited by the strictures imposed upon it by the development and citizenship functions of education. This is why, in discussing the tensions surrounding colonial education in New Caledonia, particular attention is given to the struggle to control and determine the development and citizenship functions of education.

1.4 Historical Analysis

This discussion begins with an analysis of the colonial conquest of the Kanak people. Chapter Four identifies the point of conquest as having been achieved with the suppression of the 1917 Kanak uprising. This was the point at which the Kanak people were forced to abandon strategies of overt physical resistance. This chapter shows that in this phase of the process of colonisation, France was driven by politico-military imperatives and consequently made little use of education in achieving its colonial aims.

However, once France reached the point of conquest over the Kanak people, quite different dynamics emerged in colonial relations. Chapter Five documents the marked expansion in the provision of both state and missionary schooling to Kanak people during the immediate post-conquest period. It argues that the development and allocation functions of schooling were not significant factors at this stage; the former because Kanak people were excluded from the colonial economy in favour of immigrant labour, the latter because the schools held virtually no promise of social mobility for Kanak people. Rather the emphasis was on the citizenship functions of schooling, reinforcing the view of Kanak people as a conquered and inferior group.
Chapter Six examines the two decades from the end of World War Two. This period saw the lifting of severe restrictions on Kanak people’s employment, residence, voting, educational and other rights. This thesis notes, however, that this liberalisation was not the product of Kanak struggle, but rather a reflection of a broader change in France’s approach to its colonies. Despite the new liberties they brought Kanak people, the changes strengthened France’s position and its move towards hegemonic control by more effectively integrating Kanak people into colonial society. In so doing, the new approach cultivated the notions among Kanak people that significant change could be achieved through reform and that there is no incompatibility between their own interests and those of the colonial power.

In this context, Kanak education assumed a much greater importance. Formal restrictions on Kanak access to education were lifted and education was promoted as the vehicle for individual advancement and more effective integration into colonial society. In the absence of an anti-colonial movement, France’s definitions of and control over the citizenship, development and allocation functions of education remained unchallenged.

Chapter Seven analyses official education statistics in the major public examinations from 1965, the year they were first recorded by ethnic group, to 1992. It documents the extent of the gap between Kanak and non-Kanak and especially European educational achievement. By tracing results over a protracted period, this chapter makes it possible to identify trends and to judge the validity of claims that are made about trends in educational achievement. It concludes that the gap between Kanak and European educational achievement is not narrowing to any significant degree. To the extent that it is, much of this trend is simply the result of qualification inflation. The series of quantitative measures which make up this chapter provide an important backdrop to conflict around the issue of Kanak education over the last twenty-five years.

The three chapters to follow cover this period of heightened tension. Chapter Eight analyses the modern Kanak independence movement from its origins in 1969 through to the mass uprising of 1984. It argues that this period saw the arrest and reversal of the momentum towards colonial
hegemony that had been gathering strength from 1918 to 1969. The chapter focuses particularly on the central role of education in this process of Kanak radicalisation. Colonial education came to symbolise the injustices of the entire system of colonialism.

A new generation of Kanak activists, including a sizeable number of secondary school pupils and some who had been to university, railed against the education system and used the issue to galvanise Kanak people into the anti-colonial struggle. They accused France of using education to further its colonial aims, focusing particularly on the citizenship function of the school which did not recognise Kanak people and actively promoted French values and culture.

By 1984, frustration with attempts to reform colonial education had given rise to a widely-held view that an alternative Kanak education system was needed. The independence movement's attempt to create such a system in the form of the EPK is the subject of Chapter Nine. The rise of the EPK parallels the heightened overall political mobilisation of the mid- to late-1980s. In the previous period, as the Kanak independence movement was building, the colonial authorities only had to use force against relatively small numbers of Kanak activists. From 1984, however, they were forced into the position of having to project much greater military power against a much greater number of Kanak activists. This severely undermined France's ability to establish a hegemonic control and at times even posed a threat to their continued presence in the territory.

An integral part of the independence movement, the EPK explicitly identified and rejected the citizenship and development functions of colonial schooling. In their place, the EPK proposed an orientation towards the needs of the new "Kanak socialist" society, and the requirements of the struggle to achieve that society.

Just as instructive as the study of the rise of the EPK is an analysis of its demise as a popular progressive force. In this regard, Chapter Nine examines not only pressures from the colonial authorities and their allies but also, and more importantly, opposition to the EPK from within the independence movement. Ultimately, the fate of the EPK reflected that of the Kanak independence movement as a whole. The signing of the Matignon Accords in 1988 changed the political climate
within the independence movement in such a way and to such an extent that the EPK was unsustainable.

This post-Matignon period is the subject of Chapter Ten. The Accords, it is argued, represent a reversal of the trend of the preceding twenty years. That is, the move towards colonial hegemony that had been progressively halted and reversed by the independence movement, reappeared through the Matignon Accords in a much more powerful form. Leaders of the independence movement were convinced on two key points: the futility of militant Kanak action in the face of the French army; and the economic imperative to adopt a modernisation approach to development.

Their promotion of this view has had two major points of impact on colonial relations. First, it has severely weakened the independence movement by creating a high degree of division and disillusionment. Secondly, it has opened the way for a tripartite convergence of interests between a nascent Kanak élite, settler business interests and France. There is a concerted move from some sections of the independence movement away from the goal of Kanak socialist independence: the prior rights of Kanak people are being submerged to accommodate even very recent settlers in the name of peaceful coexistence; socialism is giving way to the perceived need to base development on a market economy; and even independence is being redefined as a partnership with France.

As Chapter Ten shows, educational reform was a major thrust of the Matignon Accords. There were promises of new initiatives as well as a reorganising of the existing system to be more responsive to Kanak needs. Those needs were promoted as being those of an independent Kanak nation. In fact, however, an analysis of the effect of the reforms on the citizenship and development functions of education reveals that they are leading towards a more effective integration of Kanak people into a very different type of society.

Through the Matignon Accords, France has recaptured the initiative. In the educational field it is introducing a series of programmes which promote the citizenship and development functions of education consistent with its own interests; moves which by its own admission are a continuation of objectives it has been pursuing for many years. While these reforms are not going totally
unchallenged, they are avoiding the degree of critical analysis and popular monitoring that they would have received in earlier years. This is the result of widespread disillusionment and demobilisation on the part of independence activists and, more particularly, the shattered hopes of so many who had invested so heavily in the EPK.

Chapter Eleven concludes the thesis by identifying some of the key historical patterns to emerge from this study. In so doing, it also assesses the value of the theoretical framework that has been applied throughout. It ends with suggestions for future research in this and related fields.
Chapter Two

Imperialism And Nationalist Struggle

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is not an attempt to establish universal theoretical conclusions about all the many points of contention which have for so long dogged discussions of nationalism, imperialism and other fields of relevance to this study. Rather, it is an attempt to draw selectively on such theoretical traditions with the very limited objective of developing a framework which can inform and add clarity to the specific issues which are the focus of this thesis.

The theoretical framework required for this task must perform at least two essential functions. First, the theory should serve to analyse the nature of the political contexts within which the initiatives have arisen. Such an analysis should help to explain the nature of the institutions and structures which are sustaining French colonial rule, and also create an understanding of the struggles of Kanak people against this system.

The framework should also serve to analyse what is specific to education within this wider political context. In particular, it should help to uncover the inherent tension in colonial education, which usually reinforces colonial domination but can also be an important arena for anti-colonial struggle.

A theoretical framework suited to these purposes does not naturally evolve from any current theoretical tradition. As Geertz wrote:

"An adequate understanding of the new countries of the 'Third World' demands that one pursue scientific quarry across any fenced-off academic field into which it may happen to wander" [Geertz, 1963: p.xviii].
To understand the nature of the Kanak liberation struggle, two separate but related theoretical literatures must be examined: one concerning colonialism, the other development. However, since their heyday in the 1970s, neither of these theoretical traditions has matured or been sustained in such a way that it would be capable of explaining contemporary developments in New Caledonia.

As the former colonies of Asia, Africa and much of the Pacific attained formal independence in the 1960s and 70s, the focus of research tended to move away from colonial relationships and towards neocolonial ones, or to issues of inequalities facing immigrant ethnic minorities resident within the former colonial powers. The experience of Kanak people is significantly different from such nations or communities. The theoretical frameworks developed to explain the colonial experiences of the 1960s and 70s are now of very limited value, since the geopolitical and other contexts from which these theories arose have been radically transformed over the last few decades.

Nevertheless, theories of colonialism and development do contain some useful insights and serve as useful starting points for the theoretical task of this chapter. They provide part of the solution, and their shortcomings draw attention to the areas where further theoretical work is required for the construction of a framework that is more appropriate to the New Caledonian situation.

The model for analysing French colonialism in New Caledonia that is developed in this chapter is complemented by the more specifically educational framework that is developed in the Chapter Three. This latter discussion presents a model of the functions of education which draws on a number of debates in educational theory. One such debate is that surrounding reproduction and resistance theories of education.

Another aspect of educational theory which can inform this study is that which stems from the concept of cultural imperialism, which is linked to the dichotomy between education for domestication and education for liberation. The importance of this theoretical tradition is underlined by the centrality which it is accorded by so many of the principal actors in the nationalist educational initiatives under study.
In identifying these four theoretical traditions, one must acknowledge that they are not mutually exclusive, nor even entirely separate or independent of each other. Indeed, it is one of the aims of this thesis to identify some clear points of intersection between them from which it is possible to construct a more thorough going theory of nationalist education.

2.2 Theories of Nationalism

"In this age of imperialism," wrote Lenin "it is particularly important .. to proceed from concrete realities, not from abstract postulates, in all colonial and national problems". [Cited in Blaut, 1987: p.153] Nationalism has proved a highly elusive concept. It is not easy to define and is still more difficult to analyse in any abstract sense. The aim of this section is not to resolve this ongoing theoretical debate and develop an all-embracing theory of nationalist struggle, but rather to extract the most useful insights from this debate and attempt to apply them in a way that makes sense of the Kanak nationalist struggle.

One of the most influential contemporary Marxist theorists of nationalism is Eric Hobsbawm. He emphasises that Marxists as such are not nationalists, and argues that they cannot be so in either theory or practice [1977: p.9]. When faced with the concrete reality of national problems he moves from the theoretical position of antagonism to nationalism to pragmatic criteria. Judgements about whether nationalist struggles should be supported should be based on an assessment as to whether a struggle may be used to advance the cause of socialism. He maintains that "few Marxists have argued that no nationalist movement can be supported, none that all automatically serve this purpose and are therefore always to be supported" [Ibid: p.10].

This perspective is not unique to Marxists. Few people of any persuasion, including those involved in a nationalist struggle, would be prepared to either defend or condemn every nationalist movement. Indeed either position would be impossible to maintain because of the existence of what might be called competing nationalisms. This is certainly the case in New Caledonia which both Kanak nationalists and French nationalists claim as their own. This issue will be developed in
more detail below, particularly in relation to competing notions of citizenship in education.

There is a pronounced unease in the relationship between nationalism and Marxism. This unease can be traced back to the writings of Marx and Engels. In one of the many dramatic flourishes in *The Communist Manifesto*, they bluntly declare: "working men have no country" [Marx and Engels, 1970: p.32]. This famous phrase has created a "dust cloud", as Bikila [1992: p.7] calls it, which has haunted Marxist theory ever since.

The purpose of this declaration was, of course, to try to wrest the allegiance of working people away from their own ruling class. Marx and Engels knew the extent to which the nationalist ideology of a capitalist state undermined the revolutionary potential of working people. It created a false consciousness amongst working people that, through shared membership of the same nation, they had common interests with the bourgeois class which was exploiting them. It created an artificial obstacle between working people within different nation states. And it ran counter to the notion of internationalism which was seen to be the key to the full emancipation of working people and the overthrow of capitalism.

Marx's writings were directed towards industrial workers in capitalist states, principally European ones. His objective was to assist working people to identify their common class interests and to recognise the political importance of acting on these material interests and not on the artificial barriers of nationalism that the capitalist class used to divide them by blurring class interests and warding off international collusion by workers. As the First World War approached, with the rival imperialist powers using narrow nationalist ideology to exhort working people to fight "for their country" against the workers of other countries, the significance of this internationalist perspective became increasingly pronounced.

### 2.2 Stalin and the National Question

It was during this pre-war period and in the lead-up to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 that Stalin wrote his 1913 essay, "Marxism and the National Question" [Stalin, 1953-5: pp.300-381]
This work proved to be highly influential amongst Stalinists and non-Stalinists until quite recently [See, for example, Nabudere, 1977: pp.50-2]. Its admirers even included such opponents of Stalin as Trotsky who conceded that the work entitled its author "to recognition as an outstanding theoretician" [Trotsky, 1967: pp.156-7]. In the essay, Stalin claimed to have identified four conditions, all of which had to be met for a nation or potential nation to exist. These characteristics were: "a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up". Stalin went further, arguing that national struggle was appropriate and progressive only during the "epoch of rising capitalism", a period which had all but ended with the outbreak of the First World War [Blaut, 1987: p.143]. If and only if these conditions prevailed could a national movement be considered progressive or legitimate.

Some theorists went further than Stalin and condemned all forms of nationalism. Bukharin and Piatakov argued that, even if it was accepted that there exist oppressing and oppressed nations, the idea of self-determination was meaningless under capitalism and harmful under socialism [Cited in Munck, 1986: p.60]. In 1916, Karl Radek went even further:

"Tied hand and foot, corrupted politically by nationalism, the proletariat of the oppressed nation turns into a defenceless object of exploitation and at the same time a dangerous competitor (wage-cutters, strike breakers) to the workers of the oppressing nation" [Cited in Davis, 1976: p.304].

The Stalinist theory of nationalism left a long-term legacy. One of the most problematic concepts that it gave birth to was that of a "national minority": that is, a community with nationalist aspirations which fails to measure up to Stalin's definition of a nation or potential nation. National minorities, according to this view, were destined in the long run to be assimilated into the larger nations of which they were a part. Thus, the true revolutionary course for progressives within these non-national communities was to abandon any false nationalist hopes and engage in the common struggle against capitalism.

This attitude to national struggles has endured. It has seen Marxists attempt to relegate the
political aspirations of so-called national minorities to a subsection of the class struggle. This has generated among these nationalists a widespread frustration and disillusionment with Marxists and Marxism. For many, the approach of such Marxists is seen to parallel that of the local bourgeoisie in expecting that they will become assimilated into the dominant national group.

Stalin's theory is clearly flawed. For one thing, it presupposes the existence of a finite and pre-existing number of national entities, with a single set of criteria for identifying such an entity. Thus groups which might consider themselves nations, and be generally accepted as such could fail Stalin's rigid test. On the language criterion alone, some established nations like Switzerland would not measure up, to say nothing of the handful of Melanesian nations (some of which are, admittedly, having difficulty maintaining national unity at present) which share over one thousand languages among them. As Munck comments, "Stalin produced a dogmatic definition of the nation which was later used as a checklist to assess whether a people met the criteria to become a nation. It never occurred to Stalin that a community might decide for itself to be a nation" [Munck, 1986: p.79].

While remaining highly critical of Stalin's essay on nationalism, Blaut has nevertheless pointed out that it was written to address an internal conflict which was provoking a crisis within the Bolshevik party: a particular argument for a particular situation at a particular historical conjuncture. It has been thoroughly distorted by being removed from this historical context. "It was ... a polemic," he notes, "not an academic essay, still less a Marxist textbook on nationalism in general" [1987: p.147]. In 1918, Stalin wrote "The October Revolution and the National Question", noting that the revolution and surrounding events had "widened the scope of the national question and converted it from the particular question of combating national oppression in Europe into the general question of emancipating the oppressed peoples, colonies and semi-colonies, from imperialism" [1953-5: p.170]. By 1924, Stalin was acknowledging the theoretical transformation of the national question which Lenin had effected with his theory of imperialism. Blaut concluded by adopting Lenin's three-fold categorisation of countries [Lenin, 1964: p.151] and arguing that Stalin's theory of nations was "adequate for the multi-national states of eastern Europe, partly so for the nation states of western Europe, and wholly inadequate for the world of colonies and semi-
colonies of Asia, Africa and Latin America" [Blaut, 1987: p.149].

2.3 Lenin's Theory of Imperialism

Although there is some evidence that Lenin agreed with Stalin's original formulation and may even have had a hand in developing it, it is also clear that he soon became quite uneasy with it. Lenin held firmly to the right of nations to self-determination:

"We demand freedom of self-determination, i.e. independence, i.e. freedom of secession for the oppressed nations, not because we have dreamt of splitting up the country economically, or of the ideal of smaller states, but, on the contrary, because we want larger states and the closer unity and even fusion of nations only on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is inconceivable without the freedom to secede" [Lenin, 1964: pp.413-4].

Lenin never advocated secession, but he insisted on defending a people's right to it. Similarly, he did not feel the need to develop a hard and fast definition of nation or nationalism. His acceptance of the legitimacy of nationalist movements among oppressed nations paralleled his concept of revolutionary democracy. The theoretical problem of the nation, wrote Lenin, belonged neither to the sphere of culture or linguistics, nor to that of economics or geography, but "wholly and exclusively to the sphere of political democracy" [Cited in Jenkins and Minnerup, 1984: p.51]. Lenin's support of the rights of nations to self-determination no more implied an acceptance of bourgeois nationalism than his commitment to democracy entailed an acceptance of the formal veneer of democracy under capitalism.

From as early as the 1920s, Lenin had identified the extent to which the dogmatic dismissal or brutal repression of nationalist movements could obstruct the ultimate goal of international proletarian solidarity. By 1922, in an attack on "the Great Russian chauvinist", Lenin was calling for the need to redress past national inequalities:

"In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate
the non-Russian for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the 'dominant' nation subjected them in the past" [Lenin, 1966: p.608]

But Lenin's most significant contribution to a broader understanding of nationalism was his theory of imperialism. While non-Marxist explanations of the expansionist drive of the European industrial powers emphasised political, strategic and ideological factors, Lenin stressed the economic imperatives of mature capitalism. He drew a clear distinction between dominant and subject nations, a division which he believed "forms the essence of imperialism" [1964: p.409]. Lenin held that the nature of the relationship between these nations on a global scale was determined by the competitive and expansionist drive of the advanced capitalist states. He argued that an inherent capitalist contradiction within the advanced economies of Europe - namely, the need for capital to drive down the wages of workers at the same time as preserving workers' spending power - was forcing capital's leading edge to to move overseas where land, raw materials and labour power could be acquired more cheaply. Lenin did not deny that political or ideological factors might have been important in the overseas expansion, but he believed that economic factors provided the driving force. Had it not entered an imperialist phase, he argued, capitalism would have collapsed from its own internal contradictions.

On this argument, European political control in the colonies was necessary to guarantee the security of investments. An imperialist country's authority over a colony could be jeopardised in two ways. The threat could come from the local population whose land, labour and resources were the object of exploitation. But it could also come from other imperialist powers seeking to expand their own colonial empires. Lenin's seminal work, Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, was written during the First World War, on the eve of the October Revolution. Its aim, he wrote in the preface, was to prove that "the war of 1914-18 was on both sides an imperialist (i.e., annexationist, predatory and plunderous), war for the partition of the world and for the distribution and redistribution of colonies".

In this way, Lenin was able to provide a clear theoretical basis for distinguishing between two forms of nationalism: bourgeois nationalism used by the ruling class of an imperialist country to
provide ideological support to further colonial expansion, and the national struggle of subject peoples seeking to liberate themselves from imperialist domination. In making this distinction, Lenin's theory of imperialism also provided the basis for a theoretical link between the struggles of workers in advanced capitalist nations and the national liberation struggles that erupted throughout the colonies.

2.4 Third World Eruption

Third World liberation movements identified themselves as part of the anti-imperialist struggle. They developed in opposition to foreign domination and exploitation, the form of which was capitalist. They therefore drew heavily on Marxism in analysing the nature of colonial oppression and the strategies required to wage a successful struggle against it. Amilcar Cabral described the principal characteristic of imperialism as hijacking other peoples' history and he conceived of the anti-colonial struggle as one of liberating the colony's ability to develop its own productive forces.

"Whether on the economic level, or on the social and cultural levels, imperialist capital has been a long way from fulfilling in our countries the historical mission carried out by capital in the countries of accumulation.... The basis of national liberation ... is the inalienable right of every people to have their own history; and the aim of national liberation is to regain this right usurped by imperialism, that is to free the process of development of the national productive forces" [Cabral, 1980: pp.127,130].

As Third World peoples mobilised for national independence, the issue of the relationship between the class and national struggles became a central theoretical and practical question. Of particular importance was the issue of the role of the local capitalist class in the liberation struggle. In 1940, Mao Tse-Tung argued that the world had entered a new era in which the oppressed peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies assumed a key role. He believed that an anti-imperialist position was, by definition, anti-capitalist.
"No matter what class, parties or individuals in an oppressed nation join the revolution, and no matter whether they themselves are conscious of the point or understand it, so long as they oppose imperialism, their revolution becomes part of the proletarian-socialist world revolution and they become its allies" [Mao, 1954: pp.346-7].

At the same time, Mao argued that the national bourgeoisie was a weak and vacillating force with a dual character determined by its position between the proletariat and imperialism. For Chinese communists, this meant a "policy both of unity with the bourgeoisie and of struggle against it" [Mao, 1967: p.138]. He believed that the national bourgeoisie had both a good side and a bad side to their character, but by the use of "suitable educational methods", the Communist Party would be able to "carry the work of educating [the national bourgeoisie] and remoulding them", thereby taking care of their bad side [Mao, 1967: p.310].

Amilcar Cabral also wrestled with the dilemma of a successful liberation struggle needing to involve the petty bourgeoisie in an active, even leading, role. His solution was class suicide.

"In order to play completely the part that falls to it in the national liberation struggle, the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie must be capable of committing suicide as a class, to be restored to life in the condition of a revolutionary worker completely identified with the deepest aspirations of the people to which he belongs" [Cabral, 1980: p.136].

Like Mao, Cabral accepted that the task of keeping such elements faithful to the true principles of the liberation struggle was essentially a moral one. And like Mao and Castro, he believed that the key lay in the "development of revolutionary consciousness" [Ibid] within this class.

Success in the struggle against colonial rule did depend on the ability of a liberation movement to develop a truly national character. This entailed the blurring of class differences within the colony in order to achieve unity in the independence struggle. But this tendency to smooth over the differences between nationalism and socialism by adopting the term "revolutionary nationalism", which has attracted the label "Third Worldist", [Munck, 1986: p.152] almost always led to a post-
colonial situation where the masses of the people - farmers, workers and often significant sections of the petty bourgeoisie and the middle classes - were effectively excluded from any real political or economic power. Mella's remark made in the 1920s seemed to have been borne out.

"In their struggle against imperialism (the foreign thief), the bourgeoisies (the national thieves) unite with the proletariat, good cannon fodder. But they end up understanding that it is better to make an alliance with imperialism which, when all is said and done, pursues a similar interest. From progressives, they become reactionaries" [Mella, 1975: p.24].

2.5 Neo-Colonialism: The Anti-Climax

Having achieved formal political independence, most former colonies moved from a situation of classical colonialism to one of neo-colonialism; that is, they remained economically dependent on foreign capital and lacked any real control over their own national development. This neo-colonial relationship took the form of alliances between the political and economic elites of the former colonies and those of the major imperialist nations. "Development" replaced national independence as the first item on the agenda. As "developed" countries, themselves, the imperialist nations provided the development model, known as modernisation theory.

Modernisation theory held that development was a unilinear process of transition from tradition to modernity, the end-point of which was a mass consumption society. There were said to be a series of objective stages in this process, through which all countries would pass. Walt Rostow, whose most influential book was explicitly subtitled "A Non-Communist Manifesto" [Rostow, 1960], identified five such stages culminating in "take-off" into self-sustained economic growth. The late developing countries (those broadly known as the Third World) were seen to be in the fortunate position of being able to short-circuit the long development process the Western capitalist countries had to endure. All that was required was the injection of enough capital and the right technical advice. The principal threat to successful development, according to this model, would
be the non-rational clinging to any political, economic or cultural practices which were not part of the modernisation formula. Modernisation theory became the legitimating ideology for a massive increase in capitalist penetration of the newly-independent Third World states, and various forms of it remain influential today.

Ironically, the controllers of global capital and the guardians of some of the more dogmatic strains of Marxism find common ground in many of the assumptions of modernisation theory. As Seers has noted, they share

"a blind belief in the majestic civilizing role of modernisation, as the destroyer of archaic superstitions and ethnic loyalties. Urbanisation and industrialisation are inevitable and progressive - whatever their social and political cost" [Seers 1983: p.42].

In response to modernisation theory, Third World theorists (notably from Latin America, the original home of neo-colonialism) advanced dependency theory. Dependency theory held that, rather than developing all the areas it touches, capitalism was actually underdeveloping them. Drawing on Lenin's view of imperialism, they argued that the rapid economic growth of the leading capitalist countries was achieved at the cost of the underdevelopment of the colonised world. That is, underdevelopment was seen as a corollary of development, the outcome of the historic and continued extraction of wealth from the impoverished Third World by the industrialised West. Foreign investment was described by Sweezy as acting like a "giant pump for sucking surplus out of the underdeveloped countries" [Sweezy, 1967]. The result of this process was not an improvement in the living standards in the colonies but a serious decline, as can be seen in, for example, the frequency and severity of famine in India during the British occupation [see, for example, Bhatia, 1967].

It is, of course, absurd to think of former colonies ever "catching up" to the levels of economic activity achieved by the colonising powers. Former colonies do not have the economic benefit of themselves having colonial empires for the extraction of super profits. They do not even have the opportunity to develop their economy in a locally-determined way. Rather, the whole
development process of these colonies was retarded, with their economies shaped according to the needs of the colonial power.

Frank posited a centre-periphery theory of this process of underdevelopment. He argued that a hierarchy of exploitation existed which began at the metropolitan centres of the colonising powers and extended through an ever-expanding chain of exploitative metropolis-satellite relationships through nations, capital cities, regional centres and so on, right down to the landless labourer. He argued that profits were extracted upwards and inwards, developing some areas at the expense of others [Frank, 1971: p.95].

Much of dependency theory has now been rejected. Arguments like Frank's offered, at best, a description of the process of underdevelopment. They were static, though, and had little explanatory power. They did, nevertheless, embody a comprehensive rejection of modernisation theory's assumption of the progressive force that colonialism and neocolonialism represented in bringing capitalism to the world. As signalled in the above-cited comments from Cabral and Seers, the process of colonial exploitation is overwhelmingly seen by its victims as a negative force and an obstacle to genuine development, and even to the more narrow objective of economic growth.

This is a view that many Western Marxists have difficulty accepting. Nairn, for example, advances a diffusionist theory of nationalism which, although claiming to be Marxist, echoes conservative theories of development in its references to "the tidal wave of modernisation", which is "transmitted outwards and onwards" [Nairn, 1977: pp.96-99]. The notion of nationalism is also said to have been diffused from Europe; the product, therefore, not of exploitation and oppression, but of European enlightenment. Thus, according to Nairn's highly Eurocentric theory, the origins of nationalist struggle lie in the psychological envy and frustration on the part of élites in the peripheral countries who create a populist movement amongst the masses of their countrypeople in order to advance their own ends. As Blaut correctly comments, Nairn's theory of nationalism "owes more to Weberian theories of European rationality, along with more recent conservative theories of 'modernisation', than it does to any tradition in Marxism" [Blaut, 1987: p.79].
2.6 Beyond Lenin's Theory of Imperialism

Western Marxism has also tended to retain an uncritical acceptance of Lenin's theory of imperialism, even though the nature of the relationship between the imperialist powers and the subjugated nations had dramatically changed from what it was when Lenin advanced his theory. Lenin's argument was (in very broad terms) that the hostility between the imperialist powers emanated from competition over colonies. That was because colonial exploitation at that time depended on the colonising country holding state power in the colony, which it retained in order to ensure that its own capitalists had exclusive rights to its own colonies.

As this form of classical colonial rule gave way to a system of self-government, however, a new set of political relationships was required to continue the process of imperialist exploitation. As Steven [1991] has shown, the new neo-colonial arrangement was based on a global strategy of opening up the entire Third World for exploitation by capital from more than one imperialist country. For most of the post-war period, this new global regime has been maintained by the economically and militarily strongest member of the capitalist world, the United States. It is a form of imperialism for which Rowthorn has coined the term "US super-imperialism" [Rowthorn, 1975: p.158]. The US kept the world free for exploitation by forming alliances with Third World élites whereby, in return for continued US patronage, these local élites would ensure land, resources and cheap labour would be made available to foreign capital and potential unrest would be suppressed.

Super-imperialism through an all-powerful United States removed the imperative for war between imperialist powers. In its place was a drive to war against any potential threats to these neocolonial relationships. Sweezy and Magdoff argued that the two primary obstacles to total US domination were: first, the threat to Western global preeminence posed by the Soviet Union; and secondly, the "revolutionary initiative against capitalism which in Marx's day belonged to the proletariat of the advanced countries, (but which) has passed into the hands of the impoverished masses in the underdeveloped countries" [Baran and Sweezy, 1966: pp.9,183]. This period of US
super-imperialism was reflected militarily, the common pattern for war being one of Third World military dictatorships repressing popular movements with the direct and/or indirect support of the United States. And in tandem with (and also often underlying) these Third World-based "hot" wars was the continued escalation of the Cold War against the only serious opponent of the US-led imperialist bloc on a global scale, the Soviet Union.

Ernest Mandel correctly predicted the end of US domination of world capitalism. He saw factors such as the consolidation of European capital and increasing productivity in Japan as likely to lead to a real change in the balance of power [Mandel, 1969, 1970], a realignment which, clearly, has now come about and is a fundamental aspect of what has become known as the "New World Order". The rise of Japanese and European capital has coincided with faltering US productivity, and an inability of the US to sustain its role as lone-ranger, propping up every pro-imperialist dictator in the world.

There is broad agreement now that the current imperialist order is not one of super-imperialism. However, there are widely divergent views as to whether the modern tripolar imperialist world represents a heightening of conflict or of cooperation between imperialist countries. "Ultra-nonsense" is how Lenin branded Kautsky's theory of "ultra-imperialism" [Lenin, 1968: p.271]; the view that new cooperative relationships were forming between the imperialist powers. At that time, as the First World War was to prove, Lenin was undoubtedly right in his criticism of the Kautskian notion inter-imperialist cooperation. But current configurations among the imperialist powers indicates that the much-vaunted "new world order" is one of ultra-imperialism.

There is a very high level of economic interdependence between the United States, Japan and the European Community. Technical cooperation between the big powers is growing through high-level corporate mergers such as those between Ford and Mazda and between Chrysler and Mitsubishi. The Uruguay Round of the GATT talks, though laborious and sometimes involving conflict, are underlaid by a collective drive to break down any barriers to the free circulation of capital. The GATT is seen as essential to the establishment of a global regime of free trade, thereby avoiding the universally-feared alternative of the global economy degenerating into feuding
exclusive trade blocs.

In a discussion of the merits of the ultra-imperialism thesis in the 1970s, Barratt Brown stresses the extent to which the trans-national corporation has replaced the state as the new centre of capitalist power. Therefore, he concludes:

"It might be the companies and not the states which would initiate new forms of inter-capitalist unity, in order to preserve the stability and growth of the whole capitalist world economy" [Barratt Brown, 1974: p.325].

In fact, however, states play a key role in establishing the politico-military conditions for the new world order. With the collapse of the only serious rival to the capitalist imperialist camp (the Soviet Union), the imperialist nations under US leadership have been able to capture the powerful legitimating structures of the United Nations and present their own interests as though they were the expression of a global consensus. The clearest recent illustration of this uncontested alignment of imperialist interests was the war against Iraq.

2.7 Internal Colonialism

Before it is possible to analyse the position of the Kanak liberation struggle within this framework of imperialism, some discussion of the thesis of internal colonialism is required. Theories of internal colonialism or settlerism provide, either implicitly or explicitly, the theoretical basis for many attempts to analyse the exploitation and their liberation struggles of certain colonised peoples. What is seldom provided, however, is a clear framework for connecting such analyses to broader theories of imperialism.

Broadly speaking, what distinguishes internal colonialism from what might be termed "classical colonialism" is that the exploitation and domination of a people under internal colonialism, although taking a distinctly colonial form, occurs within the boundaries of a particular nation state,
rather than between an imperial metropolis which is spatially detached from the colony as in the classical model. Wolpe presents the argument thus:

"... the 'underdeveloped' (and 'underdeveloping') condition of subordinate ethnic and racial groups and the geographical areas they occupy within the boundaries of the state, is produced and maintained by the same mechanisms of cultural domination, political oppression and economic exploitation which, at the international level, produce the development of the advanced capitalist states through the imperialist underdevelopment of the colonial satellites." [Wolpe, 1975: p.229]

Before using Wolpe's description to discuss the nature of these mechanisms of domination, oppression and exploitation in any given country, it is essential to analyse the imperialist logic which underlies the phenomenon of internal colonialism. A key figure in a major wave of this form of imperialism (and one which has a direct bearing on the Pacific) was Edward Gibbon Wakefield.

Wakefield conceived of colonial settlement as a strategy for resolving the growing crisis in nineteenth century Britain. Britain was wracked with increasing economic polarisation and impoverishment of its working and middle classes. Marx was predicting class warfare and revolution as the likely product of this crisis. Chalmers argued that Britain should spend its way out of the crisis, while Smith, Ricardo and McCulloch were urging parsimony. "Neither class", wrote Wakefield, "admit the possibility of enlarging the field of employment for capital and labour, so as to permit, without injury to any one, and with benefit to all, for ages to come, the most rapid increase of people and capital" [Wakefield, 1835: p.253. Cited in Semmel, 1970: p.86]

Wakefield offered the British empire a way out. He argued that the answer lay not with tinkering on issues of distribution or production within Britain, but in overseas expansion. He urged Britain's leaders to "increase the field of production, (and to) lay hold of foreign fields, in proportion to the increase of capital and people in England" [Wakefield, 1834: p.79]. Colonisation was the only way for Britain to avoid the dissolution of its empire. Wakefield's prescription:
"Open new channels for the most productive employment of English capital. Let the English buy bread from every people that has bread to sell cheap. Make England for all that is produced by steam, the workshop of the world. If, after this, there be capital and people to spare, imitate the ancient Greeks; take a lesson from the Americans, wh, as their capital and population increase, find room for both by means of colonisation" [Wakefield, 1834: p.130.]

Wakefield's economic theory was based on a critique of Ricardian economics which, he believed, neglected the importance of land. Wakefield believed that the Ricardians had become carried away with the labour theory of value and obsessed by capital to the point where they refused to even admit land as an element of production. For Wakefield, land was the central in a strategy of "systematic colonisation". In the context of settler colonialism, Wakefield argued that food was the "chief object of production", and land the "chief element of production" [Wakefield, 1835: p.235].

Wakefield argued that, in agricultural capitalism, which he praised as producing the greatest surplus and promoting the greatest accumulation, land had a prior importance to both capital and labour. He believed that "the quantity of capital which can be employed in agriculture is limited in every society, by the quantity of land to which capital can be applied", and he argued that labour was valueless without such a field of employment and that its produce depended principally "upon the fertility or extent of that field" [Wakefield, 1835: pp. 235-6, 75-6, 81].

The mechanism for achieving "systematic colonisation" which became known as the "Wakefield principle" was for the colonising power to give land in the colony to a private colonising company. In return, that company would organise the programme of colonisation, financing it with the returns from the sale of lands it had been given. This formula would enable the colonial power to alleviate its domestic crisis by way of a colonisation programme financed through the realisation of the value of land; in Marxist terms, its rent value.

The centrality of land invariably leads to major confrontation. This is because the commodification
of land, whereby it becomes the exclusive private property of a particular individual, is a concept alien to most societies where this colonial settlement was to take place. Furthermore, these peoples' relationships with the land were complex and far-reaching, and largely non-negotiable. Land had economic value, of course, as it provided material sustenance. But it also had a deep political and cultural value as the central point of reference for kinship ties. This is why it is issues of land ownership, more than labour relations or other potential points of conflict, which have proved the most difficult to resolve between settler and indigenous populations. The strategy of "systematic colonisation" depends on obtaining vast amounts of land at little or no cost to the colonial power, while the defence of the political, economic and cultural integrity of the indigenous peoples requires that they retain their land.

The crucial ingredient for settler colonialism, from which internal colonialism evolves, is not so much the exploitation of cheap indigenous labour, but the expropriation of the land and resources of the indigenous population. Contrasting internal colonialism with slave society where the value of the slave can be realised only as long as the slave continues to be able to work, Steven argues:

"What is distinctive about settler racism ... is that the value of the indigenous people does not end when they die; it only begins. The indigenous people in fact have no value whatsoever: what is wanted from them is not their labour. What has value and what is wanted are their possessions, their lands and fisheries, and so the sole positive thing about them becomes available only when they cease to exist. The distinctive feature of settler colonialism is thus the drive to exterminate the indigenous people, that is, genocide."

[Steven, 1988: p.88]

Genocidal policies can be pursued through exterminatory practices. But this is not always the case. Altbach and Kelly accept the notion of internal colonialism as "the absorption of the colony into one nation-state, controlled by the coloniser." They argue that:

"As the coloniser expropriates more and more, the issue becomes eradication by the coloniser. In the modern world eradication may not entail genocide but rather obliteration
of nationhood through assimilation." [Kelly and Altbach, 1978: p.23]

Thus, they accept the notion that internal colonialism tends towards eradication, but they argue that, where this tendency is realised through the "obliteration of nationhood through assimilation", it does not constitute genocide. The denial of formal statehood to a colonised people does not in itself amount to genocide. However, the host of politico-military and socio-economic policies which a "successful" assimilation strategy requires, can be much more clearly seen as having a genocidal effect.

These issues will be discussed in more detail with regard to the colonial experience of the Kanak people. What is important to discuss at this point, however, is the theoretical question of the nature of the relationship between settler and indigenous populations once the period of formal colonial rule comes to and end. That is, in what ways, if any, is the colonial relationship transformed once political authority has been transferred from the colonial power to a settler government?

Cabral's shorthand definition of colonialism highlights the essential nature of the colonised/colonising relationship.

"Colonialism can be considered as the paralysis or deviation or even the halting of the history of one people in favour of the acceleration of the historical development of other peoples." [Cabral, 1980]

The focus is on who controls and determines the development process. In the classical colonial context, control is maintained within the metropolitan power where all politico-military and socio-economic decisions are made. Under neo-colonialism, this authority is exercised through unequal alliances between the imperialist powers and their junior political and business allies in the neo-colony. With internal colonialism, the original colonising power becomes much less important and eventually almost irrelevant to the colonial process. The settler society becomes the colonising force in its own right. It is settler policies and practices which paralyse, deviate or halt the
development of the indigenous population.

Wolpe's definition of internal colonialism (above) emphasised geographical separation within the country, thereby leaving the way open for his own counter-theory. The basis of his critique of the internal colonialism thesis is that it is often unclear which analysis of colonialism or imperialism people are adopting when they apply the theory. He argues that class relations, although alluded to, are actually treated as residual, leaving the internal colonialism thesis with the same analytical limitations of conventional race relations theory. The theory, according to Wolpe, lacks historical specificity and analytical utility. [Wolpe, 1975: p.230] His critique of theories of internal colonialism draws on broader criticisms he has about theories of colonialism and imperialism. He quotes Bettelheim's view of theories of "normal" colonialism.

"Because the concept of exploitation expresses a production relation - production of surplus labour and the expropriation of this by a social class - it necessarily relates to class relations (and a relation between 'countries' is not and cannot be a relation between classes)." [Bettelheim, 1972: p.301]

Wolpe claims that this argument, with only minor amendments, can be equally applied to the case of internal colonialism. [Wolpe, 1975: p.241] However, this line of argument amounts to little more than a dismissal of the notion of nation in the same way as Wolpe believes the internal colonialism thesis dismisses class.

Wolpe's attempt to conflate the internal colonialism thesis and conventional race relations theory is highly misleading. Race relations theory is essentially a branch of liberalism, and it provides no analytical or historical framework for explaining racial oppression or exploitation, or even for distinguishing between various forms of racial discrimination within a given society. The internal colonialism thesis, by contrast, can only exist within the context of a broader theory of imperialism. And by analysing the central role of land within the context of settler society, the internal colonialism thesis bears little resemblance at all to race relations theory. The theories of internal colonialism that Wolpe sets up for criticism are outmoded; with Casanova's study, for example,
predating even dependency theory by its acceptance of modernisation theory concepts such as the "take-off stage" [Casanova, 1965: p.28].

Unless opponents of theories of internal colonialism wish to deny the existence of any form of inter-national colonial domination, or deny the existence of such domination in the context of settler societies, they must be able to identify the point at which a particular colonial context lost its colonial character. The transferral of political power from the colonial metropolis to a settler authority made up of nationals of the colonising power who are resident in the colony would surely not suffice. All this would serve to do is to transfer the object of the indigenous peoples' struggle away from the metropolis and towards that new colonial authority. Since the cases of internal colonialism all originated from indisputably colonial contexts, the onus is on those who would deny that they remain colonial to identify the point at which they ceased to be so.

2.8 Articulation Theory

Wolpe makes no attempt to do this. His critique of the internal colonialism thesis appears to have been developed as a springboard for advancing his own theoretical preference. His view, which he develops principally as an explanation of the South African situation, is based on what has become known as articulation theory. It emerged as a neo-Marxist response to the analytical shortcomings of dependency theory. It is the antithesis of the "world systems" perspective as advanced by Amin, Wallerstein [1974] and, the specific target of Wolpe's critique, Laclau; the view that capitalist relations have "effectively and completely penetrated even the most apparently isolated sectors of the underdeveloped world" [Laclau, 1971: p.21].

Articulation (or "modes of production") theory holds that, rather than being totally subsumed within capitalism, subsistence-based pre-capitalist modes of production are often, where they can be of benefit to capitalism, maintained and articulated to the dominant capitalist mode. By providing a basic subsistence for the worker and his/her family, these pre-capitalist formations allow capitalists to pay less than the full value of the reproduction of their labour force. Wolpe
argues:
"... it is in part the very attempt to conserve and control the non-capitalist societies in the face of the tendency of capitalist development to disintegrate them and thereby to undermine the basis of exploitation, that accounts for political policies and ideologies which centre on cultural, ethnic, national and racial characteristics." [Wolpe, 1975: p.244]

In the case of South Africa, he argues,
"The ideological focus ... is always necessarily on the 'racial' or 'tribal' or 'national' elements, precisely because of the 'tribal' nature of what is being preserved and controlled." [Wolpe, 1975: p.249]

Articulation theory holds some heuristic appeal in the analysis of colonial societies which have adopted a reservation system of controlling the indigenous peoples, such as New Caledonia. However, one of its main weaknesses is its vague definition of what actually constitutes a mode of production, adn the extent to which one can empirically determine the limits of a non-capitalist mode of production, especially where it exists alongside (even within the same national borders as) a capitalist mode. Analyses of these kind tend to result in a multitude of modes of production being identified, with Wolpe claiming (without supplying any detail) that "the South African social formation is made up of several modes of production" [Wolpe, 1975: p.254].

Furthermore, articulation theory cannot stand as an alternative to the internal colonialism thesis. As Wolpe concedes in a footnote [1975: p.252], in some cases of internal colonialism, there has patently been no attempt to conserve any non-capitalist "modes of production" the indigenous population might have been operating. In fact, the tendency for settler colonies to adopt genocidal policies towards indigenous populations mitigates very strongly against such an arrangement, with both the assimilatory and exterminatory variants involving the destruction of economic base, as well as the political and cultural structures of the indigenous society.

By contrast, liberation ideologies have tended to be one dimensional.
"To break up the colonial world does not mean that after the frontiers have been abolished
lines of communication will be set up between the two zones. The destruction of the
colonial world is no more and no less than the abolition of one zone, its burial in the depths
of the earth or its expulsion from the country" [Fanon, 1967: p.31].

The victory Fanon envisaged for the national liberation movement is of the kind enjoyed by the
Cubans in defeating the US-backed Batista regime and the Vietnamese in ousting the French. He
refers to a colonial context in which an external colonising force is confronted by an indigenous
movement with diametrically opposed and incompatible interests and objectives. This can occur in
cases of classical colonialism where the colonising power has been to slow to anticipate popular
revolt and been unable to establish structures for post-independence neo-colonial control.

2.9 A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Liberation Theory

In situations where colonialism, whether through assimilation or eradication strategies, has
seriously weakened popular resistance for a prolonged period and a large settler population has
established itself over many generations, a national liberation struggle takes on different forms, and
may work towards a different objective from that outlined by Fanon. One important question, for
example, is the extent to which a new non-colonial relationship can be established between settler
and indigenous populations. Figure One is put forward as an attempt to conceptualise a less one-
dimensional approach to national liberation than that advanced by Fanon.
The colonial minimum and maximum points refer to the colonial power. The minimum or point of conquest, which must be reached in order to exercise colonial authority, involves establishing a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence and removing from the indigenous population the option of engaging in overt rebellion. Having achieved this, the colonial power is driven by the need to stabilise its authority by reaching a point where it has sufficient control over the colonised population that it no longer has to display its power of coercive violence. This is the point of hegemony, the colonial maximum. In order to achieve it, the colonial power must gain the participation of the colonised people in a system which does not uphold their own interests.

For the colonised people, the anti-colonial minimum is the point beyond which they cannot go without allowing the colonial power to establish hegemonic control. At this point, it becomes a question of their very survival. The struggle against colonial rule is oriented to reversing any move towards hegemony. This process would therefore involve, among other things, preventing the
colonial power from concealing the violent and coercive foundation of its authority.

These dimensions of the colonial struggle involve politico-military, economic and socio-cultural aspects, as Table One outlines.

**TABLE ONE: DEFINITIONS OF COLONIAL MINIMUMS AND MAXIMUMS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MINIMUM</th>
<th>MAXIMUM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Politico-Military</strong></td>
<td>Required to maintain colonial domination</td>
<td>Required to establish total hegemonic control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimation and control</td>
<td>- Colonised have no capacity for military resistance</td>
<td>- No colonial complexion to the use of state violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Coloniser has monopoly on legitimate use of force</td>
<td>- Colonised willingly collaborate in a political system which they have no control over and which upholds the interests of the coloniser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td>- Colonised is unable to control or disrupt colonial economy</td>
<td>- Division of colonised along class lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploitation</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Colonised's systems of production (capacity to sustain themselves) destroyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Colonised becomes dependent on economic system which exploits them and over which they have no control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-cultural</strong></td>
<td>- The imposition of a counter-indigenous ideology which sustains the repressive and exploitative colonial structures</td>
<td>- Colonised has no cultural identity other than that imposed by coloniser.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The model advanced by Fanon presents any movement towards sovereignty as achievable only through an equal and opposite defeat of the colonial system. However, to the extent that national liberation movements adopt more secessionist, or what are often labelled as "separatist", strategies such a zero sum equation is theoretically avoidable. In settler colonies and other instances where the odds against a national liberation movement achieving an outright defeat of the colonising power, such strategies are increasingly being adopted. Thus, the endpoint of the liberation struggle becomes a reversal of the effects of the colonisation process without necessarily hinging on the total destruction of that system itself.

In settler colonies, the destruction of the entire colonial system can only be achieved in practice through a revolutionary alliance between anti-colonial forces from both the settler and indigenous populations. Settler colonies are, by their very nature, founded on an interlocking system of class and national oppression. This system sustains itself by concealing the common interests of exploited workers and the colonised people. Thus, the survival of the ruling system in a settler colony depends on preventing the emergence of a popular movement based on a revolutionary ideology that transcends these apparent conflicts of interest between colonised people and the working class of the settler population.

The difficulty for a colonised people seeking to achieve national liberation is that those in the settler population who are most likely to perceive nationalist demands as a threat to their interests are precisely those with whom a revolutionary alliance must be made.
Chapter Three

Education and National Oppression

3.1 Introduction

The nature of the relationship between an education system and the society of which it is a part has long been a subject of debate. This debate is currently dominated by an assessment of the merits of what has become known as the "New Right" theory of education. This theory has been able to achieve dominance through its privileged access to policy formation in most Western capitalist societies. It emerged as a branch of a broader social theory which is based on a rejection of Keynesian economics and attendant welfare state policies, in favour of a neo-liberal approach. The power of this New Right programme has forced previous critics of the long-dominant liberal model of education to modify or even abandon their objections and rally to its defence.

The frantic state of this debate stands in sharp contrast to the almost moribund state of theories of colonial education. The theoretical tools which were developed to analyse colonial education remain largely unrefined from those which were in use two decades ago. This is despite the fact that contemporary anti-colonial struggles are taking place in contexts which are markedly different from those of the 1970s. Part of the reason for the underdevelopment of theories of colonial education can be found in the common assumption that colonial considerations with regard to education can be fully explained within analyses of broader issues in the sociology of education. In fact, some self-identified progressives are even talking about societies being "post-colonial".

This section aims to pick up and advance the stalled development of theories of colonial education. It will draw, in an unashamedly selective manner, from the theoretical insights of Bourdieu, Gramsci, Cabral and Freire. And it will develop perspectives outlined in the preceding discussion.
of imperialism and the national struggle in order to locate an analysis of colonial education within its wider context.

This section is presented in two parts. The first part begins by introducing a model of the functions of education which provides a mechanism for assessing the basic tasks of an education system. On the basis of this, a number of broad perspectives on the school/society relationship are introduced. The first of these is the liberal view which has dominated official policy over most of the post-war period. This is followed by reproduction theory, a radical critique of the liberal model, and resistance theory, a reaction to some of the more deterministic excesses of reproduction theory. Finally, new right educational theory is discussed, a view which emerged in association with neoliberal economic theory and has quickly assumed a dominant position in many societies.

The second part of this chapter focuses more specifically on the role of colonial education. It addresses some of the discontinuities between class and national oppression and focuses on the central role of culture in the colonial context. It draws on the work of Bourdieu, Gramsci, Cabral and Freire, and places some of their most useful insights into a broader context by connecting them with the overall analysis of imperialism developed in the preceding chapter. It represents, therefore, the culmination of the task of constructing a theoretical framework which is sophisticated enough to analyse colonial education in New Caledonia.

3.2 Theoretical Perspectives on the Relationship Between Education and Society

3.2.1 The Functions of Education

Before any evaluation of competing theories of education is possible, it is important to consider the overall tasks of an education system. These are represented in Figure Two as comprising two central points of reference - social imperatives and individual aspirations - which are mediated by
central points of reference - social imperatives and individual aspirations - which are mediated by the function of allocation.

**FIGURE TWO: THE FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATION.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Imperatives</th>
<th>Individual Aspirations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Realising Potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Social Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

The primary role of education is to ensure that the human capital of an education system is used effectively and that it serves the needs of the society. The social imperatives and individual aspirations must be balanced to achieve the optimal development of society.

The social imperatives are the needs of society as a whole. The economy requires the correct number of people with appropriate skills in the right fields in order to sustain satisfactory levels of development. Society also needs its individual members to be socialised into citizenship, with the beliefs, behaviour and values that are appropriate to social continuity. That is, the attitudes of individuals need to be moulded in such a way that they are prepared to accept in broad terms the social, political and economic rights and responsibilities of being a member of society.

The other types of demands that are made of an education system are those related directly to the expectations of individual members of the society. These are usually expressed in terms of facilitating the optimal development of each person's social and, particularly, intellectual faculties.

Individuals also look to education as providing an objective assessment of their worth, usually in the form of a qualification, which they can then use as a basis for obtaining social and financial rewards commensurate with their ability. Education is therefore looked to as a key agency of social mobility.

These individual and societal demands of an education system seldom sit easily with each other. An economic development strategy, for example, might require only a few highly-skilled and highly-paid people and a large pool of unemployed or low-paid workers. Or a political system might depend on a colonised people abandoning their belief in themselves as a separate people and becoming assimilated into the wider society.
This tension between an education system's capacity to fulfil both individual aspirations and social imperatives can never be resolved in favour of the former. However, a total neglect of individual aspirations would result in a crisis of legitimacy in education. Because of education's central role in legitimising the broader social order, such a breakdown has serious implications for the whole of society. The mediating factor which sustains legitimacy despite the contradiction between individual aspirations and social imperatives is allocation.

The primary task of allocation is to ensure that the human outputs of an education system correspond as closely as possible with social requirements. However, in working to achieve this continuity, the selection criteria applied to individuals must at least appear to be neutral and objective. When an education system is performing its allocation function effectively, individuals will believe that their levels of educational achievement reflect no more and no less than the result of their individual choices. That is, they will consider their educational achievement to be an objective measure of the extent to which they took advantage of the opportunities to develop their individual potentialities that were presented to them by the education system. Critical to their perception of this is the capacity of education to be able to generate a significant degree of social mobility.

Education systems in stratified societies which allocate social rewards solely on the basis of individual effort and ability are said to be meritocratic. The distribution of unequal rewards is justified on the basis of every individual having been given an equal opportunity to succeed. Thus, through allocation, individuals are led to personalise their educational achievement at the same time as they are being given skills and values required for social continuity.

It is because of this central mediating role of allocation that it has become the focus of so much attention in theories of the relationship between education and society. It must be remembered, however, that the allocation function of education operates within broader social parameters. As the tension between social imperatives and individual aspirations becomes more pronounced, it becomes more difficult for the allocation task of education to operate effectively and a crisis of
legitimacy is generated. This may occur, for example, as a result of an economic crisis which prevents any significant degree of social mobility. Or it may be the product of a political crisis in which significant numbers of people reject the notion of citizenship implicit in the education system.

This model highlights the need to analyse education within its political and economic context. It is this broader context which shapes the outputs of education, that is, the levels, types and distribution of skills and values. Where social inequalities are pronounced and particularly when they are growing more pronounced, the capacity of the education system to legitimise the political and economic system hinges on the extent to which it can gain popular consent for the way in which it allocates individuals to their position in society.

Thus, in order to mount a coherent critique of education or promote an alternative model one must advance an alternative theory of political and economic development. This involves extending one's analysis beyond an exclusive focus on the allocation function of education, and recognising the unique, but specific role allocation plays as a mediating factor between social imperatives and individual aspirations.

3.2.2 The Liberal Model of Education

The post-war commitments of Western capitalist societies to policies of free, universal and compulsory schooling were based on an adherence to liberal principles of the collectivist kind.

There was an assumption that society functions, or can be made to function, in such a way that there is no incompatibility between the interests of each individual member of society and the greater good. The state was looked to as a mechanism for tempering the worst excesses of the individualist model of liberalism that had generated such profound inequalities.

As Freedon has noted:
Liberalism was still concerned with the optimal expression and development of the individual but this was obtainable by reflecting the scientific and ethical truth that man could only realise himself in a community, rather than through a human organisation tending toward theoretical anarchy. A new trust emerged in social action via the state - not as a necessary evil but as the just and right way of attaining human ends [Freeden, 1978: p.257].

Education was seen as an essential element in achieving social equilibrium. The development functions of education were seen as unproblematic. They remained so throughout the economic boom period of the 1950s and 60s, until the oil shocks of the early 1970s. Of much more moment was the concern with establishing equity. Schooling was to achieve this by establishing a framework for the allocation of positions of social privilege according to non-ascriptive characteristics. Rapidly expanding social rewards were to become obtainable through educational success which would in turn be determined solely on the basis of individual merit, defined as ability plus effort.

3.2.3 Reproduction Theory and the Challenge to the Liberal Model of Education

It was the allocative function of education which became the focus of the first wave of critiques of the liberal model of education. Critics pointed out, for example, that equality of opportunity or "equal chances to become unequal" assumed the continuation of social inequality. Thus, as Entwistle has noted, the concept of equality of opportunity represents the advocacy of inequality masquerading as a species of equality [Entwistle, 1978: p.6]. By presenting an appearance of fairness through the ideology of meritocracy, it was argued that the education system was concealing structural inequalities and leading people to personalise their failure or success.

Empirical studies such as the oft-quoted Oxford Mobility Study provided compelling evidence that the social mobility promised by the liberal educational reforms of the post-war years had not
eventuated. Schools were shown to be failing in their stated aim of providing equality of educational opportunity.

The inability of schools to live up to the meritocratic myth with which they had been associated fuelled the emergence of a school of neomarxist educational theorists [see, for example, Bowles and Gintis, 1976]. They argued that capitalism required its fundamental social relations to be reproduced from one generation to the next and that this requirement was reflected in the operation of schooling. They argued, therefore, that as long as capitalism (or society based on stratification) remains, educational inequalities will persist. Therefore, society must undergo revolutionary and not reformist change if education is ever to perform any function other than reproducing class inequalities. This view has become known as Reproduction Theory.

The theoretical starting point for this perspective is Marx's view that education is part of the superstructure serving to reproduce both the labour power necessary for capitalist economic production, and the ruling ideas or dominant ideology necessary for capitalist political control. Reproduction theorists point to Marx's argument that capitalist production "produces not only commodities, not only surplus value, but it also produces and reproduces the capitalist relation, on the one side of the capitalist, on the other the wage labourer." [Marx, 1969: p.532]

Thus, there is a recognition within Reproduction Theory that the way in which the education system performs its allocative function is strongly influenced by the demands of the system's citizenship and development functions. However, reproduction theory offers little hope for challenging those functions. It documents the fact that the knowledge and values imparted through the education system serve to fit people into their respective classes; discipline and obedience for the working class, autonomy and authority for the ruling class.

3.2.4 Resistance Theory: A Critique of Reproduction Theory

In recent years, however, challenges have been levelled against the deterministic way in which
Marx's educational theory has been interpreted and applied. It has been argued further that to reduce the relationship between a society's education system and its economic base to one in which the former is mechanistically determined by the latter, prevents one from seeing the important ways in which education impacts on society. Reproduction theorists are said to be too pessimistic and people have questioned the confines of the theory's rigid structuralism. This restricted view, it is argued, denies the important role of human agency within the education system and offers no scope for action on the part of progressive educationalists. "In the final analysis," writes Aronowitz, "human praxis is not determined by its preconditions; only the boundaries of possibility are given in advance." [Aronowitz, 1977: pp.126-146. Cited in Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: p.72]

Critics have mounted an alternative perspective which has become known as resistance theory. Resistance theorists argue that education is an important arena for battles between competing interests, the outcomes of which are not, as reproduction theory would have it, foregone conclusions. They argued that the emphasis should be on conflict, struggle and resistance. [Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: p.71]

Resistance theorists maintain that the reproductive aspects of education are never complete, that there are always partially-realised elements of opposition. [Willis, 1981] They point out that the dominant ideology as advanced in schools, the media, the workplace and other arenas, is not uniform and all encompassing. It embodies contradictory elements. Studies of working class communities in Britain and the US reveal cultures with many oppositional elements which lead working class children not to passively imbibe the ruling ideology, but to resist it in a variety of ways.

There are, resistance theory concedes, limitations to this resistance. Often, those with the clearest analysis of injustice in society and in school "resist" that process by dropping out, thereby removing themselves from a context in which they might challenge that injustice and possibly prejudicing their chances of acquiring analytical skills which would enhance their capacity to mount such a challenge.
Despite its insights, there are also many weaknesses to be found within resistance theory. It appears, for example, to be too quick to dismiss reproduction theorists' critique of the liberal model of education. Reproduction theorists have made the point that by failing to cite grounds for being less pessimistic about education, resistance theorists have not substantiated their charge of excessive pessimism against reproduction theory. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that resistance theory has simply replaced an overemphasis on structure with an overemphasis on agency. What is required is a means of transcending the agency-structure dichotomy. This can only be achieved by way of a more thorough analysis of the dialectical relationship between social structures and human agency.

Much of the literature on resistance theory is devoted to discussions such as how to determine whether particular oppositional behaviour constitutes genuine resistance, and the extent to which resistance can occur even in the absence of any outwardly oppositional behaviour. [See, for example, Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: pp.96-104] This tends to lead towards an emphasis on merely describing and categorising behaviours.

Aronowitz and Giroux argue that "all forms of oppositional behaviour represent a focal point for critical analysis and should be analysed to see if they represent a form of resistance by uncovering their emancipatory interests" [Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: p.106]. The theoretical construct of resistance, they argue, "must be viewed from a theoretical starting point that links the display of behaviour to the interest it embodies, going beyond the immediacy of behaviour to the interest that underlies its often hidden logic, a logic that must also be interpreted through the historical and cultural mediations that shape it" [Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: p.107].

By failing to provide the necessary theoretical starting point, however, resistance theory amounts to little more than a methodological guideline. As such, it is of value. For analysis of ostensible acts of resistance in education, as in any arena of struggle, provides a useful means of discovering important dynamics of oppression which underlie educational institutions. However, to simply redefine particular behaviour as resistance can serve to create unrealistic levels of optimism, generating an illusion that the repressive aspects of education are under siege and being seriously
undermined by concerted popular resistance.

Spontaneous acts of resistance, especially where they occur on a mass scale, can have a positive and lasting impact. Ultimately, however, resistance needs to be organised and deliberate if it is to succeed. Resistance theory can only be of value if it forms part of a broader approach which can guide strategies of effective resistance. Educational resistance can only be effective when it is connected to a broader strategy for social change. What such a strategy entails is a full review of the citizenship and development functions of education.

3.2.5 New Right: Neo-Meritocratic Educational Theory

One of the most evident and objectionable dimensions to New Right educational theory is its reassertion of the virtues of meritocracy; its promotion of a form of neo-meritocracy. However, as long as scrutiny is restricted to its treatment of education's allocative function, the real power of the New Right educational programme remains concealed. In addition to and more fundamentally than the previously-noted point about privileged access to decision-making, the power of the New Right programme emanates from its explicit treatment of the citizenship and, especially, the development functions of education.

The liberal education theory which has been largely displaced by the New Right had a determined focus on the allocative function of education with its self-imposed mission to eliminate educational inequalities. This was paralleled by social policy based on Keynesian economic theories which postulated welfare-state solutions to social inequalities. Liberal education theory rests on the view that, within the context of a capitalist society, a meritocracy needs to be actively constructed. Just as in economic matters, some forms of intervention like welfare payments are required to counterbalance the worst excesses of the market, so too some educational intervention is needed to prevent massive inequalities from emerging. It is acknowledged that, without state intervention on their behalf, certain groups in society will disproportionately underperform in education; such
an outcome not being a genuinely meritocratic one.

New Right educational theory seeks to resolve the thorny question of educational inequalities by making a virtue of necessity. Education systems, by this view, should be designed to promote "excellence", not "mediocrity". The only long-term solution for underachieving groups is for them to compete more effectively with achievers. Concessions given to groups which underachieve in education are seen in the same light as similar concessions to economically underprivileged groups; that is, they reinforce substandard levels of performance. Attempts to enforce equality are said to stifle competition, and competition is deemed to be necessary, if not sufficient, for high levels of achievement. Furthermore, such levelling policies do not result in a truly meritocratic system, because with social factors being taken into consideration, individual merit is no longer the sole basis for selection.

The New Right argument is based on an assumption that true meritocracy is achievable only through a truly free market - both economically and educationally. The state should do no more than provide a neutral educational environment for such competition to take place. Thus, rather than constructing meritocracy through interventionist methods, there is an assumption that meritocracy is a natural condition which interventions, almost by definition, serve to stifle.

The New Right's neo-meritocratic argument is sustained on the grounds that it brings education's allocative function into a position of more direct correspondence (as opposed to what it saw as the inherent antagonism of the liberal approach) with its developmental function. The explicitly-stated developmental function being promoted by the New Right is to prepare people for a deregulated national economy which is highly integrated into a deregulated global economy. Neoliberal economic theory is the given, and educational policy must be reformed in such a way that it corresponds as closely as possible with that given. It is only on the basis of a thorough critique of the New Right reformulation of this developmental function of education that opposition to their programme can be sustained.
3.3 Education as Cultural Imperialism

The above discussion dealt, in general terms, with explanations of educational inequalities. In this section, I make a more explicit connection between educational policy and practice and national oppression. To this end, and drawing in part on the preceding analysis of imperialism, I will develop a theory of education as cultural imperialism. My choice of terminology places me under an obligation to begin by clarifying my position regarding the term's previous uses, in particular those of Galtung and Carnoy.

"Cultural imperialism" was first coined by Galtung as part of his "structural theory of imperialism" [Galtung, 1971]. Galtung's theory amounted to an elaborate description of centre-periphery relationships based on structured imbalances of power which operated at both inter- and intra-national levels. It was a highly-influential contribution to the dynamic emergence of the school of dependency theory. In Galtung's theory of imperialism, he identified three criteria, two mechanisms, five types and three phases. Cultural imperialism was said to be one of the five types of imperialism, distinguishable according to the type of exchange between centre and periphery nation. The other four types were economic, political, military and communication, and Galtung claimed to have, "no theory that one is more basic than the others, or precedes the others. Rather, this is like a Pentagon or a Soviet Star: imperialism can start from any corner." [Galtung, 1971: p.91]

Galtung is less than expansive on what he actually understands the notion of cultural imperialism to mean. He refers to the "brain drain" and the flow of information from the periphery to the centre. But his main focus is on the division of labour (vertical integration being the most basic of the two "mechanisms of imperialism" he refers to), not so much in the method of transmitting knowledge from teacher to learner, but rather in "the location of the teachers and of the learners, in a broader setting". Galtung writes:

"If the Centre always provides the teachers and the definition of that worthy of being
taught (from the gospels of Christianity to the gospels of Technology), and the Periphery always provides the learners, then there is a pattern which smacks of imperialism" [Galtung, 1971: p.93]

Galtung's notion of cultural imperialism is as static as the theory of imperialism of which it is a part. Locked into a descriptive mode when an analytic mode is required, Galtung's concept amounts to little more than documenting inequalities in the control of knowledge and technology between centre and periphery. What is needed from a theory of cultural imperialism is an analysis of the interaction between aspects of culture and imperialist domination.

Carnoy comes closer to this. However, he too offers little clarification of what he means by "education as cultural imperialism" despite this being the title of his book. [Carnoy, 1974] He comes closest where he refers to "cultural alienation" and "cultural dependency". Cultural dependency is referred to along with economic and political dependence as one dimension of the broader post-independence relationship of neocolonial dependence. "Changes in the metropole economy and culture", he writes, "are transmitted to the dependent group through the schools and other institutions." [Carnoy, 1974: p.17] Further, Carnoy notes that this condition, which includes dependence on technology, concepts and art forms, "severely limits the possibility of new forms of institutional development emerging". This is presumably a result of the related, and equally loosely defined, concept of "cultural alienation" which is said to manifest itself in the need to copy everything, including "desired values and norms", from the metropole and not from local experience. [Carnoy, 1974: p.55]

Like Galtung, Carnoy expresses himself entirely from within the limited confines of dependency theory. However, his work has an even more basic limitation than this. By maintaining, for example, that white working class Americans have essentially the same relationships to schools as do people living under classical colonialism, Carnoy has effectively equated colonisation with the institutionalisation of educational inequalities. This results in a total collapse of the notion of colonialism as nation-to-nation dominance, as evidenced by such declarations as:
"schools are able to legitimate grossly unequal access to goods and services in a capitalist society by colonizing children and their families to believe in the brand of 'meritocracy' implemented by the schools" [Carnoy, 1974: p.364].

3.3.1 Differences Between Class and National Oppression in Education

Altbach and Kelly are right to take issue with this view. "Colonialism and the inequalities that are born out of nation-to-nation dominance", they argue, "are substantially different from those that arise from inequalities related to sex, race and class." [Altbach and Kelly, 1978: p.27] The essence of their argument is that, although the allocative function of schooling has an oppressive effect with regard to each of the stated types of inequality, what makes this process different when it occurs within a nation, as opposed to between nations, is that the allocation takes place "within the existing social fabric" [Ibid].

Altbach and Kelly maintain that colonial schooling generates a fundamental discontinuity. They argue that, in the colonial context, the institution of schooling is alien to the society and culture of the colonised. It serves to prepare a new social place for them outside the structure of indigenous culture. This social place is a new creation, differing from both metropoliatan society and the indigenous society from which the colonised people came. This act of rupture, whether perpetrated purposely or unwittingly, marks out colonial schooling from, for example, the schooling of the working class which is designed to ensure children return to their social origins. [Altbach and Kelly, 1978: p.4]

Although Altbach and Kelly also fail to move beyond the framework of dependency theory, this thesis agrees with their view that discussions of inequalities which are dominated by class considerations will never get to the core of national oppression. While national oppression needs to be understood in the context of capitalist imperialism, it cannot be explained entirely through an analysis of capitalism. One of the most obvious differences between class and national oppression can be seen in an analysis of the allocative function of schooling, an aspect of education which is
often presented (as Carnoy does) as a continuity between oppressed classes and national groups because both are victims of the unfulfilled promise of social mobility. There is, however, an instructive difference between the structured failure of national groups and that of social classes.

Structured systems of class exploitation can tolerate a higher degree of social mobility than can systems of national oppression. As long as the social relations of production are reproduced, it matters little to the smooth functioning of a class society which class the privileged class is recruited from. Capitalism has little to gain from restricting social mobility. In fact, it could be argued that the more heterogeneous the social class backgrounds of the ruling class, the more stable the system of class oppression.

Capitalism demands that most working class people remain in the working class. As Willis (among others) notes, "Individual working class kids may succeed in education - never the whole class" [Willis, 1983: p.129]. But a fundamental reason for this high rate of failure and the class reproduction it services, is sheer weight of numbers. Only a very limited number of people can make up the privileged classes which are, almost by definition, minority classes. There simply is not room for any more than a very small percentage of the working classes to join them, whether or not this upward mobility involves the displacement of those who were already part of the privileged classes.

Bourdieu attempts to avoid this bind by pointing to education's role in not only the "technical" dimension, involving the reproduction of skilled labour power, but also the "social" side of reproduction, reproducing "the positions of the agents and their groups within the social structure". In so doing, argues Bourdieu, "the educational system depends less directly on the demands of the production system than on the demands of reproducing the family group." [Bourdieu and Botanski, 1981: p.142-3]

His view of how this reproduction of the family group occurs is outlined below. The point that needs to be made here though is that in a non-colonial context, the cultural divide which separates the classes is based on what is essentially one culture; the ruling class possessing a more elaborate
and sophisticated version, while the lower classes struggle with what Bourdieu considers to be
cruder and inferior versions. He applies the label "populist illusion" to "the demand that the
parallel cultures of the disadvantaged classes should be given the status of the culture taught by the
school system" [Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979: p.72].

In a colonial relationship, there is no continuity between the culture of the colonised and that of the
coloniser. Thus, to accept that the culture of schooling be based on the culture of the coloniser or
some variant of it demands the total subjugation of the indigenous culture. This is precisely the
imperative which drives national oppression. Bourdieu's views were developed in the context of
an analysis of class oppression, make no claims to universality and were certainly not developed in
defence of colonialism. However, they do highlight the difficulty in attempting to transfer class
analyses of education to a national context.

In class societies which incorporate no national struggles there is no pre-existing, integrated
society and culture which stands in opposition to the need for one class to impose its interests on
the rest of the society. In systems of national oppression, by contrast, there is an imperative that
the colonised people and social organisation be systematically undermined. Stable colonial rule
requires that colonised peoples be convinced that their precolonial societies were inferior to their
colonised situation. This, in turn, requires that the colonial situation be seen by the colonised as
embodying the prospect of a considerable improvement in their condition of life. Thus even when
colonial rule assumes overtly unfair dimensions, it is through its promise of long-term
improvement, a prospect often referred to as "development", that it attempts to retain the
complicity of the colonised.

The authority for the coloniser to dictate the entire educational experience of the colonised is
derived from the powerful assumption that the coloniser is the guardian of all knowledge and the
the colonised can obtain such knowledge only through the coloniser. This hierarchy of knowledge
is a fundamental element in the relationship between the colonised and coloniser. From the first
point of contact, education is seen to be the difference between the two peoples. The military,
technological and economic gaps which underscore the colonial relationship are, in themselves,
reducible to an educational gap. That is, for indigenous populations to obtain the wherewithal to bridge this gap and be able to attain and sustain levels of development comparable to those of the coloniser, requires an essentially cooperative relationship with the colonisers. Outright resistance may force the coloniser from one's shores. However, this course of action would condemn the colonised (or rather, the non-colonised) to remain ignorant of advanced knowledge and technologies. Schooling is thus presented as necessary if the colonised are ever to become acquainted with the means by which the European became so powerful.

It follows easily from this view that it is logical for the coloniser, the educational expert, to dictate every aspect of schooling - content, process, assessment and outcomes. Such an imbalance of power is assumed within the colonial ideology that presents schooling as a process whereby the backward (the colonised) are bestowed with the knowledge of the advanced (the coloniser). A fundamental element of this control is the redefinition by the colonial power of the development and citizenship functions of education.

Colonial education can thus be seen to be a form of cultural imperialism because of its distinct role in helping to impose and maintain colonial rule. It is a social structure which dominates human agency while masquerading as a promoter of individual choice. It demands compliance and subservience on the part of the colonised population by providing a compelling reason for them to comply with the roles they are allocated within the colonial system. It helps to conceal a relationship of dominance and exploitation beneath a veneer of meritocracy. The underachievement which is endemic in colonial education is very readily internalised and personalised because it takes place within the framework of what is presented as benevolent tutelage on the part of the coloniser, leading colonised peoples towards civilisation and modernity.

Within this ideological framework, colonial powers do not concede defeat to anti-colonial struggles. Rather, such developments are couched in terms of the colonised having successfully acquired from them the coloniser that which is necessary for them to bring themselves forward into modernity without the need for further tutelage. As Blaut has noted:

"Independence was not, therefore a fruit of struggle. It was a graduation ceremony."
3.3.2 Bourdieu and Cultural Reproduction

In an analysis of mainly neocolonial relationships, Coombs, a former US Secretary of State, has described international relations based on education and culture as the "fourth dimension" of foreign policy. [Coombs, 1964] Education can only ever be one part of a colonial strategy; military, political and economic domination are also clearly necessary. However, these forces alone are not sufficient because they do not address squarely enough the issue of indigenous culture. Education has a unique capacity to undermine and weaken a colonised society whilst posing as a force for liberating that society. It is able to do this by targeting culture.

One of the most advanced theories of education and culture is that developed by Bourdieu. Seeking to explain the extremely limited social mobility afforded by the French education system, Bourdieu stresses culture as the prime mediating factor in the reproduction of class societies, a theory of reproduction which breaks the tendency towards determinism normally associated with that school. Key to Bourdieu's theory is his notion of *habitus*, which he defines as "a system of durable, transposable dispositions which functions as the generative basis of structured, objectively unified practices." [Bourdieu, 1979: p.vii] By postulating *habitus* as a set of dispositions or tendencies, Bourdieu attempts to include within his theory a genuine consideration of both agency and structure. He also aims, as Mahar et al note, to use the notion of *habitus* as a way of "transforming theoretical classes into real groups" [Mahar et al, 1990: p.10].

His theory, or rather his method of analysing society, consists of conceiving of people and groups of people as players in a variety of relatively autonomous fields, one of which is education. They are constricted by the rules of the game which is underway in any field (a form of structural limitation), and at the same time through their practice they are engaged in a continuous reshaping of those rules (actions of human agency).
In the education field, argues Bourdieu, people's capacity to perform is largely a function of the amount of "cultural capital" they possess, that is, the extent to which there exists a continuity between the rules by which the field of education operates and the dispositions (or *habitus*) which people bring with them from their family origins. Just as economic systems function to favour those with economic capital, so too, argues Bourdieu, educational systems function to favour those who possess cultural capital.

Bourdieu argues that the cultural heritage of the privileged classes consists of a mastery of language which is both fluent and appropriate. He says that people not born into the dominant culture who attempt to acquire it through hard work in an education system betray their origins by an unconcealably pedantic display of the dominant culture. Thus the *habitus* of the dominant group is, in its purest form, attainable only through one's family.

"What is learnt through immersion in a world in which legitimate culture is as natural as the air one breathes is a sense of the legitimate choice so sure of itself that it convinces by the sheer manner of the performance, like a successful bluff." [Bourdieu, 1984: pp.91-2]

He argues that factors such as an attitude to work and educational aspirations are covertly recognised and rewarded in educational institutions, despite outward appearances of equitability. These socially-conditioned aptitudes provide clear and exclusive congruencies for children from the privileged classes between home and school environments.

"The culture of the elite is so near that of the school that children from the lower middle class (and *a fortiori* from the agricultural and industrial working class) can acquire only with great effort something which is *given* to the children of the cultivated classes - style, taste, wit - in short, those attitudes and aptitudes which seem natural in members of the cultivated classes and naturally expected of them precisely because (in the ethnological sense) they are the *culture* of that class." [Bourdieu, 1974: p.39]

Bourdieu further postulated that the legitimation of schooling requires the imposition of an
"ideology of giftedness". That is, social attributes must be accepted, both by those who possess them and those who do not, as natural gifts.

"By awarding allegedly impartial qualifications (which are also largely accepted as such) for socially conditioned aptitudes which it treats as unequal 'gifts', it [the school] transforms de facto inequalities into de jure ones and economic and social differences into distinctions of quality, and legitimates the transmission of the cultural heritage." [Bourdieu, 1974: p.42]

He believes that the ideology of giftedness is the cornerstone of the whole educational and social system. This is because it not only enables the élite to justify being what it is, but also

"... helps to enclose the underprivileged classes in the roles which society has given them by making them see as natural ability things which are only a result of an inferior social status, and by persuading them that they owe their social fate ... to their individual nature and their lack of gifts." [Bourdieu, 1974: p.42]

Within colonial education, however, the individualisation of failure is only possible after a collectivisation of failure has already been achieved. The success of this prior stage of collectivising failure in colonial education involves, as has been noted, a hijack by the coloniser of the authority to define the citizenship and development functions of education. It is only on the basis of a full redefinition of these functions in favour of colonial interests that colonial education can operate on the more advanced and sophisticated level of individualising failure.

Bourdieu's analysis of the intricacies of culture and the way in which they underlie the allocation function of schooling is, in brief, too fine-grained to be of much use in exposing the primary workings of colonial education. Culture is central to the way in which colonial schooling enhances imperialist interests. And there are subtleties in the way in which cultural domination is achieved. However, as noted above, the starting point for colonial education and the form of domination of which it is a part are different in significant ways from those of education in a non-colonial context.
3.3.3 Gramsci: Hegemony and the Role of Culture

Like Bourdieu, Gramsci's work was elaborated as an analysis not of colonialism, but of advanced (at the time) capitalist society. However, his insightful analyses of both the reciprocity between base and superstructure and, in particular, of the role of culture are instructive in analysing colonial relations. Gramsci argued that the relationship between nations where one usurps the sovereignty of another, "is not purely military, but politico-military; and, in fact, such a type of oppression would be inexplicable without a state of social disintegration among the oppressed people and the passivity of the majority; because of this, independence cannot be achieved with purely military force, but with military and politico-military forces". [Gramsci, 1957: p.171]

Gramsci insists that the power of a ruling class depends not only on its economic or physical power but also on its ability to persuade the ruled to accept its belief system and to share its social, cultural and moral values. The unconscious acceptance of an oppressive system by the people who are oppressed by that system is a form of total control which Gramsci refers to as hegemony. Like other ideological institutions such as churches and the media, education is an important mechanism for gaining this consent. A modern state is in crisis, Gramsci argued, when its hegemony can no longer be sustained and it must employ direct physical coercion, that is, when the ruling class is "stripped of its spiritual prestige and power" and reduced to its "economic-corporate" existence. [Hoare and Nowell-Smith, 1971: p.429]

The real value of Gramsci's analysis is that it provides a basis of hope by identifying a key aspect of a successful liberation struggle. A central task of the liberation struggle, argues Gramsci, is to create a counter-hegemonic world view or, as he termed it, a new "integrated culture" [see Gramsci, 1985: Chapter 6]

Bolstered by the hard evidence of its own technological and military superiority, the colonial power is able to overwhelm the world view of the colonised people. Colonial education is
designed to prevent the emergence of a counter-hegemonic world view amongst the colonised. It must ensure that the aspirations of the colonised people are always contained within a world view which legitimises and advances the interests of the colonial power. Given the economic and political domination and control which is an integral part of the colonial relationship, it is inherently difficult for colonised people to develop a truly counter-hegemonic view. It is particularly difficult to develop such an alternative within the context of colonial schooling.

Colonial control of education is predicated upon the colonial power having a monopoly over the right to define and control the "development" of the colonised. The colonial power is able to undermine popular resistance by concealing as natural its practice of translating its political, economic and cultural domination into a capacity to dictate the citizenship and development functions of education. The significance of Gramsci's view of the need for a counter-hegemonic world view is that it points to the need for a strategy based on more than piece-meal reforms of colonial schooling in order to overcome, for example, low achievement rates amongst the colonised people. What is required is a concerted effort at every level to recast the political, economic and cultural organisation of the society.

3.3.4 Cabral: Culture and the National Liberation Struggle

Cabral's theory of culture is explicitly developed as part of his theory of imperialism. He considers culture to be at the centre of the colonisation and decolonisation process. Like Gramsci, Cabral argues that, whatever the material aspects of foreign domination, "it can be maintained only by the permanent and organised repression of the cultural life of the people concerned". [Cabral, 1980: pp.139-140] This, he believes, is because as long as the cultural life of the colonised people remains intact, the colonial power cannot be sure of its perpetuation. Thus, he argues, the ideal for any form of foreign domination lies in two alternatives:
"... either to eliminate practically all the population of the dominated country, thereby excluding the possibilities of of a cultural resistance; or to succeed in imposing itself without damage to the culture of the dominated people, that is to harmonise economic and political domination of these people with their cultural personality." [Cabral, 1980: p.140]

The former option amounts to genocide. The latter option Cabral believes, has never been nor could ever be realised. It is not possible in his view to harmonise the economic and political domination of a people with the preservation of their cultural personality. This is because culture has an organic connection with, and can even be described as the result of, economic and political activities. It is, he argues,

"the more or less dynamic expression of the type of relations prevailing within that society, on the one hand between man (considered individually or collectively) and nature, and, on the other hand, among individuals, groups of individuals, social strata or classes." [Cabral, 1980: p.141]

Ill-fated imperialist attempts to resolve this dilemma usually involve the construction of crude, racist theories which, when applied through strategies such as assimilation, amount to "a permanent state of siege for the indigenous populations". [Cabral, 1980: p.140] He points to the need for a national liberation movement to defend the cultural personality of the colonised population by working out and implementing a strategy of social advancement, an aspect of the liberation struggle which he calls cultural resistance. In his reference to the role of culture in a national liberation struggle, Cabral is not referring to something distinct from political and economic factors, but to something which is "the vigorous manifestation, on the ideological or idealist level, of the material and historical reality of the society that is dominated" [Cabral, 1980: p.141]. Cabral considers national liberation, and even the armed liberation struggle, to be both cultural facts and factors of culture. [Cabral, 1980: pp.143,153]

Cabral perceived colonialism, as noted previously, as acceleration of the historical development of one people (the coloniser) at the expense of the distortion or arrest of the historical development
of another (the colonised). Thus, he saw national liberation struggle in terms of a people regaining its historical personality through the destruction of imperialist domination. [Cabral, 1980: p.130]

Although he did not develop a theory of colonial education in any detail (presumably because it was virtually unheard of in Portuguese West Africa where there was almost total illiteracy amongst the colonised peoples), Cabral's view of the role culture and cultural resistance in colonialism and national liberation is highly instructive for any attempt to analyse colonial education. The connection he draws between culture and political and economic domination draws immediate attention to the preeminence of the citizenship and development functions in colonial education, both as mechanisms for undermining the colonised people and reinforcing colonial rule, and as vital dimensions to a strategy of cultural resistance which must be an integral part of any successful liberation struggle.

3.3.5 Freire and Cultural Invasion

Freire cited Cabral's "extraordinary perceptions" and Gramsci's "keen insights" into the importance of culture in oppression and liberation as primary sources of inspiration for him. [Freire, 1985: p.182] Through his analysis of pedagogy, Freire has clarified not only the inherently political nature of education, but also the inherently educational nature of politics. The most widely discussed dimension to Freire's work is the distinction he draws between two types of educational process: education for domestication, the banking or nutritionist model, in which the teacher transfers knowledge to the passively receptive pupil; and education for liberation, a problem-posing, dialogical approach in which the educator stimulates the learner to unmask his/her oppressive social reality. [Freire, 1972: ch.2]

Freire believes that, regardless of content, the domestication model of education prevents people from developing critical consciousness by reinforcing their "political illiteracy". [Freire, 1985: p.104] The oppressed cannot be liberated by others, only by themselves. But their capacity to do so is undermined when they are taught, as in transference models of education, that they know
nothing until they receive knowledge from one who does know.

Like Gramsci, Freire argues that all people are intellectuals, in that they constantly interpret and analyse their world. [Freire, 1985: p.xxiii] Liberating education validates the experiential knowledge the oppressed have of their own oppression, by basing itself upon the interrogation of the cultural capital of the oppressed. Thus, the role of the educator is not "to fabricate the liberating idea but to invite the people to grasp with their minds the truth of their reality". [Freire, 1985 p.85]

As with Bourdieu, it is not immediately obvious with Freire where he defines the line between theory and method. Again like Bourdieu, he considers the two inextricably linked. However, without an explicit theoretical content to his notion of dialogical action in education, it has been possible for practitioners to ignore oppressive realities and focus entirely on method and process. Dialogical education in the true Freirean sense involves a commitment to and connection with a broader revolutionary struggle for liberation. Thus, simply applying techniques designed to minimise or even demolish the hierarchy between teacher and learner is not, in itself, sufficient.

Freire views all struggle for liberation as inherently educational because it is the only genuine basis for realising the personal function of education. Without liberation, no member of the oppressed group (or the oppressor group) can hope to realise their full potential as education purportedly enables them to do. Truly liberating education can only be put into practice outside the ordinary system, since only the "innocent" could think that a power elite would permit education that "denounces them even more clearly than do all the contradictions of their power structures". [Freire, 1985: p.125]

One of Freire's most insightful notions is that of cultural invasion. Although he considers it to be equally appropriate in both class and national oppression, for the purposes of this thesis it will be discussed in terms of national oppression. It is a process whereby the revolutionary potential of the colonised people is undermined by making them resigned to being domninated or, ideally, active collaborators in their own oppression. The indigenous population loses its sense of its own cultural
authenticity and begins to respond to the values, the standards and the goals of the invaders.

"In cultural invasion, it is essential that those who are invaded come to see their reality with the outlook of the invaders rather than their own; for the more they mimic the invaders, the more stable the position of the latter becomes. For cultural invasion to succeed, it is essential that those invaded become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority." [Freire, 1972: p.151]

3.4 Conclusion. Education as an Arena for Liberation Struggle

This chapter had the essentially instrumental objective of providing a theoretical framework for analysing colonial education in New Caledonia. It is acknowledged that elements of contradiction can be found between some of the theories advanced in the above discussion. It is beyond the scope of this study to attempt a coherent fusion of each of these theoretical strands. Rather, they have been drawn on in an essentially eclectic way.

As has been shown and will be further demonstrated in the application of this framework, there are also important and instructive continuities between these theoretical perspectives which justify their articulation in this thesis. It is possible to extrapolate the following series of principles which can be assembled into a ten-point line of argument.

1. Colonial education policies can only be properly analysed as one aspect of a broader struggle between an imperialist power and a national liberation movement.

2. Imperialist domination in one context cannot be fully understood in isolation from a broader, usually global, analysis of imperialism.
3. Imperialist domination, though having elements in common with purely class struggle, also has specifically national characteristics.

4. It is only when these national characteristics are present that the situation can be defined as colonial, whether it be classical colonialism, internal colonialism or neocolonialism.

5. An imperative for successful imperialist domination is for the imperialist power to be able to dictate the orientation of the development process of the colonised people.

6. Imperialist control is at its most powerful when its development dictates are internalised and actively advocated by the colonised population whose interests they undermine.

7. The capacity for imperialism to dictate development in this way depends on and is itself dependent on a corresponding capacity of the imperialist power to control the citizenship and development functions of the colonial education system.

8. Because they at once represent and reinforce the dominant political, economic and cultural dimensions of imperialist control, the citizenship and development functions must be the prime focus of any investigation into colonial education.

9. A successful struggle to decolonise education requires a reformulation in line with the interests of the colonised population of, at least, the citizenship and development functions of education.

10. Such a reformulation can only be achieved in the context of a wider anti-imperialist struggle incorporating political, economic and cultural liberation.
Chapter Four

The Conquest of New Caledonia. Education, Colonialism and Kanak Resistance to 1918

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the early development of French colonial education in New Caledonia, through the application of the theoretical framework developed in the preceding section. This chapter needs to be read, therefore, in the context of the theoretical issues raised in the previous section. In line with this framework, this chapter analyses the struggle between France and the Kanak people over the first imperative for colonialism; achieving the point of conquest. It then discusses the role that education played in this process. Chapter Five will continue the application of this framework by analysing the role of education in the process whereby France sought to move beyond conquest towards a more stable, hegemonic form of colonial rule.

The frontier between these two periods is the defeat by France of the Kanak uprising of 1917, which brought about the nadir for the Kanak people. Most accounts of New Caledonia's political history identify the Second World War as the watershed in colonial relations. It is not disputed that the immediate post-war period saw the most dramatic shift in French colonial policy with regard to the Kanak people. This turning point will be analysed in considerable detail in the following chapter. Equally clearly, however, it was the defeat of the 1917 uprising which cemented France's monopoly on the legitimate use of force and removed any residual politico-military threat to its authority in New Caledonia.

The argument that is presented in this chapter is that France's singular preoccupation with regard to the Kanak people during this drive to achieve the point of conquest was to force them to submit
to colonial rule. This depended almost entirely on politico-military strategies, with education being of very minimal importance. Kanak education was almost exclusively the responsibility of missionaries. It will be shown that the influence the colonial government sought to impose over missionary education practices was more a feature of its relationship with the missionaries themselves than with France's attitude to Kanak education. It was not until the point of conquest had been achieved that France adopted educational strategies in the drive for hegemonic rule.

4.2 First Contacts: An Insight Into The Future

Captain James Cook was the first European to meet the Kanak people, when he spent eight days at Balade in 1774. He struck up a close friendship with the local chief, Tea Booma, who bestowed the chiefly title of Tea on Cook. The well-travelled Cook wrote glowingly of the Kanak people.

"They are a strong, robust, active, well-made people, courteous and friendly, and not in the least addicted to pilfering... In their disposition, they are like the natives of the Friendly Isles; but in affability and honesty, they excel them." [Cook, 1777: p.105]

In 1793, the French Admiral d'Entrecasteaux made the second confirmed European contact with Kanak people. He arrived in the same area as Cook where the local chief was the same Theabouma (in French orthography). Unlike Cook, however, d'Entrecasteaux found the Kanak people to be violent, rude, liars and thieves. Without his greater military strength, he could well have ended up being killed.

The difference between the two encounters is highly instructive. Cook's comportment (including respectful greetings, exchange of gifts and mutual trust) was quite different from the behaviour displayed by d'Entrecasteaux (as recorded in his diaries) which was disrespectful and threatening towards the Kanak people. Kanak custom is based on alliances of equals and it is very common for foreigners (be they Melanesian, Polynesian or European) to be welcomed and given special treatment, including chiefly title and land. Such a reception, however, is conditional on the new
arrivals respecting the established social order.

Dousset identifies a common pattern of three stages in encounters between Kanak and European: "a first phase of welcome marked by what could be called the offer of adoption; then a phase of waiting and reflection culminating in the phase of rejection and overt hostility." [My translation. Dousset, 1970: p.96] She correctly sums up the lesson to be taken from the Cook and d'Entrecasteaux experiences.

"Respected, the New Caledonian society is willing to exchange; ridiculed, it retaliates" [Dousset, 1970: p.46]

Sixty years after d'Entrecasteaux's visit, France formally annexed New Caledonia. The circumstances surrounding the annexation all mitigated against the establishment of an honourable relationship between France and the indigenous Kanak people. France was interested solely in the land of New Caledonia and not its people. True to form, the Kanak people met aggression with aggression. However, as they lacked the necessary military strength to defeat the invaders, the die was cast for the genocidal policies which followed.

4.3 France's Colonial Motivations: Geopolitics, Penal Politics And Minerals

In 1853, Napoleon III authorised the annexation of New Caledonia. The decision to annex was motivated partly by geopolitical considerations, such as the desire to establish a French presence in the British-dominated South West Pacific. But the gaining of more colonial possessions, especially relatively small ones far removed from metropolitan France, was no longer seen as a worthwhile end in itself. The primary reason for the annexation of New Caledonia was for the establishment of a penal colony.

2The Loyalty Islands of Maré and Lifou were formally declared to be part of New Caledonia in June 1864, with a similar declaration regarding Ouvéa a year later.
There had been a decades-long debate in France about the merits of penal colonies, much of which focused on Britain's experience in Australia. Napoleon favoured the transportation of convicts. He saw this approach as a way of avoiding the cost and the threat to society of holding so many convicts, many of whom were political detainees from the political turmoil of 1848 and 1851, as well as a means of expanding France's colonial empire. In an 1850 speech to parliament, he said:

"It seems possible to make the punishment of hard labour more effective, more morally-improving, less expensive, and, at the same time, more humane, by using it in the development of French colonisation." [Le Moniteur Universel. 13 November 1850: p.3246]

Initial experiments in establishing the penal colony in French Guiana and the Marquesas were proving unsuccessful. It soon became clear that New Caledonia would be the best option and France decided to annex the islands. As problems escalated in Guiana, the pressure mounted for New Caledonia to be readied for the first shipments of convicts. This pressure drew a cautious response from the Governor du Bouzet, who was in charge of French possessions in Oceania. In 1855, he remarked:

"I believe it is my duty to express the hope that there is not too much haste in beginning (deportation); we need time to study the country more thoroughly, to clear the land, to obtain some influence over the miserable tribes who inhabit it; without that, we would risk compromising the success of this great operation." [Documents Relatifs à la Nouvelle-Calédonie. 15 March 1855]

In May 1864, the first shipment of 250 French convicts arrived in New Caledonia. In all 21,600 convicts, including political prisoners from the Paris Commune, were sent to New Caledonia before the transportations were halted in 1897. [Saussol, 1988: pp.43-4] On completion of their sentences, liberated convicts would be allocated land on which to establish themselves permanently in the colony, and were even brought women from French prisons to marry. Penal transportation
was eventually abandoned because it was believed to be deterring the free settlement the colony needed; Governor Feillet describing the move to turn off the "dirty water tap" as essential for the establishment of a "solid and vigorous rural democracy". [Quoted in Roberts, 1929: p.527]

But if transporting convicts was a major motivation for colonising New Caledonia, the discovery of minerals (coincidentally, the same year as the transportations began) was to prove a very powerful reason for France to remain. By the turn of the century, gold, lead, zinc, silver, copper, cobalt, chrome and nickel had all been mined in New Caledonia [Douyere et al, 1982: p.40]. The extraction of nickel eventually came to dominate the economy of the colony. In 1874, New Caledonia experienced its first "nickel rush", representing the birth of a major nickel mining industry. It was a turning point in the colony's history. In 1880, the Rothschild bank was attracted to invest in the industry and Société le Nickel (SLN) was established. This was followed in 1910 by the building of a processing plant, which subsequently grew into the Doniambo smelter. [Connell, 1987: pp.50-1]

It is clear, therefore, that France's decision to colonise New Caledonia was not made in order to dominate the Kanak people, which was not an end in itself. The decision was the product of a combination of geopolitical considerations and, very importantly, economic ones. Initially, France's aspirations for New Caledonia were to be realised through a combination of transporting convicts from France and encouraging free settlement. New Caledonia's mineral wealth later became a vital factor.

It is equally clear, however, that France's colonial objectives in New Caledonia could not be fulfilled unless France was able to eliminate any rivals to its authority over the territory. The declaration of French sovereignty over New Caledonia in 1853 was an act designed to give notice to all rival colonising powers, particularly Britain, that New Caledonia was spoken for. The sovereign rights of the Kanak population were not seriously considered until they could be said to have been extinguished. Having gained monopoly colonising rights, however, the task still remained for France to be able to exert full authority over the inhabitants of New Caledonia.
In May 1863, a decade after New Caledonia had been formally annexed, France clarified what it considered to be its sovereign rights within New Caledonia. The newly-arrived Governor, Rear Admiral Charles Guillaud, issued a decree stating France's demand for the total submission of the Kanak people to French colonial rule.

"The chiefs are being maintained only by virtue of their recognition of the sovereignty of the Emperor and, therefore, a principal obligation is obedience to his representative, the governor. Their failure to willingly meet this obligation removes the entire purpose of their existence, since instead of serving as useful intermediaries between the colonial authority and their former subjects, they are giving these people a bad example and undermining the measures which have been taken to civilise the indigenous population and develop colonisation." [Cited in Lenormand, 1954: p.260]

4.4 Achieving the Point of Conquest: A Colonial Imperative.

As outlined in the Chapter Two, the minimum requirement for establishing an acceptable degree of stability in colonial authority can be considered the point of conquest. This colonial minimum has politico-military, economic and socio-cultural dimensions. Once France had committed itself to establishing a colony in New Caledonia, it had an imperative to meet this colonial minimum, to achieve the point of conquest.

At the time of the 1863 declaration, conquest was far from achieved. French settlement was confined to isolated pockets in the north-east and south-west of New Caledonia's main island. Kanak resistance, as will be further detailed in the following chapter, was widespread and had been occurring at almost every point of contact with the European population, whether civilian, missionary or government, since 1847. Kanak people had not ceded their sovereignty, were not accepting that they were a conquered people, and were not acknowledging the authority of France.
In the early stages of colonisation in New Caledonia, politico-military control was the most fundamental. It was only by monopolising the legitimate use of force that France would be able to impose its authority. To achieve this, it sought to destroy the capacity of the indigenous population to offer military resistance to colonial rule. Economic and socio-cultural initiatives were an integral part of this strategy. There was a concerted drive to destroy the elaborate agricultural production systems which formed the economic base of Kanak societies, thereby severely undermining their capacity for resistance. And this was complemented by a socio-cultural emphasis based on undermining the systems of values and culture which bound Kanak society together.

4.4.1 The Struggle over Land

Land was a central factor. It was needed by France for all of its colonial interests in New Caledonia, that is, for penal settlement, for free settlement and for mineral extraction. The alienation of land from the Kanak people also served every aspect of France's aim to achieve the point of conquest: it curtailed Kanak freedom of movement, thereby limiting their military capacity; it undermined the economic base of Kanak society; and it crippled the social relations and sense of identity of Kanak people, which were so intimately bound up with the land.

There is no clearer statement of French recognition of the imperative to achieve the point of conquest over the Kanak people and their assessment of what this entailed than the following statement made in October 1856 by a leading military officer, Major Testard, in a letter to Admiral Fourichon:

"We must start by destroying the Kanak population if we want to live in security in the country. The only practicable means to finish with them would be to organise battues like with wolf hunts in France, with several detachments of thirty men, to destroy their plantations and their villages and to repeat these raids several times a day in the lead-up to the rainy season." [Cited in Guiart, 1983: p.58]
Dozens of such military operations were organised throughout the New Caledonian mainland. In every year from 1856 to 1870 (with the exception of 1866), at least one and as many as four military attacks were launched against Kanak villages. [Dousset, 1970: pp.115-123] At first, only those Kanak tribes believed to have been responsible for attacks on Europeans could be subject to attack and land seizure. However, in June 1859, the clan of Chief Damé of Yaté became the first to lose their land without even being accused of having rebelled. [Connell, 1987: p.44] This was a precedent for what was to follow; the drive for land leaving colonial authorities with no hesitation in uprooting entire Kanak villages and moving their occupants elsewhere in order to take their land.

These operations were complemented by a series of laws which served to legalise the process of repression and land confiscation and impose increasingly tight restrictions on Kanak people. They also imposed on Kanak people a form of social organisation which was designed to make it easier for the colonial authorities to communicate with and control the irrepressibly non-hierarchical Kanak communities.

From 1860, the Governor had already acquired the legal right to appoint and dismiss chiefs, to confiscate land and prohibit any Kanak community from owning land, and to imprison or deport any Kanak.3 [Tchoéaoua et al. 1983: p.13] In 1867 the "tribe"4, was given a formal legal status and the chief was made the single legal representative of the tribe. This was followed in 1868 by the establishment of native reserve lands, defined as "inalienable, incommutable and undistrainable". In March 1876, France began the move to further reduce these small areas of land with a decree specifying that:

"Each tribe of New Caledonia and its dependencies will be limited as much as possible within the territory to which it has traditional possession to an area of land proportional to the quality of the soil and to the number of people making up the tribe." [Cited in Dousset: 1970: p.143]

3 These legal rights were retained by the Governor of New Caledonia until 1946.
4 Traditional Kanak society is organised around complex interlocking clannic relationships. The concept of tribe was imposed on them by the French.
It was the application of this law which provoked the first generalised revolt of Kanak people.

4.4.2 Organised Kanak Resistance

The cycle of Kanaks welcoming strangers, seeing their hospitality abused and then attacking the newcomers was repeated for tribe after tribe, region after region throughout the entire mainland. There is considerable anecdotal evidence of settlers establishing amicable relations with Kanak communities which had engaged in hostilities against other Europeans. Wherever these people sought to dominate their Kanak friends, however, relations would sour very rapidly. [see Dousset, 1970: pp.100-101].

In 1878, after an eight year period of relative calm in the colony, Kanak resistance moved from spontaneous isolated acts to a coordinated revolt. The uprising, which lasted several months, was spread over a wide area and cost the lives of over 1,000 Kanaks and over 200 Europeans before it was finally suppressed by the military.

The revolt fractured the ambience of security which had developed among Europeans in the period of calm which preceded it. A large proportion of those Kanaks who had been employed by the colonial administration or the settlers played important roles in the insurrection. The local newspaper exhorted the colonial authorities to achieve the point of conquest without delay. This would involve rendering subject the entire Kanak population, including the pro-French tribes:

"The extermination of the rebels must be completed and the tribes that have not taken part in the revolt must be made to tremble with the remembrance of the punishment; otherwise there cannot be any colonisation." [Nouvelle Calédonie: 4 July 1878]

A report on the revolt prepared in 1879 by General Trentinian\(^5\) identifies a number of causes of the revolt: the sharp reduction of Kanak reserve lands through the application of the 1876 statute; the

\(^5\)The full text of Trentinian's report can be found in Dousset [1970] pages 127-159.
further encroachment on these lands by settler cattle, deceitful dealings by Europeans with Kanaks (even those most friendly to the French), the desecration of Kanak cemeteries, and the absence of any mechanism for addressing Kanak grievances. Trentinian concluded that the Kanaks were given little option but to revolt, and that:

"the administration ... had not the slightest concern for the natives and had given absolutely no thought to governing them with justice in order to attract some of them and prove to them that, even though we invaded their lands, we would like at least to give some resources to those who came to serve at our side." [Quoted in Dousset, 1970: p.135]

4.4.3 Reinforcing Colonial Rule

In contrast to the humanitarian sentiments in the Trentinian report, France's defeat of the 1878 uprising led to series of policies aimed at consolidating its domination over the Kanak people. In 1887, it established a Native Law (Code de l'Indigénat) which placed very tight restrictions over almost every facet of Kanak life and remained in force until 1946.

In 1895, a poll tax was introduced requiring every Kanak to pay 10 francs per year to the colonial authorities. In 1897, France exercised the powers it had given itself to nominate and depose chiefs by imposing a total reorganisation of the responsibilities of Kanak chiefs, removing non-cooperative ones and replacing them with "chiefs" of its own choice. [Tchoéaoua, 1983: p.43] In 1900, a new law allowed the administrative "chiefs" to take a ten per cent commission from the poll tax they collected and made those unable to pay liable to work on settlers' farms or public works. [Tchoéaoua, 1983: p.45]

Between 1895 and 1903, Kanak reserve lands on the mainland were dramatically reduced from 320,000 hectares to just 120,000. [Saussol, 1988: p.45] In just 50 years of French colonisation, the Kanak people had lost 92.7 per cent of the mainland including over 83 per cent of their traditional agricultural land. Feillet, the Governor from 1894 to 1903, who oversaw this massive
transfer of land, wrote:

"In law, the French Government had never renounced coming into possession of Caledonian land, the sovereignty over which it had gained through right of conquest. The cantonnements\textsuperscript{6} since 1895 had been preceded by many others, according to needs. The only difference with them was that they were more extensive and more methodical. To class them as despoilment, as some people have, is to make a serious mistake over a crucial point... It is not at all possible to say that Kanak chiefs, representatives of their tribes, had ever had a property right over the valleys of New Caledonia that they were not occupying. Their right to these lands was in the past a right of sovereignty, which is quite different. And it is very clear that this right of sovereignty has been passed to France: to deny this would be to question the very possibility of any form of colonisation." [Cited in Gabriel and Kermel, 1985: p.41]

French authorities were openly claiming sovereignty by right of conquest. And they had reason to expect that the point of conquest had been achieved. In line with Social Darwinist theories of the day it was confidently believed that the Kanak people were on the path to extinction. This view was appearing to be confirmed by the steep decline in the Kanak population, due to factors such as killing, loss of land, change of diet and disease. [Connell, 1987: pp.89-92 and Brou, 1973: p.256] Estimates of the precolonial Kanak population vary widely from as few as 50,000 to as many as 200,000. [See Lyons, 1986: p.15 and Fray, 1944: p.9]\textsuperscript{7} What is certain, however, is that by the turn of the century the Kanak population was less than 30,000 and falling. The European population was over 22,500. [Dornoy, 1984: p.39]

4.4.4 The Failure of Kanak Resistance

The Kanak people did, however, manage to mount one final resistance effort. The uprising lasted

\textsuperscript{6} Herding of Kanaks onto reservations.
\textsuperscript{7} A range of early estimates is reported in Dornoy, 1984: p.42.
a year from February 1917 to January 1918 and was concentrated around the central west coast area. The casualty rate of this revolt was much lower than the earlier one with 11 Europeans and 200 Kanaks killed.

The causes of the revolt were similar to those which provoked the first major uprising forty years earlier: the colonial administration and the settlers taking more Kanak land and destroying houses [Interview with Kanak chief cited in Dornoy, 1984: p.29]; the subjugation of Kanak traditional authorities and suppression of Kanak culture as detailed above; and the drive to recruit Kanaks to fight in the European war of 1914-18.

The uprising of 1917 needs to be seen as much more than just a lesser version of the 1878 revolt. It was undertaken in circumstances which were objectively much less favourable to the Kanaks than those prevailing at the time of the earlier uprising. Demographics were no longer such an advantage to the Kanaks, and they had considerably less land on which to operate. In the wake of the failure of the 1878 uprising, a greater number of Kanaks had been coopted by the French and tensions between Kanak groups had thereby been heightened. Despite these disadvantages in comparison with the earlier revolt, and the fact that that campaign had failed, Kanak people still mobilised a large-scale armed insurrection.

The other major significance of the 1917 uprising is that it was the last organised resistance effort in which Kanaks went beyond the confines of the law in order to achieve their aims. It was not until 1969 that Kanak resistance returned to extra-legal strategies, and not until 1984 that this developed into a mass-based movement to challenge French colonial rule.

It is for these reasons that the suppression of 1917 Kanak uprising can be considered to be the point of conquest by France over the Kanak people. Through military force backed up by legal sanction, France had established a full monopoly on the legitimate use of violence. And by crippling the social and economic base of Kanak society by alienating their land and suppressing any attempts to oppose this process, it had destroyed the capacity of the Kanak people to offer any military resistance to French rule.
4.5 The Role Of Education In Achieving The Point Of Conquest

In the early colonial period in New Caledonia, three distinct processes were occurring each of which could be described (given a definition broad enough to encompass contradictions) as Kanak education. The first was that which Kanaks themselves considered to be education; that is a process of transferring skills and values from one generation to the next in such a way as to enhance the functioning of Kanak society. The second was a form of principally moral instruction which was organised by Christian missionaries. The missionaries used schooling as a means for achieving their fundamental aim of saving the souls of the so-called heathen Kanaks. The third was the formal instruction given by the colonial authorities to a small number of Kanaks. This form of schooling was designed to produce a group of Kanaks who would be part of a system of conduits to facilitate the implementation of colonial policy.

Each of these processes are outlined below. It will be shown that the Kanak concept of education tended to be an obstacle to the attempts to impose a European model of education on them. It will be argued that, as long as Kanak and colonial interests remained incompatible, so would the respective education systems which reinforced those interests. It will also be made clear, however, that in the period where France was seeking to achieve the point of conquest, education was not a significant factor in either French colonial strategy or Kanak resistance.

4.5.1 Kanak education or ūne

In traditional Kanak society, education or ūne\(^8\) was a process through which every member of

\(^8\)This discussion of traditional Kanak education is based on the only detailed analysis of this subject carried out by a Kanak; that is, Wea [unpublished, 1977]. It is augmented by discussions with Wea and other Kanak educationalists. The example being used is that of Iaai, although it is acknowledged that some variation exists between various Kanak social groupings.
society was transformed from an individual into an integral part of a collective unit. In the theoretical model of the functions of education which is being applied in this thesis, education is seen to be performing dual functions of meeting individual aspirations as well as social imperatives, a tension which is mediated by the process of allocation.

In ûne, however, no such tension exists. Individual aspirations are inseparable from social imperatives. They can be fulfilled only to the extent that social imperatives are met. It is never possible, for example, for an individual to make use of ûne to achieve material advancement relative other members of society. And personal fulfilment, the second component of individual aspirations, is the product of the smooth functioning of the social unit. In the absence of a divide between individual aspirations and social imperatives, ûne has no allocation function to perform.

That is not to say that no stratification exists in traditional Kanak society. Stratification exists, for example, on the basis of gender, age and customary status, each of which has become more pronounced through the influence of colonial authorities and missionaries. However, in a properly functioning system, these forms of stratification are mitigated by a complex system of kinship ties, checks and balances, and collective responsibility for the well-being of every member of the community.

The foundation of ûne is the word or hofuc. It is the collective wisdom of generations, the society's library of knowledge and experience. As Wea writes:

"The hofuc that our elders are speaking and living before us, with us, in us, is education for us, our own education, and when we accept it and live it, then that is our life, our education. ... This is the whole of education for us Kanak people" [Wea, 1977: pp.10-11]

Kanak society is founded on kinship which is itself inextricably linked with land. The basic kinship unit is lap, usually translated as clan. The central organising principle of the lap is Môtr hobikàn ke at me ke at or live for one another. Lap is divided generationally and incorporates both the living and the dead. The unity of lap derives from bubà the ancestors who, at death, become one
with the land and whose spirits remain to nourish and guide the living. Ûne is shaped according to particular generational needs. Thus, ūne is made up of four stages.

The first stage of ūne is the education of wanakat or children. From birth until puberty, children undergo two types of learning which correspond quite closely with the model this thesis is using to analyse the social imperatives of education; that is, skills for economic development and values for citizenship. In Kanak society, the basis of imparting values for citizenship is to develop in the child an understanding of his/her role in the lap. It is only through a profound understanding of the interconnectedness between his/her own life and the lives of all the other members of the lap that a child is able to acquire the values, attitudes and behaviours which are required for the smooth functioning of the lap and of him/herself within the lap. From the age of about six, children accompany their parents and other member of the lap in the production process. They become familiar with the agricultural, fishing and other work that must be performed for the lap to sustain itself.

From puberty, the ūne of the youth is oriented towards preparing them for adulthood and marriage. It is, therefore, quite different for hlu (young women) and hidrōu (young men). Marriage is the means by which one lap makes binding links with another and is, therefore, a collective and not an individual responsibility. For hlu, ūne is the responsibility of women who teach the role of womanhood. The woman is the hnyaba, the home. Although the woman's husband may build the house and work in the garden, it is always referred to as her home and her garden.

Boys become hidrōu when an elder decides to shave their face for the first time. They then leave their parents house and live together in the omtabaga, the young men's house. It is in the omtabaga that the men teach them the responsibilities of manhood: ensuring the nourishment, defence and other needs of the lap. Hidrōu are the hwegien (power) and singiny (protector) of the lap.

Wea concludes that Kanak youth:
"... are aware of ourselves, our status and roles set by the lap and we do not live in indifference, but with continuing preparation and education and awareness for the benefit of our than², lap, land and our gods. Hmailife (adulthood) will not surprise us but when it comes we will run to meet it with joy and awareness." [Wea, 1977: p.25]

At marriage, hidrōu and hlu become baga (man) and momo (woman). As adults, they have new roles and responsibilities in enhancing the life and development of the lap. In performing these roles (whether in healing, food production, warfare or some other form of activity) they heighten their experience and knowledge and transfer this to generations to follow.

The fourth stage in the personal growth of Kanak people is old age. Someca (old women) and hingat (old men) are regarded by Kanak people as their equivalent of a university. They are the receptacles of years of knowledge and experience which they impart through hofuc, a process which occurs both formally and informally with the younger generations. As old people near death, their hofuc is said to be intermingled with that of the ancestor spirits and therefore becomes even more sacred.

4.5.2 Missionary Education

In the context of colonial society, this process was regarded as having nothing to do with education. Indeed, it was seen as an impediment to it. European knowledge, values and beliefs were considered to be the only ones with any validity. For the Christian missionaries, schooling for the Kanak people was not an end in itself, but a means of advancing their objective of proselytisation. And this required the systematic undermining of üne. The writing of leading missionaries confirms this:

"To establish Christianity and make it part of people's morals, it is not enough to evangelise

²Most commonly, although somewhat misleadingly translated as "chief".
the adult generation. We must take hold of the youth through education and, after removing the shadows of their traditional paganism, imbue them with the spirit of faith... once the establishment of divine service is assured, schools are the first institution to create. It is even necessary that these schools, especially at the beginning of the mission, be boarding establishments. This is because, not only are they and will they be for several generations incapable of working for the education of their children, our natives, as we know well, unconsciously maintain within their families, if not through their hollow observances, a seed of paganism. " [Fraysse: 2 July 1904]

The aim of the missionaries was largely compatible with that of the colonial authorities and the relationship between the two was, from the outset, a close one. New Caledonia's first Marist missionaries were brought to Balade in a French warship. Their arrival in 1843 was marked by the raising of the French flag and a ceremony consisting of a mass and a symbolic twenty rounds of cannon fire. [Kohler, 1988: p.145] A plaque on the cathedral in Nouméa declares proudly that the church gave the country "to God and to France".

However, there was always some degree of tension. In 1896, the Catholic mission was accused of inciting Kanak people to refuse to pay their head tax. And in 1903 and 1904, anticlerical legislation that had been developed in France was used to expel clergy from mission school, hospitals and orphanages [de Bigault, 1944: p.7].

The missionaries' superior knowledge of Kanak languages was of great value to the colonial administration which was remarkably inept in this area. In fact, the two interests were mutually beneficial. As Rivierre has noted:

"If they (the missionaries) facilitated the task of the colonial power, in return they were accorded military support and aid in consolidating their installation". [Rivierre, 1985: p.1698]

Like other Europeans, the missionaries were convinced from a very early date that the Kanak
people were doomed to disappear. Accordingly, they saw their work as saving as many souls as possible before they died and facilitating the smooth absorption of the remainder into European society.

"The black race ... will soon dissolve, absorbed by the settlers on one hand and removed by illnesses on the other. In the not too distant future, there will remain, at least on the big island of Caledonia, only whites. From this day, therefore, we must seriously and actively look after those who are here, spread throughout our missions. They will be a precious core for Catholicism in this colony. ... don't forget that it is to their service that we are devoted, leaving our country and coming at the risk of our lives to these wild and distant beaches. These souls that we came so far to find have not lost their importance because of their contact with those of Europeans. Let us not be lured by the world which despises all that lacks a shiny outer. Let us love our poor natives to the end, precisely because they are poor and unfortunate. Let us save their bodies if possible, but at least their souls."

[Rougeyron: 2 February 1867]

The Protestant missionaries had the same aim as the Catholics and were equally convinced of the value of schooling. However, their strategy was different. Rather than using the Catholic model of boarding schools separated from the perceived corrupting influence of the tribe, the Protestants sought to make themselves a part of the traditional society in order to change it from within. This was reflected in their policy of recruiting Kanak converts as catechists or natas to carry out much of their mission work.

In the early years of colonisation, relations between the Protestant missionaries and the colonial authorities were quite tense. This was because the first Protestant missionaries were British, from the London Missionary Society (LMS) and were based in the Loyalty Islands. The French authorities wanted to ensure that this island group which is located just east of the mainland would remain part of its colony. Tensions eased at the turn of the century, when the Paris-based Société des Missions Evangéliques arrived in the colony and eventually took over form the LMS. In 1911, the Protestant natas were given freedom of movement and residence to carry out their work,
privileges denied to other Kanaks. However, the Protestant missionaries were never as close as the Catholics to the colonial administration.

It is clear from the evidence of the early Protestant missions that Kanak people were very quick to learn how to read and write in their own languages. By the turn of the century, upwards of sixty percent of Protestants in the Loyalty Islands were said to be literate. The rapid spread of literacy was due at least in part to Kanaks learning informally from each other. [Howe, 1977: pp.126-7]

The first mission school was opened in 1861 on the Isle of Pines. By 1906, there were seventeen Catholic schools throughout the colony, as well as a handful of Protestant ones on the Loyalty Islands. [Saussol, 1969] Mission schools of both denominations shared the same basic curriculum: religious instruction, religious worship, manual labour and basic numeracy and literacy. Both also relied on the active involvement of Kanaks in providing food and other materials for the mission. Classes lasted for just a few hours per day. [See Kohler and Pillon, 1982: chapter 2]

Brou argues that the efforts of the missionaries, of which schooling was a central factor, played a big part in combating what he describes as the psychological disintegration of the Kanak people.

"Constructive acculturation was thus in progress. Little by little, the tribes came to realise that they had a place in the Caledonian sun." [Brou, 1973: p.256]

Kohler and Pillon argue more convincingly that the mission schools had the responsibility in liaison with other missionary activities to establish colonisation through means other than military action. [Kohler and Pillon, 1982: p.31]

It is true that the missionaries' work did have the effect of softening up Kanak resistance to colonial rule. However, their efforts were not essential for the achievement of the point of conquest over the Kanak people. Neither the mission schools nor any other dimension of missionary work can be fully understood in isolation from politico-military considerations. It would not have been possible for the missionaries to separate Kanak people from their land and the
political sovereignty through any amount of persuasion. Since these were fundamental to Kanak survival, they would never have been voluntarily surrendered.

The contribution of the mission schools to the establishment of colonialism in New Caledonia appears, therefore, to have been twofold: first, the missionaries were able to undermine the strength of Kanak resistance to colonial domination; and secondly, they were able to provide solace for the defeated and demoralised Kanak people. It was, however, the politico-military strategies of the colonial authorities which proved decisive in achieving the point of conquest over the Kanak people.

4.5.4 Kanak Schooling and the Colonial Authorities

The French colonial authorities did not organise any schooling system for Kanak people until after the point of conquest had been achieved. During the period where France was still struggling to conquer the Kanak people, two policies with regard to the instruction of Kanaks are worthy of mention. Both were the initiatives of Governor Guillain.

The first is Guillain's decision of 26 July 1862 to establish a school for young natives. Half the children were to receive manual training, the other half to be trained as interpreters. What set this school apart, however, was that the pupils were the children of chiefs who had been defeated. The chiefs were forced to hand over their children who were, in effect, held as hostages in case of further rebellion. Successful attacks by the French military against the people of Koumac in November 1863, Chépénéhé in June 1864 and Gatope in September 1865 were each followed by the demand for the chiefs children to be handed over to the government school. [Dauphiné, 1990: p.184] A number of chiefs who held friendly relations with the colonial authorities, such as Chief Gélima of Canala, could not be persuaded to give up their children. [Cited in La Haütière, 1869] The school was eventually deemed too expensive and was closed in 1866. By this time, some of the sixty children who attended had run away, others had died and the forty who remained were put to work for settlers at the port.
As well as this Port-de France (now Nouméa) school, Guillain also established four other "encampment schools" in association with military posts in areas that had come under the military control of the colonial regime. It was to one of these schools in Canala that Chief Gélima eventually consented to send his son. However, children at these schools were even more likely to run away, despite threats to their parents from the military. Dauphiné concludes:

"The general impression one can gain is that these encampment schools were mostly a gardiennage for young adolescents who occasionally did some lessons but who were mostly used for numerous jobs (domestic work, running errands, etc...) without much connection the educational vocation of these modest establishments." [Dauphiné, 1990: p.186]

These schools were also cut back in 1866 and eventually closed by order of Governor de la Richerie, who replaced Guillain in 1870.

The other initiative of the colonial administration with regard to Kanak education was the move to ban the use of Kanak languages and make French the only language to be used in schools. This decree was made in October 1863, only a few months after Guillain's decree (cited above) reasserting France's sovereignty over the Kanak people; a decree in which he described the entire purpose of the existence of Kanak chiefs as "serving as useful intermediaries between the colonial authority and their former subjects".

This move was designed only in part in order to undermine the little potential that existed in the mission schools for Kanaks to learn anything of value. More importantly, however, it was intended to remind the missionaries of who was in charge. In particular, it was an attempt to call to heel the British missionaries from the LMS who were predominant in the Loyalty Islands and it was accompanied by a declaration that no correspondence in English would receive a reply. [Rivierre, 1985: p.1695]
The French missionaries needed no convincing of the priority that the French language deserved. As Monsignor Fraysse wrote:

"The natives belong to a French colony. They must be given a French social education .... The French language must remain the only language regularly authorised at school, whether in class, in relations between the sisters and the children, or for relations among children." [Fraysse: 1904]

The 1863 decree did not constitute an outright ban on all use of Kanak languages. Where instruction was of an entirely religious nature, programmes could be continued in the indigenous languages. [Rivierre, 1985: pp.1693-4] In practical terms, this provided the scope for the missionaries to use whichever language they found most effective and it was not until 1923 that the law was tightened to prevent this. [Brou, 1973: p.180]

On the one occasion in 1865 when Guillain came into conflict with the Catholic mission and moved to order the closure of their schools, he earned a strong rebuke from the French Cabinet. The Navy and Colonies Minister regarded the move as counter to French colonial interests, stating:

"I insist that this undertaking, whose principal aim is to bring about the submission and civilisation of the indigenous populations without violent measures, should be allowed to freely develop and be certain of finding in the future alongside the local administration, the facilities and encouragement which it has lacked since your arrival in the colony." [Cited in Pisier, 1971: p.195]

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter set out to analyse France's achievement of the point of conquest over the Kanak people and the role of education in this process. The point of conquest is the point at which the colonial authorities obtain a monopoly on the legitimate use of force and are able to enforce the
The chapter began with an analysis of what motivated France to colonise New Caledonia and in this regard. It was shown that considerations of geopolitics and penal politics provided the initial impetus while the discovery of New Caledonia's remarkable mineral wealth provided France with added reason to retain its possession of the islands. The way in which it achieved the point of conquest was through an organised military strategy to impose its own political authority over the colony. France realised from a very early stage that the success of their colonisation of New Caledonia depended on their ability to dispossess the Kanak people of their land. This was essential for two reasons: first, the land would be needed by European settlers and in order to extract its mineral wealth; and secondly, because dispossessing Kanak people of their land which was the source of their physical survival and their cultural identity was the most effective way of eliminating them.

The struggle over land, therefore, represented an irreconcilable conflict of interest between the Kanak people and the colonial authorities. It was the primary basis of conflict between the two competing forces, and was much more important than any educational considerations.

Education was shown to be an important institution in Kanak society; an integrated process of transferring skills, knowledge and values from one generation to the next. The collective nature of Kanak society ensured that there was no significant conflict between the traditional education system's need to meet social imperatives and allow the realisation of individual aspirations. In the absence of such a tension, education in traditional Kanak society was not required to avert a potential crisis of legitimacy by performing an allocation function.

The aim of the missionaries' schooling initiatives was to replace the knowledge, skills and values of the Kanak people with their "civilised" European equivalents. It is clear, however, that while Kanak people valued the various skills the missionaries offered such as literacy and numeracy, they also retained most of their own knowledge and values as well, much of which was essential for their continued survival, in both a physical and cultural sense.

The colonial administration took some initiatives with regard to Kanak schooling. However, these
their continued survival, in both a physical and cultural sense.

The colonial administration took some initiatives with regard to Kanak schooling. However, these were not the beginnings of providing educational services for Kanak people. Rather, they took the form of taking young Kanaks to teach them things so that they could be placed at the service of the colonial authorities. Pupils were taken as punishment and even the pro-French chiefs were reluctant to participate in this exercise.

As the following chapter explains, France's attitude to Kanak education changed according to their broader colonial strategy. In achieving the point of conquest, very little was expected of education. However, when this point was achieved through the suppression of the 1917 uprising, France began a strategy of consolidating its power and moving towards hegemonic control. In this context, a much more active education strategy was required.
Chapter Five

Towards French Hegemony In New Caledonia: Education, Colonialism And Kanak Resistance From 1918 To 1946.

5.1 Introduction

For a colonial power, the purpose of achieving the point of conquest and establishing a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence is, in the first instance, to remove military resistance from the range of strategies available to the colonised people. It forces a colonised people to accommodate virtually all demands that the colonial power chooses to impose. Thus, the achievement of the point of conquest represents a major advance in the interests of the colonial power and a qualitative change in the nature of the relationship between it and the colonised people. It also represents a significant change in the imperatives which confront the coloniser and the colonised respectively.

For the colonial power, the challenge is to avoid a reversal or a weakening of the point of conquest. That is, it must find a way to consolidate its position of authority in order to dispel any prospect of the colonised people ever establishing such a *rapport de force* that it might be able to militarily evict the coloniser. This demands a more sophisticated politico-military strategy than that applied in reaching the point of conquest. Though the military superiority of the coloniser remains the fundamental factor in its position of dominance, the less the military option is actually used and the less explicit the threat of military repression remains, the more stable the position of the colonial power becomes.

In order to move towards this more hegemonic form of colonial rule, the colonial power needs to
gain the willing cooperation of the colonised population. It must create a situation whereby the colonised people perceive it to be in their best political, economic and cultural interests to cooperate with the system of colonial rule.

For the colonised, conquest imposes a survival imperative. In no position to make demands, they are forced to comply with the dictates of the colonial power. They are forced to undergo a major revision of their political aspirations and corresponding strategies. Whether or not the colonised people retain the long-term aim of regaining national sovereignty, this can have little bearing on their actions in the immediate post-conquest context. Having been forced to abandon their immediate goal of reversing the colonial process through the forcible eviction of the colonising power, the colonised people formulate new objectives, whether consciously or subconsciously, to accommodate their defeat. This usually involves exploring ways of cooperating with the colonial system in order to optimise the benefits which can be obtained from it.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the post-conquest period is characterised by a remarkable de-escalation of violent conflict. Both the colonial power and the colonised people are seeking to avoid such confrontation, albeit for quite different reasons: the colonial power, because it must seek to establish a more hegemonic form of control over the colonised people; and the colonised people, because it has been forced to abandon any hope of taking power by force, and to concentrate in the short term on mere survival.

Post-conquest colonialism in New Caledonia divides itself into three distinct historical periods. The first, which is the subject of this chapter, was the immediate post-conquest period from 1918 to 1946. This was a time at which Kanak power to resist colonialism was at its lowest, and the colonial strategy was based on a combination of repression and paternalism. The post-war period from 1946 to 1969, which is the subject of Chapter Six, was a time when colonial authorities reinforced their hegemonic position by making sufficient concessions that Kanak political leaders saw no essential incompatibility between the interests of their people and continued colonial rule. The third period, which is discussed in more detail in Chapters Seven to Ten, began in 1969 with the rebirth of the Kanak nationalist movement and the adoption of political strategies which
included illegal and sometimes violent tactics.

A major reason for needing to trace the historical development of colonial education in New Caledonia is in order to more fully comprehend the challenges currently facing the Kanak people. The analysis of this history through the lens of the theoretical framework developed above is necessary in order to fully understand the extent of the contemporary dilemmas facing the Kanak people and the role that education has had in generating this situation.

5.2 Post-Conquest Colonialism

5.2.1 Causes and Effects of the 1917 Revolt

Apart from opposition to conscription for the First World War, the causes of the 1917 revolt were largely the same as those identified by General Trentinin for the 1878 revolt; principally, mistreatment by colonial officials and settlers and the alienation of land. Pastor Leenhardt reemphasised these basic Kanak grievances during the trial of the the 1917 insurgents. Connell [1987: p.75] and Guiart [1970], among others, have pointed out that, with colonialism more firmly established and Kanak resistance less extensive than in 1878, the 1917 revolt was doomed to failure.

The capacity of the Kanak people to mount a revolt of that scale as late as 1917 was largely due to colonial society having been taken by surprise, the result of a thoroughly complacent attitude towards the Kanak people. The extent of this complacency was official, with the last governor before the 1917 revolt and the First World War publicly acknowledging that the colonial administration had no native policy. [cited in Connell, 1987: p.85] While Trentinin's remarks in the 1870s were generally not acted upon, the aftermath of the 1917 rebellion saw the French colonial authorities begin to adopt a more active policy towards the Kanak people.

France maintained the structural base of the colonial relationship throughout this post-conquest
period. The repressive legislation contained in the *code de l'indigenat* continued to be applied, confining Kanak people to their specified reserve land and subjecting them to capitation tax and the forced labour programmes. However, this was augmented by new administrative structures for dealing with the Kanak people, such as the creation in April 1919 of the post of Inspector of Native Affairs who was responsible directly to the Governor and had the task of "maintaining frequent contact with the natives". Official attitudes at the time can be seen through remarks, such as that of Governor Guyon, who administered New Caledonia from 1925 to 1932:

"It is necessary to abstain from being brutal and be committed to always being just... Wisely, France has not tried to make (the indigenous population) cover in a few decades the thousands of years of our civilisation." [Cited in Brou, 1975: p.272. Cousot, 1970]

### 5.2.2 Perspectives on the Post-Conquest Period

The immediate post-conquest period in New Caledonia's history has been interpreted in widely differing ways. On one extreme is the perspective of Alain Christnacht, who served as French High Commissioner in New Caledonia from 1991 to 1993. He portrays the 1917 uprising as a brief outburst from an over-excited Kanak population which resulted in little loss of life, was leniently dealt with by the colonial authorities and was symptomatic of the beginnings of a Kanak revival which took the form of an increase in the Kanak birth-rate and agricultural development [Christnacht, 1990: p.17].

Conservative historian, Bernard Brou, makes no mention of the 1917 revolt in his voluminous works on the history of New Caledonia. He does, however, describe New Caledonia from 1925 to 1960 as "a vast melting-pot" which, through "an incredible osmosis", transformed the country from a society of three separate communities of "blacks, whites and yellows" to one of multiracialism. [1975: p.254] This view could only be given any credence if the term "multiracialism" can be defined as being devoid of any connotation of social or economic equality between the various
ethnic groups of a society.

A newly-published quasi-official school text book on the history of New Caledonia and France also omits any mention of the 1917 revolt, despite the book's claim to be breaking new ground in providing a history of relations with France from a New Caledonian rather than a metropolitan French perspective. [Société d'Études, 1992]

More realistically, Dornoy interpreted the revolt as serving "to demonstrate that the Melanesians, although conquered, were not entirely subdued" [1984: p.30]. She recognises it as the last act of organised Kanak resistance until modern times, as does Lyons [1986: p.95] who describes the period following the revolt and the First World War as one in which "the Kanaks submitted to white cultural domination, with all the losses and gains that that entailed." Gabriel and Kermal view the end of the revolts as "the opening of a very dark period in the history of the Kanak people" [1985: p.26].

These accounts square with those of contemporary Kanak nationalists who, in their first English language publication, outlined the situation facing Kanak people during the 1917-46 period.

"The Kanak people had to choose between dying of resignation in a reserve, being totally massacred if they mounted any armed resistance, or surviving. They chose to survive."

[PALIKA, 1977: p.15]

The inter-war period gave the appearance of Kanak people accepting French colonial rule; a surface impression beyond which it is not in French colonial interests not to look, hence the extraordinary interpretation offered by Christnacht above. In fact, however, the absence of Kanak resistance during this period was not based on a voluntary or willful acceptance of France's right to govern. Rackèd by despair and despondency, the Kanak people lacked any organised political objective or strategy for decades after the point of conquest had been achieved through the putting down of the 1917 uprising.
5.2.3 Development and Demography

The inter-war years in New Caledonia were also notable for an ambitious attempt by Governor Guyon to develop the colony's infrastructure through a public works programme. European immigration had dried up and the Kanak population was deemed to be unsuitable as a potential workforce. So in order to resolve the colony's labour shortage, thousands of contracted immigrant workers were recruited from Asia. They were drawn principally from French Indochina and Java, as well as some from Japan (who were forcibly repatriated at the time of World War Two) and a few hundred from India. The demographic impact of these changes can be seen in Table Two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Melanesians</th>
<th>Europeans</th>
<th>Asians</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>27,700</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>23,450</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>28,500</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>19,300</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>27,100</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>14,500</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>14,900</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>28,500</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>16,400</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>28,800</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>17,400</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>33,500</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>20,400</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Official census figures.

The nature of New Caledonia's colonial relationships was significantly affected by these developments. It meant, for example, that even though the Kanak population was increasing relative to that of the European settlers, it remained more or less static as a proportion of the colony's total population. Secondly, these developments marked the beginning, in post-convict times, of a three-tiered stratification of New Caledonian society: the wealthy European settler

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10 The 1911 figure for Asians includes about 660 New Hebrideans.
families being at the top; the non-European immigrant workers and some of the poorer European broussards in the middle; and the indigenous Kanak population, which was still deprived of even the most basic liberties, on the bottom.

The other point of major significance for the purposes of this study is the exclusion of the Kanak people from the freely participating in the colony's economic development. Through the forced labour programmes, Kanak people did make a major contribution to the New Caledonian economy during this period. However, because it was requisitioned and not wage labour, it provided them with no opportunity for social progress. This deprival of the potential for Kanak wage-earning, combined with the loss of their land, forced them into a bare survival mode. The colonial policy of exclusion stifled the ability of Kanak people to achieve a significant improvement in their life conditions, whether as an individual or family or as a broader tribal unit, let alone a nation.

5.3 Post-Conquest Kanak Education

5.3.1 The Expansion of Native Schooling

The first educational policy initiative in the post-conquest period was the decision in June 1919 to integrate the native schools into the education system. Responsibility for their administration was transferred from the Native Affairs to the Education Service. The stated aim of the native schools remained: "to promote the use of French and initiate trade training" amongst the Kanak people. To this end, a new law making French language compulsory in native schools was introduced in November 1923. [Tchoéaoua, 1983: p.53]

The native schools were made progressively more available to Kanak children through the 1920s, 30s and 40s. More schools were constructed and more Kanak children attended them. In 1925, the provision of Kanak schooling was augmented by the creation of two training establishments; one for vocational training and the other to train monitors to teach in the native schools. As
shown in Table Three, the numbers of Kanak children in the native schools more than doubled between 1925 and 1945, increasing from 707 to 1,487 pupils. Despite the increase in state-provided primary education, mission schools still accounted for approximately two thirds of the Kanak school population. During the same period, there was a similar increase in numbers of Kanak children attending the mission schools: 1,524 in 1925 increasing to 3,086 in 1940.

**Table Three: Kanak School Population, 1925-45.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Total School</th>
<th>Total Kanak</th>
<th>School as %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>1,402</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>28,075</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>1,524</td>
<td>2,231</td>
<td>26,900</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>2,169</td>
<td>2,749</td>
<td>26,915</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>2,278</td>
<td>3,078</td>
<td>27,867</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>2,348</td>
<td>3,180</td>
<td>27,966</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>2,859</td>
<td>3,765</td>
<td>28,063</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>2,810</td>
<td>3,694</td>
<td>28,282</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>2,615</td>
<td>3,497</td>
<td>28,469</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>2,647</td>
<td>3,666</td>
<td>28,800</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1,058</td>
<td>2,694</td>
<td>3,752</td>
<td>28,900</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>2,572</td>
<td>3,589</td>
<td>28,984</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>1,049</td>
<td>2,468</td>
<td>3,817</td>
<td>29,368</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1,196</td>
<td>3,086</td>
<td>4,282</td>
<td>29,592</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>1,474</td>
<td>2,968</td>
<td>4,442</td>
<td>30,489</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>1,417</td>
<td>2,963</td>
<td>4,380</td>
<td>30,634</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>1,444</td>
<td>3,220</td>
<td>4,664</td>
<td>31,246</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Service des Affaires Indigènes; Brou, 1980; DornoY, 1984; Lenormand, 1953.

The combined effect of these increases was a jump of nearly 92 per cent between 1925 and 1940 in the numbers of Kanak people receiving some form of schooling. Measured against available estimates of the total Kanak population over this period, one can see an almost 50 percent increase in the percentage of Kanak people attending school. The figure increases (although the rate of increase is not constant) from 10.2 per cent in 1926 to 14.5 per cent in 1940.
These figures show that there was a marked increase in the provision of schooling to Kanak people, both in terms of actual numbers of Kanak people attending school and when the numbers receiving schooling are measured as a proportion of the total Kanak population. Conservative historians of New Caledonia describe this trend in positive terms as a movement towards the integration of the indigenous population into civil society [see, for example, Brou, 1973: p.286]. In fact, however,

There was an inadequate standard of teaching in the Kanak schools. Besides the missionaries themselves, most of the monitors and teachers in these schools were Kanaks with little or no training. Their remuneration was fixed by decree in 1923 at between 1,200 and 3,000 francs per year, that is, exactly the equivalent of the allowances given to European high school pupils. [Cited in Tchoéaoua, 1983: p.53]

The use of untrained monitors was in keeping with the very low level of instruction the Kanak schools were designed to impart. Classes were held only a few days each week and then for only a few hours. And the buildings themselves were run-down and very poorly equipped. [H. Wéa, A. Wimbé: Interviews]

Furthermore, the entire Kanak experience of schooling during this period needs to be understood not only in the context of the prevailing social order to which they were being subjected, but also in the light of attitudes being expressed about them in academic journals of the day. Roberts [1929: p.517] described Kanak people as "the lowest of the black Melanesians, infinitely more archaic and repulsive ... than the gentle tawny Polynesians, who are almost Caucasians." And Keesing [1932: p.681] was seriously entertaining the question of whether or not Melanesians were actually capable of being educated.

5.3.2 Mission Schools: Friend or Foe?

Although there was a marked increase in state-run Kanak schools in the post-conquest period, the principal provider of schooling for the Kanak people continued to be the Christian missionaries.
The missionaries' influence over the Kanak population grew dramatically during this period. By 1930, they had succeeded in gaining the allegiance of virtually the entire Kanak population. [Forman, 1982: p.44] Next to the actual churches themselves, the mission school was the main focus of missionary activity.

The Protestant mission is generally regarded as having been more committed to advancing the interests of the Kanak population. Led by Maurice Leenhardt, the Protestants established a centre for their activities on the New Caledonian mainland in 1903 at Houailou, where Kanak pastors from the Loyalty Islands known as natas had already established a foothold. From the outset, the Protestant mission adopted a strategy of placing as much control of the church as possible in the hands of the Kanak population. This applied both to teaching as well as to religious services, with a constant emphasis on developing new schools for basic instruction and for the training of new pastors and teachers. [Nerhon, 1969]

The Protestants' approach proved extremely effective and led to their church growing much more rapidly than the more-established and better-resourced Catholic church. In the 1930s, Father François Luneau recognised the need for the Catholic church to adopt the Protestant model of relating to the Kanak population. [O'Reilly, 1952] From this time until his sudden death in 1950, he led to a revival of the Catholic mission in New Caledonia, including the ordination of the first Kanak priests in 1946. [Saussol, 1969: p.122] So profound was the influence of Leenhardt and Luneau that their names, according to Métais, "resonate in even the most distant valleys, as a living emblem, as the symbol of the renaissance of the indigenous population." [Métais, 1954: p.53]

MacKenzie [1993: pp.45-8] has noted that analyses of the impact missionary education in colonial contexts tend to be polarised between two perspectives usually expressed in superlatives which, he argues, tend to be equally crude. The first sees missionary education as "an arm of colonial conquest", the second, as "an agent of social amelioration". Accounts of the work of the missionaries in New Caledonia tend to reflect this polarisation.

Those who heap unqualified praise on the missionaries in New Caledonia present them as the
saviours of the Kanak people. In doing so, they highlight the essential spirituality of Kanak people in drawing a connection between the missionaries' transformation of Kanak identity and their amelioration of Kanak social and material life. Métais[1953], for example, declares:

"The leaven of the indigenous Kanak renaissance is, and will be for a long time yet, religious life. To live, according to Melanesian thought, is essentially to have confidence in a mythical reality from which moral forms and rules arise. It is to the extent that he has faith that the Kanak recreates himself. Religious life has torn him from his desolation, his death even" [p.119].

Further, he argues that:

"... the (Kanak) resurrection is above all the product of the affective forces that missionary action has awakened and given life to" [p.123].

Kohler, by contrast, advances the view of the missionaries as agents of colonial conquest. He argues that both the Protestant and Catholic churches cooperated equally, if not in the same way, in the alienation of the Kanak people while pursuing their own interests within the colonial framework.

"By embracing the ideas of their time and thus serving, whether consciously or not, the aims of the dominant social forces, the churches formed for at least a century an element of prime importance in the colonial mechanism in New Caledonia" [Kohler, 1988: p.146].

Together with Wacquant, he defines the role of the colonial school as one of training auxiliaries to the religious and administrative authorities and "producing 'cultural half-castes' to serve as weak intermediaries between the two groups (of dominant and dominated)" [Köhler and Wacquant, 1985: p.15].

In an attempt to develop a more sophisticated perspective, Wachetine rejects the analyses of both
Métais and Kohler and Wacquant [personal communication]. Concentrating on the latter pair, he criticises the deduction that, because the missionaries were part of the colonial order therefore all their activities, including the priority they gave to schooling, were part of a one-way process of colonialism between dominant and dominated. He takes exception, for example, to the implication in Kohler and Wacquant's analysis that the early Kanak *nata* and *moniteurs* were an integral part of the strategy of colonial conquest.

Wachetine points to the Kanak preference for missionary over state schooling, and highlights the need to acknowledge agency on the part of the Kanak people. He argues that, for missionary schooling to have taken place, Kanak pupils and parents must have made a conscious decision to go along with it and play the game in the educational arena. The issue of playing the educational game is a function, according to Wachetine, of the respective dispositions of those individuals involved and of strategies adopted to defend specific interests. Thus, Kanak participation in missionary education cannot be understood by sticking to a rigid dominant-dominated dichotomy, but needs rather a study of the specific strategies of the various social groups.

The educational relationships between the missionaries and the Kanak people, Wachetine insists, embody several competing "logics" within the overall colonial logic. To view the schooling of Kanak people by the missionaries solely as a product of a "single colonial logic", he argues, has the effect of denying the conscious agency of the Kanak people themselves and it treats them as mere objects in the colonial process.

According to Wachetine, missionary schooling was a consensual arrangement between the missionaries, whose overriding aim was to "save souls" and the Kanak people, who, recognising the unfavourable *rapport de force* which was prevailing in the colony, formed strategic alliances with them.

While there is considerable merit in the importance Wachetine attaches to agency, he overstates the element of choice that underlay Kanak compliance with missionary education, particularly in the post-conquest period. In the wake of colonial conquest, in what real sense can it be said that
Kanak people did have a choice in their relationships with missionaries? PALIKA painted a very stark picture of the nature of the post-conquest choice faced by Kanak people.

"The Kanak people had to choose between dying of resignation in a reserve, being totally massacred if they mounted any armed resistance, or surviving. They chose to survive. The price that had to be paid for survival was to accept Christianity" [PALIKA, 1977: p.15].

There is no evidence that Kanak participation in missionary schools was ever part of an organised anti-colonial struggle. On the contrary, it was the lack of strategic options available to the Kanak people in the post-conquest context left Kanak people fragmented, disorganised, disorientated and despairing. With the Kanak people in this low state, the efforts of missionaries were at their most effective. Thus, the Kanak "choice" to integrate themselves into the religious and educational structures of the missionaries in the first half of this century is of quite a different order from, for example, the choice to organise armed resistance to the colonial forces.

Missionary activities, and particularly their schools, placed them in a position where Kanak people would defer to their judgement not only on matters of spirituality, but also on aspects of custom and politics. Because of the missionaries' basic acceptance of the colonial-order, the Kanak allegiance to them formed the foundation of a protracted period of acquiescence. Whatever the motivation of the missionaries, this was precisely the demeanour desired by the colonial authorities in their push for hegemonic control over the Kanak people.

5.4 Applying the Theoretical Model to Post-Conquest Schooling

5.4.1 Individual Aspirations

Schooling in the post-conquest period was implicitly connected to the limited favours which were given to selected Kanaks (besides those who were chosen by the colonial authorities to be
administrative "chiefs" of their tribe). For example, the October 1932 decree granting French citizenship rights to Kanak returned servicemen was limited to those who could read and write the French language. Similarly, in 1934, exemption from the Kanak poll tax was granted to those who worked as monitors and taught French in tribal schools. These policies represent the beginning of a colonial cooption strategy. However, the rewards were so limited and offered to so few people that it can only be considered cooption in its weakest sense.

To the general Kanak population of this era, schooling did not represent a mechanism for achieving any significant material gain, whether for themselves or for their wider family or community. The absence of any possibility to advance on to higher learning, even for the highest Kanak achievers, prevented schools from providing an avenue for Kanak social mobility in colonial society. Neither did schooling significantly affect the position of people within the remnants of their own society. With the colonial schools being so overwhelmingly European in their focus, preparation for life in Kanak society was still largely the product of ioneer.

Such a system of schooling might have been expected to provoke a legitimacy crisis. In post-conquest New Caledonia, however, no such crisis eventuated for three main reasons. First, the schooling being provided for Kanak people did represent an improvement, albeit a slight one, on that which was available in the pre-conquest period, as noted above. Secondly, Kanak aspirations had sunk very low in the wake of their defeat, and the associated loss of their economic base, their politico-military authority and their cultural integrity. They expected no better and, as a conquered people, had lost their power to resist in any event. Finally, schooling for Kanak people was presented as a means to become civilised in European and Christian ways. As it was never promoted as a means of social mobility, there was no scope for a mismatch between the promise and the actual achievement of Kanak schooling.
5.4.2 The Development Function

The formula for economic development that France adopted for its New Caledonian colony, to the extent that there was one, did not include the indigenous population. Although Kanak labour was requisitioned through the forced labour programmes, the wage labour force was mainly comprised of immigrant workers. As noted above, what was required of the Kanak was their land. Virtually all of this had been seized during the conquest process and, with insurrection no longer a viable option for the Kanak people, continued stability would see it remain in the hands of the colonial forces, whether state or private.

The forced labour programme required no transfer of skills or knowledge to Kanak people, other than the ability to understand the orders they were given. Thus, there was no developmental imperative for schools to give Kanak people anything other than a rudimentary knowledge of French.

5.4.3 The Citizenship Function

According to colonial ideology, European and Kanak societies embody the civilised and the uncivilised respectively. By this account, colonialism is a liberating process through which an inferior uncivilised society is introduced to and schooled in civilised ways. Until this transition is complete, and to the extent that the Kanak remains uncivilised, repressive measures are needed in order to protect civilised European society. Together with Christianity, schooling is one of the main mechanisms for achieving civilisation amongst colonised peoples.

This is why the citizenship function of schooling is so important in the post-conquest context. As the colonial process moved beyond its most brutal phase of conquest, the Kanak people had to be encouraged either to forget or to develop new and more positive perceptions of the dispossession and oppression to which they had been subjected, even though there were constant reminders of their status as a conquered people, such as having very little access to land and being subjected to
the Native Law, forced labour and poll taxes.

By their substandard condition and their very presence in increasing numbers in post-conquest New Caledonia, Native schools told Kanak people that they were in need of being civilised. Kanak people were to view things French as intrinsically superior to things Kanak. The citizenship function of native schools was to make Kanak people view themselves not as French but as potentially French. They were to aspire to emulate the civilised ways of the French. This required integrating themselves into colonial society at its lowest level. The first step in this process was to give themselves completely to the civilising influence of the schools and missionaries.

For Kanak people in post-conquest New Caledonia, therefore, there were two aspects to the colonial definition of citizenship, a perspective that they were too weakened to contest. First, it involved Kanak people rejecting rebellion as both futile and, even if it were to be successful, undesirable in the sense that it would amount to Kanak people depriving themselves of the civilising benefits of French colonialism. More than this, however, Kanak citizenship also meant a willing acceptance of the appropriateness of their place at the bottom of the colonial hierarchy. They were to define themselves according to colonial values and measure themselves according to colonial standards. A key element of this was for the Kanak people to perceive themselves as dependent on the tutelage of the missionaries and those elements of the state which were devoted to this purpose, principally the native schools.

5.4.4 The Allocation Function

The allocation function of education, as applied in this thesis, represents the interface between the capacity of an education system to meet social imperatives and its ability to realise individual aspirations. As has been shown, Kanak education in the post-conquest period provided little or no possibility for individual advancement. Therefore, with the education system oriented entirely towards meeting social imperatives, particularly the citizenship dimension of these imperatives, it
had no allocation function to perform for Kanak people. The legitimation of social inequalities which the allocation function of education would normally provide was not necessary in this context. It was derived not from the apparent fairness and equality of the education system, but rather from the legacy of conquest. That is, Kanak participation in colonial institutions such as education was the product of their lack of choice and inability to organise resistance.

Kanak people had very few options in the post-conquest period. The absence of any form of Kanak resistance despite the repressive laws to which they were subjected, coupled with the documented increase in Kanak rates of attendance of the colonial schools during this period indicates a tacit acceptance of colonial logic. Certainly, the person who history records as being the greatest European defender of Kanak rights at this time, Pastor Maurice Leenhardt, actively promoted this course amongst the Kanak people at the same time as he pleaded with the colonial authorities to be more lenient in their dealings with them. This pattern of accepting and learning to live with colonial dictates continued to influence the pattern of colonial relationships which developed in the post-war period.
Chapter Six

Reinforcing French Hegemony in New Caledonia: Education Colonialism and Kanak Resistance From 1946 to 1969

6.1 Introduction

The immediate post-war period saw France adopt major changes in its policy towards the Kanak people in New Caledonia. The Native Law, which had dictated the nature of the relationship between the colonial authorities, settler society and the Kanak people since the early days of French conquest, was dismantled. Gone were the capitation tax, the forced labour programmes and the legalised confinement of Kanak people on reserves. In less than a decade, virtually all of the legislation was removed that had formally denied Kanak people of political or economic equality with the settler population.

Brou has claimed unconvincingly that the liberties Kanak people obtained in the immediate post-war period should be seen as the product of "a logical evolution, slow yet methodical, in the process of being realised before 1939, and that the war served only to retard" [Brou, 1975: p.272]. But in understating the extent of the post-war policy change, Brou at least provides a counter-balance to those who understate the continuities between the pre- and post-war periods.

The post-war liberalisation of colonial policy in New Caledonia was possible only because of the way in which the colonial relationship had been shaped in the preceding period. Kanak people had been conditioned away from resisting French colonial authority or even aspiring to achieve self-determination. They had instead been led to believe that their future lay in working for political and economic advancement within the framework established by France.
While the immediate post-conquest period saw both Kanak and colonial interests seeking to avoid violent revolt, the post-war period was one in which both sides sought the integration of Kanak people into colonial society. In this context, education assumed a new importance. It held the promise of providing for the transfer of skills to the Kanak community. And to the individual members of that community, it represented one of the only non-church vehicles for social mobility.

6.2 Post-War Liberalisation and French Colonial Hegemony

The liberalisation of policy towards the Kanak people in the post-war period advanced French colonial hegemony in New Caledonia. This was not, however, the reason for the changes. Rather, they came about as the result of a global trend away from systems of classical colonialism, as symbolised by the emphasis on human rights and self-determination in the creation of the United Nations. More particularly, the changes in New Caledonia stemmed from the decision of the Fourth French Republic to liberalise France's relationship with all of its colonies.

The newly formed republic replaced its colonial empire with what it called a French Union, under which New Caledonia became an "overseas territory". The new political arrangement was based on a declared commitment to "equal rights and responsibilities, without racial or religious distinction" and was described in the preamble to the 1946 constitution in the following terms:

"The French Union is composed of nations and peoples who share or coordinate their resources and their efforts to develop their respective civilisations to enhance their well-being and assure their security. True to its traditional mission, France intends to bring the peoples over whom it has assumed responsibility, to the freedom to administer themselves and democratically manage their own affairs: excluding all arbitrary systems of colonisation, it guarantees to everyone equal access to the public service and the individual or collective exercise of the rights and freedoms proclaimed or confirmed above" [Cited in Faberon, 1992: p.5].
Within New Caledonia, the liberalisation of policy towards the Kanak people also corresponded to the sentiment that was generalised amongst the Kanak people, largely as a result of their wartime experience. New Caledonia, which remained loyal to the Free French forces of de Gaulle, served as a principal staging post for the allied war effort in the Pacific. A total of 50,000 mostly American troops (almost as many as the islands' resident population) were stationed there [Christnacht, 1990: p.18]. The levels of equality the American army showed amongst black and white soldiers and the wage rates at which it employed Kanak workers were hitherto unknown in New Caledonia and remain to this day fond memories for those Kanak people who experienced this period [See testimonies in Dornoy, 1984: p.35 and Raluy, 1990: p.99]

In a petition presented to French authorities in November 1945 (see Appendix One), Kanak returned servicemen requested "the improvement of their social, economic, cultural and political conditions". The petitioners asked that Kanak people be "liberated from an outdated and, too often, oppressive and unjust regime that tends to keep them in a morally, intellectually and economically inferior condition". They called on France "to preserve, in line with the ideals of France's colonising mission, the old indigenous society to which they belong and outside which they could only be uprooted in their own land."

The petition provides an insight into the relationship between the Kanak people and the colonial administration. At the same time as it seeks "improvements", it also declares in terms that go well beyond the requirements of diplomatic etiquette, the Kanak people's "unfailing attachment, loyalty and pride in being French". It even goes so far as to remark that in their contribution to "the liberation of the mother country", Kanak people had "paid for the mistakes committed by their ancestors".

This declaration, like the many similar ones made by Kanak political representatives in the decades to follow, shows the extent of the advance of French colonial hegemony in New Caledonia. Kanak people had come to see their future as remaining an integral part of France. Rather than seeking to overturn the colonial structure, Kanak people aimed to improve their position within colonial
society. In so doing, their dealings with the French administration assumed either tacitly or explicitly, the legitimacy of French colonial rule.

Commentators at the time recognised the extent to which Kanak people had acquiesced to colonial authority. One writer noted that, apart from St Pierre and Miquelon, New Caledonia was the only French colony with no risk of nationalist revolt.

"It seems that the repressions of the nineteenth century have exterminated even the idea of revolt" [Le Calédonien. 21 July 1953]

In the same vein, Métais remarked:

"The struggle remains 'pacific' and the white never appears in it, other than as something to mimic, to imitate; no latent conflict, not the slightest hint of myths of rediscovered power and domination, like those which appear in cargo cults" [Métais, 1953: p.123-4].

Kanak politics in the post-war period was moderate and reformist. Kanak people participated in a political, economic and social context that was determined by France. They made demands of that system and sought to effect changes within it. Kanak reformism meant that France had reached the stage where it no longer needed to adopt specially designed measures of coercion and repression in exerting its authority over Kanak people. Similarly, Kanak moderation left France in a position where it was able to meet - if not in full, then certainly to a large degree - the demands of the Kanak people, without jeopardising its own political and economic interests.

6.3 Missionaries, Education and Kanak Political Integration

Kanak integration into New Caledonia's colonial political institutions was intimately connected
with Kanak schooling and, in particular, with the relationship between the Kanak people and the principal providers of their schooling, the missionaries. This applied both to Kanak participation in political groupings and to their gaining of the franchise.

On 22 August 1945, a year before the entire Kanak population were to gain citizenship through the new constitution, the French parliament extended voting rights to certain categories of Kanak people. A total of 1,144 returned servicemen, chiefs, pastors and school monitors, who comprised 11 per cent of the electoral roll, became the first Kanak people to acquire the right to vote for the colony's deputy in the French parliament [Brou, 1982: p.9]. To the extent that such a distinction can be made, the former two categories comprised those who had demonstrated a loyalty to the state, while the latter two represented those chosen by the church.

The early 1940s had seen the emergence of some left-wing political tendencies amongst unionists in the settler population, particularly around the Social Progress party, which was a branch of the Soviet-aligned French Communist Party. However, it was not until January 1946, with the launch of the Caledonian Communist Party (PCC) that a concerted effort was made to involve Kanak people in a political party. With references to "slave-drivers" and calls for equal rights, it struck a chord with Kanak people, and the PCC grew very rapidly [Thompson and-Adloff, 1971: p.277, Dornoy, 1984: pp.154-6 and Fleury Trongadgo interview].

The missionaries were alarmed by the growing communist influence. Perceiving it as a threat to their own privileged access to the hearts and minds of Kanak people, they demonstrated the power of their own influence by mobilising their flock into creating alternative associations. Founded in 1947, these new groupings were to serve as vehicles through which Kanak people could press for political reform while remaining within the missionary orbit. For the Catholics, Father Luneau initiated the creation of *l'Union des Indigènes Calédoniens Amis de la Liberté dans l'Ordre* (UICALO) and, soon after, Pastor Raymond Charlemagne oversaw the launch of its Protestant counterpart, *l'Association des Indigènes Calédoniens et Loyaltiens Français* (AICLF).

In its founding policy statement, UICALO called for the creation of "freedom committees" in the
tribes to oppose the communist party's "agents of darkness".

"The flag of freedom that we are raising is not that of revolt. It can fly happily beneath the one with three colours (the French tricolour)" [Cited in Ataba, 1984: p.185].

The founding president of AICLF was later to receive the French Légion d'Honneur in recognition, according to the official declaration of the High Commissioner in presenting the award, of his anti-communist efforts [See Tchoeaeoua, 1983: p.69].

The move was a success. Kanak support for the communists fell away rapidly and the church-sponsored associations soon became established as representative of Kanak opinion. However, that opinion remained inexpressible through the ballot box. Such was the timidity of the two groups that neither was even advocating universal suffrage. This was eventually gained in May 1951 in the same indirect way that Kanak people acquired French citizenship; through an act of parliament designed for France's African colonies which was also deemed applicable in New Caledonia [Connell, 1987: p.243]. With the conservative vote split, Maurice Lenormand, a European, won the July 1951 election to be New Caledonia's deputy (political representative) in the French parliament largely though the support of the newly-enfranchised Kanak population (who made up almost half of the electorate) and in the process acquired the pejorative label "the Kanak deputy".

The closest either AICLF or UICALO had come to supporting universal suffrage was the motion passed by the third UICALO congress in September 1949 calling for voting rights to be extended to any Kanak who could read and write French [Cited in Brou, 1982: p.15]. Their choice of this educationally linked criterion is an indication of how widely accepted the view was that Kanak people had no basic right to participate in the electoral process. Rather, it was a privilege to be earned through a European-defined schooling system. At the time, although most (but not all) Kanak people could use a French as an oral language, it was a very basic form and was largely restricted to use in dealings with Europeans [see Rivierre, 1985: pp.1706-7]. Many fewer Kanak people would have been literate in French.

In 1953, the forces which had mobilised to support Lenormand - essentially AICLF, UICALO and
the more liberal sector of the settler population - launched a political party, the *Union Calédonienne* (UC). The UC was to dominate New Caledonian politics for two decades, with Lenormand as the territory's elected representative in France until 1964 when Rock Pidjot, the Kanak president of the party took his place. Organised around the slogan "two colours, but only one people", the UC campaigned for a high degree of autonomy from France. However, it remained firmly opposed to independence until the late 1970s.

In 1958, with the creation of the fifth French Republic under President deGaulle, plebiscites were organised in all France's overseas territories (but not departments) offering four choices ranging from immediate independence (which involved a correspondingly immediate end to French aid and was chosen only by Guinea) to becoming a French department [Faberon, 1992: pp.6-7]. Despite prevailing conflicts, the UC joined the conservative forces and succeeding in securing a 98 percent vote against independence, which led eventually to New Caledonia retaining its status as a French overseas territory. In its third congress, held in the wake of the referendum, the party "solemnly" declared that it would:

"never ask for independence for New Caledonia and (would) exclude from its ranks any person who did ask for it" [Cited in Tchoeaoua, 1983: p.73].

The UC was able to secure some valuable reforms in favour of the Kanak people, such as the right to family allowances (in 1955), holiday pay (in 1956) and provisions for accident compensation and a minimum wage (in 1958) [Noted in Gabriel and Kermel, 1985: p.96]. And its electoral success enabled it to hold at bay the conservative big-business interests centred in Nouméa. By the late 1960s, however, frustration at the slow pace of change led to the emergence of a new generation of Kanak radicalism and the beginnings of the modern independence movement.

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11 Caledonian Union
6.4 Kanak Schooling: Universal Provision, Widespread Failure and the Myth of Meritocracy

The post-war decades saw a consensus reign between the colonial authorities, Kanak representatives and the more liberal elements in the settler community, on the desirability of providing schooling for the Kanak people. The first UC policy statement, issued in 1953, placed a strong emphasis on Kanak education. It called for:

"The expansion of the network of private and public native schools, the application of the principle of free access for all children to their nearest primary school; the creation of an official native artisanal school and a school of native arts; the establishment of a medical school open to all, European and native, for the training of hospital personnel necessary for territorial sanitation; the provision of study grants for native children for the Agricultural School of Port-Laguerre, the Koumac Boarding School, the Nouméa vocational school and all specialised schools, public or private, located outside the children's place of residence; the recruitment of five teaching families, without general responsibilities, to assist the Native Schools Inspector and to control, orient and help the native monitors in their task; the observation of the principle of compulsory education - the chiefs to be made responsible for assuring its application" [Cited in Tchoeaua, 1983: p.69].

The post-war period saw a rapid expansion of schooling for Kanak children. As shown in Figure Three, the number of Kanak children enrolled in school increased by 12.8 per cent (4,664 to 5,262) from 1946 to 1948. Over the same two-year period, the number of Kanak schools increased by 34.2 per cent from 79 to 106. Of the Kanak schools in 1948, 44 (41.5%) were public, 37 (34.9%) were Catholic, and 25 (23.6%) were Protestant [Service de l'Enseignement Publique]. Although this still left as many as 60 percent of Kanak children under the age of 15 in 1948 receiving no schooling, the number was steadily dropping. By 1953, primary schooling had been made free and compulsory and Kanak children were no longer excluded from state primary schools [Dornoy, 1984: p.82]. The phasing out of native schools began in 1950 and ended with the closure of the last one in 1961 [Brou, 1980: p.97]. In 1956 the doors of public secondary schools were opened
to Kanak people for the first time [Lyons, 1986: p.104].

**Figure Three: Kanak School Population.**

Numbers of Kanak children attending native schools from 1945 to 1960.

For many years, however, only a small number of Kanak children were able to earn their place in this higher level of schooling. Of those who did, most found themselves unable to compete effectively with their European counterparts and experienced very high failure and drop-out rates. It was not until 1962 that the first Kanak, Boniface Ounou, passed the baccalaureat exam, a prerequisite to entering a tertiary institution. The first Kanak to receive a university degree graduated in 1967 [Bwenando: January, 1986].

Most Kanak pupils did not advance beyond their local primary school, which provided a low-level and sub-standard service through untrained and unsupported Kanak monitors. All schooling was totally Eurocentric. And at the same time, the education system was covered in a veneer of meritocracy. The combined effect was that the colonial regime was better able to use Kanak schooling to reinforce its own hegemony; a development that was to have far-reaching and highly destructive consequences for the Kanak people.

In 1945, in a move to stop cronyism in public service employment, the primary school leaving
certificate, Certificat d'Études Primaires (CEP) was set as an objective entry qualification [Guiart, 1983: p.114]. As late as 1959, however, no public native school apart from the Nouvillle school that had been established in 1950 to train Kanak school monitors [Métais, 1953: p.119], was preparing Kanak pupils for this exam. This function was left to some of the mission schools to perform.

6.4.1 Post-war Attitudes to Kanak Education

In 1959, Guiart identified the two fundamental challenges facing New Caledonia as economic development and education. "Education today", he wrote "is in a state of growing anarchy, without a doctrine and without a plan for the future" [Guiart, 1959: p.17]. He believed the problem stemmed from the legacy of an education system that was designed to give two completely different types of schooling: one for the Europeans which was to be identical to that offered in metropolitan France, the other, a second-rate system for the Kanak people which aimed to do little more than teach them the basics of French. He declared:

"Education should be the mould of the society of tomorrow, of a society without racial discrimination; today it is the last institution through which the old order is prolonging itself" [Guiart, 1959: p.17].

Guiart was advocating the adaptation of the school to Kanak (and New Caledonian European) needs. In that regard he was looking forward to the printing of the first geography text to deal with the local environment. He was not the first to raise the issue of adapting the school system to meet Kanak needs, and it is a call which is continuing in the nineties. It is instructive to consider, however, what kind of adaptations were being advocated and the reasons they were being promoted.

Lenormand, leader of the UC with the electoral support of the vast majority of Kanak voters, advanced the view that:
"The native seems almost resistant to (quasi-réfractaire) anything concerning mathematics, but he appears gifted in other intellectual areas: eloquence, story-telling, carving, ornamentation, medicine, music. His abilities in agriculture and fishing should also be mentioned.

The native school should, therefore, deliver schooling which has been brought down to the level of the Melanesian's own intelligence, and adapted to his particular mental capacity and to his aptitude at certain techniques. This would make it possible to elicit a contribution from him which would be more helpful for the collective effort and make his contact progressive with Western culture and civilisation" [Lenormand, 1953: p.586].

These racist (or, at best, patronising) sentiments can also be found in Lenormand's ringing endorsement of the policy of using only French as the language of instruction in schools.

"It goes without saying that French must remain the lingua franca, for it is the language of civilisation and it remains understood that in the schools the various subjects must be taught in French as in the past, because words corresponding to our techniques do not exist in the native languages.... By the wealth of its vocabulary compared to these languages, French will remain the language of scientific and literary knowledge and the instrument of contact with civilisation" [Lenormand, 1953: p.587].

Lenormand's idea of adaptations of schooling to benefit Kanak pupils and the Kanak society was to place a greater emphasis on vocational training particularly in trades, agriculture and indigenous arts. This view was very widely held at the time among liberal Europeans and Kanak. The effects of it, however, were to pursue Kanak people for decades as they were channelled in increasing numbers into dead-end streams at school which acquired the disparaging title of voie de garage.

Lenormand and other reformers were also concerned to ensure that education and training could increase the number of Kanak people in the public service, beyond the one role where they were heavily represented, that of monitor. This required a primary education which would prepare Kanak children for secondary schooling. The difficulty was, however, that in attempting to adapt
schooling in ways that were perceived to correspond to the (low-level) abilities and interests of Kanak people, the reformers ended up curtailing Kanak educational opportunities. Even though they were not arguing for these adaptations at the expense of other opportunities for higher level study, this was the effect.

Like Lenormand, the orientation of the UICALO, AICLF and UC policies on things Kanak was essentially welfarist. Besides decrying pre-war injustices, their main calls were for greater recognition and protection of Kanak custom and traditional authority, and better health and education services for Kanak people [Tchoéaoua, 1983: p.67, Dornoy, 1984: pp.156-9].

What was meant by custom was, of course, the version which had been fashioned by missionary moulding and colonial decree. And when it came to the provision of health and education services, no serious consideration was given to areas of customary knowledge and practice such as úne. Traditional Kanak health and education practices were generally considered to be obstacles to progress, rather than dimensions to be reinforced [Dornoy, 1984: p.158]. These were areas in which improvements could only be effected by the one-way transfer of knowledge and skills from European to Kanak.

Kanak attitudes to education were much less straight-forward. Perceiving European schooling to be the sole means of obtaining the kind of wealth and power evident in European society, they encouraged their children to work hard at school and take advantage of the kinds of opportunities that they themselves never had. At the same time, however, they expected úne to continue to function. Kanak children, therefore, had the pressure of being expected to function and compete effectively in systems designed according to European-defined values, as well as being steeped in the behaviours and attitudes appropriate to their roles in Kanak society.

This tension is made all the more pronounced by the contradictions between the values and attitudes around which colonial schooling is organised, and those assumed and encouraged in úne. Wéa identifies such a contradiction in the "individualism, egocentrism and auto-satisfaction" of French education. According to Wéa [1977: pp.34-36], these attitudes, which are essential to
success in the competitive, exam-oriented French school system, equate with the Iaai concept of ka inya thibi, (living only for oneself). Such an attitude and the behaviours it generates pose a threat to the collective form of social relations upon which Kanak society is based. Ka inya thibi is, therefore, emphatically discouraged through ûne, and as an expression is employed usually as a form of censure.

The consequences of this contradiction between traditional Kanak education and European schooling have become a cause of concern for many Kanak elders. As one old man has remarked:

"The young people have school now, but they have forgotten the Kanak culture. They are like the balls of a bull which swing between his legs. With the elders, they say that they have the education and custom of the Europeans; and with the whites, they say that they have Kanak custom. But they know nothing with the Europeans and they know nothing in the tribe"

[Philippe Paado. Quoted in Kohler and Pillon, 1982: p.3].

Another remark by a Kanak elder in Ouvéa in 1964 has become legendary in part because it shows the incompatibility of colonial schooling and ûne. In the process of lecturing a group of youngsters on the error of their ways, the old man (who, like many of his generation, had limited French) repeatedly said "pas d'école" in French instead of the common Iaai expression "ebé lna ûne" (ebé meaning "no"). What he meant to say was that the person was behaving an a way contrary to that which is expected of a Kanak. However, by using the French word école, he conveyed a quite different meaning.

6.4.2 Kanak Monitors, Colonial Bulldozers.

Responsibility for teaching in the native schools lay on the shoulders of a contingent of Kanak monitors. They were untrained, unsupervised and left to work in impossible conditions. Hninô Wéa was among the first generation of products - first as a pupil, then a monitor and eventually a school principal - of the post-war school system for Kanak people.
In 1960, Wéa was employed as a monitor in the Bourail Public School in the tribe of Wawé, with a population at the time of 56 [ITSEE, 1990: p.28]. He was 18 years old and his own education had consisted of: six years of schooling in the Protestant-run Gossannah Mission School, which only operated for two days per week (Mondays and Fridays) and even on these days, large amounts of time were spent gardening; four years taught by an untrained Kanak monitor (Pierre Kaigatr) from Maré at the Gossannah Public School, as part of the school's first intake after it opened in 1951; and finally, five years at the Nouville Public School where he passed his CEP.

Arriving in Wawé to be in sole charge of the school, he found that the previous monitor had already left, leaving nothing but a few old textbooks in a cupboard.

"I was given the job after finishing my CEP, but had been given no training. I just taught out of what I had in my head, my own personal knowledge."

No accommodation had been arranged, so Wéa had to ask the local chief for a place to stay. He had been given no introduction to the school community.

"When I arrived, even the parents didn't know that I was coming. When I arrived, I went to see the parents to tell them that I had come to teach at the school. I didn't even know who I was supposed to see in the tribe. I just landed there. I knew no one. I didn't even know the area. I was a total stranger there. I am Kanak, but I was only 18 and I knew nothing at all about that region. I just had to do the best I could."

The school building consisted of one run-down classroom.

"When it's a classroom in the tribe, it's not really a classroom, it was a real pig-sty. The walls were made of earth with big holes in them. There was a big wasp nest in the room. If you looked up, you could see the sky through the big holes in the roof. There were large areas where the straw roofing material had come off. We could not hold classes while it was raining
because the water just came straight through. The local council was responsible for maintenance, but the only upkeep that was ever done came from the parents themselves. It was all free labour from the tribe."

In 1948, a thoroughgoing consultation was held between those responsible for state provision of Kanak schooling and their missionary (both Catholic and Protestant) counterparts. As a result, a clearly defined curriculum for Kanak schools was elaborated. It was to place greater emphasis on local geography, hygiene and agriculture. Lenormand expressed the hope that:

"The application of this curriculum in every native school in the territory will make it possible to organise studies around a final exam, thereby equalising the level of instruction among all the institutions of native schooling" [Lenormand, 1953: p.584].

However, language barriers and lack of training and supervision mitigated against the realisation of this objective, and very little learning took place. Wéa's school/class had 15 pupils, aged between five and twelve years old. French was the language of instruction. This was because not only were all teachers and monitors required to teach in French, but Neku (the local language) and Iaai (Wéa's mother tongue) were mutually incomprehensible. This was a source of immense frustration for the young monitor.

"When they start school, most of the kids knew no French at all. Almost all the children couldn't speak one word. They'd all come in with their heads hanging down. Kids do that because they are scared - scared of the monitor, or scared of coming up against a foreign language and a strange situation they're not used to.

I was in a hopeless situation. I couldn't teach properly in French and I couldn't even translate it because I didn't know the language of Bourail. If I was back in Ouvéa, I could have translated from French to Iaai. I just had to do what I could."

In 1949, Lenormand described Kanak schooling as "still most rudimentary", with a very modest
budget and having difficulties recruiting teaching personnel. Neither the curriculum nor the rules of inspection had been fully established [Lenormand, 1953: p.584]. Eleven years later, the system was still in disarray. And the aims of the 1948 consultation were far from being realised.

In the year he spent at Wawé, Wéa received not one visit from an inspector. He tested his pupils every week and discussed their progress with their parents, but this procedure was never reviewed. The only contact that he and other monitors had with the authorities was an occasional visit from a gendarme.

In this regard, Guiart speaks highly of the gendarmes. He notes that, despite their lack of educational expertise, it was at their insistence that a number of tribes previously without schools had them built. And he judged the gendarmes' visits to and encouragement of isolated monitors to be more effective than the rare and fleeting visits of the primary school inspectors [Guiart, 1959: pp.18-19]. As a Kanak monitor, Wéa interpreted the presence of the gendarme differently. He believed their main purpose was to simply ensure that the monitors had not abandoned their posts.

It was not unusual for this to happen.

"I had a friend who completely left his school because he was so isolated, in Hienghène. He just couldn't stand it any longer. I was lucky where I was because I had good relations with the people of the tribe and the young people. That's how I was able to last there despite all the problems, because there's always a good ambience amongst Kanaks. That's what gave me the courage to carry on. Money was secondary; it was being with other Kanaks that mattered most to me."

In fact, Wéa received no wages until September, despite making several trips to Nouméa to see the authorities. In the end, it was only resolved when a Kanak politician from Ouvéa (Michel Kauma) paid Wéa out of his own pocket and then took up his case with the authorities.

After a year at the newly opened teacher training college in Nouville when he earned a teaching certificate, Certificat d'Aptitude Pédagogique (CAP), Wéa was appointed principal of l'École
Pilote de Mou on Lifou. He spent one year there in the embarrassing situation of being a 21 year-old in charge of eight Kanak monitors, some of whom had twenty years experience before taking up the post of principal of the Public School of Hwadrilla, in his mother's tribe of origin on his home island of Ouvéa. Wéa was recognised as being quite exceptional and, as such, his ability to cope with the challenges of being a monitor in those conditions were probably atypical.

Guiart noted that, whereas the older generation of Kanak monitors compensated for their lack of training through a totally professional devotion to duty, the young generation (that of Wéa) that replaced them were very unstable.

"Ill-prepared for a role which has become suddenly more complex, they are having difficulty adapting to the foreign villages they are sent to, are not finding their place in the local community where they know only the children and, being neither supervised nor encouraged, are turning to drink [Guiart, 1959: p.17]."

Wéa likens a monitor to a bulldozer.

"A monitor is lower than a teacher. It is like a bulldozer. Its purpose is to clear the ground, to prepare it, to confront the Kanaks and to try to suffocate other Kanaks who have evolved. Monitors are only trained to the level of the CEP and then they go into the tribes to do the work of a bulldozer. Excuse me for using this term, but it is the most accurate one I know."

6.5 Applying the Theoretical Model to Post-War Kanak Schooling

The post-war period was a time of passive rather than active integration. Formal barriers to Kanak participation in colonial society were removed and, still under the tutelage of the mission churches, Kanak people became involved at the points where they were permitted to do so. Apart from the quickly marginalised PCC, there was no radical critique of the foundations of society as it existed and certainly no questioning of the role of France as the ultimate authority in the territory. It was in this context that Kanak people came to be fully integrated into the colonial education
system. In the absence of a broader critique of colonial relations in New Caledonia, it is not surprising that no radical critique of colonial education emerged.

The citizenship function of colonial schooling was never at issue. France was implicitly, and often explicitly, accepted as the cradle of civilisation and culture which, through schooling, Kanak people were privileged to come into contact with. Even, or perhaps especially, people like Lenormand who were acknowledged by Kanak and European alike as being the strongest advocates of Kanak interests, openly promoted this conception of the citizenship function of colonial schooling.

During this period, the colonial economy continued to rely on mostly immigrant labour. Some Kanak people did join the workforce at the lowest levels, but a large majority of them continued to live as subsistance farmers. Since there was no great need for the transfer of work-related skills to Kanak people, there were no development imperatives influencing the shape of colonial education policies.

The aspirations among Kanak people for individual advancement through education were very low. Only a handful of individuals were able to use the education system in order to secure any significant improvement in their social standing in colonial society. For many in the post-war generation who were heavily influenced by the missionary message, the lifting of the formal, repressive restrictions upon them represented such an improvement that they did not have aspirations much beyond what could be delivered by gradual reforms.

Because their aspirations were so low, there was very little tension between what they desired and what the system could deliver. The fundamental legitimacy of the colonial order, let alone the colonial education system, was never threatened. For this reason, the allocation function of colonial education was never tested.

As will be outlined in Chapter Eight, it was precisely this low level of expectations and aspirations among Kanak people that the new generation of Kanak activists that first emerged in 1969 set out to confront.
Chapter Seven

Kanak Educational Under-achievement: The Statistical Evidence

7.1 Introduction

Before proceeding with an analysis of the rise of the modern Kanak independence movement, it is important to consider some quantitative measures of Kanak educational achievement, particularly as they compare with those of other ethnic groups in the territory. Rather than being broken into pieces corresponding with the chronological organisation of the chapters of this thesis, these data are more profitably analysed as a whole. In this way, clear judgements can be made about historical trends in educational achievement levels, which will serve as an important backdrop to the issues discussed in Chapters Eight to Ten.

The most instructive assessment of Kanak educational achievement can be found by comparing the performances of Kanak pupils with those of the dominant European group. This limits the distorting effect of inflation qualification in the analysis of achievement trends. It should be noted, however, that the "Other" ethnic category is not entirely homogenous. The four principal ethnic groups which comprise it show significant variations. Indonesians and Vietnamese achieve at high levels, with the latter outperforming Europeans in some measures. Tahitians and Wallisians, on the other hand, perform poorly, the Wallisians sometimes doing worse than the Kanak students.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first examines primary schooling in New Caledonia, which until very recently was a major mechanism of selection and exclusion, particularly for Kanak children. The second section deals with the first cycle of secondary schooling as well as the "short" or vocational streams. Finally, there is a discussion of the higher
levels of secondary schooling, the "long" cycles organised around the lycées. Except where numbers are too low to be significant, the year 1965 will be taken as the historical starting point, since statistics on educational achievement in New Caledonia prior to this date did not include a regular breakdown by ethnic group.

7.2 Primary Schooling

In line with the French system, New Caledonian school pupils pursue a unified stream of primary schooling until the end of the year known as cours moyen 2, the equivalent of standard 4. From this point, they used to be channelled in different directions. Those not intending to advance to secondary school would be channelled into a stream known as Fin d'Etudes Primaires\textsuperscript{12} (FEP). This branch would prepare them for the exam for the school-leaving qualification, Certificat d'Études Primaires\textsuperscript{13} (CEP). Most pupils would expect to sit the CEP at the age of fourteen was the minimum school-leaving age.

Although it did not open the door to secondary school, the CEP could be supplemented by other training such as vocational courses or teaching certificates. In ascending value, qualifications for teachers included: the monitors' certificate, Certificat d'Aptitude aux fonctions de Moniteur (CAM); the basic teaching certificate, Certificat Elémentaire d'Aptitude Pédagogique (CEAP); and the advanced teaching certificate, Certificat d'Aptitude Pédagogique (CAP), which was sat by people who already held high level school qualifications.

In the immediate post-war period, the CEP was a valuable qualification in New Caledonia. It was set as the prerequisite for entry to the public service. It was not unusual for people to remain at school to the age of 18 (as in the case of Hninô Wéa) and sometimes well into their twenties to obtain this qualification. More often, though, pupils would fail to obtain it and leave school with no formal qualification.

\textsuperscript{12} Translation: End of Primary Studies
\textsuperscript{13} Translation: Certificate of Primary Studies
7.2.1 The Devaluation of the CEP

However, as growing numbers of pupils passed their CEP at increasingly younger ages, it came to lose much of its value. By 1966, for example, public primary schools had stopped employing monitors whose highest qualification was the CEP [Bruel, 1981], although church schools pursued a more flexible recruitment policy. To compete more effectively for employment, growing numbers of pupils chose to bypass the primary school leaving certificate and continue their education by attending secondary school. This could only be done by successfully completing a public exam for entry to the sixth grade (the equivalent of form one in the New Zealand system) which is the first year of secondary school. Unless they had repeated a class, students would normally sat this exam at the age of eleven, at the end of their year in cours moyen 2.

Figure Four shows the number of European students who sat the respective exams between 1965 and 1978. Figure Five shows the equivalent pattern for Kanak students. Each graph shows a pronounced trend towards sitting the secondary school entrance exam. There are two significant differences between the Kanak and European graphs. First, 1965 was the last year that the number of Europeans sitting the CEP exceeded the number sitting the 6th grade entrance exam. For the Kanak pupils, there was still a majority sitting the CEP in 1974. Secondly, the numbers of Kanak students sitting the CEP was still tending to increase through the 1970s, whereas for European students, the number was in decline.
FIGURE FOUR:

Numbers of European students in New Caledonia sitting CEP exam and exam for entry to 6th grade between 1965 and 1978.


FIGURE FIVE:

Numbers of Kanak students in New Caledonia sitting CEP exam and exam for entry to 6th grade between 1965 and 1977.

A more recent assessment of the paths taken by pupils at the end of *cours moyen* 2 is shown in Table Four, which comes from a study of all CM2 pupils at the 46 primary schools in greater Nouméa which was conducted at the end of the 1983 school year [Kohler and Wacquant, 1985]. The study has a number of limitations. One of these is that its findings relate only to one year. Because of this, the study can serve only the limited function of providing a snapshot of a particular moment that may or may not be typical. Furthermore, its static nature does not permit one to identify any historical trends, an exercise which is essential to developing a more dynamic interpretation of the selection process. Also, the fact that the statistical data upon which it is based are not systematically gathered means that the study would have to be fully replicated to enable the identification of trends.

**TABLE FOUR:**

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<td>FEP</td>
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<td>CM2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>109</td>
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<td>6th</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>207</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>223</td>
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|                   | Kanak    |                      |            |          |          |          |
|                   | Lower    | Middle               | Upper      | Total    |
|                   | Number   | Number               | Number     | Number   |
|                   | Percent  | Percent              | Percent    | Percent  |
| FEP               | 54       | 15                   | 0          | 69       |
| CM2               | 52       | 18                   | 2          | 72       |
| 6th               | 115      | 64                   | 13         | 192      |
| Total             | 221      | 97                   | 15         | 333      |

**SOURCE:** **Kohler and Wacquant, 1985.**

Secondly, the ethnic composition of the population under study was quite unrepresentative of the territory. In 1984, 36.6 per cent of New Caledonia's CM2 pupils attended school in Nouméa.
This population comprised 61.3 per cent of all European pupils in the territory as compared with only 16.6 per cent of Kanak pupils. Because of this, the study is likely to understate the differences along ethnic lines, since the vast majority of Kanak pupils from outside Nouméa live in rural, tribal settings and tend to under-achieve in comparison with their Nouméa-based counterparts. European pupils in rural areas also perform worse than those in Nouméa (although still markedly better than even Nouméa-based Kanak pupils), but comprise a much smaller proportion of the European CM2 population. Given these factors, it would be unwise to generalise from the study's findings. Nevertheless, some qualified inferences can be drawn.

The study showed that, of the European pupils in CM2 in Nouméa, only 3.4 per cent were oriented towards FEP classes to work for their CEP. A further 14.0 per cent were required to repeat their CM2 year. Secondary school entrance was achieved by 82.6 per cent. For Kanak students, only 57.7 per cent entered secondary school, with 20.7 per cent being oriented towards FEP and an additional 21.6 per cent being required to return for another year to CM2.

### 7.2.2 Socio-economic Differences Within Ethnic Groups

For those pupils whose socio-economic background could be identified, Kohler and Wacquant offered a further statistical breakdown. Among European pupils, 69.3 per cent of those from lower classes\(^ {14}\) entered secondary school, compared with 84.4 per cent of those from middle-level occupations and 92.8 per cent from the highest socio-economic grouping. Among Kanak pupils, 52.0 per cent from the lowest category entered secondary school, compared with 66.0 per cent from the middle group and 86.7 per cent of the highest.

At the other end of the scale, European pupils were oriented towards FEP streams at the rates of 9.3 per cent for lower classes and 1.8 per cent for the middle group, with none from the top category. Among Kanak pupils the FEP orientation rates were 24.4 per cent for lower group and 15.5 per cent for the middle, with none from the top category.

\(^ {14}\) Kohler and Wacquant employ the term "populaire" to include both working class families and a sizeable number (especially amongst Kanak people) of those involved in subsistence agriculture.
To these intra-ethnic breakdowns a note of caution must be added. The class composition of the European pupils took the form of 27.6 per cent for the lowest category through 43.7 per cent for the middle and 28.7 per cent for the top grouping. The Kanak sample, by comparison, comprised 66.4 per cent lower group pupils, 29.1 per cent from the middle group and just 4.5 per cent from the top group. Thus, from a sample Kanak population of 233 pupils, only 15 came from the higher socio-economic group, making it risky to read too much into the figures.

Notwithstanding their limitations, the data reveal unmistakable class differences within each ethnic group. Amongst both the European and Kanak populations, the percentage of pupils in each of the FEP and repeating CM2 categories decreases as class position improves. Conversely, the likelihood of advancing to secondary school improves for both Kanak and European pupils with a higher class background. These findings confirm Kohler and Wacquant's conclusion that ethnicity alone cannot explain every difference in school achievement levels in New Caledonia.

Equally clearly, however, the data reveal that although class differences in achievement levels exist, they pale in comparison to ethnic differences. Even ignoring the tendency of that study to minimise ethnic differences, it can be seen that the middle level Kanak group underachieves in comparison to the lowest level European students. Although they repeat their CM2 year at a slightly lower rate, they are much more likely to be oriented towards FEP classes, and less likely to move onto secondary school.

Furthermore, the 4.5 per cent of Kanak pupils from higher class backgrounds reached achievement levels only marginally higher than the middle level Europeans and considerably lower than the 28.7 per cent of European pupils from higher class backgrounds. Although none of the 15 Kanak pupils in this category was channelled into the FEP classes, they repeated their CM2 year at a rate almost twice as high as Europeans from the higher level grouping.
7.2.3 Pass Rates

Also worthy of note are the respective European and Kanak pass rates for the two primary school exams. These are shown in Figures Six and Seven. The CEP results show that, except in 1967 and 1975, there is a consistent and sometimes marked tendency for the European pass rate to be higher than that of the Kanak pupils, although the difference is not very pronounced. Through the 1960s and 70s the 6th grade entrance exam assumed a greater importance as a growing number of pupils chose to continue their studies in secondary school, rather than leaving school armed only with the rapidly devaluing CEP. It is noteworthy, therefore, that in contrast to the CEP results, the more important secondary school entrance qualification showed a marked differential between European and Kanak achievement which, until 1978, was still tending to increase.

FIGURE SIX:

Comparison of CEP percentage pass rates between Kanak and European students in New Caledonia from 1965 to 1978

SOURCE: VICE-RECTORAT DE NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE
Figure Seven:

Comparison of secondary school entrance exam pass rates in New Caledonia from 1965 to 1992 by ethnic group.

Source: Vice-Rectorat de Nouvelle-Calédonie

It should be noted that these statistics on primary school examinations do not refer to a single age cohort which has automatically progressed through primary schooling. In the years highlighted in Figure Six (1965 to 1978), repetition of classes in primary school was common among all pupils, but especially so among Kanak pupils, who greatly outnumbered their European counterparts. This led to a greater concentration of Kanak pupils in the lower levels of the primary school, and a more even spread of European pupils through to the upper primary levels. Combined with the higher European pass rates, this meant that in 1975 (to take the example of the first year that more Kanak pupils sat the 6th grade entry exam than sat the CEP) the European pupils who passed the 6th grade entrance exam represented 7.3 per cent of all European primary school pupils. The Kanak pupils who qualified to enter secondary school were just 1.6 per cent of the total Kanak primary school population.

The European pass rate for the secondary school entrance exam can be seen to follow a consistent pattern throughout the extended 1965 to 1992 period, with a more or less steady tendency to rise.
The Kanak rate, by contrast, can be divided into three different periods. The first, from 1965 to 1978, shows an erratic progression finishing with a jump in the pass-rate in 1978. This was likely to have been caused, at least in part, by the move in 1978 to abandon the secondary school entrance exam. Since then, entry to secondary school has been determined through internal assessment procedures. For the more capable pupils, internal assessment procedures had been in place since 1972. This may go some way to explaining the tendency for the gap between the European and Kanak pass rates to widen between 1971 and 1977.

For the ten years following the abolition of the secondary school entrance exam, there was a slow but consistent increase in the Kanak rate of entry to secondary school from just under 47 per cent in 1978 to just over 57 percent in 1988. Throughout the entire post-war period, there have been more Kanak than European primary school pupils. However, as Figure Eight shows, it was not until 1980 that a greater number of Kanak than European pupils passed the secondary school entrance exam. This was also the first year that the Kanak pass rate exceeded 50 per cent. However, the increase in the Kanak pass rate must be measured against an even greater increase in the European pass rate. Over the decade under discussion, the European advantage actually widened from a difference of 21.5 percentage points in 1978 to 22.7 in 1988. Until 1989, the Kanak pass rate for the secondary school entrance exam had never reached 58 per cent. From a total of 30,544 Kanak pupils who had sat the exam from 1965 to 1988, only 14,566 had passed. This pass rate of 47.7 per cent compares with 69.7 per cent success rate for the 23,880 European pupils who sat the exam. The combined results of all other ethnic groups fell between the two, with a 58.6 per cent aggregate pass rate.
It was not until the final post-1989 period that Kanak primary school achievement levels began to improve dramatically. The Kanak rate of entry to secondary school jumped from 57 per cent to 74.1 per cent in 1989, 82.7 per cent in 1990 and 86.7 per cent in 1991. This rapid improvement also led to a significant closing of the gap between the Kanak and European pass rates. From 22.7 percentage points difference in 1988, the gap had been reduced to 7.2 percentage points in 1991.

Satisfaction with this trend should, however, be tempered by two considerations. First, in considering the closing of the gap between Kanak and European pass rates, one must take account of the inevitable levelling off which the European pass rates must experience as they exceeded 90 per cent and approach their maximum limits. In effect, the data show the emergence of a quasi-universal advance from primary to secondary school, a phenomenon that is likely to lead to the abolition of the secondary school entrance exam in line with similar moves made some years ago in other countries.
Secondly, the quasi-universalisation of progress from primary to secondary school is largely the result of a political decision to move the CM2 hurdle back onto the secondary schools. This was achieved by phasing out the FEP classes in primary school from the beginning of the 1990 school year. Thus, pupils in CM2 in 1989 were dealt with in one of only two ways; either held back to repeat the year in CM2 or moved onto secondary school. The new policy was accompanied by a directive that "the primary school must no longer retain pupils beyond the age of 13 years and 9 months" [Vice-Rectorat, 1989: fiche 20].

The Vice-Rectorat acknowledges that some of the improvement in the rates of entry to secondary school is the product of the new policy. However, it claims that of the difference only "half at the most" can be attributed to the termination of the FEP classes and the resultant arrival in secondary school of a backlog of older pupils from these classes [Vice-Rectorat, 1991a: p.35]. However, it offers no evidence to substantiate this claim.

Further, it claims that of the 20 per cent increase in the number of pupils entering secondary school between 1989 and 1991, 70 per cent of whom were Kanak, "one half that is 10 per cent clearly represent an improved output from primary schooling throughout the territory" [Vice-Rectorat, 1991a: p.36]. Again, no attempt is made to explain the basis upon which this claim is made.

In fact, recent studies in France, which abandoned the CEP in 1987, point to a conclusion diametrically opposed to that proffered by the Vice-Rectorat. Tenzer, for example, has claimed that, although primary school failures have reduced substantially since the beginning of the 1970s, "this reduction is due to a decrease in standards" [Tenzer, 1989: p.85]. On the basis of performances in arithmetic (with whole and decimal numbers), problem resolution, reading and spelling by pupils in their first year of secondary school, he concludes that 41 per cent lack the ability considered normal for a CM2 pupil while 16 per cent could be described as illiterate [Tenzer, 1989: pp.85,90].

A study [Fort, 1992] of levels of reading ability among pupils in New Caledonia also casts doubt over the Vice-Rectorat's claim about academic standards. The study was conducted in 1986, that
is, at a time when only about 64 per cent of those seeking entry to 6th grade (Europeans around 80 per cent, Kanak around 57 per cent, and other ethnic groups around 62 per cent) were granted it. It used a sample of 609 pupils in CM2 and 6th grade classes with a reasonable spread of variables such as ethnicity, socio-economic background, age, gender and place of residence.

In speed of reading the study found that overall 6th grade pupils performed better than those in CM2. However, it also noted that more than 35 per cent of those in the 6th grade were still at the beginning syllabic stage of reading "which denotes the absence of mastering a level of competence which it is fundamental to acquire in the primary school, and appears to augur very badly for their future schooling" [Fort, 1992: p.38].

When it came to the more important factor of reading comprehension, the study found very little difference in ability between the two groups, with the pupils from the primary classes actually enjoying a slight edge over their secondary school counterparts [Fort, 1992: p.48]. The difference that existed between ethnic groups (Europeans and Vietnamese over-achieving while Kanak and Wallisians under-achieved) was found to be much more significant than that between pupils in CM2 and those in 6th grade.

A clear conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that factors other than objective measures of academic ability influence levels of achievement and rates of progress through the New Caledonian school system.

Pass rates for entry to 6th grade had remained virtually static for most of the decade. Indeed, as noted above, the last time they changed significantly coincided with the last major policy change; that is, the introduction of universal accreditation in place of the entrance examination. The onus is, therefore, on the Vice-Rectorat to provide evidence for its claim about improved standards in primary school, and to identify any factors other than the 1989 change in policy that might have contributed significantly to the dramatic jumps in the pass rates for entry to 6th grade.

By lowering the end-of-CM2 hurdle and thereby allowing Kanak primary school pupils to close the
gap on their European counterparts, the 1989 change gives the appearance of an improvement. In reality, however, this development represents neither the raising of the achievement levels of primary school pupils in New Caledonia who would otherwise not have entered secondary school, nor the abandonment of the selection function in schooling. It amounts to little more than moving the first major selection mechanism from primary through to the secondary school.

7.3 Secondary Schooling, the First Cycle.

Secondary schooling in New Caledonia, as in France, is divided into a first and second cycle. The first cycle, which is followed in a collège, is a four-year course of study in which students progress from sixth grade\(^{15}\) (form one in New Zealand) to third grade\(^{16}\) (form five in New Zealand). Collège studies culminate in the Diplôme National du Brevet (DNDB)\(^{17}\) which serves as a school leaving qualification. For a time it was the minimum qualification for employment in the public service but it has since lost much of its value as a job-seeker’s qualification. It now acts more as a mechanism for selecting those pupils who are able to progress beyond collège to the advanced cycle of secondary schooling in a lycée.

The number of European candidates for the brevet follows an essentially demographic pattern. It tends to mirror the European rate of entry to secondary school and is likely to do so to an even greater degree the closer the pass rates of European primary school leavers come to 100 per cent. As Figure Nine shows, the numbers of Europeans presenting for the brevet peaked from 1987 to 1989, and has since fallen back; this trend paralleling secondary school entrance statistics, with a stabilisation of numbers after a high point was reached in the early 1980s.

\(^{15}\) Sixième

\(^{16}\) Troisième

\(^{17}\) The DNDB was previously known as the Brevet des Collèges (BC) which was in turn previously known as the Brevet d’Etudes du Premier Cycle (BEPC). It will be referred to hereafter as the brevet.
For Kanak pupils, the sharp increase in the numbers of those presenting themselves for the brevet is the product of a combination of two main factors: demographic trends in the broader population; and the gradual removal of the secondary school entrance exam as a selection mechanism which had previously prevented or retarded the entry to secondary school of large numbers of Kanak pupils. This dramatic upward trend is certain to continue, as the impact of the steep rise in the numbers of Kanak pupils qualifying to enter secondary school every year since 1989 has yet to be reflected in the brevet statistics.

Figure Ten shows the comparison of Brevet exam pass rates by ethnic group from 1965 to 1992. Until the late 1970s, the pass rates of Kanak pupils actually compared quite favourably with those of their European counterparts. However, this was largely the result of selection mechanisms which pupils had confronted prior to sitting the brevet exam. As Figures Seven, Eight and Nine show, far fewer (in absolute numbers and proportionately) Kanak pupils made it through the
school system as far as the brevet. Comparing brevet pass rates alone does not allow one to see that, particularly in the early years, the brevet exam involved a large proportion of European pupils, but only a select few Kanak pupils.

**FIGURE TEN:**

*Comparison of Brevet (BEPC, BC and DNB) exam pass rates in New Caledonia from 1965 to 1992 by ethnic group.*

---

**SOURCE:** *Vice-Rectorat de Nouvelle-Caledonie*

Variable rates of students being required to repeat classes in college make it impossible to trace the progress of single age cohorts from entry to secondary school through to achievement in the brevet. Nevertheless, a clear link can be seen between Kanak entry to secondary school in 1978 and performance in the brevet four years later. From 1977 to 1978 the number of Kanak pupils entering secondary school leapt from 265 to 790 when the provision for pupils to enter on the basis of their year's work and not solely on exam results was extended to all pupils in New Caledonia. This policy of more open entry to secondary school served simply to move the Kanak failure point back four years as brevet pass rates for Kanak pupils fell from 61.1 per cent in 1981 to 45.4 per cent in 1982. It was not until 1989 that the Kanak pass rate for the brevet regained its lost ground.
Another consideration to be born in mind when examining Figure Ten is that overall pass rates for the brevet, especially from 1978 to 1992, were heavily influenced by educational policy changes. Prior to 1978, the BEPC had always been awarded on the basis of a public examination, identical in New Caledonia to that sat by pupils in metropolitan France. From 1978 until 1985, the exam was dropped and collège students in New Caledonia, like their counterparts in France, were subjected to a system of internal assessment.

In 1986, the BEPC was replaced by the Brevet des Collèges and with it came the reintroduction of assessment by public examination [Vice Rectorat, 1986: p.5]. The results were dramatic: a drop in the pass rate for New Caledonia students from 67 per cent to 43.8 per cent. The fall-off was most pronounced among Kanak pupils whose pass rate dropped from 58.1 to just 28.6 per cent, even though fewer Kanak students had sat the exam than had been candidates for the BEPC the previous year.

The very poor results were a blow to the French schooling system and provided ammunition to critics of the system who argued that it was responsible for falling educational standards. The following year, the Brevet des Collèges was abandoned in favour of the current Diplôme National du Brevet (DNDB). The new brevet retained examination-based assessment procedures but the exacting requirement of having to pass each of three written tests was removed.

Notwithstanding all these factors, the overall conclusion one can draw from Figure Ten is that there is little or no tendency for a closing of the gap between the high European pass rate and the low Kanak pass rate in the brevet. Since the late 1970s, the two lines have remained more or less parallel. Thus, as far as the brevet is concerned, there is no Kanak catch up occurring. In fact, when the brevet results are more deeply analysed, the opposite conclusion may be drawn.

The introduction of the DNDB also marked the beginning of three different "series" of brevet-college (or general), technical and vocational. Ostensibly each series is distinguished only in orientation. The college series is the most abstract and academic, and pupils following this stream
are the most likely to progress to tertiary studies. Less academic and focusing more on areas such as applied sciences, the technical series of the DNDB is part of an extensive technical stream which extends to the highest levels of the French secondary school system and can also lead to tertiary studies. The third series, vocational, is much more oriented towards practical skills, although it too can now lead to a type of baccalaureat qualification.

The French school system prides itself on the quality of its technical and vocational education. And with so much responsibility being on schools as opposed to industry for skills development and vocational training, it must be acknowledged that the technical and vocational branches of the school system are considerably more developed than in other Western countries [see Lewis, 1985: pp.77-9]. Nevertheless, the general or college stream is designed to prepare pupils for what are undeniably higher educational qualifications. It is this fact which underlies the broad public perception that the technical and vocational series are somewhat lesser versions of the college series [Tenzer, 1989: p.92].

With this in mind, the ethnic composition of each DNDB series is not surprising. Taking the data from 1988, the first year that more Kanak than European pupils sat the DNDB, Table Five compares European and Kanak results by series. The data reveal that within each ethnic group, there is no clear pattern to pass rates between series. Between ethnic groups, however, one can see that, even since 1990 when a greater number of Kanak than European pupils began passing the DNDB, Kanak pupils have been passing the college series DNDB in lower numbers than their European counterparts.
TABLE FIVE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>European</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Kanak</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Series</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>Passed</td>
<td>Pass Rate</td>
<td>Percentage of Passes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988 College</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>76.81</td>
<td>81.05</td>
<td>721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>73.85</td>
<td>18.95</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 College</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>85.38</td>
<td>79.07</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>82.14</td>
<td>20.93</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 College</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>87.50</td>
<td>79.80</td>
<td>771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>86.11</td>
<td>20.10</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 College</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>88.04</td>
<td>78.85</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>13.25</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>83.10</td>
<td>7.90</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992 College</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>85.78</td>
<td>79.27</td>
<td>825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>90.24</td>
<td>10.03</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>81.44</td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: VICE-RECTORAT DE NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE

Most significantly, one can see that a far greater proportion of European pupils are opting for and passing the college series. Of the Europeans passing the DNDB, a high and relatively stable percentage (the lowest being 78.85 per cent in 1991) did so through the more prestigious college series. The corresponding percentage for Kanak pupils is far lower and has fallen every year from 67.61 per cent in 1988 to 57.58 per cent in 1992.

It should be noted, however, that not all college pupils are oriented towards the DNDB. After the first two years of secondary school in the classes known as sixth and fifth grade, fewer than 60 per cent of pupils (58.7 per cent in 1991, 57.4 per cent in 1992 [Vice Rectorat, 1992: p.3]) are permitted to enter fourth grade to pursue what is referred to as a "long" course of study in the more academic "general" stream. Of the remainder, a significant number are steered in the direction of "short" vocational courses. This involves leaving college and entering a vocational high school¹⁸ to prepare for a vocational qualification.

¹⁸These establishments are made up of lycées professionnels and extensions known as annexes des lycée professionnels.
7.4 The Short Second Cycle of Secondary Schooling

Those taking a short course of study are faced with two main forms of qualification. The first, and lesser, is the vocational aptitude certificate\(^{19}\) (CAP). The second more advanced qualification is the vocational studies brevet\(^{20}\) (BEP).

Designed to be of a practical nature, the CAP (as well as the CAP development option\(^{21}\) which was introduced to New Caledonia in 1983) is awarded after the successful completion four years study after the fifth grade\(^{22}\). In 1992, students in New Caledonia presented themselves for a total of nineteen different CAP specialities. The most popular of these were secretarial (352 pupils), mechanics (182), hostelry (121), commerce and distribution (59) and woodwork (55) [Vice Rectorat, 1992].

As shown in Figure Eleven, until the 1980s European pupils sat the CAP exam in far greater numbers than those of other ethnic origins. In comparison to the brevet in which the numbers of European candidates increased at a reasonably steady rate until 1988, the clear upward trend for the numbers of Europeans sitting the CAP ended a decade earlier, before demographic factors came into play. The comparatively low numbers of Kanak pupils sitting the CAP was a product of their high rate of exclusion from entering secondary school. By the same token, the fact that Kanak pupils have now come to dominate the numbers of those sitting the CAP is largely the result of a combination of demographic factors (the high numbers of Kanak youngsters compared, in particular, to their European contemporaries) and the softening of the selection mechanism at the end of primary school.

\(^{19}\)Certificat d'Aptitude professionnelle.
\(^{20}\)Brevet d'Études Professionelles.
\(^{21}\)CAP Polyvalent au Développement.
\(^{22}\)The CAP was, and in some circumstances remains, a three year (after fifth grade) course, but this option is now being phased out in New Caledonia.
An analysis of the ethnic differences in pass rates for the CAP exam (see Figure Twelve) reveals that European pupils recorded consistently higher pass rates than their Kanak counterparts. With regard to the Kanak pass rate, there was a tendency in the mid-1980s (1983-88) for a drop in the numbers sitting the CAP to correspond with an increase in the pass rate, and an increase in the numbers sitting to coincide with a decrease in the pass rate. It should be noted, however, that the sharp increase in the numbers of Kanak pupils sitting the CAP since 1988 has been achieved at the same time as a steadily increasing pass rate. There remains, nevertheless, little evidence of any significant reduction in the gap between European and Kanak pass rates.
The BEP is within the same vocational sphere as the CAP and is prepared in essentially the same institutions, but it is a more advanced qualification. The BEP is obtainable four years after the successful completion of the fifth grade. Although permission is sometimes granted for pupils who have obtained the CAP to prepare subsequently for the BEP, there are two main channels for those who sit the BEP. The first involves pupils who complete their fourth and third grade studies in a college and then opt for or are allocated to a vocational high school where they complete two years of study specifically designed to prepare them for the BEP. The other possibility is for pupils to leave the general school system at the end of fifth grade and take the "technology" option, a move made by 14.2 per cent of fifth graders in 1991 and 12.6 per cent of them in 1992 [Vice Rectorat, 1992: p.3].

As shown in Figure Thirteen, the BEP has shown a steady increase in popularity. Although the absolute numbers involved remain considerably lower than those sitting the lesser CAP, they have continued to grow amongst all ethnic groups except the Europeans, whose numbers appear to have peaked in 1989 and have since shown a downward trend. As with the CAP and the general brevet, 1987 was the year in which the numbers of Kanak pupils first matched the number of Europeans. Since then, and particularly since 1989, the number of Kanak candidates for the BEP
has shown a dramatic increase, to the point where in 1992 they constituted nearly 40 per cent of all BEP candidates.

**FIGURE THIRTEEN:**

![Numbers sitting the BEP exam by ethnic group, 1969-92.](image)

**SOURCE: VICE-RECTORAT DE NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE**

The very low numbers of pupils sitting the BEP prior to 1975 would render meaningless an analysis of pass rates. Figure Fourteen shows comparative pass rates for the BEP after this date. It reveals that, after a steady decline from 1982 to 1986, the Kanak pass rate for the BEP has tended to increase, despite falls in 1990 and 1992. It has never come anywhere near the European pass rate, the closest point being achieved in 1982 when the difference was narrowed to 12.1 percentage points (58.7 compared with 46.6). On occasions the differences has been well in excess of 30 percentage points, such as 1984 (35.9) and 1988 (38.7).
Overall, Figure Fourteen reveals a very similar pattern to that of the equivalent charts for the general brevet and the CAP. A significant gap between European and Kanak pass rates persists, and there is no clear evidence of this abating.

7.5 The Long Second Cycle of Secondary Schooling.

In New Caledonia, as in France, the most successful school pupils are those who are able to gain entry to a lycée to pursue a "long" course of study culminating in what is unquestionably the premium secondary qualification, the baccalaureat. The key to being able to attempt tertiary study, the baccalaureat is also demanded as a minimum entry qualification to many jobs within the public service and in the private sector. It is also widely employed in the application of promotion or salary differentials within both sectors.
As mentioned in the previous chapter, it was not until 1962 that the first Kanak\textsuperscript{23} was awarded the baccalauréat. As recently as 1974, there were only nine Kanak pupils (compared with 275 Europeans) who had even reached the point of qualifying to sit the baccalauréat exam. For Kanak people, therefore, being a candidate for the baccalauréat is already a significant achievement in itself.

Figure Fifteen shows the ethnic differences in the number of pupils sitting the baccalauréat since 1965. It reveals clearly the European dominance of the exam, not only up until the 1980s when there were minimal numbers of non-European candidates, but since then as well. Although the numbers of Kanak candidates for the baccalauréat rose almost every year from its 1985 total of 178 to a peak of 326 candidates in 1992, this was surpassed by an even greater rise in European candidates from 401 in 1985 to 734 in 1992. Thus the gap between the European and Kanak pupils has grown in every year but one (except 1987 when it dropped by one) from 1985 (223 pupils) to 1992 (408).

**FIGURE FIFTEEN:**

\begin{center}
\textbf{Numbers sitting the Baccalauréat by ethnic group, 1965-92.}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{SOURCE: VICE-RECTORAT DE NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE}

\textsuperscript{23} Boniface Ounou from Ouvéa
Comparing Figure Fifteen to Figures Nine, Eleven and Thirteenen, one can see that the increase over the last decade in the number of Kanak candidates for the baccalauréat is far less marked than the corresponding increases for the lesser qualifications of the brevet, the CAP and the BEP. Furthermore, while there has been a levelling off in the numbers of European pupils choosing or being oriented towards these other qualifications, no such trend is in evidence at the baccalauréat level where numbers continue to soar.

When it comes to pass rates for the baccalauréat, there is evidence of the gap between European and Kanak pupils narrowing. Figure Sixteen takes 1981 as a starting point for analysing comparative pass rates because, even though there were almost twice as many European as non-European candidates for the baccalauréat (221 compared with 421), it was the year that the total number of non-Europeans sitting the baccalauréat first exceeded 200. The graph shows a convergence between the Kanak and European pass rates with the 1992 results (68.8 compared with 42.6 per cent) representing the smallest difference between the European and Kanak rates. Furthermore, the average difference over the last six years is a considerable reduction on the average over the previous six-year period.

**FIGURE SIXTEEN:**

![Comparison of Baccalauréat exam pass rates in New Caledonia by ethnic group, 1981-92.](image)

**SOURCE:** VICE-RECTORAT DE NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE
This trend has emerged as a result of not only a slight improvement in the Kanak pass rate, but also a weakening in the European pass rate. The falling European pass rate is occurring in absolute (75.9 per cent in 1990, 69.9 in 1991 and 68.8 in 1992) as well as in relative terms. It is deteriorating in comparison with other ethnic groups in New Caledonia and also in relation to the overall pass rate in metropolitan France. New Caledonian Europeans, who until 1988 performed consistently and significantly better than the national average, are now dropping below it.

One plausible explanation for this is that the disproportionately high increase in the numbers of European pupils sitting the baccalauréat has brought in many who would not in the past have continued to this level. They may be feeling the pressure of the increased numbers of non-European, and particularly Kanak, pupils gaining lower level qualifications. Even though, as we have seen, there is little sign of a convergence of pass rates in these other qualifications, the sheer numbers of people obtaining them contributes to a reduction in their value.

There are a number of other important factors that must also be taken into consideration in the analysis of baccalauréat results. First, even though the gap between the Kanak and European pass rates is reducing, it is still extensive. The average European pass rate is around 70 per cent, while the Kanak rate occasionally exceeds the 40 per cent mark. Secondly, even at its highest point (44.9 per cent in 1985) the Kanak pass rate in the baccalauréat is still lower than the nadir (45.5 per cent in 1966) reached by the European rate since statistics were first recorded by ethnic group in 1965.

The single most important element to consider in relation to recent developments in the baccalauréat, however, is that there are many different types of baccalauréat with widely unequal status. The baccalauréat takes three main forms, each of which in turn comprises a number of different streams: the first and most prestigious is the general baccalauréat of second degree schooling²⁴ (BESD); secondly, there is the technical baccalauréat²⁵ (BTN); and finally, the newest

²⁴ Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement du Second Degré.
²⁵ Baccalauréat de Technicien.
and lowest status form, the vocational baccalauréat\textsuperscript{26} (BCP).

7.5.1 The Vocational Baccalauréat, BCP

The vocational baccalauréat is sat by those pupils who move out of the general school stream after third or, in some cases, fifth grade in order to pursue a vocational course of study. After passing the BEP, they engage in two more years of schooling which, if successfully completed, entitle them to sit the BCP. In 1992, for example, of the 543 pupils who had passed the BEP the previous year, 390 applied and 187 were permitted to enter first grade to continue their studies for a baccalauréat; either a BCP or a BTN. Although it can open the way to some limited possibilities for tertiary study, the vocational baccalauréat is a leaving qualification with emphasis on the practical and concrete, designed to train pupils skills directly applicable at a place of employment. It has little or none of the abstract and theoretical content of the other baccalauréats which aim to prepare pupils to continue their studies at tertiary level.

Introduced as an option in New Caledonia in 1989, the BCP involves only a small number of pupils compared to the other forms of baccalauréat. However, as Table Six shows, it is increasing in popularity. In 1989, it offered only one option (restauranting) and accounted for only eight of the 988 baccalauréat candidates. By 1992, 85 pupils presented themselves as candidates for five BCP options. The growing popularity of the BCP is due to the increased difficulty people are having finding employment with the lower level vocational qualifications.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & \multicolumn{3}{c|}{European} & \multicolumn{3}{c|}{Kanak} & \multicolumn{3}{c|}{Other} \\
\hline
 & Sat & Pass & \% & Sat & Pass & \% & Sat & Pass & \% \\
\hline
1989 & 5 & 5 & 100.0 & 2 & 1 & 50.0 & 1 & 1 & 100.0 \\
1990 & 10 & 8 & 80.0 & 1 & 0 & 0.0 & 6 & 4 & 66.7 \\
1991 & 37 & 27 & 73.0 & 5 & 3 & 60.0 & 8 & 4 & 50.0 \\
1992 & 42 & 34 & 81.0 & 12 & 5 & 41.7 & 31 & 25 & 80.6 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Results of Vocational Baccalauréat (BCP) by Ethnic Group, 1989-92.}
\end{table}

\textbf{Table Six:}

\textit{Source: Vice-rectorat de Nouvelle-Calédonie}

\textsuperscript{26} Baccalauréat Professionnel.
Given the substantially lower numbers of Kanak pupils passing the prerequisite BEP before 1991, it is not surprising that they are currently under-represented in the BCP statistics. However, with the number of Kanak pupils passing the BEP doubling between 1989 and 1991, they are likely to figure more prominently in the BCP statistics in future.

7.5.2 The Technical Baccalauréat, BTN

Longer established and of higher status than the BCP is the technical baccalauréat, BTN. Sat at the end of three years successful study after the brevet (in classes known in ascending order as second, first and final) the BTN is prepared for in a lycée and comprises what are known as the F and G series of the baccalauréat. The F series is itself comprised of a number of specialised technical and vocational sections, four of which (F1, F2, F3 and F8) are available to pupils in New Caledonia. The G series is the economics branch, three sections of which (G1, G2 and G3) can be sat in New Caledonia.

While the BCP is clearly designed as a leaving qualification and the BESD as preparation for tertiary studies, the technical baccalauréat sits uneasily between the two. Because it embodies a significant amount of abstract learning, the BTN really needs to be supplemented by another more applied qualification for its holder to become easily saleable on the employment market. Furthermore, besides its inadequacy as a leaving qualification, the technical baccalauréat also lacks as a preparatory qualification for higher education.

Only around twenty per cent of holders of an F series baccalauréat enter university. As many as 70 per cent of BTN holders fail the first cycle of their university studies, the two-year Diploma of General University Studies²⁷ (DEUG) [Raynaud and Thibaud: 1990, p.175]. In the classical streams of the DEUG, the failure rate of F series baccalauréat holders gets as high as 99 per cent [Tenzer, 1989: pp.95]. Generally, holders of series G baccalauréats record even worse results than their G series counterparts. Even when it comes to tertiary institutions which exist precisely in

²⁷ Diplome d'Études Universitaires Générales (DEUG).
order to continue and deepen the technical side of education, such as the University Institutes of Technology\(^{28}\) (IUT), BTN holders underperform; 71 per cent of the IUT intake have the BESD [Charlot and Pigelet, 1989].

### 7.5.3 The General Baccalauréat, BESD

If the baccalauréat represents the pinnacle of achievement in the French school system, the rather unglamorously-named general baccalauréat or BESD must be considered the top of the top. Although the classics have long since been dropped as compulsory subjects for it, the BESD is revered for its high degree of theory and abstraction. It is designed unashamedly to be other than a school-leaving qualification. It aims to produce erudite pupils who will be equal to the exacting academic standards demanded by the universities.

In light of these differences between the three types of baccalauréat, it is instructive to revisit the recent statistics for New Caledonia. As Table Seven shows, nearly 63 per cent of all European pupils who have passed their baccalauréat since 1988 did so with the prestigious BESD. The corresponding figure for Kanak pupils is just over 40 per cent. Thus, although the number of Europeans to be awarded the baccalauréat was over four times greater than the corresponding Kanak figure, when it comes to the high status BESD there are more than six times as many European pupils.

**Table Seven:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Kanak</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BESD</td>
<td>BTN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>133</td>
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<td>181</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Vice-rectorat de Nouvelle-Caledonie

\(^{28}\) Institut Universitaire de Technologie (IUT)
Status differentials in the baccalauréat do not, however, end with this three way typology. Within these types of baccalauréat, and in particular within the BESD, further hierarchies of status exist. Apart from section E (science and technology), which in New Caledonia accounts for only around four per cent of candidates for the BESD, there are four main sections: A, the literary section which, in New Caledonia is further divided into three further sections - A1 sciences, A2 languages, A3 arts; B, economics and social sciences; C, mathematics and physics; and D, mathematics and natural science.

7.5.4 Series C of the BESD

Series C, with its heavy mathematical emphasis, is in a class of its own. As many as forty per cent of those who obtain a series C baccalauréat end up graduating with a diploma from a grande école, the most prestigious of France's institutions of higher education. A further 29 per cent graduate with qualifications in medicine or pharmacy. By comparison, 40 per cent of D series baccalauréat holders enrol in university and, of these, less than one third successfully complete their two-year DEUG. Of those with series A or B baccalauréats, 70 per cent and 57 per cent respectively enrol in a university and they too are consistently out-performed by series C holders, whose pass rates are often twice as high in the same courses [Tenzer, 1989: p.95].

In the early 1980s, a CUIO\textsuperscript{29} study revealed that although although twice as many students with the series D baccalauréat in biology than with C sit the first-year examination in medicine, only half as many pass it. Similarly, in the first part of the degree course in economics, twice as many B series (for whom economics is the specialty) as C series holders presented themselves. However, only 13 per cent of the former passed, compared with 46 per cent of the latter [Cited in Le Monde de l'Éducation, February 1984].

In New Caledonia, three of the four lycées preparing pupils for the BESD offer the C series baccalauréat; the exception being the overwhelmingly Kanak Lycée Dokamo, run by l'Alliance

\textsuperscript{29} Cellules d'Information et d'Orientation.
Scolaire, the educational wing of the protestant church. Table Eight presents the ethnic differences in series C baccalauréat results since 1989. It shows the overwhelming European dominance of the series. Every year, between 77.8 and 87.8 per cent of C series baccalauréats awarded in New Caledonia go to Europeans. Kanak pupils obtain fewer than five per cent of the baccalauréat Cs that are awarded. Although between 12.4 and 16.6 per cent of Europeans who obtain the baccalauréat do so in the C series, the corresponding figure for Kanak pupils is between one and three per cent.

**Table Eight:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Kanak</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of all Bac Cs</td>
<td>% of Europ'n Bacs</td>
<td>% of all Bac Cs</td>
<td>% of Kanak Bacs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** *Vice-rectorat de Nouvelle-Calédonie*

### 7.6 Cumulative Impact.

It is clear, therefore, that the higher the level of schooling and the more prestigious the qualification, the greater the dominance of Europeans and the more marginal the position of Kanak pupils. The school system's barriers of exclusion are moving higher: originally set at the end of primary school, they were then moved up through the secondary school. Kanak pupils are now attending secondary institutions in unprecedented numbers to the point where, in every public exam except the baccalauréat, they now outnumber their European counterparts and constitute the largest ethnic group.

Although there are greater numbers of Kanak pupils attending secondary schools and sitting and passing secondary qualifications, their achievement rates are still well behind those of Europeans.
The closing of the educational achievement gap between Kanak and European, if it is occurring at all, is happening very slowly.

Taking five-year periods from 1965 to 1990, Figures Seventeen and Eighteen show the rates with which Kanak and European pupils respectively dropped out of the system. The gradient of the lines indicates the drop-off rate; the flatter the line, the higher the rate of retention and achievement. Although it is slightly higher at the top end, indicating greater numbers at baccalauréat level, the Kanak line has become higher but steeper. That is, greater numbers are entering secondary school, but they are not making it through to the higher levels.

**FIGURE SEVENTEEN:**

*Drop-off of Kanak Pupils at Selected Points in School System, 1965-90.*

**SOURCE: VICE-RECTORAT DE NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE**

The European lines have been consistently much flatter and less varied. The main change over time has been a steady rise in the line at each point, particularly in recent years at the top end of the school system. It remains to be seen how long this increase can be maintained as the numbers of European pupils entering secondary school falls as a result of demographic changes.
Figure Eighteen:


Source: Vice-Rectorat de Nouvelle-Caledonie

The comparative extent of the drop-off rate can be seen even more starkly in Figure Nineteen. It shows the progression since 1965 in the numbers of those in each ethnic group who obtain the ultimate school qualification, the baccalauréat, as a percentage of those for that group who originally qualified to enter secondary school. The graph does not include the large numbers of (especially Kanak) pupils who failed or were not allowed to sit the secondary school entrance examination. Neither does it take account of the very marked differences in status between the various series of the baccalauréat.

Figure Nineteen:

Number of passes in Baccalaureat exam as percentage of number of passes in secondary school entrance exam in New Caledonia from 1965 to 1992 by ethnic group.

Source: Vice-Rectorat de Nouvelle-Caledonie
Despite these omissions, which would have made the observed trend even more pronounced, there is a very clear and growing differential between Kanak and European secondary school performances.

The French education system does not systematically record statistics on factors such as the levels of schooling achieved by school-leavers, or the age at which pupils achieve particular qualifications or leave school. In the absence of these data, broad analyses of examination statistics over a long period of time are the only means available for gaining an accurate impression of the overall impact of the school system.

The available statistics confirm a picture of a school system which, despite some minor improvements in some areas in recent years, gives Kanak youth little reason to expect that they will emerge from it with anything like the qualifications of their European counterparts.

7.7 Ethnic Division of Labour

New Caledonia's ethnic division of labour clearly reflects the educational underachievement of Kanak people. It has also been influenced by two other main factors: a colonial strategy of economic development based on immigrant labour; and the delay by the colonial authorities in adopting an organised strategy for Kanak cooption.

The best available information on employment patterns is to be found in census data. However, changes in the categorisation of various forms of employment prevent long-term comparisons. The 1976 census, for example, has no "agriculturalist" category which, as revealed in subsequent statistics, comprises an overwhelming number of Kanak people. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify data relating to higher status positions. The category which comprises top managerial officials in the private and public sector, employers and the liberal professions represents 0.3 per cent of the Kanak workforce compared with 9.6 per cent for Europeans. A second category which could be described as middle professionals represents a further 2.0 per cent of the Kanak
workforce compared with 18.3 per cent for Europeans [DTSEE, 1982: p.33].

A more detailed analysis and comparison can be made between the 1983 and 1989 census data, which are represented in Tables Nine and Ten.

**TABLE NINE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation by ethnic group, 1983</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Kanak</th>
<th>All Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of category</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculturalists</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and fisherpeople</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans, company mngs</td>
<td>2,302</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive, high professions</td>
<td>1,806</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle professions</td>
<td>4,914</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>1,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>6,862</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>3,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>3,798</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>3,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeclared</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Workforce</td>
<td>20,354</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>16,345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** INSEE, 1984.

**TABLE TEN:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation by ethnic group, 1989</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Kanak</th>
<th>All Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of category</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculturalists</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>5,668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and fisherpeople</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans, company mngs</td>
<td>3,003</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive, high professions</td>
<td>2,078</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle professions</td>
<td>6,571</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>1,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>7,295</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>4,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>4,477</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>5,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Workforce</td>
<td>23,997</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>18,210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** DTSEE: 1991.

These figures reveal that the coincidence between social class and ethnicity, though weakening slightly, remains pronounced. The category of agriculturalist, which refers to subsistence farmers, is still almost entirely Kanak, although it has fallen from comprising almost half the Kanak
workforce to just under a third of it. There has been a corresponding increase in the numbers of Kanak people employed in low-level occupations.

In the higher categories of employment, Kanak people are still grossly under represented. To their extent that their representation has increased between 1983 and 1989, two notes of caution are needed. First, the increase in Kanak people being employed as executives or high professionals is due largely to greater numbers of Kanak people employed as "senior civil servants". This is the direct result of France creating decentralised systems of local government to undermine the political mobilisation of the Kanak independence movement, as outlined in Chapters Eight, Nine and Ten. This subcategory was one of only two within this category where European representation declined in real and percentage terms.

The other note of caution concerns the category of artisans and company managers. Ninety per cent of the increased number of Kanak people in this category are artisans. The number of Kanak company managers, defined as heading a business with ten or more employees, actually declined from 2 in 1983 to 2 in 1989. The corresponding figures for Europeans were 156 and 84.

7.8 Conclusion

Taken together with the education statistics, these figures reveal that the increased numbers of Kanak people obtaining educational qualifications has had very little impact on the social class of the Kanak people in New Caledonian society. Leaving aside anecdotal evidence of the powerful settler community conspiring to exclude Kanak people from positions of influence or economic power in the territory, the data confirm the qualification inflation thesis. That is, improved qualifications do not, in themselves, enhance one's ability to obtain high-level employment. Employment chances can only improve if one's qualifications are higher than those of other people. Therefore, the only significant statistical measure of an improvement in Kanak educational achievement is that which relates to the gap between Kanak and non-Kanak performances.
Chapter Eight

The Rise of the Modern Kanak Independence Movement and the Crisis of Legitimation in Education. 1969-1984

8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the role of education in the emergence and rapid growth of the Kanak independence movement through the 1970s and 80s. Drawing where appropriate on statistical material introduced in the previous chapter, it documents the frustration of an increasingly politicised Kanak population with what has come to be seen as a highly selective and alien education system. Despite the rapid expansion of education facilities in New Caledonia, including those provided for Kanak children, growing numbers of Kanak people perceived schooling in New Caledonia to be organised to promote colonial interests.

Kanak disaffection with this education system has been a prominent aspect of the movement for independence from its inception. As such, it has served as both a cause and effect of the radicalisation of Kanak politics over the last twenty-five years. This chapter details how this has happened by focusing both on the movement's struggles against the colonial authorities and on the important internal debates which have occurred between and within pro-independence parties and groups. It also examines the ways in which the French Government has sought to undermine this process of Kanak radicalisation and, in particular, the educational initiatives they took to achieve this end.

This chapter also provides the politico-educational background to the following chapter which
examines the *Écoles Populaires Kanak*\(^{30}\) (EPK). It concludes with a discussion of the extent to which the developments of the period can be explained by the theoretical framework of this thesis.

### 8.2 The Rejection of Political Reformism and the Emergence of Kanak Nationalism.

For the first thirty years of the post-war period, politics in New Caledonia was dominated by a single party; the multicultural and reformist Caledonian Union (UC), whose origins and development were outlined in Chapter Six. Never questioning the fundamental colonial relationships upon which the territory was organised, the UC is nevertheless associated with the liberalisation of policies and the social concessions granted by France during the party's period of ascendancy. Whether the UC can claim credit for these developments is, however, questionable, as Brou has pointed out:

"The Caledonian Union can justifiably take credit for neither family benefits, nor accident compensation, nor the establishment of provisions for retired workers, which have each been used for such a long time in election campaigns. Their origins lie simply in the *Code du Travail Outre-Mer*\(^{31}\) and in the local affluence of the period, and if the name of the *Député*\(^{32}\) (a UC member) had been different, their establishment would have perhaps been adjusted by around six months. That is the only difference" [Brou, 1982: p.203].

The first hint of a genuine break with UC reformism and the emergence of a modern anti-colonial movement can be found in the first issue of a little-known newsletter, *Le Canaque, Homme Libre*. It was published in Paris in February 1969 by *l'Association des Jeunes Calédoniens de Paris* (AJCP), a group of New Caledonian students based in France. With a committee consisting of

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\(^{30}\) Kanak Popular Schools

\(^{31}\) Overseas work code.

\(^{32}\) New Caledonia's elected representative in the French parliament.
four Kanak, five European and one Asian student, the AJCP presented itself as having three uniting characteristics: all were in favour of autonomy for New Caledonia, although they had varying ideas about the degree and form of that autonomy; embodying a political range from Christian Socialist to Marxist, they all identified themselves as leftists; and they wanted to create a single community from the different ethnic groups in New Caledonia.

The group, whose formation had been inspired by association with the well-known events of French students a few months earlier in May 1968, was too politically diverse and too transient to last. The group's first newsletter nevertheless remains important for two reasons.

The first is its use and definition of the word "Canaque". The newsletter's first statement concerns its choice of this term:

"We have taken 'Canaque' as a symbol of our action because this word reflects the complete reality of New Caledonia today. The European utters it with disdain. The man of colour identified by this word, wears this badge as a burden: it wounds him.
Sure of the fact that man is the supreme being, who alone is worth struggling for, we take this word, which flatters the arrogance of one race at the same time as wounding the other, to mean the following: 'Canaque - free man'.
For us 'Canaque' is no longer a pejorative term reserved for one race, but one for all Caledonians committed to freedom, whatever race they belong to.
Our task is to combat politically, economically and socially all that prevents the New Caledonian from being Canaque."

The reclaiming and redefining of the term "Canaque", which had always been an insult directed at the indigenous population, was an important step in the reemergence of nationalist politics in New Caledonia. It has been used ever since as a political tool of the nationalist movement. As such, however, it did not carry the inclusive definition that the AJCP sought to give to it. "Canaque", which by the mid-1970s had come to be written "Kanak", was the term that the young generation of indigenous Melanesians used with pride to refer to themselves and their people.
The second reason for the importance of *Le Canaque, Homme Libre* is that it contained an article by the AJCP president, Nidoish Naisseline, a sociology student and the son of the High Chief of Maré. Naisseline's article, entitled "Aspect Noir du Problème Blanc" (see Appendix) is an attack on the ideology and institutions of colonial society in New Caledonia, and a defence of the integrity and dignity of Kanak people.

The significance of the Naisseline article is that just seven months after its publication, it was translated into action on the streets of Nouméa. On his return to New Caledonia, Naisseline founded the Red Scarves, a radical political grouping of young activists which aimed to rebuild Kanak identity and pride and engage in militant action to regain lost Kanak land. Jean-Marie Tjibaou, who is often credited with orchestrating the revival of Kanak culture because of his role in the 1975 Melanesia 2000 festival, acknowledged that it was the actions of the radical youth of the Red Scarves that created the conditions where people were ready to take part in that event [Tjibaou, 1989]. After announcing itself through graffiti around Nouméa, the Red Scarves rose to prominence with the arrest of Naisseline for distributing leaflets publicising a demonstration against the annual September 24th celebrations of French colonialism in New Caledonia.

Naisseline's arrest provoked an angry demonstration on 2 September 1969 of 300 people in front of Nouméa's central police station. One young Kanak activist who spontaneously joined the action believed it was the beginning of the revolution [Ounei-Small, 1992: p.163]. However, Thomson and Adloff dismissed it at the time as a riot which resembled student protests in the West. They claimed that "it reflected an indigenous hostility to the growing economic inequalities of Caledonian society, in which extremes of wealth and poverty happened to coincide with its ethnic divisions" (emphasis added). This led them to predict, quite incorrectly as it turned out, that:

"Probably the prosperity resulting from the territory's imminent economic expansion will be sufficiently widespread to offset the dissatisfaction caused by the inequality in its distribution" [Thompson and Adloff, 1971: p.329].
The year after the creation of the Red Scarves, a Kanak group led by Yann Céliné Uregei split from the UC to form the *Union Multiraciale de Nouvelle-Calédonie* (UMNC). Seen as more progressive than the still European-led UC, the UMNC attracted support from the Red Scarves, who were also allied with a small independent group of progressive Europeans, the Union de Jeunesse Calédonienne (UJC).

These alliances did not last. The Red Scarves withdrew its support for the UMNC in 1973. An article signed by Naisseline in the Red Scarves newspaper announced the break, accusing the UMNC of undemocratic decision-making and collaboration with the colonial administration [*Reveil Canaque: March 1973*]. Strained by what Kanak activists described as "whites giving themselves credit for the actions of Kanak militants" in September 1974, relations between the Red Scarves and the UJC ended with the dissolution of the latter in May 1975.

In 1974, a group of young activists from the mainland, some of whom had links with the Red Scarves, formed a new group called *Groupe 1878* (after the date of the Atai revolt) to address their specific problems. On the mainland, extensive land confiscation saw Kanak tribes confined to reserve lands which were very small, inaccessible and infertile. The Loyalty Islands, by contrast, were designated reserves almost in their entirety.

In March 1975, the Red Scarves itself divided into regional units - Atsai from Ouvéa, Wayagi from Maré and Ciciqadri from Lifou. All four groups shared a common objective, Kanak independence, and a common strategy for achieving it. They saw their initial task as one of political education and mobilisation of tribally-based Kanaks. Later that year, and partly out of concern that elected officials of other political parties were taking responsibility for their actions, they regrouped and decided to form their own political party. The result was *Parti de Libération Kanak* (PALIKA) the founding conference for which was held in May 1976 [See SPAN, 1978: pp.17-19 and Ounei, 1985].

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33 Multiracial Union of New Caledonia  
34 Union of Caledonian Youth  
35 Kanak Liberation Party
PALIKA attracted an active following, particularly among Kanak youth. In March 1977, the party was able to convert this into electoral support. Contesting six local body elections, PALIKA won the mayoralties of Ouvéa (Malaki Kapoa) and Poindimié (Francis Poadouy). In elections to the Territorial Assembly later that year, PALIKA also won two seats, with two parties that had previously made up the UMNC, the *Front Uni de Libération Kanak*\(^{36}\) (FULK) and the *Union Progressiste Mélanésienne*\(^{37}\) (UPM), winning one seat each.

In May 1977, midway between the two elections, the UC congress defined the party's belief that autonomy was a step towards the goal of independence. The move marked the rise to power of five people in the party: three Kanak (Jean-Marie Tjibaou, Yeiwéné Yeiwéné and Eloi Machoro) one Caldoche (François Burck) and a Zoreille\(^{38}\) (Pierre Declercq). Designed to stem the loss of party support to the more radical Kanak parties, the new policy also led to defections by many Europeans who remained advocates of the previous UC policy of opposition to independence.

In June 1979, PALIKA\(^{39}\), UC, FULK, UPM and a small European party, the *Parti Socialiste Calédonien*\(^{40}\) (PSC) came together to form the *Front Indépendantiste*\(^{41}\) (FI) on the basis of a minimum common platform for Kanak independence. The territorial elections the following month saw the FI win fourteen seats, against fifteen by the anti-independence grouping *Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République*\(^{42}\) (RPCR) and seven by the centrist *Fédération pour une Nouvelle Société Calédonienne*\(^{43}\) (FNSC). The FNSC first allied itself with the right to give political control to the RPCR, but later changed allegiances to give the FI a majority. In 1981, a split in PALIKA (detailed below) saw the breakaway *Libération Kanak et Socialiste*\(^{44}\) (LKS) stay within the FI and PALIKA withdraw.

\(^{36}\) United Front for Kanak Liberation  
\(^{37}\) Progressive Melanesian Union  
\(^{38}\) Metropolitan French immigrant  
\(^{39}\) It should be noted that it was only the *Tendance Amoa* of PALIKA, which later became the LKS as explained below, which favoured this alliance.  
\(^{40}\) Caledonian Socialist Party  
\(^{41}\) Independence Front  
\(^{42}\) Rally for Caledonia in the Republic  
\(^{43}\) Federation for a New Caledonian Society  
\(^{44}\) Kanak Socialist Liberation
After having signed an agreement with the FI while still in opposition pledging to grant Kanak independence should it come to power, the French Socialist Party won the 1981 election and raised expectations within the independence movement. Radical elements remained sceptical about whether the new government would honour its promise, and their reservations proved well founded. Frustration at the rejection of their demands, as evidenced by the proposed Lemoine Statute of 1984, led to the FI dissolving itself and reforming in a new body with more radical aims and strategies.

The result was the foundation of the Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste\textsuperscript{45} (FLNKS) on 24 September 1984 and the announcement that it would stage an active boycott of the forthcoming elections. Its component groups were the UC, FULK, PSC and UPM as well as the Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Kanak et des Exploités\textsuperscript{46} (USTKE) and the Groupe des Femmes Kanak et Exploitées en Lutte\textsuperscript{47} (GFKE). Absent was the LKS which decided not to join the new front because it believed that the boycott strategy was ill considered and because it did not believe that the hitherto cautious leaders of the UC were capable of implementing their radical pronouncements in any sustained way. However, PALIKA decided it would join the FLNKS.

The Kanak independence movement had begun as a small band of radical youth, dismissed as extremists by all shades of Kanak and European opinion in the established political order. However, in the space of fifteen years it had grown to the point of representing the hopes and aspirations of the vast majority of Kanak people. One of the key issues around which this radicalisation took place was education. French education came increasingly to be seen as an instrument of colonial rule. Imported directly from mainland France, New Caledonia's system of schooling was shaped in the first instance by struggles which occurred in Paris.

\textsuperscript{45} Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front
\textsuperscript{46} Union Federation of Kanak and Exploited Workers
\textsuperscript{47} Group of Kanak and Exploited Women in the Struggle
8.3 Educational Reform and Resistance

8.3.1. The Politics of Reform in French Secondary Schooling

If the late 1960s was a turning point for New Caledonia's colonial politics, it was also a dramatic period in mainland France. The spontaneous student uprising of May 1968 and the subsequent general strike rocked the French establishment and even took the organised left by surprise. It marked an assertion of the power of organised labour and the emerging middle class, a development which hastened the retreat of Gaullism and the growth of the French Socialist Party.

The economic boom from 1969 to 1973 enabled concessions to be made in the form of substantial wage rises. Increasingly, however, the focus of both students and workers was on the demand for more democratic structures of management and control. This combined with a surge in electoral support for the socialists in 1973 and a plunge into economic crisis in 1974 [see Hayward, 1982].

It was against this background in 1975 that the Giscardian Education Minister, René Haby, announced his reforms to the system of French secondary schooling. The Haby reforms were an attempt at comprehensivisation after earlier efforts had failed to achieve much in democratising this traditionally rigid and elitist system.

French secondary schools had been organised around a strict tripartite division of pupils from the age of eleven. The lowest stream would work towards their primary school leaving certificate, the CEP. The middle group would study for their secondary school leaving certificate, Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle (BEPC), either through classes attached to a lycée or in "complementary" courses run originally by a primary school but later by the newly-created Collège d'Enseignement Générale (CEG). The top pupils would gain entry to a lycée and aim towards the prestigious baccalauréat which would open the door to tertiary education.

The Fouchet reforms of 1963 had sought to replace the first cycle in the lycée and the CEG by
creating a single institution, the Collège d'Enseignement Secondaire (CES), to cater for all children in the 11 to 15 age group. Despite its aim of assembling all pupils into one institution, however, the CES was itself composed of very rigid streams. The main division was between "short" and "long" streams: the former catered for those expecting to leave school early, while the latter prepared pupils for eventual entry to a lycée where, unless they repeated a class, they would sit the baccalauréat after three years. Within each stream there was a further split. Until the two sides were merged in 1968, the division in the long stream was between a "classical" arts-based academic course and a "modern" course based on the physical sciences. In the short stream, there was a vocationally-oriented "modern" course that was less academic than its "long" equivalent, and there were pre-vocational classes for those deemed the least competent.

Although starting much later, the creation of CESs proceeded at a faster rate than the equivalent comprehensivisation process in Britain [Neave, 1975]. However, the CES did not completely replace the first cycle of the lycée or the CEG, nor did it overcome the precipitate categorisation of pupils into high and low ability groupings. Although the CES was ostensibly designed to allow mobility from lower to higher streams, it was more common for transfers to be made in the opposite direction, eliminating weaker pupils from the higher streams [Lewis, 1985: p.40]. The short stream's less academic orientation and less qualified teaching staff\footnote{Many "short" course teachers were primary teachers who had received additional training.} mitigated against the upward transfer of pupils.

What the Haby reforms sought to do was to move towards comprehensivisation by collapsing the remaining divisions between the CEG, the CES and the first cycle of the lycée, and combining them into a single institution, the collège unique. The first two years at college (sixth and fifth grades) were termed the observation cycle, and the last two (fourth and third grades) the orientation cycle. Legislation was also introduced which abolished the rigid streaming system and replaced it with a common course to be supplemented by remedial classes\footnote{classes de soutien.} for slow learners and advanced classes\footnote{classes d'approfondissement.} for the most able.
The idea behind the Haby reforms was to achieve a form of social homogenisation at the secondary level comparable to that achieved through primary schooling under the Third Republic - except that it was socio-economic (as opposed to regional or religious) differences that were to be surmounted. Thus, despite inequalities in qualification and pay, it was envisaged that each French child would receive a minimum cultural endowment which has been described as the cultural equivalent of a minimum wage\textsuperscript{51} [Reynaud and Thibaud, 1990: p.114]. In advocating the change, Giscard stressed cultural factors:

"The setting up of a single system of collèges for all French youngsters will constitute a potent means of acquiring the same culture. It will have to be accomplished with regard to syllabuses by the defining of a common core of knowledge, varying with the times and giving expression to our particular civilisation" [Giscard: p.66].

Despite Haby's attempts to unify the first cycle of secondary schooling, many teachers remained opposed to the idea: a 1976 SOFRES\textsuperscript{52} survey of teachers found 57 per cent believing the reforms would not solve any of the underlying problems in the schools and a further 25 per cent of the opinion that they would make matters worse [cited in Hantras, 1982: p.125]; in 1977, a survey of teachers showed 40 percent favoured early streaming [Le Monde: 27 January 1978]; and a 1984 survey found 55 per cent of teachers against and only 40 per cent in favour of it [SOFRES, 1985: p. 275]. Many colleges were able to find ways of avoiding the directive to teach entirely mixed-ability classes. By 1980, the Ministry of Education conceded that as few as 60 per cent of 6th grade\textsuperscript{53} classes were organised in accordance with the Haby law for mixed-ability teaching [Cited in Le Monde, 4 February 1983].

Furthermore, as Lewis [1985: pp.46-7] has shown, neither the remedial nor the advanced classes that were envisaged in the Haby reforms were properly implemented. This was because this part of the reforms was left in the hands of the teachers themselves. Often the weakest pupils were not

\textsuperscript{51} Salaire Minimum Intéproffessionel de Croissance (SMIC) culturel.

\textsuperscript{52} Société Française d'Enquêtes pour Sondages.

\textsuperscript{53} The first year of secondary school.
included in the remedial classes because they were not thought capable of catching up to the class average. There were also obstacles to the advanced classes. Intended to develop a deeper understanding of the common curriculum, as opposed to introducing new material, there was little that teachers were able to do with the brightest pupils who had already acquired a good understanding of the course content. Moreover, advancing the top pupils was not at all conducive to whole-class teaching [see also Raynaud and Thibaud, 1990: p.115].

Critics also questioned the rationale behind the Haby reforms, arguing that they were simply crisis management manoeuvres designed to bolster an establishment under threat. It is true that the Haby reforms were responding to two main types of pressure, both of which had become particularly intense in the aftermath of May 1968, with renewed student unrest in 1973-74 [Duclaud-Williams, 1983: p.70] and the economic crisis of the mid-1970s. First, there was a growing crisis of legitimation which took the form of popular demands for schools to deliver greater equality of opportunity for pupils. As Sharp [1986: pp.169-170] has pointed out, "It would be extremely problematic if most of the jobless youth continued to come from the same type of institution, namely, those schools which were clearly for the working class".

The other pressing issue which underlay these and other educational reforms was that of synchronising the outputs of the education system with the perceived requirements of industry. In this regard, France incorporates within the formal school system a considerable and increasing amount of vocational training much of which is considered in other countries to be the responsibility of industry itself [ILO, 1979]. This enthusiasm for vocational courses, streams and qualifications was shared by the socialists when they came to power in 1981.

Dissatisfied with the impact of the Haby reforms, the newly-elected Socialist Party Minister of Education, Alain Savary, engaged Louis Legrand to conduct an extensive review of the collèges. Legrand opposed what he saw as the imposition of a unified curriculum upon pupils with widely different needs and abilities. He declared:

"We can justifiably wonder if the imposition upon all children of a common intellectual
norm is not fundamentally an act of violence against social groups who are unable or unwilling to submit themselves to it" [Legrand, 1981: p.164].

In a move which backed away from full comprehensivisation by officially sanctioning the existing less-than-rigorous application of the Haby reforms by schools, the socialists acknowledged the difficulties that colleges faced in applying the mixed-ability teaching policy to some subject areas (namely mathematics, French and foreign languages), and they made streaming optional. Special assistance was, however, offered as an incentive to those establishments that volunteered to implement the policy.

The other significant innovation of the socialist administration was the introduction of zones d'éducation prioritaire\(^54\) (ZEPs). Established in 1981, ZEP were designed to address the needs of targeted problem areas. These areas, which tended to be places of high unemployment and/or high immigrant populations, were defined not purely in terms of the relative underachievement of school pupils, but also with regard to many associated problems such as truancy, violence, ill health and poverty. The ZEP programmes involved a range of government departments, the specifically educational contribution being the encouragement of adapting teaching methods to local conditions. These initiatives were known as projets d'actions éducatives\(^55\) (PAE). From 1982 to 1992, the number of ZEPs increased from 353 [Cahiers d'Education Nationale: June 1983] to 554 and comprised 6,454 educational institutions [Education et Formations: September 1992].

The most optimistic proponents of the ZEPs highlight details such as the following: even though a greater proportion of pupils in the ZEP get channelled towards short vocational courses like the CAP and BEP or apprenticeships, the gap between the ZEP and non-ZEP pupils in this regard is not getting wider [Croissandeau, 1993: pp.126-8]. Critics point to the fact that the gap is not closing either. What is more, some unions and parent groups have expressed fears about the effect on schools of being classified as problematic [cited in Lewis, 1985: p.50].

\(^{54}\) Educational priority zones.
\(^{55}\) Educational action projects.
Whatever the merits of the ZEP, the very fact of the programme being established and extended represents an official admission that meritocratic aims of earlier reforms are far from being realised.

8.3.2 The Theory and Practice of Education and Kanak Educational Resistance

The French state assumed full responsibility for public secondary education in New Caledonia in 1966. Official accounts of French education policy in New Caledonia since this time are as naive in their optimism as nationalist accounts are scathing in their opposition. It is virtually impossible to find an official view that sees anything other than a positive future for education in New Caledonia.

Typical of such views is the opening statement of an article in the bulletin of the South Pacific Commission (SPC) written by the principal of Nouméa's only lycée in 1971:

"In New Caledonia, the Paris Ministry of National Education is responsible for the administration of secondary public education establishments and the management of their finances. Instruction is in the hands of of teachers most of whom belong to the metropolitan corps of teachers, and is constructed on the same curricula and timetables as in metropolitan France. Thus, although they are far away from the major centres which spread culture and civilisation, our pupils have the same advantages as their fellows in the capital or in the French provinces. They have the same rights, sit the same examinations which lead them, on French territory, to the same faculties and higher schools in which they can, with or without a scholarship, receive the same higher education. Thus, in the vital field of instruction and education, the great principle of equality of all French citizens before the law is implicitly asserted and upheld" [Senes, 1971: p.20].

Senes' declaration provides a clear insight into the educational context within which Kanak school

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56 Les grandes écoles in France are tertiary institutions of considerably greater prestige than the universities.
pupils were obliged to function and against which the rising nationalist movement was determined to fight. The assumptions embodied within Senes' statement, whether implicit or explicit, include the following:

1. The only valid form of culture and civilisation is that which originates in France, or at least in Europe.

2. New Caledonia is an integral part of France and all of its inhabitants have, or at least should have, identical needs and aspirations to those in mainland France.

3. Equality of treatment is the over-riding measure of fairness and justice in education.

Senes makes little mention of issues related to Kanak education until the very end of his article. Here, he points to the impact of growing numbers of Kanak pupils gaining entry to secondary establishments.

"During the next few years, the development of secondary education will make possible an increasing representation of New Caledonia's indigenous youth and an improvement in the quality of this representation. Gradually, difficulties are being ironed out which, in the past, were due to a faulty use of the French language and, at the same time, we see the handicap disappearing of the too high age at which young people of the inland tribes or of the islands reached secondary educational level.

"We must, therefore, expect a considerable increase in the admission of a number of indigenous young people to the first form. This influx, together with the consequences of an increasing population inflow due to the territory's economic boom, will necessitate renewed efforts which in turn will bring about further advance" [Senes, 1971: p.22].

The first two sentences reveal a clear "blame the victim" perspective. Employing broad terms, Senes refers to the "development" of secondary education resulting in an increase in Kanak
attendance without referring to the formal obstacles which had previously been placed in the way of Kanak pupils. According to Senes, the cause of the "difficulties" faced by Kanak pupils was simply their "faulty use of the French language". Adaption must come from the Kanak pupils themselves. It is their responsibility to do what is necessary, such as better mastery of French, to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the school which is the vehicle for advancing culture and civilisation in New Caledonia. There is no recognition of a need for change on the part of the educational authorities, other than in the form of increased provision of schooling.

In this regard, the influx of Kanak youth into form one (there was very little pressure from Kanak pupils qualifying to enter his own more advanced lycée) was discussed in the same breath as the arrival of immigrant workers, most of whom were coming from metropolitan France. Again no special adaptation to what might have been particular Kanak needs was seen as necessary or desirable. Rather, Senes concludes optimistically, the influx "will necessitate renewed efforts which in turn will bring about further advance".

It was against the kind of views expressed by Senes and the kinds of policies and structures which emanated from these views that young Kanak activists railed. In the same year that the Senes article appeared, the Red Scarves newspaper, *Reveil Canaque*, reported that an elected Kanak councillor from Lifou had requested that a CEG be constructed in Gavena for the youth of the Loyalty Islands. "Impossible," answered the government official Delpias, "Lifou needs a technical lycée."

From that reply, *Reveil Canaque* concluded that advanced institutions were only for Europeans. While noting that progress is difficult because the territorial educational authority, the *Vice-Rectorat*, is no more than a transit agency, *Reveil Canaque* launched a call for action.

"Why not establish a project for the revision of the education system of New Caledonia, the objective of which would be the deracialisation of education for a better adaptation of education, taking account of: New Caledonia's situation in the Pacific; its economic future; its different ethnic components; different cultures and the possibility of exchanges; and the
One of the main grounds that Naisseline found for attacking French education in New Caledonia in his 1969 article was that it reinforced the subservient status of Kanak people by denying the Kanak child the right to be Kanak. By the disdain with which Kanak parents and their values and customs were treated by the school system and the wider colonial society, Kanak children were made to feel ashamed of and embarrassed about their parents.

"The white community denigrates the man of colour wherever it meets him. It ridicules his parents in the eyes of the young indigène, making them guilty for not having made of him a descendant of Asterix. At school the ideal mother is always represented by a white. As youngsters, my friends and I avoided being seen by the teacher in the company of our parents. Thanks to the French school, our parents had ended up representing for us something to be shunned and forgotten in order to become a real person" [Naisseline, 1969: pp.5-6].

Naisseline's extended his criticism to the self-styled defenders of the Kanak people, the missionary churches. The mission school system, including the much-vaunted college of Doneva, was accused of subjecting Kanak children to "intellectual totalitarianism, sexual terrorism and under-nourishment". Worse, according to Naisseline, Kanak parents were cowed into submission because of the feelings of inadequacy and inferiority which were fostered by the paternalism of the missionaries:

"Convinced of their inability to provide adequate education for their children, and resigned to going along with everything the missionary does, no indigenous parent raises any objection to this infanticide" [Naisseline, 1969: p.8].

The impact of colonial education on the Kanak consciousness was a theme that was also
The impact of colonial education on the Kanak consciousness was a theme that was also emphasised by Groupe 1878. They argued that from its inception, French colonialism in New Caledonia was designed to "imprison the Kanak consciousness" and that education was an important means for achieving this.

"We received domination education, that is education whose aim was not to take account of the local people's way of thinking and acting, but oriented in such a way that the traditional past be not given any emphasis. From this came the tendency to transform everything into an object of domination - land, resources, mineral production, even the education of people themselves" [Andi Ma Dhô. July 1976].

It was to counteract this situation that activists placed so much store on grass-roots political education work. This emphasis was also a prominent feature in the programme of PALIKA. The report of its 1976 founding conference in Amoa [PALIKA, 1976: pp.18-20] includes an outline of the political, economic and socio-cultural aims of the party as well as its strategies for achieving each of these inter-related goals. The socio-cultural aims stress the primacy of Kanak culture and, in this regard, foreshadow changes to the education system that would be adopted in an independent Kanak state.

"Education will be open to everyone, without distinction on the grounds of age or sex. The regime of qualifications will be abolished. Education will obviously be adapted to local conditions and will be dispensed according to the specific norms and programmes of the future nation. Kanak history will be included in the programmes. ..."

"There must also be intervention to adapt education to Kanak realities, make official Kanak cultural education and introduce the teaching of vernacular languages. Regarding overseas, there should be help for young students who want to pursue their studies abroad if France and the territory do not look after them... Parents should give their children a customary education. Culturally, we need to feel and live as Kanak. It is the starting point for our struggle for independence".
By 1979, educational issues had assumed an unprecedented degree of importance for a number of reasons besides the mobilisations of that year that are outlined below. One was the widespread opposition to the Debré Law when it was introduced in 1976. The new law, which had existed in France for many years, established a contractual relationship between the state and the private educational bodies. The state would assume greater financial responsibility for the schools in return for greater control over key areas such as the qualifications of teaching staff. Kanak and pro-Kanak groups feared that the church schools, which were attended mostly by Kanak pupils, would lose staff and have less flexibility in adapting teaching methods and content [La France Australe, 16 August 1976]. Their fears proved well-founded. As a result of the new law, l'Alliance Scolaire lost several teachers, whom it considered to be highly capable, because they did not have the requisite qualifications [Interview Wapotro]. There were also cases of teachers being forced out of the private school system on these grounds and then being reemployed in state schools and given in-service training to obtain the necessary qualification [Interview Gorodey].

The Dijoud Plan also placed emphasis on education. It offered the territory a cash injection and a series of concessions to the Kanak people in a range of areas, including education, in an explicit attempt to undermine the rapidly growing movement for Kanak independence. During his first visit to New Caledonia in July 1978, France's new Secretary of State for Overseas Departments and Territories, Paul Dijoud, sketched the outline of what was eventually entitled, Un Plan de Développement Economique et Social à Long Terme pour la Nouvelle-Calédonie 57, or the Dijoud Plan [For detailed discussion of the Dijoud Plan, see Ward, 1980 or Ovington, 1988]. One of the remarkable features of Dijoud's approach was that it represented the first official admission on the part of the French administration that there was some substance to the grievances advanced by the Kanak independence movement. In acknowledging this, however, Dijoud also made it clear that he opposed independence, let alone Kanak independence, for New Caledonia and that the substance of Kanak demands for independence would be met through the right type of development plan.

57 A Plan for Long-Term Economic and Social Development for New Caledonia.
Central to his plan for Kanak development was a state programme of purchasing and reallocating land which was to be accompanied by a programme of social measures known as "La Promotion Mélanésienne". Educational reforms featured highly in this programme. With the introduction in 1980 of a new type of educational establishment, the annex de lycée d'enseignement professionnel\textsuperscript{58} (ALEP), schooling was to be made more sensitive to Kanak culture and adapted to what were said to be "the daily realities experienced by the child in order to facilitate his future social involvement" [Christnacht, 1990: p.120].

PALIKA, FULK and UPM were all adamant in their opposition to the Dijoud Plan. Dijoud hoped that by working with the UC, which saw some merits in the plan, as well as some settler groupings, he would be able to isolate the more radical Kanak parties. However, his unnecessary and tactless insistence that an integral part of the plan was a ten year moratorium on calls for independence provoked even the UC to withdraw its support.

The educational reforms introduced by Dijoud were designed to cater for Kanak underachievers. The lycée d'enseignement professionnel\textsuperscript{59} (LEP) which had been called the collège d'enseignement technique\textsuperscript{60} (CET) took pupils from the fifth or third grades who chose not to or were deemed incapable of progressing in the general stream. In the LEP, pupils worked towards vocational qualifications such as the CAP or more advanced BEP.

The newly created ALEPs were designed as a lower level institution to take pupils who had completed primary school, were judged not capable of dealing with secondary school, but were obliged to remain at school to the age of 16. Through a combination of practical and book work, the pupils worked towards a development-oriented CAP (quite separate from a normal CAP) or an even lower level certificat d'études professionnels. The ALEPs began as an experiment but grew rapidly to number fourteen by 1983, and became a permanent part of the school system.

The ALEPs were a territorial responsibility and functioned autonomously from the Vice-Rectorate.

\textsuperscript{58} annex to vocational lycée
\textsuperscript{59} vocational lycée
\textsuperscript{60} technical college
The Territorial Assembly with a pro-independence majority in the early 1980s supported their continued existence. André Gopéa of the UPM, who was the local government member in charge of education, described the ALEPs as an attempt "to satisfy a need for practical schooling ... while avoiding letting this become dead-end training". ALEPs, he says, need to be closely adapted to local conditions:

"We are striving to develop them into a practical and varied form of schooling, able to respond to the needs and activities of local populations by enabling their pupils to run small-scale development schemes in their place of origin" [Gopéa, 1989: p.60].

For many activists, however, the ALEPs were second-rate institutions which were an indictment of colonial schooling. They were simply a device to make the Kanak believe that the French Government was concerned about and looking after them. Their very existence, critics argued, served to conceal the fact that those attending them, almost entirely Kanak, had been excluded from the mainstream of schooling [Kanak. Number 38, December 1979: p.3]. Therefore, to condone the ALEPs amounted to an acceptance that the mainstream could continue unchallenged in its practice of dispensing education which met the needs only of the dominant social groups. ALEPs, it was argued, were awarding worthless qualifications which would serve only to create a new even lower underworld of workers [see also Kanak. Numbers 50, 51, 62, 87].

One person, who had taught at an ALEP, said that his impression was that one of the main purposes of them was to increase the number of Caldoches teachers to establish careers for themselves" [cited in Chroniques de Kanaky. Number 2, Jan-Feb 1990: p.2].

Critics of the ALEPs and the Maisons Familiales Rurales\(^6^1\) (MFR), a similar institution which predates the ALEP, argue that they "simply give the current bourgeois school system the possibility of justifying itself and legitimising its thoroughly negative results concerning Kanak and exploited children". They accuse those who promote these institutions as solutions to the

\(^6^1\) Rural Family Houses
underachievement of Kanak children as being interested only in smoothing out the rough edges of the system. And they identify, as a common assumption underlying such initiatives, a view which is almost identical to that advanced by Lenormand (cited above) in the 1950s:

"Kanaks cannot cope with the current school system, so schools that are down to their level must be created for them" [Kanak. Number 50, August 1981: p.7].

8.4 Kanak Educational Resistance: Case Studies of Students and Teachers

At the end of the 1970s, Dornoy identified the issue of education, together with land and finances, as one of the most important problems facing New Caledonia [Dornoy, 1984: p.263]. Ward agreed, declaring his view that, alongside the issue of land, education is "the most important focus of Kanak protest and pressure, leading to boycotts, sit-ins and other forms of challenge to the authorities, and occasional confrontations with the forces of law and order" [Ward, 1982: p.49].

As documented above, ever since its rebirth in 1969, the Kanak nationalist movement has focused on the injustices of French education. Rather than being conducive to social equality and development, it has argued, the school system in New Caledonia has served as an essential mechanism for reinforcing colonial domination and denigrating and marginalising Kanak people. Although much of the movement's analysis of colonial education in New Caledonia tends to draw heavily on reproduction theories of education, this has not lessened the extent to which they have organised strategies of resistance.

As the movement gained strength in the late 1970s, two major campaigns in particular brought educational issues to the forefront of the anti-colonial struggle. The first, instigated by students, was the 1976-78 occupation of the Foyer Calédonien. This was followed by a prolonged series of mobilisations and confrontations in response to the dismissal of Kanak or pro-Kanak teachers which challenged the educational establishment in New Caledonia from 1979 until 1981.
8.4.1 Students: The Occupation of the *Foyer Calédonien*

The *Foyer Calédonien* was a hostel in Paris, where students from the territory could stay while pursuing tertiary studies in France. The building was purchased in 1961 by the New Caledonian Local Government [Thompson and Adloff, 1971: p.502] who had also been responsible for its administration. However, by the mid-1970s Kanak students, together with some of their progressive European counterparts, were becoming increasingly dissatisfied about the way the hostel was run. They felt discriminated against by the warden and objected to the unduly restrictive rules to which they were subjected. They claimed that policies of selection of hostel residents as well as the overall organisation of hostel affairs were designed to meet the interests only of a privileged class of European students.

One particular demand was that the *foyer* should be open not only to university students, but also to other young people from New Caledonia who had to go to Paris. The single largest group in this category were those who were sent to France to do their compulsory military service. Because it reflected the entire spectrum of New Caledonian youth and not-just the élite who had survived the selective school system and qualified for tertiary studies, this group comprised a far greater proportion of Kanak.

Growing discontent came to a head in October 1976. The newly-appointed warden of the hostel, Mrs Bouttroux, tore up posters that some hostel residents had put up in opposition to the colonial exposition, "France in the Four Corners of the World". The students responded by drawing up a list of six demands including: freedom of expression; fair distribution of rooms; a management committee composed of hostel residents; and the right for young soldiers doing their compulsory military service in France to stay in the hostel. The warden replied by immediately expelling from the hostel two students as well as a group of visiting Kanak soldiers. The group refused to leave, and on 1 November began an occupation which lasted more than eighteen months [Kanak, undated leaflet].
The occupation was organised by the *Association des Canaques en France*[^62] (ACF), who established a management committee[^63] of thirty Kanak and non-Kanak members each with defined areas of responsibility. Included among the Kanak members of the committee were: Jimmy Ounei, the first editor of *Reveil Canaque*; Raphael Mapou, later to become FLNKS mayor of Yaté; and Hnalaine Uregei, who became a leading figure in the Kanak trade union. Among the European members of the committee were at least four (Philippe Berghe, Dominique Humbert, Danielle Prébin and Ismet Kurtovitch) who, on their return to New Caledonia as teachers, came into conflict with the colonial school system over the issue of Kanak education.

The ACF was roundly criticised by the New Caledonian establishment. The territory's main daily newspaper referred to the occupying group as "scholarship-holders with nothing better to do than engage in agitation" and described the *foyer* as having been transformed into "a soviet where Jimmy Ounei holds the forums" [*Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*: 20 November 1976].

The students prepared themselves for a long campaign, and launched appeals to groups within France and back in New Caledonia to support their action. In a letter to activists in New Caledonia, the spokesperson for the group wrote:

"This action is important, not only for students, but for the revolutionary struggle which we all must conduct to liberate our country. Through the *Foyer*, we can break the wall of silence which blocks New Caledonia from gaining the international support which is so necessary. Already here, the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, other left-wing and Christian groups, the workers' movement (CGT and CFDT) and the student movement support the Foyer committee... Since the formation of the management committee,

[^62]: Association of Kanaks in France
discussions on New Caledonia - politics, economics, repression, liberation etc... are constantly being held. The overwhelming majority of residents from the Foyer are participating, and so are New Caledonian students living outside the Foyer. The Foyer is full of posters denouncing the colonial system of domination and exploitation in New Caledonia. Thousands of passers-by stop, read our posters and come in to talk with us.... It is a great victory for us Kanaks to direct an action, having taken on one of the monuments of colonial domination... Help us to give the colonial administration the most majestic slap in the face it has ever received" [Ounei: 18 November, 1976].

Throughout 1977, the students' action attracted the attention and support of a large number of French people and groups, with the hostel itself becoming a lively meeting place where Kanak students and other came into contact with all shades of left-wing activism in France. The students linked the anti-colonial struggle with the struggle against capitalism and began to adopt an increasingly Marxist vocabulary.

"All of us have the tasks of preparing (see Lenin) and carrying out (see Che Guevara) the Kanak revolution, the only solution for liberating the Kanak people and constructing socialism in our country." [Foyer Calédonien en Lutte, 14 January-1978].

Throughout the duration of the occupation, a regular correspondence was maintained between those in control of the foyer and their supporters in New Caledonia. Within New Caledonia, the foyer occupation became a rallying point for anti-colonial forces, particularly the newly formed Parti de Liberation Kanak64 (PALIKA), with whom the most ACF members were politically aligned. Money was raised and sent to the occupying group, and information and education tours were organised by activists around Kanak tribes in the mainland and the Loyalty Islands.

In July, the Territorial Assembly, at the suggestion of the Socialist Party, proposed a system of co-management for the foyer, involving the students and the administration [La France Austral: 20 July 1977]. However, the students were in no mood to compromise and maintained their demand

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64 Kanak Liberation Party.
that the hostel be self-managing. They also pointed out that, with a majority of members who claimed to be autonomists or socialists, the Territorial Assembly and particularly its Commission on Education might be expected to respond more favourably to the students' demands. At the same time, however, they pointed out that it was Griscelli, the man who chaired the commission and whom they described as "a soft liberal and lukewarm socialist who only has energy for stigmatising advocates of change", who in the name of the UC called for severe action to be taken against the Red Scarves after their first demonstration in 1969.

On 11 September 1977, elections for New Caledonia's Territorial Assembly gave power to a right-wing coalition which was overtly hostile to the occupying students. They served an eviction order which was upheld by a court hearing in Paris on 4 October [Residents du Foyer Calédonien, undated]. The occupation was declared illegal and all the students had a week to leave. Certain students were to be reinstated in the foyer but only under strict conditions [La France Australe: 5 October 1977].

By this stage, only five Kanak and around twenty non-Kanak residents remained in permanent occupation of the building. However, sizeable numbers of military conscripts were still passing through, and elaborate security systems and structures for calling supporters in at short notice had been established [Ouwei, 18 October 1977]. Even more importantly, support networks in New Caledonia were in a high state of mobilisation.

On October 3, the day before the expulsion order came into effect, l'Association des Lycéens Canaques 65(ALC) organised a protest meeting in Nouméa to support the students in Paris and denounce "the racist rules of the students' hostel that favoured the selection of those from the privileged classes of the population" [La France Australe: 4 October 1977]. However the police intervened to disperse the students and prevent the demonstration from taking place.

On October 8, the ALC joined forces with activists and councillors of PALIKA and FULK to organise another rally. In the lead-up to the action, police confiscated leaflets from activists in the

65 Association of Kanak students of lycées.
town on the grounds that they were engaged in "the unauthorised collection of funds and the distribution of leaflets publicising an unauthorised demonstration" [ALC, FULK, PALIKA: 8 October 1977]. When it came to the protest itself in Vallée du Tir, police encircled the gathering, declared it "unruly and unauthorised" and gave people three minutes to disperse. They then proceeded to attack the demonstrators with batons, hospitalising several people including Territorial Assembly councillor, Yann Céléné Uregei and prominent PALIKA activists, William Trongadjo, Malo Harper, Henri Bailly and Bernard Gambey. Gambey and Bailly were also arrested for "violence and assault" [personal communication and PALIKA, undated].

A week after the batoning and in protest against it, two activists, Georges Nemia and Guy Kaloi went on a hunger strike, in which they were joined three days later by Marius Thomo and one of PALIKA's newly elected Territorial Assembly councillors, Daniel Gohoup [Comité de Grève, 22 October 1977]. The hunger strike, as well as the impending trial of Bailly and Gamby provided a focus for ongoing action in support of the foyer occupation, and the wider issues it raised.

The ALC, which was becoming increasingly active on political issues, used the occasion to convene a public meeting on the problems facing Kanak high school students. To reduce the chances of further police action, they held the meeting in the Protestant church in Montravel. In a leaflet publicising the meeting, they attacked the selective and alien nature of the French education system and noted:

"Once the national liberation struggle of their people begins, it is completely normal that the young Kanaks in secondary schools and lycées wonder about their own situation and the various problems to which it gives rise. On 3 October they wanted to demonstrate their solidarity with the Kanak students in struggle at the hostel for Caledonian students in Paris; the police intervened. Furthermore, they were given eight hours of detention at Blaise Pascal, two hours at Lycée La Perouse and a warning at the Lycée Technique. Inevitably, it is in the interests of the Vice-Rectorat and the colonial administration to see Kanak high school students on sports fields rather than on the streets to support their

66 The three named institutions are Nouméa secondary schools.
brothers in the struggle" [Comité de Grève, 22 October 1977].

Despite the demonstrations, opinion amongst the political authorities in New Caledonia was hardening against the students. Opponents included "centrist" senator, Lionel Cherrier, who claimed that "these troublemakers were brainwashed by the communists and the extreme left" [La France Australe: 11 November 1977]. However, what rankled with the students and their supporters more than opposition from the right and centre was that the UC and UPM, parties which declared themselves in favour of independence, also lined up against them in the Territorial Assembly. Eventually in 1978, after almost eighteen months, the foyer occupation ended when the Territorial Assembly in Nouméa voted to sell the building.

The student-led action in Paris and support campaigns in Nouméa had a powerful and lasting impact on colonial relations in New Caledonia. It was often said to have reproduced in miniature the anti-colonial struggle in New Caledonia [PALIKA, undated 2]. The foyer occupation succeeded in placing the newly invigorated Kanak independence struggle on the political agenda in France for the first time, and it elicited support from influential elements within the French Socialist Party and Communist Party. It established strong links between the Kanak movement and other progressive groups in France. It was the catalyst for an increased politicisation and mobilisation of Kanak high school students. The foyer occupation also saw the development of a more class-based ideology amongst Kanak independence activists; a process which gave rise to the slogan "Kanak socialist independence" which was eventually adopted by virtually all pro-independence groupings in New Caledonia.

The foyer occupation was not, however, without its negative consequences. Of these, the most far-reaching was the acrimonious conflict which led on 15 January 1978 to a number of members of PALIKA resigning from the ACF to form a new group, le Groupe des Kanaks en France67 (GKF). The accusations that the GKF levelled at the ACF included: "class collaboration between Kanak and Caldoche intellectuals"; failing to act upon their agreed belief that "PALIKA alone advances the struggle in New Caledonia"; and engaging in "negative practices" and operating in

67 Group of Kanaks in France.
For its part, the ACF wanted to maintain its Toussaint 1975 position of being an anti-colonial and anti-imperialist group, autonomous of all political parties. This position had been adopted prior to the formation of PALIKA and was largely intended to prevent autonomist parties such as the Union Multiraciale de Nouvelle-Calédonie\(^{68}\) (UMNC) either trying to exert control over them or taking undeserved credit for their actions. Those who remained with the ACF, though remaining close to many key figures within PALIKA, refused to be called to account by people who had not been directly involved in the foyer occupation and resisted the move to transform the ACF into a PALIKA section de base\(^{69}\), preferring that the group remain open to Kanak students from other political parties as well [Personal communication]. This group saw the ACF as "a political, grassroots organisation which, as such, defines precise and specific tasks for (them) linked to the transitory nature of (their) situation in France and carrying above all the real, as opposed to the ecumenical and proclamatory, contribution that we can bring to the struggle our brothers are leading at home" [ACF, January 1978].

The conflict between the students in Paris was a precursor to a deeper division which would eventually split PALIKA in half.

### 8.4.2 Teachers: The Removal of Kanak Sympathisers and Activists

A significant proportion of the administrative and, especially in the secondary establishments, the teaching staff in New Caledonia's school system consists of people who have come from metropolitan France on fixed term contracts. They receive a bonus of seven months salary on their arrival and again on their departure. And should they renew their contract for a second three-year term, they qualify for another pair of bonuses [Bernard, 1989: p.14].

Although these conditions generate considerable disgruntlement on the part of local teachers, they generally have the desired effect of ensuring that the prime focus of metropolitan teachers is on the

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\(^{68}\) Multiracial Union of New Caledonia

\(^{69}\) A branch committee of PALIKA in France.
Although these conditions generate considerable disgruntlement on the part of local teachers, they generally have the desired effect of ensuring that the prime focus of metropolitan teachers is on the acquisition of material wealth and comforts. To ensure the pro-colonial bias of the schools, any teaching staff (whether metropolitan or local) who showed themselves to be sympathetic to or involved with the Kanak movement have been promptly dismissed or transferred by the educational or political authorities.

An early example of such tactics was the removal of James Wright from his position as teacher at Oundjo. A Kanak who was active in the Red Scarves and from 1971 to 1972 the mayor of Voh, Wright had twice before been under threat of removal; on one occasion political activities being cited as the reason. His transfer finally came in June 1973 when he returned to Oundjo after attending a UJC meeting in Nouméa. He was accused by the gendarmerie of meddling in customary affairs and given twenty-four hours to vacate his post in Oundjo and move himself, his wife and five children to Pont des Français [Reveil Canaque: July 1973].

Another such case was that of Jean-Pierre Levi, a highly qualified teacher at Lycée Laperouse, who was forced to return to France after the Vice-Rectorate refused to renew his contract. Levi was very popular with his pupils, two hundred of whom signed a petition to support his retention in New Caledonia. Even the Vice-Rectorate was satisfied with his performance, and was said to be in favour of renewing his contract. The refusal came from political authorities who claimed that Levi was behind an article published in Le Monde on 1 January 1976. The article, which was actually written and signed by Monique Duvgiaux, was highly critical of French policy towards Kanak people and attacked, among other things, the commercialisation of Kanak culture in the government-sponsored "Melanesia 2000" festival.

Kanak activists believe the real reason for the non-renewal of Levi's contract was his close friendship with leading Kanak radicals like Déwé Gorodey and Elie Poigoune, coupled with the administration's belief that European agitators were the prime movers in the revival of Kanak nationalism. Kanak activists say that Levi was among a few European teachers who tried to understand the problems faced by the Kanak people, who did not have a superiority complex, who
were more interested in listening to them than in lecturing to them and who recognised them as equals.

What led to Levi's removal from the territory was, they argue, his failure to follow the rule for all Europeans teaching there:

"To be a teacher in New Caledonia, you must love money, lead the life of a king, have your own boat and villa and above all, above all [sic] ignore the Kanak" [Andi Ma Dho. Number 31: p.2].

The most widely-publicised case of the political expulsion of a pro-Kanak teacher was that of Inspector Lucien Gau. Gau had recognised that a significant cause of the educational underachievement of Kanak children was that they were being taught as though French were their mother tongue when in fact it was not. In 1977, Gau tried to introduce pedagogical reforms for Kanak children in the Loyalty Islands which would see them taught French as a foreign language. [Kanak. Number 50: p.10 and Bernard, 1989: p.14].

Gau's initiative and the type of rapport he had developed with the local community met with official disapproval and he was promptly transferred out of the territory and back to metropolitan France. On his return, however, Gau placed an appeal with the Conseil d'Etat against the action that the New Caledonian Vice-Rectorate had taken against him. His complaint was upheld, the Conseil d'Etat ruling that the reasons given by the Vice-Rectorate for transferring him were without foundation [Kanak. Number 21, March 1979: p.3].

Each of these cases provoked criticism from Kanak groups and their supporters. They were cited as evidence that the French administration was deliberately pursuing a policy of using the education system in New Caledonia to actively reinforce its power. As the Kanak independence movement grew in strength, its capacity to resist and even overturn such moves grew correspondingly.
The power of this resistance came to the fore in the late 1970s, as the issue of the selective, unadapted and discriminatory nature of the education system in New Caledonia became an increasingly important focus of the independence movement in the territory. From 1979 to 1981, a series of sackings directed against politically active teachers (both Kanak and French) provoked a long campaign of Kanak protest.

In August 1979, protests prompted by the dismissal of three Kanak teachers: Jules Jebez and Gadre Yewene, who were primary school teachers in Mare; and Paul Neaoutyine, who was one of only two Kanak teachers at Nouméa's prestigious Lycée La Perouse. The official grounds for dismissal were cited as lack of professional competence or under-qualification. PALIKA attacked the dismissals as "clearly an ideological and political sanction", arguing that Neaoutyine's high political profile in Noumea and the participation of Jebez and Yewene in demonstrations against a French military exercise in Mare were the real reasons for the actions taken against them [Kanak. 24 August, 1979].

The first demonstration against the sackings was organised by PALIKA's youth section on August 22. Sixty school pupils aged from fourteen to twenty boycotted classes and, together with a few of the party leaders, mounted a picket outside Lycée La Perouse. The school authorities called the police who attacked the group with batons and tear gas and arrested nine people, five of whom were boycotting students. Outraged at the attack, which took place within the school grounds in front of other pupils, up to three thousand pupils and teachers (Kanak and non-Kanak) marched through Noumea in protest [Ounei interviews].

For the following two months, a wave of school boycotts swept the Kanak areas of the territory, involving pupils, teachers and parents [Kanak. 14 September, 1979]. The specific aims of the boycott were to demand the reinstatement of the sacked teachers and the release of the prisoners, and to protest against the police violence against the student picket and other subsequent protests. However, these issues were also placed within a broader context of dissatisfaction with the inequalities and injustices generated in the education system.
PALIKA’s newspaper identified two particular problems: first, the prohibitively high cost of buying uniforms, books and stationery, and the added financial hardship caused to poor parents if their child had to repeat a year and, therefore, lose his allowance; and secondly, the problems of the anti-Kanak cultural bias and racism in the education system. The editorial declared: "In New Caledonia, we live in a racist and capitalist society. The role of the school in this context is to prepare children to be integrated into that society, which constantly abuses the Kanak. ...In an unequal society, the school accentuates the inequalities" [Kanak. 14 September, 1979].

The protest actions won the release of the prisoners, the reinstatement of Neaoutyine and the transfer of Yewene to another school. But the dismissal of Jebez, who had also refused to teach French to his Kanak primary school pupils, remained [Kanak. 7 September, 1979]. Many of the most active pupils were expelled for absenteeism.

In June the following year, four more teachers were arrested for political activities, one of whom, Itraqalo Watrone, was taken in handcuffs from his classroom in front of the pupils [Nouvelles 1878. 28 July, 1980]. A protest rally was called to demand the teachers' release. In the meantime, the teachers were released, but the demonstration still went ahead, focussing instead on the mistreatment they received while in custody. The rally was again attacked by the police who arrested eighteen people, many of whom were school students.

That night the police raided a high school dormitory, seized leaflets and banners, and made further arrests. Two of the students, Sam Iwen and Julien Kando, received prison sentences of two years and sixteen months respectively, and almost all the others, though not charged, were expelled from school [Nouvelles 1878. 28 July, 1980].

Neaoutyine was also arrested, together with his fellow PALIKA member and secondary school teacher, Elie Poigoune. In September, after each had been sentenced to three months imprisonment, they were dismissed from Lycée La Perouse, the official grounds being their participation in the demonstration [PALIKA leaflet, 12 September, 1980]. PALIKA and their teachers' union STE again mobilised in their support.
October saw the protests broaden. Two European teachers who had begun participating in Kanak demonstrations in Ouvea were dismissed from the Catholic secondary school on the island. The campaign to reinstate the four teachers, therefore, had two targets: the Vice-Rectorate, which was responsible for the public schools; and the offices of the Catholic education system, the DEC.

It was not until the Socialist Party came to power in France in 1981 that the teachers were reinstated and an amnesty was granted for the political prisoners [Kanak. 4 September, 1981]. For many Kanaks, however, the gesture was "too little too late". The succession of political conflicts over education had generated a large number of talented youth who had been expelled from school. This factor, coupled with a heightened general awareness of the selective and racist nature of the education system permitted the mobilisation of a strong body of Kanak opinion in favour of cutting all links with colonial education and establishing a separate school system. The impact of this development is examined in more detail in the following chapter.

8.5 The Role of Kanak Intellectuals

That the resurgence of Kanak nationalism was a generational phenomenon is beyond doubt. Having lost the fear and submissiveness of their parents' generation, Kanak youth who grew up in the post-war period were the driving force of the Red Scarves and the parties which grew from it. Furthermore, the mobilisations of 1979/80 as well as those of 1984 and 1988 saw new waves of youth enter and invigorate the nationalist movement. And there is reason to believe that Kanak youth will continue to play a decisive role in the future [Ounei-Small, 1992: p.179].

What is less clear is the role of intellectuals in the modern independence movement. Commentaries on the origins and development of the movement vary in the importance they attach to this issue, with some making little reference to it at all. There is, however, a definite tendency to overstate the involvement of Kanak students, and to present their influence over the movement in largely uncritical terms.
8.5.1 Misrepresentation of Student Influence

Ward [1982: p.18] wrote, "From the late 1960s there emerged organised groups of educated young Melanesians", one of whom, Naisseline, founded the Red Scarves. Gabriel and Kermel [1985: p.102], Kircher [1986: p.8], Fraser [1988: p.5] who exaggerated even further by referring to "Kanak tertiary graduates" in the 1960s, and Barbançon [1992: p.64] have repeated the claim. Whether implicitly or explicitly, they give the clear impression that Naisseline was one of many, or at least several, Kanak intellectuals who sparked the political revival in 1969.

Chesneaux [1988: pp.61-2] is similarly misinformed. He claims that Kanak students (plural) took part in the May 1968 student uprisings in Paris, although this was the case for only one of those he names as being politically influential in the Kanak resurgence in New Caledonia. Furthermore, he incorrectly identifies a former student, Paul Neaoutyine, as being a leader of Groupe 1878 and a founder of PALIKA. In fact, Neaoutyine's political engagement in New Caledonia did not begin until after the dissolution of Groupe 1878 and subsequent creation of PALIKA. The role Chesneaux attributes to him was actually played by Gabriel Moenteapo who had never attended university.

For Coulon, the year 1974 was a "turning point". He highlights the important role played that year by activists with university backgrounds. The Kanak activists he names in this regard are Elie Poigoune, Déwé Gorodey, Henri Bailly and Naisseline [Coulon, 1985: p.127]. In fact, however, Bailly had not been to university. Moreover, although Coulon acknowledges that Trévor Underwood and Georges Tidjine were not students, he overlooks the lack of education or the very low level of school qualifications of many other Kanak activists. In the most widely-cited chronology of Kanak political history, [Tchoéaoua et al, 1984: pp.83-85] to which Coulon himself contributed, eighteen Kanak activists are named in connection with the militant actions of 1974 to which Coulon refers. Of these, only three (Naisseline, Gorodey and Poigoune) had been to university, with two others (Bailly and Gabriel Moenteapo) having achieved high qualifications at
school. The remaining thirteen\textsuperscript{70}, however, had no significant qualifications at all [personal communication, Ounei].

The usually accurate Connell is another who overestimates the student influence. In his discussion of the September 1969 actions, he writes:

"What is equally significant is that this birth of radicalism exactly paralleled similar developments elsewhere in Melanesia, especially in Papua New Guinea (where the first university had just been established), primarily among those with some tertiary education obtained in teachers colleges, universities or seminaries" [Connell, 1987: p.260].

The presence of Fote Trolue among the arrested in September 1969 may have contributed to the confusion among commentators [Connell, 1987: p.259]. Although Trolue, who went on to become the first and only Kanak judge, had passed his baccalauréat, he was just about to begin, not complete his tertiary studies when he was arrested. However, Connell does acknowledge comments from Poigoune, who came to prominence five years later, that he was politicised more through his own experience of discrimination and exploitation than through his tertiary studies.

\textbf{8.5.2 A Unique Influence}

In fact, only one returned Kanak student was involved in the resurgence of Kanak nationalism in New Caledonia in 1969: Nidoish Naisseline, who was one of the first, if not the first Kanak university graduate. He was, however, the catalyst for the new movement.

Notwithstanding the above remarks, and without wishing to personalise political history, the pivotal role Naisseline played must be acknowledged. As Dornoy has noted, Naisseline became the "political hero" of the new generation of Kanak activists [Dornoy, 1984: p.205]. His political

\textsuperscript{70} Abel Bouillant, Sylvain Néa, Bernadette Moenteapo, Suzanne Ounei, Madeline and Bernadette Ayawa, Youyoune and Pierre Sipa, Edmond Koataiba, Annie Buama, Annette Mindia and Underwood and Tjidjine.
training and education was profoundly affected by his involvement in the radical student actions of the 1960s, particularly May 1968. His studies were also relevant since, unlike the mathematician Poigoune, Naisseline graduated in sociology.

Ideas, of themselves, however, do not create history. The proof of this for the Kanak people can be found in the writings of the young Kanak priest, Apollinaire Anova-Ataba [Anova-Ataba, 1984]. Although much less radical than Naisseline, many of his ideas such as his open admiration for Atai were, nevertheless, revolutionary for his time. However, because of the conservatisms of the Catholic church and Anova-Ataba's untimely death, they were not made accessible to the wider Kanak population.

To understand the role of intellectuals like Naisseline in the Kanak nationalist movement, it is important to examine how and why their ideas come to be translated into political action, and what form that political action takes. In the case of Naisseline, his own personality was undeniably important. In this regard, two key factors need to be considered.

First, he acquired a special status with Kanak people by graduating from university. More powerful than this, however, was his decision to reject the option of using his degree for a personal career, and instead to devote himself to the anti-colonial struggle. At a time when very few Kanak people were even getting through school as far as the BEPC and scarcely any to the baccalauréat, Naisseline's actions had a profound political impact. In the years to come, hardly any Kanak people (even among the political activists) with higher level education (small though they were in number) chose not to convert their qualifications into money-earning careers.

Naisseline's ability to shun a professional career was related to the second essential feature of his personal situation; his family background. Naisseline's father was the high chief of Maré and was also a wealthy (very wealthy by Kanak standards) prominent, conservative politician. Nidoish was thus in the highly unusual position for a Kanak of being able to afford not to be too concerned about material well-being. And his customary position in Kanak society gave him a peculiarly powerful influence over a large proportion of Maré's approximately 4,000 inhabitants.
Thus Naisseline's status, both ascribed and acquired, made him an ideal vehicle for the Kanak renaissance. However, his personality and initiative could not have proved such a catalyst had they not been combined with the objective conditions of marginalisation that the colonial system generated for Kanak people. Writing over the pseudonym Jamulo Eram Uzab, a leading figure in the Red Scarves insisted:

"Far from being an invention born from the fertile imagination of Kanak students, the claim to regain one's own personality was already present but unexpressed in the soul of our youth" [Uzab: 1971: p.3].

8.5.3 Kanak Intellectuals and the Introduction of Marxism

From the above discussion, it can be seen that with the exception of Naisseline, the few Kanak intellectuals who returned from France to become politically involved did so by joining an anti-colonial movement which had already generated considerable momentum. However, it is also true that a number of them (notably Gorodey, Poigoune and some years later Neaoutyine) who assumed positions of leadership had considerable impact on the movement, as individuals, particularly when it came to the adoption of Marxist theory.

From its inception, the Red Scarves were mobilised around an ideology which did have an explicitly anti-capitalist flavour. References abound in the Red Scarves' newspaper, Reveil Canaque, to the evils of bourgeois capitalists and the exploitation of workers under capitalism. However, these remarks were elements of a much broader mix, much of which focused on issues of culture, national identity and the devastating impact of colonialism in New Caledonia. There is no evidence of the Red Scarves applying a specifically Marxist analysis to the New Caledonian situation.

One of those principally responsible for the introduction and spread of Marxism within the ranks of
the young Kanak activists was Gabriel Moenteapo, who was not a student. Having acquired most of his tools of Marxist analysis through painstaking private reading and research, he remains bitter towards the French left for failing in their duty to organise the systematic introduction of Marxist theory to Kanak people, who were victims of French colonialism [Moenteapo interview]. It must be said, however, that as a non-student Moenteapo was the exception among the key promoters of Marxism in the movement.

Gorodey and Poigoune, two of the other main promoters of Marxism in the movement who together with Moenteapo founded the Groupe 1878, were indeed university graduates. However, Chesneaux is quite wrong to claim that they, "had become acquainted with scientific socialism during the 1968 May uprising in Paris" [Chesneaux, 1988: p.62]. Neither was associated with the uprising at all. At the time it happened Gorodey had never left New Caledonia. Furthermore, she declared that during her time in France she had never read a book on Marxism. As for Poigoune, although he attended occasional meetings in Paris, his engagement in radical politics began after his return from France and was based, not on what he saw and learned as a student in France, but on personal experience of and association with the excesses of colonialism in New Caledonia [Interview, Poigoune. See also Colombani, 1985: pp.66-7].

For them as well as other activists, many of whom had very little formal education at all, Marxist theory was acquired in order to satisfy a widely felt need in the movement to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the workings of French colonialism and to devise effective strategies in the fight against it. And, at least in its initial stages, it was acquired entirely through self-instruction oriented largely towards the resolution of specific and concrete problems [Discussions and interviews with Moenteapo, Gorodey, Poigoune and Ounei]. This self-instructive method determined the shape of early Marxist thinking among Kanak activists much more than did the outside influence of the Paris '68ers, as claimed by Chesneaux. Through the 1970s, one of the most significant outside influences on the young activists was the left-wing magazine Afrique-Asie, which covered events and analysis surrounding the decolonisation of Africa and Asia. It brought many young Kanak into contact for the first time with the inspirational work of people like Amilcar Cabral, Che Guevara and Samora Machel, and it also helped to alert them to the dangers of
neocolonialism.

In the early days of PALIKA, Marxism was not an issue. Held at Amoa from May 27-29 1976, PALIKA's foundation congress was a picture of unity, representing as it did the coming together of four regionally-based groups (Groupe 1878 from the mainland, Atsai from Ouvéa, Wayagi from Maré and Ciciqadri from Lifou) to form a pro-independence party. Spelling out the form of an independent Kanak state and the means for achieving it, PALIKA analysed the political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions of their struggle.

PALIKA adopted policies for national sovereignty, non-alignment, participatory decision-making structures, the outlawing of economic exploitation and the nationalisation of mines, big industrial corporations and banks. The programme, which was essentially social-democratic and nationalistic, contained no mention of Marxism [PALIKA, 1976: pp.18-21]. The second PALIKA congress in Maré, the focus of which included electoral politics, religion, land struggles and the role of women, was also silent on the issue of Marxism [Kanak, May 1977].

It was not until PALIKA's third congress at Nechaot in 1978 that, through a heated discussion led by two proponents of Marxism (Gorodey and Gambez), the party was confronted for the first time with a decision as to whether to adopt an official Marxist policy. The issue became a source of considerable tension within the party. Although it was overshadowed at the 1979 congress in Lifou by the question of the role of women, it resurfaced with a vengeance the following year at the Témala congress.

It was at Témala in 1980 that the advocates of Marxism gained the upper hand and succeeded in having PALIKA declare itself to be Marxist. As the party paper described it:

"PALIKA clarified its ideology opting for scientific socialism and clearly defining the interests it means to defend in the national liberation struggle... The content of this (revolutionary Kanak socialist) independence is defined in broad terms by scientific socialism. This means, among other things, that ... workers will no longer be subjected to..."
Prior to being expelled at the 1981 Dokamo congress and later forming a new party, *Libération Kanak et Socialiste*\(^{71}\) (LKS), critics of the new position formed an opposition faction within the party. Known as Tendance Amoa because they identified with the original principles of the party adopted at its foundation congress at Amoa, they argued that the new policy was the product of the excessive influence of the party intellectuals.

"Marxism was officially adopted by a large majority of delegates present at the Témala congress, doubtless out of trust in the intellectuals of the party. But as scientific socialism had never been explained at the grass-roots, as soon as the congress finished, many grass-roots committees and activists, disoriented by all the isms they had just been hearing for three days, wondered whether the intellectuals had not taken advantage of their influence over their comrades to get them to accept this doctrine that only ever heard from a distance" *[Kanak Tendance Amoa, 1980]*.

### 8.5.4 Kanak Intellectuals and Fragmentation in the Independence Movement

It should also be noted that the controversy over Marxism did not take the form of a simple for-or-against debate. Significant tensions were also generated between the proponents of Maoism and Trotskyism. However, leaving aside the rights and wrongs of the splits in PALIKA, and notwithstanding the fact that there were people in the intellectual category on both sides of the divide, it seems that the split and the debate which gave rise to it were dominated by intellectuals. So too was the rift which developed between the Paris-based Kanak students when the GKF parted company with the ACF. In fact, the two were not unrelated; the division in Paris was in many respects a precursor to the split in PALIKA just a couple of years later.

That is not to say that the divisions were entirely over intellectual issues. As with other political

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\(^{71}\) Kanak Socialist Liberation.
many respects a precursor to the split in PALIKA just a couple of years later.

That is not to say that the divisions were entirely over intellectual issues. As with other political conflicts in New Caledonia and elsewhere, personality politics was also a key factor and so, even more importantly, was regionalism. The much more repressive imposition of colonial rule in the mainland compared to the Loyalty Islands which was reinforced by a colonial policy of favouritism of Loyalty Islanders over mainlanders generated, as would be expected, latent regional tensions among Kanak people which were and still are often brought to the fore in political debate.

Neither is it true that intellectual debate has no place in progressive politics. Theoretical debate and clarification on key issues, which often give rise to division, are an integral part of any dynamic political movement. The issue really is the extent to which such debates are required in any given context and, more importantly for a national liberation movement, the extent to which they are conducted in a participatory, that is, non-élitist fashion.

In this regard, this split in PALIKA generated widespread feelings of frustration amongst grassroots activists in the party, many of whom were unable to follow the debates and ended up deciding their allegiances on which individuals they wanted to follow. This type of frustration had been expressed earlier in a public letter written by a group of Kanak high school students in 1975 lamenting earlier divisions including that between the Red Scarves and the UM. Unaware that the earlier cooperation between those two groups had only ever been a marriage of convenience, the students wrote:

"Many among us aspire through our schooling towards a single common goal: Kanak emancipation, cultural, social, political and economic, which will be achieved only after the realisation of a uniquely Kanak unity. At present, however, we have the misfortune to note that the Kanak masses are in the process of dividing themselves as a consequence of many differences and rivalries between Kanak politicians and, more seriously, splits even at the heart of a Kanak political party" [Lettre Emanant du Groupe des Lycéens Canaques. November, 1975].
liberation movement.

8.6 Applying the Theoretical Model

The period from 1969 to 1984 was one in which New Caledonia's principal colonial relationship underwent a major transformation. As previously noted, the immediate post-war period was one in which the colonial power was moving towards a point of hegemonic control. There was barely a hint of resistance to its authority on the part of the colonised Kanak people, whose political leaders were working within the confines of a colonially determined system of local government and within parties which had been set up by and were being led by non-Kanak people.

The process of Kanak resistance that began in 1969 had succeeded in arresting and even reversing the momentum towards colonial hegemony. It is instructive to compare the obsequiousness of the Kanak returned servicemen's letter to French authorities in November 1945 with the uncompromising defiance of Naisseline's article of February 1969. Each statement set, or at least represented, the tone for the respective periods that followed.

By 1984, what had begun twenty-five years earlier attracted the active support of all but an isolated minority of Kanak people to a movement with a shared commitment to Kanak socialist independence. Although the means for achieving this goal was far from clear, there was a widespread realisation of the need to adopt extra-institutional strategies which had previously been the modus operandi of only a radical fraction of the movement. Colonial authority was being confronted in a way which required it to reveal its latent violence through the systematic use of repression against organised groups of Kanak people, a situation it had not faced since the suppression of the 1917 uprising.

In the field of education, the political radicalisation of the Kanak people was accompanied by the emergence of a radical analysis of the role that education was playing in reinforcing and reproducing colonial relationships. Each of the major social functions of schooling - development,
In the field of education, the political radicalisation of the Kanak people was accompanied by the emergence of a radical analysis of the role that education was playing in reinforcing and reproducing colonial relationships. Each of the major social functions of schooling - development, citizenship and allocation - became hotly contested.

As in mainland France and much of the rest of the Western world, the marked increase in the provision of schooling was in New Caledonia at least in part a response to the skills needs of an expanding post-war economy. As was the case throughout the colonial history of New Caledonia, however, only a part of this workforce was locally trained; much of it continued to be brought in from abroad. The increase in technical education in New Caledonia, for example, was less a response to local skills shortages than it was an application in New Caledonia of an educational emphasis which emerged in mainland France in response to skills shortages there.

After years of what New Caledonians perceived as negligence on the part of France, the first comprehensive strategy for long-term development came at the end of the 1970s in the form of the Dijoud Plan. The effect of this approach was, however, to try to reinforce Kanak involvement in the area of agriculture while leaving the highly profitable mining industry in European hands. The educational dimension to the Dijoud Plan exposed the place it held in store for Kanak people in the form of development it was proposing for New Caledonia. It was clearly more a political strategy than a purely economic one, in the sense that it attempted to use development, and a particular form of development, as a substitute for satisfying the political demand for independence.

However, Dijoud underestimated the extent to which even the more moderate Kanak parties wanted to gain independence. Although the Dijoud Plan was not rejected out of hand by the independence movement, Kanak radicalism was in the ascendancy and the Dijoud Plan was too little too late to be able to reverse this trend.

With regard to citizenship, the post-war period had seen French colonialism move from defining Kanak citizenship separately from that of the settler population to promoting an increasingly inclusive definition of citizenship. It attempted to do this by adopting, albeit belatedly,
the political, economic, social and even geographical marginalisation of the Kanak people from colonial society, the local variant of French civilisation. Although colonial schooling had some effect in inculcating French ideals and values, it also served to reinforce Kanak feelings of being different from rather than an integral part of French society.

With the growth of the nationalist movement, feelings of Frenchness on the part of most Kanak people were almost entirely replaced with notions of Kanak citizenship. With this development, the colonial school system with its promotion of the virtues of French citizenship, stood out in Kanak minds as an example of the kind of institutions which oppressed them and from which they needed to liberate themselves.

The allocation function of New Caledonia's colonial school system was also a prime target for the nationalist movement. Although greater access to schooling offered a previously unknown degree of social mobility to Kanak people, the pronounced discrepancies in achievement between Kanak and non-Kanak, especially European, pupils made it virtually impossible for the school system to sustain a meritocratic image. It became clear to the vast majority of Kanak people that the basis on which the selection process in schools operated and allocated people to different social roles was highly unfair.

This was due in part to the failure of the colonial authorities to coopt the leading figures in the emerging generation of activists, a number of whom had conspicuously refused to use their educational achievements for personal material gain. But it was also a feature of the widespread realisation among Kanak people that no matter how much effort individuals invested in their schooling, a system designed to reflect French values and serve colonial society would not allow the degree of mobility that would be needed to effect any significant change in the existing colonial order.

In summary, the combination of all of these factors left New Caledonia in crisis. Despite reforms aimed at undermining support for independence, French political authority was being threatened by a strong and united movement for Kanak socialist independence. The education system, which
In summary, the combination of all of these factors left New Caledonia in crisis. Despite reforms aimed at undermining support for independence, French political authority was being threatened by a strong and united movement for Kanak socialist independence. The education system, which should have assisted in whatever small way in quelling such a development was instead experiencing a crisis of legitimacy which was serving to further inflame the challenge to French rule. How this conflict developed after 1984 is the subject of the next chapter.
Chapter Nine

Reform or Rupture: The Kanak Popular Schools (EPK) Experience.

9.1 Introduction

With the creation of the FLNKS in September 1984, the Kanak people demonstrated an unprecedented degree of radicalisation. This was the product of the high level of frustration with the French Socialist Party, which had built up since the last of the Kanak parties joined the pro-independence camp in the late 1970s. The socialist administration in France was perceived to have reneged on its pre-election promise of meeting the Kanak demand for independence.

Disillusioned with piecemeal governmental reforms and what were seen as time-wasting feints, the FLNKS adopted a policy of removing itself from and disrupting colonial structures and institutions. This strategy of rupture began with the "active boycott' of the November 1984 territorial elections which were the first phase of implementation of the Lemoine Statute. The campaign also involved land occupations, economic disruption and a boycott of colonial schools. The schools boycott was followed by the establishment of a network of alternative schools which were called Ecoles Populaires Kanak\textsuperscript{72} (EPK).

This chapter examines the EPK experience. It discusses the origins of the idea for a separate school system and the context which gave rise to this idea being implemented. It also considers the rationale for the EPK and the form the schools took. Attention is then given to the arguments and impact of opponents of the EPK, including opposition from the colonial authorities and from

\textsuperscript{72} Kanak People's Schools
within the independence movement itself.

9.2 Origins of the EPK

Although the formal establishment of the EPK structure dates from the beginning of 1985, discussion of an *école populaire* amongst Kanak nationalists can be found as early as the mid-1970s. It was around this time that Kanak assertiveness and critical analysis of the structures of French colonialism were starting to gather strength.

The groundswell of Kanak discontent with colonial education both led to and was itself fuelled by the incorporation of educational demands within the programmes of Kanak political parties. In September 1977, as part of the election campaign which led to it gaining two seats in New Caledonia's Territorial Assembly, PALIKA produced a leaflet which included an outline of the cultural content of Kanak independence. One of three points under this heading read:

"A POPULAR SCHOOL adapted to the needs of the country and to local realities (history of the Kanak people...)"

Given the imprecision of this brief comment and the fact that there had been no real discussion before then of the establishment of an alternative school system, it can be assumed that this early mention of an "école populaire" represented a call to make schools "populaire" by way of reforms. A 1979 issue of *Kanak* [number 34] published a declaration from Djubelly Wéa, who was to become one of the strongest advocates of a separate school system, but who at that stage was still calling for reforms of the existing system.

"The Kanak people are rising publicly ... to condemn the racist education system of the French Government by the prohibition of the use of Kanak languages in the schools, recent sackings of Kanak teachers and the refusal of scholarships to Kanak students pursuing studies in the Pacific, and demand education which is free and equal for all".
Subsequent issues of *Kanak* [see, for example, number 59, December 1981: pp.6-7] contain articles which explicitly reject the idea of separate schools but conclude with the slogan, "Pour une école populaire".

It was, nevertheless, from within PALIKA that the idea did eventually emerge of creating a popular school which would function outside the existing educational institutions. The call came from high school students in PALIKA's youth division who had mobilised in support of Neaoutyine and Poigoune in 1979. They had responded to the school boycott campaign, being described by the party as being its most dynamic elements [*Kanak*. Number 34: p.3], and they saw the creation of an alternative system as the logical extension of their efforts. They argued that if everyone who had been mobilised during the boycott campaign could invest their energies and talents into a positive alternative, a new Kanak-defined education system could become a reality.

Most of the party leaders, however, opposed the idea. Despite their enthusiasm for the boycott strategy, they viewed it as principally a mechanism for forcing concessions from the educational authorities and as a means of advancing wider union struggles [see, for example, *Andi Ma Dhô*. Number 66: p.3]. They argued vehemently against creating a separate school system. At a special PALIKA meeting held to discuss the issue, the high school students were dismayed to be told that their idea could be likened to a "hippie" approach to the problem [Ounei-Small interview]. In other words, the party leaders told them, it was politically naive of them to expect to be able to avoid engaging in struggle against the structures of the dominant society. To the extent that they posed no threat to capitalist power structures, it was argued, alternative systems would be tolerated but would not represent any real progress in the Kanak liberation struggle.

*Groupe 1878* issued a reminder of this policy in 1981. After extensive discussion of the students' idea in 1979, the *Groupe 1878* newspaper noted, it was resolved that the proposition of leaving the current bourgeois school and forming an alternative popular school should be rejected as "unrealistic".
"To leave the current school would leave the field free to right-wing elements to occupy the terrain. On the contrary, it is necessary to stay in this school, to organise oneself there as pupils and teachers to defend our interests as exploited and colonised people" [Andi Ma Dhô, Number 66, Feb 1981].

The reason for reasserting their view at that time was that in the early 1980s the call for a separate Kanak school system was being made more publicly and more assertively. It arose in the context of the campaign for the reinstatement of Humbert and Prébin who had been employed and subsequently dismissed by the Catholic educational authority. The demand for a separate system focused on an alternative to DEC: the proposed institution carrying the name Direction de l'Enseignement Catholique Kanak73 (DECK).

On 3 December 1980, an occupation of the DEC offices to demand the reinstatement of Prébin and Humbert resulted in the arrest of the FI's nine elected members of the Territorial Assembly74 as well as Humbert. The following month, an APEL congress in Tyé agreed on a policy of withdrawing from DEC and examining the possibility of setting up the DECK alternative. PALIKA's Tendance Témala leaders, who retained significant reservations about participating in the territory's political institutions, found themselves in the unfamiliar position of opposing a move to break with the territory's educational institutions.

Their view of the new DECK idea was that it would be "nothing other than a new employer; sure it will be pro-independence, but it will still have to employ workers and one cannot prevent these workers from defending their interests in face of their new employer". They also warned that the DECK would be under-resourced and conclude that creating DECK would do nothing to prevent the old DEC from using political blackmail against activists. "On the contrary", they argued:

"DEC will be very pleased to have a new educational structure which will be able to absorb all those who are organising educational resistance and it will enable them to adopt even

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73 Kanak Catholic Education Authority
74 Nidoish Naisseline, André Gopea, Pierre Declercq, François Burck, Eloi Machoro, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, Yeiwéné Yeiwéné, Edouard Wapae and Gabriel Patta.
more reactionary policies and it will be the workers who will suffer the consequences of
them" [Andi Ma Dhô. Number 66, February 1981: p.3].

The campaign against DEC was concluded by a simple act of cooptation on 19 December 1981. The
total executive of DEC was replaced by new people, who were drawn largely from the ranks of
SELEC. Despite their earlier protestations, the new executive did not reinstate Humbert or Prébin
and they continued other controversial policies such as favouring the recruitment of metropolitan
French teachers [see Kanak. Number 63, April 1982 pp.4-5].

9.3 The Creation of EPK

One of the earlier public references to the type of thinking that eventually formed the basis of the
EPK can be found in an undated (estimated date, May 1983) leaflet entitled, L'Ecole des Giannoni,
Roynette et Mitterand: Ecole Capitaliste et Coloniale au Service de la France75. Targeting the
territory's Vice-Rector and High-Commissioner and the French President, the leaflet's authors
condemn the educational reforms initiated by the socialist administration, claiming that they are
based on two assumptions which are hostile to Kanak interests:

"First, Kanak civilisation is doomed to dissolve in the face of economic development; it is
only a matter of finding the compromises to enable the rapid adaptation of Kanaks which
would be impossible by violence alone. Learning good French is a master stroke which will
accelerate the disappearance of a civilisation which is still resisting too strongly capitalist
penetration... Kanaks are made to believe that their languages and customs are being taken
into consideration.

"Second, even if these Kanaks become independent, and give great (importance) to their
cultural identity, the school will have had the time to train teachers and cadres attached to

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75 Giannoni, Roynette and Mitterand's School: Capitalist and Colonial School at the Service of France.
the ringing and staggering values of the West, in love with capitalism and power"
[Commission Enseignement, undated].

The leaflet rejects educational reforms out of hand, branding them as "lures to the independence movement - a bone to chew on, which permits the government to gain time in order to avoid moving on the fundamental issues". The fundamental lesson for New Caledonia to learn from the experiences of Algeria, Tanzania or Vietnam, the leaflet argues, is that to preserve one's own cultural values and avoid being assimilated by the colonising culture, "it is necessary to rely on one's own forces". This was to become an essential element in the philosophy of the EPK and of the FLNKS in general.

9.3.1 The Canala Experience

Marie-Adèle Néchéro-Jorédié, who founded the Canala EPK, cites 1976 as the year that a process was set in train that culminated in the creation of the EPK in her area. She describes the period from 1976 to 1985 as "a very long gestation period" during which time the local community became increasingly critical of the existing school system and correspondingly more convinced of their ability to provide a better service themselves [Néchéro-Jorédié, 1988: pp.198-9].

At the initiative of the Association des Parents d'Elèves76 (APEL) and its chairman Marcel Nonnaro77, a survey was conducted into the educational and occupational achievements of the Kanak people of the region, who made up eighty-four per cent of Canala's just under four thousand inhabitants. It was discovered (not surprisingly in light of the statistics revealed in Chapter Seven) that only one person from there had ever obtained a baccalaureat. There was also a widespread perception that schools were contributing to a clear trend of young people being increasingly unable to function within their own Kanak communities. On the basis of this research and the rapid

76 Parents' Association
77 Together with Eloi Machoro, Nonnaro was killed by French military snipers on 10 January 1985. Their assassinations effectively put an end to the FLNKS campaign of resistance which had begun with the November 1984 election boycott.
development of Kanak political consciousness at the time, parents and teachers in the community began to subject the colonial school system to an increasingly critical analysis. They concluded that it was actually counter-productive to their interests.

With Canala's dominant educational institution being the 500-strong Catholic school, the administering authority of the territory's Catholic schools, the DEC, became the target of criticism. At the same time, however, the conflict with DEC brought the parents' group into contact with the Syndicat d'Enseignants Laïcs dans l'Enseignement Catholique 78 (SELEC), a lay teachers' union which was politically active within DEC. Much of the group's early work was in the area of language, and in particular in exploring ways of promoting the local vernacular, Xaracu, as a language of instruction in school. They decided that, rather than leaving children to pick up the language as a result of being informally exposed to it, it needed to be actively taught in an organised way. Then came the realisation, according to Néchéro-Jorédié:

"We are going to get the children to learn how to speak the language, but do we parents know how to speak the language properly ourselves? These were some of the first sorts of questions we faced in 1976 that eventually gave rise to the popular school" [Néchéro-Jorédié interview].

9.3.2 The Gossannah Experience

A key figure in the founding of the EPK in Gossannah, on the island of Ouvéa, Hninö Wéa stressed the influence of his experience as a teacher and his growing political awareness in the 1970s. His teaching career on his home island involved fourteen years as principal of the state school at Hwaadrilla followed by seven years in charge of the one in Gossannah.

As Wéa's mother was from Hwaadrilla, he had a close customary involvement with the people there. However, the rule which prohibited the speaking of Kanak languages in schools imposed a double identity upon him in the eyes of his pupils. They would see him engaging normally in community

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78 Union of lay teachers in Catholic schools
events and speaking in the Iaai language, but then in school he would be speaking in French, a language which was quite foreign to most of them.

Wéa says that he would hear the children saying, "Hey, it's a white! It's a white!" when they heard him speaking in French.

"When they hear another language, it's as though we're no longer Kanak and we've become French. This was the spontaneous reaction of the children, reactions which were very concrete. I knew something was not right because I felt quite uneasy when the children made those comments. Frankly I felt very uneasy about it" [Wéa: interview].

Concerned that many of his pupils were finding it impossible to follow lessons in French, Wéa sometimes broke the rules and explained things to his class in Iaai. However, the contradictory roles he had to fulfil led him to become increasingly critical not only of the colonial school system but also of the role he was himself playing in it. These concerns were accentuated as Wéa became more politically active in the late 1970s through his involvement in PALIKA. This also coincided with his move from Hwadrilla to take up the position of principal at his own school of origin in Gossannah, when his former teacher, Pierre Kaigatr, who had begun working there as an untrained eighteen year-old monitor, retired in 1977.

It was around this time in Gossannah that a process was set in train to conduct a critical evaluation the impact of colonial schooling on the Kanak people. Similar to that described by Néchéro-Jorédié in Canala, it involved parents, teachers and pupils, including a number of high school pupils who would return home for their end-of-year holidays. Wéa describes the evolving process as essentially political.

"We began to look at what we could do to overcome the problem of educational blockages and failures. It was also part of our political analysis, a political analysis regarding the custom, education, religion and other factors which pushed us to address these issues. What is the ultimate aim of education and how did it relate to custom and to people's
political participation" [Wéa interview].

It was also at this time that Hninô Wéa's younger brother, Djubelly, was completing a research project entitled "An Education for Kanak Liberation" at the Pacific Theological College in Fiji. Djubelly Wéa presented a highly critical analysis of colonial education in New Caledonia.

"French education is individualism, colonialism and capitalism. It is French. It is not the hafuc, it is not ourselves, the Kanak people. French education is the butei waina\(^79\) that French colons and capitalists manufactured in their factories in France or in New Caledonia. They send it to our country and they sell it to us Kanak people. We drink it and enjoy it, but later on we get drunk and vomit it out again, and we get sick and die. Is that what we want? I do not believe so. The Kanak people themselves have to describe and define their own education, and not the French" [Wéa, 1977: p.33].

The small tribe of Gossannah experienced the return of Hninô Wéa in 1977 and Djubelly Wéa a few years later; both brothers regarding education as a crucial arena for the Kanak liberation struggle. Their insight and activism played an essential part in the foundation and ongoing achievements of the Gossannah EPK.

9.3.3 EPK and the FLNKS Boycott

The 1984 founding charter of the FLNKS announces its policy of ceasing what it saw as fruitless dialogue with the French Government. It defines its aim as establishing "Kanak legitimacy" and "socialism based on local realities", and declares its opposition to colonialism, capitalism and imperialism. In outlining its strategy for achieving these aims, the FLNKS charter "denounces false colonial democracy and decides to boycott all future elections within this framework" [EDIPPO, undated]. Thus, unlike the earlier consideration of establishing a separate system which was a response to more specifically educational concerns, the decision to establish the EPK was part of a

\(^{79}\) wine bottle
broader political strategy of rupture with all institutions that were perceived to be advancing colonial interests.

The FLNKS decided at its second congress in Nakety in February 1985 that children would not be sent back to the colonial schools the following month. Rather, they would attend Kanak schools that were to be established and would operate in ways consistent with the political, economic and cultural aims of the FLNKS. Some Kanak communities had taken their own initiatives before this, such as in Canala where a school of 36 children aged from four to seven years had opened on 1 December 1984 [Nchéro-Jorédié interview]. A month earlier, Nchéro-Jorédié had been promoting the idea at the Women's Commission of the UC, which resolved "to encourage the creation of 'the school of the Kanak people' in the country's six regions" [UC, 1984: p.41]. However, with the political decision of the FLNKS, the move to officially establish the EPK on 1 March generated considerable momentum.

The EPK began with around 1,500 pupils. This figure represents just six per cent of the 25,000 Kanak pupils who were enrolled in the territory's schools in 1984. Nevertheless, given the inherent risks involved in taking part in the move and that there was considerable opposition to it even within the FLNKS, it was a substantial number. The EPK pupils were taught in a total of 46 schools. Some of these schools represented the majority of pupils in their area with others being in quite marginal situations. Many areas were without an EPK, and some children from these areas would travel to attend an EPK elsewhere.

A total of 264 people worked as animateurs\textsuperscript{80} in these schools [EPK: 1985b]. At the beginning all worked voluntarily. However, after nine months the Canala EPK began giving some remuneration to its workers and in some other EPK contributions of produce or labour were made.

The facilities of each EPK were locally organised. Construction of desks, chairs and buildings was a community activity. In some cases, school buildings such as classrooms and cooking areas were also locally built, although a number of EPK occupied buildings that had previously been used by

\textsuperscript{80} animateurs or teachers
the colonial school system.

The first national meeting of all the EPK was held in Ponerihouen in August 1985. A coordinating body called the National Structure of the EPK was put in place with representation from the various EPK regions and a process was set in train for the development of programmes and interchange of ideas. The EPK convention was conscious of a lack of support on the part of many within the FLNKS leadership. This lukewarm support had been reflected in Motion Five of the Third FLNKS Congress in Hienghène in May 1985 which began:

"The FLNKS decides to halt the school boycott and asks parents to send their children to school, leaving them the choice of this school. Of course, the popular school is maintained" [EDIPOP undated].

The Ponerihouen Convention of the EPK, therefore, challenged the Bureau Politique and Provisional Government of the FLNKS to extend official recognition to the EPK and to:

1. conduct a critical historical evaluation of their positions with regard to the EPK since its creation;
2. adopt a clear and uncompromising position on colonial schools;
3. participate actively in the consolidation of existing EPK and assist the establishment of new EPK in each struggle committee;
4. give part of the money coming from FLNKS structures for the functioning of the EPK to the ministry concerned;
5. write to FLNKS-controlled local bodies to finance the EPK."

A groundswell of support for the EPK among FLNKS activists ensured that this official recognition was given. In its General Assembly of September 1985, the FLNKS passed a resolution identical to that listed (above) as number three from the EPK Convention of the previous month. Two months later at its fourth congress in Oundjo, the FLNKS resolved that:
"The newspaper Bwenando, Radio Djindo and the EPK are indispensable structures in the liberation struggle of the Kanak people" [EDIPOP undated].

Despite these resolutions, however, the FLNKS remained deeply divided over the issue of support for the EPK; divisions that will be examined in more detail below.

9.3.4 Pedagogical and Organisational Innovation

One of the distinguishing features of the EPK was its innovative way of operating the school. For the first time, parents, pupils and teachers worked in genuinely collaborative ways on virtually every aspect of the school programme. Course content and teaching methods were developed which were specifically oriented towards the needs of Kanak children; taking account, for example, of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Most of the EPK adopted what was called a "thematic pedagogy"\(^{81}\). This involved the organisation of learning around particular themes - the coconut, the human and the case\(^{82}\) being some examples of teaching themes. Each theme would be chosen collectively and studied in three phases; observation, comprehension and analysis. As the Minister of Education in the FLNKS's Provisional Government of Kanaky, Simon Naaoutchoué, explained:

"We will look at one thing, say the coconut tree, and we will study every aspect: from an artistic level to paint the coconut; then its role in Kanak custom; the science of how it grows; the mathematics of selling the fruit or producing baskets for sale. we start from the concrete, what a child knows, then move to the abstract. The same is true for everything we teach ... it is based solidly in the Kanak reality and we can expand from there as much

\(^{81}\) Original: pédagogie du thème
\(^{82}\) Traditional Kanak house
as we want to" [Corso, 1987].

The thematic pedagogy was introduced by the Yaté EPK. It drew on notions of dialectics that had been developed within PALIKA in the sense that it analysed the themes that were chosen from the point of view of how they were shaped by internal and external forces. The coconut, for example, is seen to be transformed by the interaction between its own latent potentialities and the external forces of nature. This pedagogy was thought to make it possible to:

"... start from concrete social relations that are experienced by Kanak people, then learn to abstract from this, then return to the concrete through an action which dialectically transforms the reality" [Chroniques de Kanaky, Number 2].

After extensive discussion and consideration of a range of alternatives, this method, which Gauthier has described as "critical auto-ethnology" [Chroniques de Kanaky, Number 2] was adopted by the broader EPK movement. It was found to provide a structured mechanism for beginning the learning process with the child's immediate surroundings, while also being flexible enough to include a wide range of subject matter which could be pursued to quite advanced levels.

Many people found an immediate and natural affinity with the thematic pedagogy. As one EPK animateur explained, when the method was outlined to people for the first time, many people found that it was very similar to the type of method they had been experimenting with in their own EPKs: "some EPK had been using the method without realising it" [Ankaituliwa, interview 2].

Despite widespread acceptance, one EPK area remained unconvinced that this was the best type of pedagogy. The Canala EPK passed over it in favour of a "pedagogy of alternation". Like the advocates of thematic pedagogy, the Canala EPK people believed that pedagogy of alternation was the best way of teaching Kanak children. Néchéro-Jorédie describes the method as a way for children to learn about the world around them from within their home environment. The children "construct their own knowledge through practice... and the principle of alternation in effect

83 Original: pédagogie de l'alternance
becomes a means that we put at the disposition of children to construct that knowledge themselves" [Néchéro-Jorédié, interview].

It involves a negotiated learning process in which the school gives the pupils methods of work, the pupils establish their work plans, and assignments or contracts are established on the basis of this exchange. The child is then able to measure her own achievements according to that which was established in the contract. From the age of seven, all pupils are expected to be able to present a monograph, which could be in written or drawn form, about some aspect of local knowledge; something they know about or can find out about from other members of the family or community. As Néchéro-Jorédié notes, this use of the pedagogy of alternation:

"engages not only the children but the parents and in fact the whole milieu, because some young parents may not know very much about the history of an object or a mountain which is the subject of the monograph. So they have to find older people in the tribe to ask about it, and that's why I say that it engages the entire milieu and there is popular participation, there is popular learning" [Néchéro-Jorédié, interview]

Some EPK people criticised this method on the grounds that the pedagogy of alternating between practical work and school-based study created a division which left the schooling side organised along lines which remained similar to those applied in the colonial schools [Chroniques de Kanaky, Number 2].

Despite disagreements over pedagogical approaches, both tendencies in the EPK placed great store on broad community involvement in and positive feelings towards the school. Pupils at the EPK derived an unprecedented level of enjoyment from coming to school and communities which could sustain an EPK were proud of what they had been able to achieve against powerful odds (detailed below). With collectively determined content and weekly evaluations of classes, animateurs were kept extremely busy, as one from Ouvéa explained:

"At the beginning, the pupils who had been to the colonial schools were too timid to offer
criticisms. But now we have children as young as eight or nine years old making very mature contributions to the evaluation process. I spent ten years teaching in the colonial schools and I never come home as exhausted as I do now" [Ankaiuliwa interview 1].

Dominique Humbert, a European animateur in Nadjo (Lifou) who had been a focus of resistance in 1980 when he and Prébin were dismissed from the Catholic school in Ouvéa, was impressed by the extent of community commitment to the EPK when it began:

"One of the successes of our EPK notably at the beginning - after then it died away - was the willingness of the parents to participate to give their time, their ideas, their all, within the EPK. They were there, they came to do carvings, songs, they brought their creativity. In other words, it was their EPK and they were training themselves as well" [Humbert interview].

He echoed Ankaiuliwa's comments about the levels of commitment that were demanded of and given by all those involved:

"There was such a willingness for people to train themselves, it was amazing. Guys would go kilometres on foot to attend meetings and it took many forms ... we organised seminars, meetings. There was so much going on, a real profusion of activities... You wouldn't believe the amount of work that was produced by the group of animateurs, forty or fifty of us. We started at 8am and finished at midnight and then we saw people were asking for more of it" [Humbert interview].

Humbert notes, however, that not all of the EPK were alike. Even at the beginning, there were striking differences between the many schools, particularly with regard to levels of openness. "Some EPK", he says "were very open, very participatory, while others were more authoritarian with less parental involvement".
9.4 EPK and the Functions of Kanak Schooling

Drawing on the critiques of colonial schooling that had been developed in the years prior to its establishment, the EPK identified three main functions of colonial schools within New Caledonian colonial society:

"Reproduction of the society with its inequalities and relationships of domination, the production of an ideology in order to camouflage the exploitation that the people experience, and the division of Kanak society into classes with the consolidation of a Kanak bourgeois class conscripted to defend neocolonial interests" [EPK, 1985b: p.8].

From its inception, the EPK movement embarked upon a deliberate strategy of redefining the functions of schooling in the interests of Kanak people. In doing so, it was making an explicit attempt to develop an education system which would serve two purposes: to assist in the struggle to gain Kanak socialist independence; and to equip people to take their place in a future independent Kanak state.

It should be noted, however, that there was a recognition within EPK that, of themselves, educational initiatives, whether in the form of school reform or the establishment of an alternative system, would not result in the fundamental change that was sought:

"School and society are indivisible, one does not exist without the other. One cannot define school without defining the society within which it operates" [EPK, 1985a].

"The EPK, like any school, cannot change the entire society by itself. Society changes through change in all of its components. But in the liberation struggle of the Kanak people, the EPK has a function which goes beyond the simple functions of the colonial school" [EPK, 1985b: p.9].

EPK, therefore, saw an interdependence between itself and the FLNKS. It believed that its educational work was an essential element of the FLNKS, and it saw the national liberation
struggle such as that being waged by the FLNKS as the only appropriate context within which it could operate.

9.4.1 Beyond Reforms of Allocation

The immediate focus of EPK’s critique of the colonial schools had been on their allocation function. Specifically, schools were said to be awarding pupils with qualifications and as a consequence political, economic and social privileges, in a way which unfairly disadvantaged Kanak children. This widespread perception, compounded by the failure of colonial education authorities to adequately address it, contributed greatly to the crisis of legitimacy that underlay the 1984 uprising.

Kanak educational underachievement (as documented extensively in Chapter Six) was, therefore, a major motivating factor for those involved in the EPK. And a major EPK focus was to develop more appropriate pedagogical approaches in order to facilitate better learning by Kanak children. However, EPK viewed Kanak underachievement in itself as simply one of the symptoms of the failure of colonial schooling. The resolution of this particular dimension of the problem was not, therefore, a primary objective of the EPK. EPK’s main concern in this regard was to reassert what, in Kanak terms, constituted achievement, and then devise ways in which a school system could facilitate such achievement.

It can be seen, therefore, that the EPK phenomenon represented a move beyond a call for colonial schools to operate a fairer system of allocation. Rather, as an integral element in the national liberation struggle, the EPK was working for a redefinition of the component parts of allocation. As outlined in Chapter Three, allocation can be considered to be the interface between the realisation of individual aspirations and the fulfilment of social imperatives. That is, through allocation, schools attempt both to realise the aspirations of individual pupils and to meet society’s need for its members to have the appropriate levels and types of skills as well as socially acceptable attitudes and values. EPK was founded on an explicit rejection of the way in which colonial schools were carrying out these functions and serving the needs of colonial society.
The individual attitudes which colonial society conditions Kanak pupils to hold and which the colonial school system is designed to reinforce are essentially, according to Wéa [1977: p.34], those of "individualism, egocentrism and auto-satisfaction". These values and the aspirations and behaviour that arise from them, he explains, correspond to the notion in Iaai of *ka inya thibi* (meaning "only for oneself") which is a highly undesirable way to think and behave in Kanak society. They stand in direct opposition to the collective and community-oriented values required by Kanak people in the struggle for independence, and are seen as undesirable for the new independent society that the Kanak independence movement is seeking to construct.

9.4.2 Rejection of Development and Citizenship Functions of Colonial School

EPK has been equally adamant in its opposition to the development and citizenship functions of colonial schools. As part of the FLNKS it rejected the existing development model in New Caledonia: its class composition, its heavy use of immigrant labour, its exploitative nature, its foreign control, and its alienating impact on Kanak people.

EPK objected to the way in which the colonial school system was conditioned by this model of development. In particular, it argued that colonial schools were integrating Kanak people into colonial society in such a way that they were gaining very few benefits since they consistently occupied the lowest social stations - "the slums, the reserves, the unemployed". Yet at the same time Kanak people were steadily losing their remaining independent means for social advancement by being made dependent on colonial society. The colonial school, it was argued:

"favours the educational failure of Kanak children ... it completely ignores the real needs of the country to the point of alienating minds to make a beneficiary of the Kanak people and to make the country a devotee of the cultural hegemony of French imperialism" [EPK, 1985a].

A key factor which enabled the colonial education system to continue denying higher levels of skills to Kanak pupils was the policy of ensuring that New Caledonia's workforce comprise almost
exclusively immigrant labour. The rationale for this policy, as spelled out in the oft-quoted Messmer declaration of 1973 (see Coulon, 1985), was one of undermining the potential threat of a nationalist movement by using immigration to place the indigenous population at a permanent demographic disadvantage, at which point appeal could be made to democratic (that is, one-person-one-vote) principles to oppose any nationalist demands.

If this policy had not been pursued and the colonial economy had therefore required a more skilled Kanak workforce, there may have been additional pressures on the colonial school system to meet this need. Under such a scenario, the class composition of Kanak society may have been less weighted towards subsistence farmers. It would have been unlikely, however, for this to have resulted in any less of a crisis of legitimacy for colonial society or colonial education in particular, since Kanak people would still have occupied the lowest social classes in the territory and they would probably have developed a more powerful union presence.

Another major concern of the EPK with regard to the development function of schooling was the danger it saw in retaining the essence of the colonial school after independence. It saw this as contributing to the risk of an undesirable neocolonial system developing in New Caledonia. In particular, it warned that such an eventuality could result in a school system which would be dependent for its upkeep and running on foreign aid [EPK, undated: p.4]. It cited Togo and Zaire as examples of countries whose retention of colonial education systems has forced them into such a relationship of dependence on the former colonial power [EPK, 1985b: p.8].

As might be expected of an arm of an independence movement, the EPK mounted a particularly strong critique against the citizenship function of colonial schooling whose orientation was to encourage pupils to identify with and admire the achievements of the French nation. As Simon Naaoutchoué remarked:

"We know the French aim is to imprison our children's minds; to make them think in a straight line to France and nowhere else" [Naaoutchoué interview].
As well as flags and anthems of France, French nationalism was also promoted through literature, geography and history. They had been promoted virtually uncontested through the 1950s and 60s. And although some of the excesses of this had been modified more recently as a result of Kanak pressure, French values were still reflected in a deep way.

"Of course we no longer learn 'our ancestors the Gauls', but the ideological content of schooling remains", wrote the EPK [1985a]. The French-defined notions of citizenship that were being generated and reinforced among Kanak people in colonial schools were seen to be undermining both the desire to struggle for independence and the kinds of values and attitudes that would be needed for the construction of a new independent Kanak state.

9.4.3 EPK's Alternative Development and Citizenship Functions

The EPK was committed to building a new society within which "social relations would be radically different from those which prevail in colonial society", and it saw its role as constructing an education system which would correspond to those new social relations [EPK, undated: p.3]. It acknowledged, however, that the FLNKS description of such a society remained very unspecific, leaving the stated goal of Kanak socialist independence as little more than a slogan. And the EPK was one of the elements within the movement that argued most vehemently for the FLNKS to address this issue of defining the new society urgently and seriously.

In making this challenge, the EPK also made reference to the FLNKS charter which recognises that the form of Kanak socialist independence to be established "will be defined in the struggle by the combatants for liberty". The EPK saw itself as engaged in a continuous process of contributing to this debate through the educational work of action and analysis in which it was engaged.

In relation to outputs, Néchéro-Jorédié stresses an explicit policy of the EPK of organising schooling in order to meet the broad social goals of a new society, and educating children to
function as worthwhile members of that society:

"As regards the children who come from our EPK, we want to make them profitable\textsuperscript{84} to the country, profitable culturally, economically and politically" [interview].

Néchéro-Jorédié explained the notion of cultural profitability as one of ensuring that children acquire a knowledge of how to live in their own community\textsuperscript{85}; that they receive education that grounds them in their Kanak cultural identity. This notion of making people culturally profitable, an idea to which the broader EPK movement subscribes as well, is essentially an argument in favour of reasserting the notion of \_une\_ in Kanak education\textsuperscript{86}.

As outlined in Chapter Four, \_une\_ refers to the traditional, non-institutionalised process of educating Kanak people for their future roles within Kanak society. It has had no place within the colonial school system, whose points of reference have been uniquely European and which has at best ignored and at worst actively undermined the cultural values and knowledge of Kanak society. It is difficult to see how even a reformed and more benign variant of the colonial school system would be able to perform this function.

For the EPK, however, \_une\_ represents the starting point and primary point of reference for the entire educational process. It defined for itself an active role in the reproduction of the cultural base of Kanak society, equipping the emerging generations with the values and attitudes that Kanak society needs to flourish, while preparing individuals to be able to feel at ease and function effectively within that society.

As Hninô Wéa points out, however, this does not amount to the uncritical acceptance of every aspect of Kanak society as it currently exists. He argues that some elements of the custom need to be reorganised in ways which allow it to evolve, retaining positive aspects and amending or discarding negative ones.

\textsuperscript{84} Original: rentable
\textsuperscript{85} Original: un savoir vivre de chez lui
\textsuperscript{86} Coming from the Xaracu region, Néchéro-Jorédié would not, of course, have used a laai expression.
"The struggle committee also has things to say with regard to the custom. Because when we talk about socialism ... we see that there are parts of the custom which, one could say, are feudal, and when we talk about socialism, we don't want to be in the period of feudalism... For me, my children and for the children of others in the family and the struggle committee, I think that the important thing in the life of our children is to be equal, to give everyone an equal chance" [Wéa interview].

The EPK believed that reforms to the existing education system which have led to the introduction of elements of Kanak custom and language into the school are actually designed to further undermine the Kanak people. They are not being introduced as intrinsically important elements to the education of Kanak people, it is argued, but rather to more effectively integrate Kanak people into colonial society. They believe that such programmes make the colonial schools even more effective arms of colonialism as they leave the overall orientation of the old system in place, but make it less alienating to Kanak children [Ankaiuliwa interview]. Some EPK activists have also questioned the competence of those charged with the responsibility of teaching Kanak language and customs. Pointing to a profound lack of understanding of these elements on the part of some who are charged to teach them, they ask who within the existing educational hierarchies, is capable of determining what qualifications are required to teach such things in school [Wéa interview]?

As well as raising Kanak children with a developed understanding of their own milieu, the EPK is also concerned to design the patterns by which they are exposed to other knowledge and experience. The report to the FLNKS Congress by its Minister of Education provides a clear indication of this:

"We have the task of forging new methods for a popular pedagogy that can work out what should be the cultural, scientific and technical training of a young citizen or official of the independent Kanak of tomorrow. For us, the young Kanak of the year 2000 will be more and more open to other peoples, to scientific and technological progress with its applications that must proceed from popular needs and serve to build socialism"
[Naaoutchoué, 1987].

It is also reflected in the desire among a number of EPK, particularly that of Gossannah, to emphasise the English language and to forge links with the country's anglophone Pacific neighbours. The embryonic university that was established in the tribe in May 1986 through correspondence with the University of the South Pacific is an indication of this [Bwenando: 3 July 1986]. So too was the drive to send animateurs for training in the region. These initiatives, most of which were set up and many financed by Djubelly Wéa, saw EPK people undertake fact-finding missions and studies in Vanuatu, Fiji, Western Samoa, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and Australia.

Selection was made on the basis of the individual's history of political activism as well as appropriate courses being available. The hope was that returning students would provide a solid base of trained teachers to reinforce the EPK.

"They are going there to broaden their knowledge and learn other things, but they will not learn in other Pacific islands how to manage the Kanaky of tomorrow. Kanak socialist independence - nobody from outside can teach that to our students. That will come from here. That is the responsibility of the EPK, of the struggle committees, of the people" [D Wéa interview].

Partly as a result of the retreat of the EPK, as explained below, the investment in these individuals was not always as fruitful as had been hoped. However, at least in Gossannah, the orientation towards the Pacific and emphasis on English remains. As Wéa explains:

"We do not live in England, but we do live in an anglophone Pacific. English is spoken by ninety per cent of the people of the Pacific - everywhere except New Caledonia, Tahiti and Wallis. Tomorrow, after independence, we want to be in contact with all the countries which are around us, and so we will need English as a means of communicating with them" [D Wéa interview].
9.5 Opposition and Obstacles: EPK in Retreat

Despite the optimism, enthusiasm and commitment of its origins, the EPK has been reduced to a shadow of its former self. In purely quantitative terms, it had been reduced by the end of 1989 to approximately ten per cent of the numbers of people it had included at its foundation convention in Ponerihouen in August 1985. Some new EPK had been established in 1986, notably in Yaté and Pouebo, which along with those of Ouvéa, Témala and Lifou proved among the most durable of the schools. However, numbers had been steadily falling to the point where just five schools remained with around 170 pupils and thirty animateurs, as well as occasional helpers [Structure Nationale undated: p.2].

In the same book in which he included a chapter about the Canala EPK from Néchéro-Jorédié, Connell painted a very pessimistic picture of the potential for the EPK to realise its goals, or even for a radical overhaul of the colonial education system.

"The objective of Kanak schools to maintain and develop Kanak identity through an emphasis on Kanak language and culture presents real paradoxes, and appropriate education, through Melanesian languages, may remain a chimera" [Connell, 1988: p.239].

He implied that Kanak people would, through want of an acceptable alternative, end up having to accept an education system that is more or less the same as that which France is currently. Given the history of Kanak educational resistance, this seems very improbable. However, the EPK experience does constitute a major setback for Kanak politico-educational aspirations.

It is highly instructive, therefore, to consider the various reasons for the failure of the EPK. They fall into three basic categories: first, outside attacks from agents or supporters of continued French colonial rule; secondly, conflicts, mistakes and other problems internal to the EPK; and thirdly and most significantly, opposition to the EPK from within the pro-independence camp.
9.5.1 Pro-Colonial Opposition

The EPK became the target of opposition from a wide variety of colonial and pro-colonial forces; the educational authorities, the military, social services and right-wing employers.

The territory's colonial education authority, the Vice-Rectorat, exerted pressure over its employees or former employees who had defected to the EPK. Among those it targeted was Hninô Wéa. At the end of 1984, after Wéa had closed the school in Gossannah of which he had been principal, he was offered a salary increase from 220,000 CFP\(^{87}\) per month to 280,000 CFP if he would agree to reopen the school. When he refused, the offer was raised to 350,000 CFP. Wéa's refusal and subsequent dismissal cost him not only the substantial salary increase but also a retirement package he would have received if he had remained working until 1987 [Wéa interview].

Even more overt than this type of coercion was that applied by the military. Targeting from the military intensified after the electoral victory of Jacques Chirac's RPR administration in France in 1986, and his appointment of Bernard Pons as Overseas Territories Minister. EPK animateurs, many of whom had refused to do their military service or were wanted in connection with political activities as far back as 1984, became the targets of regular attention from the military as part of a counter-insurgency campaign known as "Nomadisation". This imposed security problems for a number of EPK, who had to post sentries to warn of the approach of soldiers. In some instances, soldiers would arrive to find schools with no teaching staff.

In the 1988 campaign against the Pons Statute, three of the areas which offered the strongest resistance - Ouvéa, Canala and Pouebo - were those with functioning EPK. And the EPK in those areas were prime targets for military attention. In Canala, there were military attacks against the EPK buildings and materials. In Ouvéa, the military also destroyed materials and established their headquarters in the Gossannah EPK buildings. Furthermore, among the nineteen activists killed by the military assault known as "the Ouvéa Massacre", five were EPK animateurs and six others had

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\(^{87}\) Approximately US$2,200
children at the EPK [Interview A. Wéa].

Parents were also pressurised into withdrawing their children from the EPK. Among Kanak workers, there are many examples of threats coming from employers to the effect that, if they did not withdraw their children from the schools, they would be dismissed [Néchéro-Jorédié, 1988: p.214].

Parents were also forced to forego any entitlement to child allowance of up to 6,000 CFP per child per month. Access to state-subsidised medical care was also denied them [Interview M. Wéa]. The grounds for these moves was that child-related social services were provided conditional upon attendance at school. The EPK was not recognised as a legitimate school. Therefore, children attending it were officially categorised as truants. This policy angered Naaoutchoué who pointed out [Naaoutchoué interview] that Article 26.1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which France is a signatory, clearly upholds the right of Kanak parents to send their children to the EPK. It reads: "Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children"

The imposition of intense financial hardship on already-poor parents was compounded by the lack of resources suffered by the EPK themselves. This posed significant difficulties for the EPK, preventing it from purchasing or producing necessary teaching materials or stationery. As Néchéro-Jorédié points out:

"Its existence will only be effective, real, if it has financial support... Without this it can't survive. It isn't just teaching strategies that make a school work. Without financial support our little experiments will just pop like a balloon" [Néchéro-Jorédié, 1988: p.218].

The lack of financial resources has also provided a focus that critics and competitors (for example, Billy Wapotro, President of the Protestant education authority, l'Alliance Scolaire) can highlight in their efforts to dissuade people from sending their children to the EPK. As Naaoutchoué points

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88 approximately US$60
out, the comparative lack of resources made it difficult for the EPK to present itself as a credible alternative to parents.

"There was the whole conventional school system that continued to function with all their money and materials as against the EPK which was just a few groups of animateurs"
[Naaoutchoué interview].

It should be noted that the financial problems faced by the EPK were not entirely the result of external pro-colonial forces. The emphasis on self-sufficiency within the EPK was a contributing factor, as was, more importantly, the denial of funding from within the independence movement, as documented below. Nevertheless, it was an area in which the French Government and its allies were active against the EPK.

In one incident, the Banque de l'Indosuez refused to handle a bank draft of NZ$7,500 which was a grant for the EPK from the New Zealand development agency Corso. Over a period of nine months, the bank manager employed a series of obstructive measures: demanding extensive documentation from the EPK; then asking for confirmation from Corso about the purpose of the funding; then trying to dissuade Corso from funding the EPK; then citing non-existent regulations about restrictions on the flow of money into New Caledonia; then finally, in a face-to-face interview with Corso's National Coordinator, declaring that the bank would not handle any funds destined to the EPK [Corso archives]. The grant was eventually brought into the country in cash by Naaoutchoué after a visit to New Zealand.

The ban on funding the EPK was also enforced by allied governments of France. The New Zealand Labour Government consistently overturned the advice of the VASS\textsuperscript{89} and DEP\textsuperscript{90} advisory committees on subsidising projects of New Zealand non-governmental organisations which involved the EPK. In a document relating to these decisions that was obtained under the Official Information Act, the Ministry of External Relations and Trade (MERT) advised the

\textsuperscript{89} Voluntary Agencies Support Scheme
\textsuperscript{90} Development Education Programme
"The French Government has made known its strong opposition to the work of the EPK which is heavily political and as such goes beyond the field of education" [MERT, 1987].

9.5.2 EPK Internal Difficulties

The EPK was weakened by a number of internal problems. Some of these related to disagreements between EPK over pedagogical or political issues. One of the main divisions of this kind was between the Canala EPK and the rest of the movement which worked within the framework of the National Structure.

After participating in the founding convention in Ponerihouen and the second one in Lifou in February 1986, the Canala EPK absented itself from the rest of the movement. Although no formal withdrawal statement was ever issued, pedagogical issues were a particular concern of the Canala EPK. They applied their pedagogy of alternation, while the other EPK worked with a thematic pedagogy. This was not the only point of tension, however, as even some animateurs who remained within the EPK network were unconvinced of the virtues of thematic pedagogy [see, for example Humbert].

There were also concerns over educational emphasis and the role of politics in schooling. Néchéro-Jorédié of the Canala EPK accused the broader EPK network of concentrating on too much overtly political work in the schools, at the expense of its primary educational function, a function which was itself intrinsically political.

"Canala is the only EPK where the Project Pedagogy is actually applied. I'm politically active, and in our EPK we've always stressed the pedagogic angle, with politics as an adjunct. Elsewhere, the main aim is to set up a political school and make the tools afterwards" [Néchéro-Jorédié, 1988: p.217].
As regards the actual operation of the EPK, there were many accusations of inferior teaching practices. Wapotro cited anecdotal evidence of former EPK pupils arriving at schools run by l'Alliance Scolaire with much lower than average abilities in basic literacy and numeracy. He argues that:

"In the EPK, they are creating illiterates. And this has very dangerous consequences, because these children could become the future exploited classes of the country" [Wapotro interview].

However, there is no conclusive evidence that the children from the EPK were or are any more or any less advanced in basic skills than those from the colonial schools. And even if it could be proved that EPK children were less competent, it does not follow that the EPK is to blame for this, since there are many other determinants of children's ability. However, the accusation rests Naaoutchoué, who insists that, given the nature of the task being undertaken in the EPK and the conditions in which it had to operate, it is totally unrealistic to demand immediate success [Naaoutchoué interview].

Wapotro has also pointed to the experience of having former EPK pupils who arrive at l'Alliance Scolaire schools with a real appetite for learning, which he attributes to the sporadic nature of schooling in the EPK. Describing these ex-EPK pupils, he notes:

"In the EPK, sometimes they have school and sometimes they don't. You can feel a motivation about schooling. In other words, they know the value of school because they've been left out of it a bit. When they come back they want to go, there's a certain motivation. You get the impression that they feel a desire to go to school... The children have been left to one side, and especially in the EPK, and suddenly say we want to get something done too, and one feels a certain motivation" [Wapotro interview 2].

Wapotro conceded, however, that the increased motivation from the former EPK pupils might
equally be explained by the fact it was precisely their experience in the EPK had enabled them to develop a heightened appreciation and enjoyment of learning.

Humbert, who put a lot of effort into the EPK, believes that one of the problems was that they were not sufficiently child-centred. Echoing some of the concerns expressed by Néchéro-Jorédié, he points out:

"The EPK is an adult affair ... and the children are there because we send them there. One of the less heartening aspects of the EPK was to see that the parents made the EPK a nationalist school more than one for the children" [Humbert interview].

However, his main concern about the internal functioning of the EPK was that insufficient attention was given to the reasons for the closure of EPK. He notes that people would simply give up on their work within the EPK, and leave the movement without offering any explanation. And those who remained would not seek an explanation. This lack of evaluation meant that, instead of learning from problems or shortcomings, there was just a steady dissipation of energy and corresponding increase in the sense of frustration and isolation experienced by those who remained.

9.5.3 Anti-EPK Moves from within the Independence Movement

It has been shown that the shortcomings of the EPK and the opposition it encountered from the French Government and its allies were partly to blame for the failure of the EPK to realise the hopes that were placed in it. However, lack of support for as well as outright opposition to the EPK from within the independence movement was a more fundamental cause of its failure.

One of the main causes of tension from an early stage was that many prominent figures within the FLNKS, including some who argued in favour of the EPK, did not send their children to the EPK, or even participate in the boycott of the colonial school system in any way. This was a source of
intense frustration because it made more difficult the EPK's task of reassuring parents that it offered a serious educational option for their children. In Poindiimié, some FLNKS activists who resented the actions of the leaders' non-participation in the EPK, burnt down the local EPK in frustration. As another activist explained:

"They did not want to see the children from the tribes being brought into the EPK to learn the name of this or that tree, while some of the leaders of the FLNKS continued to send their children to the colonial schools to learn how to give them orders in the future"

[Ouei-Small interview].

Opposition from within the FLNKS also took the form of financial obstruction. The FLNKS rationale for returning to participate in the territorial institutions after the 1984 boycott had been to channel resources into alternative, FLNKS-controlled structures for resistance and development. However, even though as late as December 1988, the EPK was still formally acknowledged by the FLNKS as being a key structure of the movement\(^1\), it had been very difficult to extract funding from the FLNKS-controlled Regions\(^2\). In one instance, the Ponerihouen EPK had been promised money from their regional administration in 1985, but the funding was not made available until 1988. The EPK had been forced to close just weeks earlier [Gorodey interview].

\subsection{9.5.3.1 Conservative Opponents}

One of the clearest declarations of opposition to the EPK from within the independence movement can be found in a confidential document prepared by the leaders of the UC in the Loyalty Islands. It was produced towards the end of 1985, while the EPK was at its peak as a popular arm of the FLNKS. Because of the unusually revealing nature of this document, it is instructive to quote it at length:

\begin{quotation}
\footnote{along with the newspaper Bwenando, Radio Djjido and tribal cooperative stores}
\footnote{Territorial elections, which were held in September 1985 as part of the Fabius Plan, saw the FLNKS participate and win a majority in three (Northern, Central and Loyalty Islands) out of four (the other being around Nouméa) Regions.}
\end{quotation}
"These EPK struggle schools have not succeeded in weakening the colonial school through lack of maturity and equally of strategy and tactics. More seriously, these schools have never openly presented a timetable, objectives and a programme that are well-defined in order to convince the political leaders and particularly those most affected, the parents. Why would any man of reason give a moment's thought to 'sacrificing' his child in order to satisfy a political slogan, a blind fanaticism, a utopian ideology. How is it imaginable that the day after the 18th a one-hundred-year-old institution would disappear with the stroke of a pen. It is to do away with certain realities that are unavoidable and, in a positive sense, elementary...

"Politically, through its congresses and the reflections of its constituent groups, the FLNKS has learnt lessons and accepts the principle of cohabitation of the different schools - EPK, public and private - which implies that it recognises these schools whether implicitly or explicitly. Each of them follow their own path without ever meeting each other. The EPK continues to think that it is necessary to bury French education and follow the culture as well as the civilisation of the mother tongue. Advantage: knowledge of the milieu, of the language (?), of the cultural identity (?), of Canaque civilisation (?). (sic) Drawbacks: disappearance of the second language which is the relational link, tendency towards navel-gazing, xenophobia, withdrawal into oneself, autarky, in other words, the cultivation of weakness and the facilitation of interference and domination by a modern, organised foreign state; a state commonly called 'strong'.

"The advocates of the 'colonial' school, by contrast, believe in the virtue of reform. Their key word is to adapt; adapt the timetable, the objectives, the programmes. Thus account could be taken of both cultures and the child would feel at ease there in each one. Furthermore, international or global competition demands that we be defended by serious and, above all, competent representatives (emphasis in original). Competent means qualified and French qualifications are sure guarantees in these international levels.

Learning French, other than its virtues in opening new horizons to us and giving us access

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93 18 November 1984 being the date of the election boycott.
to a superior knowledge of a certain notion of freedom and of learning about the world, is also a significant if not the principal trump for successfully securing a good independence" [Union Calédonienne, Region Isles].

The document reveals a deep faith in the superiority of French society and the education system upon which it is based. It shows an internalisation of the colonial definition of development being a process of making Kanak society more like that of France. It articulates a view of Kanak education that has not evolved to any significant degree from that advanced by Lenormand in 1963 (see Chapter Six). Furthermore, it is virtually indistinguishable from the perspective presented by the Vice-Rectorat. It should be no surprise, therefore, that this view of education is preceded in the same document by an astounding interpretation of the thinking behind the formation of the FLNKS and its 1984 boycott campaign.

"Over a year ago, the FLNKS decided on a boycott of institutions in order to make the socialist government look again at a statute closer to the Canaque claims. The objective was not in the slightest to foment revolution but to destabilise the institutions in order to take account of these claims and make progress in the direction wanted by the independence movement. Within this strategy, it was out of the question to cut the umbilical cord with France (which would be suicidal), but to cry louder in order that she (France) would be more attentive and considerate. With dialogue proving ineffective, the last resort was to action. This was engaged in a good-natured way, but it led to things getting out of hand and unfortunate mistakes which proved difficult to halt. The EPK, which is more a political slogan than a genuine institution, is one of these mistakes" [Union Calédonienne, Region Isles].

The authors of this document who occupied key positions in the biggest party within the FLNKS, had political convictions which were seriously at odds with those contained in the FLNKS Charter and agreed on at congresses of the movement. Just as the EPK analysis of and commitment to usurping colonial education was intimately connected to a broader anti-colonial perspective, so too the political and educational perspectives articulated in the UC document are entirely compatible.
Like the educational view, the political position upon which it is founded indicates a profound acceptance of French colonial hegemony in New Caledonia. It reflects no less obsequiousness on the part of its authors than did the 1946 open letter by returned Kanak servicemen [see Appendix One].

Divisions within the FLNKS over the EPK did not, however, follow party lines. Within the UC, there were EPK supporters and activists like Néchéro-Jorédié. It was, however, difficult for many UC people to sustain their involvement in the EPK in the face of attacks from within their own party, and particularly from leaders. One UC member from St Louis reported that sustained pressure for an entire year from other UC people was instrumental in forcing the closure of the EPK in which he had been active.

"We didn't get to the point of physically fighting each other but it was very tense between us. The pressure was too much for the parents, with their child allowance being stopped and everything... Today, now that we've stopped (the EPK) we can talk to each other again. Which is what was needed before, some encouragement, because the determination of the parents who had got involved in it (the EPK) was real. But there was no support from the local UC committee, neither financial nor moral, and no participation in the debate, even though the refection workshop that we had established was very open" [Anon. *Chroniques de Kanaky*. Numbers 4,5: p.33].

### 9.5.3.2 Radical Reformist Opponents

Internal opposition to the EPK was by no means confined to the UC, however, and neither was it all a reflection of older conservative ideology. Amongst the most strident critics of the EPK were Elie Poigoune, a founder and leading figure in PALIKA, and Paul Neaoutyine, a more recent but highly prominent member of PALIKA whose dismissal from his teaching post had sparked the protests and school boycotts of 1979. Poigoune, in particular, has expressed a number of grounds on which he disagrees with the path adopted by the EPK and the way it has gone about its work.

He believed that insufficient thought was given to the creation of the EPK for it to be a school
system for the entire population, and that it was irresponsible to call people to take part in an essentially experimental exercise without adequate preparation. More importantly, he believed that the existing school system was a useful starting point and that it was a mistake to consciously reject everything in it and try to establish a new system from scratch. Despite its pro-colonial dimensions, Poigoune argued, there are important elements within the French education system that Kanak people can take and use to their own advantage.

"It is true that the school ... diffuses the bourgeois colonialist ideology but it can also be, if we really want it to be, a formidable weapon which we can use against colonialism and to gain our liberation. To achieve this, we must push our youth to go as far as possible in their studies; as many as possible of our youth must get their baccalauréat and go on to higher education in France" [Kanak. Number 128, 1988].

Poigoune remained unapologetic about his promotion of a view perceived to be conservative that was out of step with the majority of activists in the movement. He insisted:

"We have to send young people to France to study. When they come back to New Caledonia, they will be able to help us carry on the struggle correctly. This is considered to be a petty bourgeois discourse. We are accused of wanting to form élites who will play the system's game against the real interests of the people. That is not true... Study allows (young people) to perceive the situation more clearly and to understand the problems better" [Poigoune, 1988].

This view has been strenuously opposed by EPK supporters. One such activist from Pouebo concedes that some positive gains came from Kanak students studying in France, but rejects the type of extension of this view that Poigoune makes.

"If we continue to follow that logic, we end up saying that colonialism is a positive gain. I reject that view that Kanak people have to try to achieve within the existing society. This might solve a short-term problem, but the fundamental problem (of colonialism) remains"
Another problem with Poigoune's argument is the impact that such a strategy has upon people in a colonial context. The question remains as to what such a strategy promises for the majority of Kanak youth who are eliminated from the education system well before tertiary level. And for those who do pursue advanced studies, it is unrealistic to expect them to be able to pick and choose just those elements of an education system which they actively seek to acquire while remaining unaffected by their overall educational experience. Furthermore, Poigoune's acceptance of France's position as the source of knowledge and analytic skills makes even more difficult the already challenging task of breaking from the kind of mentality, as expressed in the UC document cited above, that has been conditioned by the colonial experience and continues to sustain colonial power relations.

Poigoune also criticised the EPK preoccupation with Kanak custom and culture. He argued that culture and traditions are properly part of the family and traditional milieu. Although in favour of preserving and promoting the things which are of value from traditional society, Poigoune has insisted that they are not school subjects:

"There's no point in teaching them at school. I think there are other things to learn"

[Poigoune interview].

Wapotro, who is also pro-independence, agrees with the EPK emphasis on Kanak culture but maintains that it is a concern that was already being addressed by existing schools:

"Their concern is to say, let us root children normally in their own milieu, with their language and everything... But we have already been doing that for around ten years. We do it for the new entrants in our pre-school classes and we reinforce it in the initial subjects in history, songs, music..." [Wapotro interview 2].

However, critics within the EPK argue that such initiatives are only tokens and that, as long as the
ultimate orientation of the school system is towards a colonially-defined system of knowledge and its associated qualifications, any introduction of Kanak culture is purely cosmetic.

Poigoune also insisted, as he had continued to do since 1979, that the real task of organising educational resistance needed to be undertaken within the existing institutions. The colonial system, he argued, much prefers to see activists establish parallel structures like the EPK than to have them engaged in a strong and well-organised union.

"A genuinely progressive and decolonised school can only be put in place from the moment where the people take power and put in place a society which takes account of their real needs. And to take power, we must struggle wherever we are - in the tribes, factories, businesses and colonial schools... Since 1985, there has been a major demobilisation in the educational sector. We cried so much that the school is colonial that people no longer dare to struggle within it... Those who have stayed have been the targets of criticism; that they are petit-bourgeois or the agents of neocolonialism" [Kanak. Number 128, 1988].

Officially, PALIKA supported the EPK. As a dissenting voice, Poigoune was in a minority and was regularly taken to task over the issue. Poigoune says that he is aware of his own position of privilege as a graduate and qualified secondary school teacher, and that he consciously tries not to let that influence the political line that he promotes. However, this has not spared him from the accusation that his primary concern is with his own personal well-being. Although some former EPK people94 have been able to resume teaching careers, the sacrifices made by many others95 for their EPK involvement have been irredeemable. Furthermore, lingering bitterness still remains among some activists who, as secondary school students in 1979, abandoned their studies out of a political commitment to the schools boycott campaign, only to see promoters of the campaign doing very well for themselves.

94 for example, Dévé Gorodey and Henri Ankaiuliwa
95 for example, Hninô Wéa and Simon Naaouthoué
9.5.3.3 Unity and Rupture

These types of accusation and recrimination, combined with the undeclared attacks from other sectors of the FLNKS, heightened tensions surrounding the EPK. Opinions for or against the EPK became increasingly entrenched. The end result was that the unity needed for the EPK to stand any chance of succeeding as a popular movement was lost. For any one of the many reasons noted above, parents began withdrawing their children. And once this process of marginalisation from the community began, it was very difficult to reverse. As a founder of the Ponerihouen EPK, which had begun with five school and 130 pupils, explains:

"For three years the EPK was a real popular school, based on the participation of the entire population. But once people began to withdraw their kids, it became very marginal involving only around thirty pupils and run by a few activists from PALIKA. For us, EPK was never supposed to be a PALIKA school, it was a school of the whole movement. That is why we closed, because it no longer corresponded with what we had originally set out to do" [Gorodey interview].

In its early stages, the EPK had remained largely united in the face of disputes within the FLNKS. The contentious FLNKS decision to participate in the Fabius Regions was met by an EPK decision from its Ponerihouen Convention to remain "in rupture". Recalling the unity and sense of purpose within the EPK, Humbert comments:

"We felt so good together at that EPK convention ... We felt really free to express our deepest thoughts... It was a forum where we were able to express our most intimate ideas" [Humbert interview].

Naaoutchoué has similar memories, and blames the EPK's demise on the lack of political direction from the FLNKS:

"When I think about the plenary meetings of the EPK - we used to have 300, 400, 500
people all participating in the discussion. It was a really strong movement at the time. But little by little, the FLNKS cut itself off from the EPK." [Naooutchoué interview].

Since 1987, Naooutchoué argues, the FLNKS has not had any coordinated political strategy. Like Moenteapo and many others within the EPK tendency, Naooutchoué believes that the main failing of the FLNKS was its refusal to define its social project; that is, its vision of the society it was struggling to create. "Ultimately, the school is the reproduction of the system, the society and everything", he argues. "Theoretically, when a structure like the EPK is put in place, it corresponds with a social project".

The absence of an agreed social project left the EPK in an untenable position. It also made it impossible to prevent debates within the EPK from ranging into the area of defining a social project. Thus, debates within the FLNKS were eventually imported into and revisited within the EPK. And as division intensified within the FLNKS, it had an increasingly debilitating effect on the EPK.

The 1988 Matignon Accords which saw the FLNKS leadership agree to abandon the strategy of rupture, finally put an end to the EPK. By demobilising the Kanak population, the Accords removed the political framework within which the EPK had been able to operate after the 1985 decision to participate in the Fabius Regions. The EPK was conceived of and could only properly function as one element of a popular mobilisation.

The Accords also exacerbated the existing divisions within the FLNKS to an irreconcilable point. Two member groups, the FULK and USTKE resigned or were expelled, and large numbers of activists who had identified with the FLNKS without belonging to any particular member party were also excluded. Many EPK activists as well as whole communities with functioning EPK, notably in Ouvéa and Lifou, were among those which parted company with the FLNKS.

EPK continue to function in both pro- and anti-FLNKS areas. And in some instances, particularly in Gossannah, the EPK is still the focal point for a community which remains at a high state of
political mobilisation. However, the EPK which have been able to survive are isolated fragments of what the national EPK movement once promised to be.

9.6 Conclusion

As the Kanak desire for independence strengthened, so too did their commitment to change the existing education system into one of their own design. The EPK were the realisation of this wish, which had been building up for most of a decade, to break from an education system which served colonial interests and replace it with one which would meet the needs of Kanak people.

The EPK were established as structures of the struggle for Kanak socialist independence. Although there was not a uniform view of the extent of the political content they should embody, all involved saw the exercise as one of redefining the fundamental orientation of the school. That is, they saw themselves as preparing future generations for a new society. This involved redefining notions of citizenship and development.

As part of the independence movement, the destiny of the EPK was inextricably linked with that of the overall struggle and, more particularly with that of the FLNKS. While in the early stages this proved advantageous for the EPK, it led eventually to their demise. As Néchéro-Jorédié had warned:

"The EPK is an integral part of the FLNKS. It can only continue to exist if there is a political will for it to do so... If the EPK, as it were, explodes in order to grow, it'll be because there will have been a political will for it to occur. If it explodes in order to die, it'll be because there will have been a political will for it to die" [Néchéro-Jorédié, 1988: pp.217-8].

Although anti-EPK initiatives from pro-colonial forces played a significant part, the EPK ultimately failed in the form in which it was originally conceived because two essential conditions for its
success were not retained by the FLNKS - if they had ever really existed. The first of these was a policy to implement a radical rupture with the political, economic and socio-cultural structures of French colonialism in New Caledonia in order to achieve Kanak socialist independence. The second was a unified understanding of and commitment to what this entailed; both the means required to achieve it and the form that it would take.

The process of radicalisation which had intensified through the 1970s and early 80s appeared in 1984 to have given rise to a broad-based Kanak movement which was committed to turning back France's hegemonic hold over New Caledonia. As it transpired, however, French colonial rule proved stronger and considerably less brittle than many within the independence movement had anticipated. Although large numbers of alienated Kanak youth were ready for a radical rupture with colonialism, amongst many within the FLNKS leadership there remained a fundamental attachment to the relationship with France and the institutions upon which this was based. The conflict between these competing perspectives was heightened by the Matignon Accords, whose impact is the subject of the following chapter.
Chapter Ten

Education and the Matignon Accords: Colonial Hegemony Revisited

10.1 Introduction

The Matignon Accords, a tripartite agreement signed by the French Socialist Government and the leaders of the major pro- and anti-independence groupings in New Caledonia, were concluded on 26 June 1988. They have been credited with bringing the territory back from the brink of civil war and ushering in a new era of peace, prosperity and equality. However, they also have their critics. While the agreement focused on policy and process, the disagreement was over the likely outcome. With contradictory aspirations and expectations of the Accords, both pro- and anti-colonial signatories placed bets on their desired outcome and committed themselves to doing the work needed to realise it.

This chapter examines the impact of the Accords and the role of education in New Caledonia since they were signed. It begins with an assessment of the context within which the Matignon Accords were signed and the impact the agreement has had on colonial relations. On the basis of this, recent educational developments are assessed in three parts. The first examines citizenship through a discussion of recent curriculum changes. This is followed by an assessment of allocation which takes the form of an analysis of new measures introduced by France in line with its stated commitment to enhancing equality of educational opportunity in the territory. The third section considers the issue of high-level education and training which has been implemented as part of the development strategy laid down in the Matignon Accords.
10.2 Colonial Relations and the Causes and Effects of the Matignon Accords

It is not possible to understand education in New Caledonia since 1988, let alone how it relates to colonial relations, without first understanding the upheaval that the Matignon Accords created in the territory. To this end, this section analyses some key aspects of the Accords. In particular, it outlines the content of the Accords and the context which gave rise to them. It also examines the impact the Accords have had on the Kanak independence movement. Finally, there is a discussion of the notion of "development" upon which the Accords are based.

10.2.1 The Matignon Accords: Context and Content

Under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, and his Overseas Territories Minister, Bernard Pons, French colonial rule in the two years leading up to the Matignon Accords had been the most aggressively anti-Kanak in the post-war period. Determined to confront the independence movement, the right-wing government embarked on a politico-military strategy which had been developed in Algeria called Nomadisation, which involved the deployment of mobile army units very close to Kanak tribes.

The Government also sought to end the debate over independence by imposing a referendum on independence in which anyone living in the territory could vote. In clear breach of United Nations guidelines on such plebiscites, it took no account of the systematic immigration policies France had applied in the 1970s and was boycotted by the pro-independence parties. Despite a 98 per cent vote against independence, therefore, the 13 September 1987 referendum did little to convince the international community, much less the Kanak people, of the legitimacy of continued French colonial rule.

The belligerence of the Chirac administration left the normally conservative South Pacific Forum, which had willingly accepted any French Socialist government assurance over New Caledonia, with no grounds to refuse to accede to Kanak demands to take their case to the United Nations.
On 4 December 1986, the United Nations General Assembly voted to refer the case of New Caledonia to its Decolonisation Committee. Within New Caledonia, France was forcing the usually measured and moderate FLNKS President, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, into adopting an increasingly hard line:

"The situation in Kanaky has reached the point where Kanaks have no option but to arm themselves with guns... To continue (unarmed) would be sending our people to the slaughter house" [Quoted by AAP, 14 December 1987].

The final act of Chirac/Pons rule in New Caledonia was what became known as "the Ouvéa massacre". FLNKS activists on the island of Ouvéa had taken a group of gendarmes hostage after an attempt to occupy the Fayawé gendarmerie in protest at the proposed Pons Statute. A thirteen-day stand-off was proving an embarrassment for French authorities, especially Chirac who was in the final days of a presidential election campaign. On the eve of the final round of voting and in spite of Kanak assurances that the hostages would be released after the election, Chirac and Pons ordered their most élite military unit\textsuperscript{96} to attack the cave where the hostages were being held. Despite the release of the hostages, the attack was widely condemned as a cynical election manoeuvre and Mitterand and the Socialist Party were returned to power.

Many civilians were tortured during the occupation of Ouvéa, and the attack itself left nineteen activists dead, at least three of whom had been killed or left to die after surrendering. The entire Kanak population and especially that of Ouvéa (just 2,700 people) were traumatised by the events. It was against this background, just fifty-two days after the massacre, that the new government negotiated the signing of the Matignon Accords.

Thus, although they are an ostensibly free agreement, the Accords are steeped in coercion and were not signed by equal partners. The institutions of the French state as well as many of the leading personalities, including President Mitterand, remain unchanged from those which authorised and conducted the Ouvéa massacre. The new government's bargaining power was

\textsuperscript{96} The "eleventh shock" force.
strengthened by the impact of the actions of its predecessor and "the implicit threat that such acts could happen again" [Ounei-Small, 1992: p.172], no matter how much it voiced condemnation of those actions. As the wider FLNKS considered its position on the Accords, which had been signed unilaterally by some of the movement's leaders, the French Overseas Territories Minister, Louis Le Pensec, made this even more explicit. He warned that the agreement would not be renegotiated and that FLNKS failure to ratify it would result in the reimposition of the overtly anti-Kanak Pons Statute [Quoted by AFP, 22 July 1988].

The Accords postponed a decision on independence until 1998, at which time an electoral college comprising all who had been eligible to vote in 1988\textsuperscript{97} and had remained in the territory would participate in a referendum. In the interim, the principal institutions of local government would be three semi-autonomous Provinces - the South, the North and the Loyalty Islands; the latter two being largely Kanak and pro-independence, with the former being mostly anti-independence settlers.

The ten-year period leading up to the referendum would be one of "development", oriented towards rebalancing\textsuperscript{98} the territory's Nouméa- and European-dominated economy. This would involve increased investment and infrastructural construction in the underdeveloped largely Kanak areas. It would be accompanied by the extensive revision of existing and creation of new education and training programmes concentrating on Kanak people.

10.2.2 An Agreement Shrouded in Disagreement

The Matignon Accords are an agreement about a broad programme and a process and timetable for it to be implemented. However, they also embody a major disagreement about the desired and likely outcomes of its implementation. Each of the parties to the Accords had its own expectations of them which, particularly on the issue of independence, included fundamentally incompatible

\textsuperscript{97} On the basis of a three-year residency qualification.

\textsuperscript{98} Original: rééquilibrage.
elements.

From the French Government's perspective, Rocard was candid about his views. He considered that the Accords provided the framework for what he described as "a veritable economic and cultural decolonisation without any change in (French) sovereignty" [Reuter, 28 August 1988]. Rocard believed that at the end of ten years, Kanak people who had wanted independence would have come to an appreciation of the benefits of remaining a French territory. "My dearest hope," he declared, "is that in 1998 the people of New Caledonia will choose to remain a part of France" [Reuter 29 August 1988].

Although the extreme-right Caledonian Front and National Front remained steadfastly opposed to any compromise with the independence movement, the main anti-independence party, the RPCR, agreed with Rocard's assessment that independence would be an unlikely outcome of the agreement. The business community had suffered from the instability generated by the Kanak mobilisations of the 1980s and could see that the Matignon Accords posed no inherent threat to their interests. Their leader and RPCR president, Jacques Lafleur, called on his supporters "to give and to forgive". He welcomed Tjibaou's acceptance of the accords, describing him as "one of the Melanesians who has an economic conception ... which works towards advancing things and forgetting the conflicts". Asked why he waited until 1988 to make such an arrangement with the FLNKS, Lafleur replied, "I have always wanted it to happen like this. If I could have, I would have done it long ago" [Reported on RFO, 29 September 1988]. Two months earlier, an RPCR conference of one thousand delegates took just three and a half hours to agree on a unanimous endorsement of the Accords [Reuter, 24 July 1988].

By contrast, the FLNKS debated throughout two weekend meetings (at Thio on July 16 and 17 and Ouvéa a week later) before adopting a position on the Accords. Activists questioned the mandate of those who had signed the Accords. They were also concerned that the agreement was based on too long a time frame, was not sufficiently restrictive on the voting rights of new immigrants and offered no guarantee of independence. Openly divided on the issue, the FLNKS eventually resolved to continue negotiations and use the final round of talks on the Accords the
following month to extract as many concessions as possible from France. Tjibaou described the FLNKS position in the following terms:

"This plan does not correspond to our objectives, but we must see to what degree we can make it work for us. All our activists support Kanak Socialist Independence, however before gaining it, we have to live" [Quoted by AFP, 25 July 1988].

The rationale was similar to that which the FLNKS had adopted in 1985, when it decided to abandon its mobilisation and participate in the Fabius Plan. The objections to the Matignon Accords were also similar to those advanced with regard to the Fabius Plan, except that they were argued with greater intensity. This was a product of the loss of life and other sacrifices in the intervening period, as well as a feeling among many activists that, rather than advancing the political objectives of the movement by supporting structures like the EPK, those involved in the FLNKS-controlled Regional governments had used the resources given by the France for their own personal ends.

The low level of popular support in New Caledonia for the Accords was demonstrated when they were framed as a statute called the Rocard Plan, and put to a referendum of all French citizens in November 1988. Although all three principal parties to the Accords campaigned for a "yes" vote, only 33 per cent of enrolled voters endorsed the agreement; just over half of the combined FLNKS/RPCR vote in the September 1985 elections [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 13 September 1985]. The "no" vote, representing anti-independence settlers plus a relatively small number of FULK supporters, came to 25 per cent. Despite a proposed amnesty for the 115 Kanak political prisoners and although there was no organised boycott campaign, pro-independence strongholds recorded high rates of abstention; the highest being in Ouvéa itself where 54 per cent of eligible voters did not vote [see Small, 1989: pp.24-5].

The inter-Kanak conflict that was generated - or at least exacerbated - by the Accords, resulted in the deaths of three major protagonists - Jean-Marie Tjibaou, Yeiwéné Yeiwéné and the person who assassinated them and was himself killed, Djubelly Wéa. The Accords also led to the
departure of many FLNKS activists: some to join other political groups; most, to become disillusioned with all existing parties. Within the FLNKS, the struggle committees which had been the backbone of the grassroots political mobilisation were disbanded [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 10 June 1991], and the "coordination committees" set up to replace them never functioned. After participating in the Accords, at least partly because of an unfavourable rapport de force, the FLNKS has ended up in an even weaker position.

France ended up exactly where it wanted to be. Besides wreaking havoc in the independence movement, the Accords allowed it to present itself in the role of benevolent moderator in a civil conflict. In effect, it was seeking to establish a variant of internal colonialism that would enable it to achieve the sort of hegemonic control within New Caledonia and legitimacy in the international arena that it begrudges the European communities in Australian and New Zealand.

It was a long-held preference of President Mitterand for France to develop amore sophisticated form of colonialism in France's overseas possessions [see Clark 1991]; a view which he outlined in relation to New Caledonia in the lead-up to the 1988 presidential elections in an "Open Letter to all French":

"Independence in this state of rupture between two populations of comparable size means civil war, the only inexpiable war, and therefore the destruction of one of the two sides. One can guess which. The ridiculed right of the Canaques will be upheld and restored only by internal peace, and the guarantor of this peace and these rights can only be the French Republic" [Reproduced in Faberon, 1992b: p.183].

Since the signing of the Accords, tensions between pro-independence groups and disillusionment among the wider Kanak population have steadily intensified. The LKS, an original signatory of the Accords, has since withdrawn from the agreement. It argues that, as a basic human right, the issue of independence is of quite a different order from an electoral choice between a left- or right-wing government. It is a fundamental entitlement that cannot be denied. The LKS also believes that the Accords embody opportunism and cronyism and have a repugnant image among Kanak youth who
"are disgusted with the political class and ashamed of the degrading image of the Kanak projected by the elected officials" [LKS, 1991].

The combination of disunity and disillusionment caused a dramatic drop in electoral support for the FLNKS in the 1993 legislative elections [see Small, 1993]. The sharpest drop, due to an precededented level of abstentions, occurred in Canala, the home area of the FLNKS northern candidate, Léopold Jorédié, who is also the President of the Northern Province. According to Rock Wamytan, who was the FLNKS candidate in the South and is a fellow UC member and the FLNKS Vice-President, Kanak people are frustrated that the emphasis on development appears to have moved independence off the agenda. Amongst the leadership, he believes:

"There is too much talk about economic development and a tendency to forget the reason we are in the institutions, the political objective of gaining independence" [Wamytan interview].

10.2.3 Models of Development

The Matignon Accords gave "development" centre stage. It is, however, a highly contentious concept. It goes to the heart of the unresolved issue within the independence movement of what kind of post-colonial society the Kanak people are seeking to construct. Some long-time advocates of Kanak development have expressed alarm at a lack of clear thinking about the subject and have warned about the dangers of conservative models of development:

"Development is surely the central myth of our time. In relations between North and South or industrialised and poor countries, it serves to justify the wealth of the West at the same time as making Third World societies dream of a better world. In the Western ideological apparatus, it is the sequel to the myth of the universal church and of benevolent colonialism; used to justify the gradual extension of the European ruling classes from the Middle Ages to modern times, with the complicity in our countries of indigenous Johnny-
come-latelys, blinded by the glitter of the white world" [LKS, 1991].

These remarks connect with those of the FLNKS Vice-President, Rock Wamytan, who has commented:

"No economic development will be possible without cultural realities being taking account of, and the Kanak people alone are able to define and put into operation development specific to their country... Any development enterprise which is not based on the Kanak reality is destined to fail or even lead to under-development" [Wamytan, 1985: p.7].

Since the early days of the independence movement in the 1970s, Kanak activists had warned of the dangers of neocolonial independence which has been described as "formal independence with all the political and economic power being controlled by foreign capital and a small Kanak élite of well-paid politicians, civil servants and junior business partners" [Ounei-Small, 1992: p.166]. Through the Matignon Accords, the French Government and settler business interests have been able to make use of this concern about neocolonialism to argue that unless economic development preceded decolonisation, an independent Kanaky would not have a viable economy.

Their assumption was, however, that development in New Caledonia would be based on modernisation theory or a variation of it. Even within the FLNKS-controlled Northern Province, one finds resolutions, possibly prepared by French technocrats, borrowing directly from modernisation theory with references to "economic take-off" [Quoted in Leblic, 1993: p.232]. According to these models of development, what the territory requires are: injections of capital for the construction of infrastructure; a flood of technical advisors from France; policies that would be attractive to foreign investment; greater integration of Kanak people into the market economy; and the recruitment of a Kanak élite into management positions in the public and private sectors.

New Caledonia's outstanding mineral wealth gives it development options many other countries do not have. However, there are serious dangers in relying too heavily on capital-intensive extractive industries. Agricultural development has also proved difficult. A ten-year plan called "Operation
Coffee" could not overcome the disparity between a coffee producer's income of 100,000 CFP per year and the minimum wage for a worker of 60,000 CFP per month [Freyss, 1993: p.5].

During the administration of the regional governments set up under the Fabius Plan, the independence movement spoke of development being "not only a question of investment in capital but also investment in people" [Bwenando, Number 44: p.10] and of it being "a matter of producing to construct a country, improving the material well-being of the populations and ensuring their dignity by respecting their own values" [Bwenando, Number 42: p.5]. Elements of these views were reflected in the creation of the EPK and alternative media organisations like the Bwenando newspaper and Radio Djiido, as well as strategies of establishing tribal cooperatives and small-scale community enterprises. And, notwithstanding the blockages noted in Chapter Nine with regard to EPK funding, the Regions and more recently the Provinces have distributed significant sums of money to a range of community applicants.

However, in the absence of an agreed vision of the content of Kanak socialist independence, let alone a theory of development for achieving it, the independence movement was left in the dangerous position of having to respond to and apply a model of development about which many activists had grave misgivings. Kanak activists have expressed concern that, in development strategies that take France as a model, the roles in which Kanak people will end up will be those of beggars and servants [Ounei-Small, 1992: p.177]. The dismay that a group of Kanak activists in France had expressed during the administration of the Fabius Regions is equally applicable to the institutions of the Matignon Accords:

"Plans have been published to orient and favour a certain type of development which aims to integrate the Kanak into the colonial economy. That which 132 years of colonisation was not able to do, Pisani and his technocrats want to achieve in two years" [Kanak Immigré, Jan-Feb, 1986].

There are widespread fears that the availability of French Government money will create a handout mentality among Kanak people [see interviews in Leblanc, 1993: pp.389-397]. Some who have
remained steadfastly opposed to the Accords, argue that this has always been a considered objective on the part of the French Government. The FLNKS-controlled Regions were more concerned with allocating funds than assessing their impact as, by their own admission, they conducted very little evaluation of the projects that they funded [Construire, Number 9]. This funding is also associated with a wealth of anecdotal evidence of corruption, cronyism and inappropriate allocations, such as a very large sum of money going to the construction of a petrol station on the Belep islands with only half a dozen cars [Tanham, 1990: p.16].

As has been pointed out by the FLNKS Mayor of Yaté, Raphael Mapou, the overall effect of the type of development being promoted in New Caledonia under the Matignon Accords is that, rather than preparing the territory's economy for independence, it is locking it into a position of dependence. This, he argues, will leave the country with increasingly limited options for future economic development [Interview with Mapou].

However, in the name of economic realism, Kanak people are still being exhorted to follow this path. Arguing that social goals cannot be achieved without "putting in place structures and infrastructures which permit the obtaining of financial resources", the UC has opted for development based on a market economy. As its president, François Burck, told the party's 1991 congress:

"We are confronted by a market economy. When we say independence we place our country in a zone where there are rules. If we say no to the market economy, with what do we replace it? And if we say yes to the market economy, this assumes constraints" [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 12 November 1991: p.4].

Already, the "constraints" of this model of development are being used to promote a wide range of policies, some of which have very serious political implications. Immigration, for example, which was promoted by France in the 1970s as an expressly political strategy is now being promoted as a necessity for the fulfilment of the development aims of the Matignon Accords. Calling for more immigration from Europe of "people who work well to teach people who don't know how to
work" [Pacific Report, Volume 6 Number 13: p.4], Lafleur has declared:

"New Caledonia needs to increase its population to achieve economic growth... This is a universal economic principle, not a trap to anyone" [Reported in PACNEWS, 16 January 1991].

The FLNKS President, Paul Neaoutyine has insisted that a distinction must be made "between these two processes - rebalancing and decolonisation" although he hopes they can both be pursued [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 27 October 1992: p.5]. He argues that the concept of socialism for an independent Kanaky must be based on "the rejection of capitalism and colonialism as it is and as it is practised today ... and include going beyond a model which is imposed as universal but which is only the Western model" [Combat Ouvrier, Number 8, January 1993: p.17].

Within the UC, however, there is a strong move, which has been expressed by both Jorédié and the party's president, Burck, to abandon completely the notion of Kanak socialist independence and the alternative development models which might be pursued within it. As Burck has revealed, the main obstacle they face is that most members of their own party do not support them:

"If we (UC) announce tomorrow that we no longer support Kanak socialist independence there will be war, because no-one will agree. Our work is to bring people to be realistic, we have to be honest with them. For us it is not a question of Kanak independence, but of what sort of independence and is it possible" [Pacific Report, Volume 6 Number 14: p.2]

As part of this process, Burck has begun talking about the dangers of the 1998 referendum refocusing attention back on the choice: independence, yes or no? Rather, he believes it should enable a continuation of the process that was begun by the Accords and serve as a "ratification of this consensus" [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 25 March 1991]. His views have been echoed by RPCR leader, Jacques Lafleur [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 4 February 1993: p.3]. And they also reflect the Rocardian (some might say Claytons) notion of decolonisation. Nowhere is this
clearer than in Burck’s declaration that his understanding of independence had "evolved and is no longer taken as meaning a break with France but rather a partnership" [PACNEWS, 29 May 1991].

10.3 Post-Matignon Education and Training

An essential aspect of the Matignon Accords was a commitment on the part of France to improvements in the education and training of Kanak people in New Caledonia. Soon after the signing of the Accords, Prime Minister Rocard described the aim of their educational emphasis as one of:

"making up for the 'retard' and correcting the imbalances which give rise to such a weak presence of Melanesians in the different sectors of the territory's activity, and particularly in the public service" [Reproduced in The Kanak Dispatch, 27 June, 1988].

Between France and those in the independence movement who supported the Accords, there was broad agreement over this aim and even over how it might be implemented. As with the overall Accords, however, the competing parties had divergent and incompatible expectations as to the ultimate impact that such an education and training strategy would have on colonial relations.

As documented in Chapters Eight and Nine, grievances over French education have long been a central feature in the growth of the anti-colonial movement among Kanak people. In the specific context of the movement’s engagement in the Matignon Accords, a determination to have these concerns addressed is seen as essential if the ten-year process is to realise the movement’s aspirations. Independence movement leaders stress the need to enhance the skills and knowledge of Kanak people in preparation for their accession to independence.

In the wake of the Matignon Accords, Tjibaou appealed to Kanak people "to become better trained and educated in order to cope with greater responsibilities". Accompanying the French
Prime Minister on a tour of the territory to promote the Accords, he declared:

"People have to be better trained in management skills: management of the cooperatives, the shops, and to become more involved in the economy so that when the time comes ... to take up the sovereignty of our country, we have the necessary tools in our hands" [Speech by Jean-Marie Tjibaou in Poindimié, 26 August, 1988].

France was very willing to oblige. On the same tour, Rocard explained the importance of the renewed emphasis on education to an assembly of Kanak high school pupils:

"New Caledonia tomorrow, and even more so in ten years, will need farmers and workers of course, but also tradespeople and drivers, veterinarians and engineers, teachers and doctors. ... From this year, the state is going to launch an important programme to improve the training you receive. Your teachers will be able to benefit from extra training. School texts will be printed to better relate the history, geography and environment of New Caledonia. ... Education and training are the keys to development. Whatever destiny New Caledonia may choose in ten years, this territory and its different communities need economic, social, cultural and administrative leaders who are ambitious for themselves and for their country" [Speech by Michel Rocard in Lifou, 24 August, 1988].

Education was just as important an element in France's strategy of engaging in the Accords as it was for the FLNKS. However, Rocard hoped and expected that, rather than strengthening the movement of Kanak people for independence, educational reform would contribute to a more hegemonic French influence in the territory. It would achieve this by more effectively integrating Kanak people into the political, economic and socio-cultural structures of the territory.

In an initial outline of the post-Matignon educational strategy, the French Prime Minister focused on three programmes. First, state-funded youth employment schemes would aim to train 4,000 people per year by involving them in community development projects. The second initiative was aimed at middle and senior management training. Through a programme named "Operation 400
Cadres", four hundred Kanak people would be specially trained over a period of ten years to prepare them for positions of responsibility in the economy, local administration, communication and services. Finally, the territory's resource of teaching personnel would be augmented through the training of fifty assistant teachers every year for five years [Speech by Michel Rocard in Canala, 27 August, 1988].

Three months after the Rocard tour and immediately following the referendum on the Rocard Plan, Lionel Jospin visited New Caledonia; the first such visit by any French education minister. Stressing what he described as the progress of the last few years, Jospin nonetheless the "undeniable inadequacies of our school system". These he described as the very high rate of repeating classes, a generalised failure at school and the lack of equality of educational opportunity, especially for Kanak pupils.

Jospin called for greater efforts to adapt education to New Caledonian realities. He identified three ways in which this could be achieved: teaching of pupils' mother tongues; teaching geography, history, economics and civil institutions from a local perspective; and giving greater recognition to local cultures, particularly Melanesian culture. Rather than abandoning French programmes and texts, he argued, "they must be enriched and adapted to take account of geographic and economic realities which are yours, of your history and your life" [La Dépêche Kanak, Number 184].

In 1991, the Vice Rectorat prepared a special report on education in New Caledonia. Written in English, the report was destined for an international and probably a South Pacific audience. Discussing the aims of post-Matignon educational reforms in the territory, it notes:

"The reduction of the difficulties and problems due to cultural, social and linguistic environment and their consequence on schooling, the full integration of all pupils in the school system (emphasis in original) where they are accommodated, the realisation of the gap which separates the school world from its environment and the total implication of all school partners which, in many respects, affects its improvement, all these factors show the
needs of a larger and more diversified educational action, more rooted in its environment, and given their place to the needs of adults and of learners who have left the school system and to the needs of opening to the economic world, to the role which the Territory holds or must hold today or tomorrow in its regional environment" (sic) [Vice Rectorat, 1991d: p.6].

10.3.1 Curriculum Content and Citizenship

One aspect of educational reform involved the school curriculum. Previously, as noted in Chapter Eight, the entire content of the curriculum in New Caledonia was determined in mainland France, and the courses available to pupils in the territory were a subset of those offered in French schools. In response to protests that this was inappropriate and alienating for Kanak children, the post-Matignon period has seen efforts being made to adapt the curriculum to local realities. It will be shown, however, that the new notion of citizenship being promoted by these curriculum changes is likely to make the school an even more effective instrument of colonialism.

The reforms of the curriculum have been of two main kinds: moves have been made to extend the teaching of Kanak languages in schools; and new teaching materials have been developed for teaching a range of subjects, such as history and geography, with a local orientation.

10.3.1.1 Kanak Languages in Schools

One such initiative has been an increased emphasis on Kanak languages in schools. Attempts had been made in the 1970s by church educational bodies to introduce Kanak languages in secondary school. In 1972 the Protestant church tried to introduce Ajie into Nédévin Collège in Haouilou but, according to Gasser [1979], they failed because of a lack of trained teachers and interested pupils. Four years later, their Catholic counterpart introduced Ajie into a Nouméa collège. In
1977, as political pressure was mounting, the Vice-Rectorat established a *Commission des Langues Vernaculaires* (BLV) [Rivierre, 1985]. State involvement increased further in 1979 under the Dijoud Plan with training being provided in France by the *Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales*\(^9\) (INALCO) and the creation in New Caledonia of the *Centre Territorial de Recherche et de Documentation Pédagogique*\(^1\) (CTRDP).

In 1981, the Vice-Rector estimated that, by 1985, this work would have culminated in the introduction of Kanak languages in state lycées where they would be taught as baccalauréat subjects [Bruel, 1981]. Such a policy had already been implemented in the neighbouring territory of French Polynesia with the Tahitian language [Rivierre, 1985: p.1715]. However, it was not until 1984 that the prohibition on the teaching of Kanak languages in schools was formally lifted in New Caledonia, through the application of a June 1982 memo from the French Education Minister, Alain Savary [Wahoe et al, 1989: p.51]. And it took until 1992 for the Vice-Rectorat to follow the lead of private secondary schools a few years earlier and introduce two Kanak languages, Drehu and Ajië, into state lycées. These languages have also been approved as "living second language" subjects at the baccalauréat level [ITSEE, 1991: p.40]. Similar delays were also experienced with regard to moves towards introducing Kanak languages in primary schools and teaching French as a second language for non-francophone children.

It should be noted, however, that Kanak people have indicated a range of concerns about these developments. From its origins in the 1970s, many activists felt uncomfortable with what they perceived to be an excessive degree of state control of or at least influence over such a crucial aspect of Kanak culture and identity. These feelings are echoed by current concerns. Some activists are worried about the central role that schools, as opposed to parents, are assuming in the rehabilitation of Kanak languages in the post-Matignon period. And a group of Kanak people who have been working on Kanak languages have identified a number of "inherent problems" in the incorporation of Kanak languages into the curriculum. These include:

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\(^9\) National Institute for Eastern Languages and Civilisations.

\(^1\) Territorial Centre for Pedagogical Research and Documentation.
1. reticence on the part of elders with regard to the written which fossilises the Word: the Word is life;

2. feelings of the usurpation of the prerogatives and the role of the elders, the holders of traditional knowledge;

3. and fear of the devaluing of this knowledge through its integration into the school and responsibility for it being assumed by teachers, who carry Western knowledge but have not mastered all that is to be known in their own culture" [Waheo et al, 1989: p.50].

Even more bluntly, the LKS views the integration of Kanak languages into schools as a means of "bringing the young Kanak to a better understanding of and appreciation of the fable of the crow and the fox and the three little pigs". It argues that the authorities are orienting their efforts towards:

"... how to use the custom and a particular conception of development to ensure a better acceptance of French domination. It is clear that, taken together, the political leaders, top civil servants and church authorities think that the preservation of Kanaks as a human group within the French Republic can only be temporary and that sooner or later it will be integrated into white Caledonian society" [LKS, 1991].

A common theme which underlies these concerns is that the teaching of Kanak languages through the medium of a formal education system remains problematic unless that system genuinely reflects and advances the interests and aspirations of the Kanak community of which it is an essential part. In other words, Kanak people recognise that schooling promotes a notion of citizenship other than their own and other than that of which their languages are an inextricable part. The insertion of particular elements of Kanak culture does not, in itself, alter the fundamental orientation of an otherwise alien education system.
10.3.1.2 "New Caledonian" Text Books in Schools

The production of school text books has long been recognised as means of exerting an influence over a society. Altbach [1982: pp. 479-480] highlights this in relation to the United States and Britain which each pumped millions of books into Third World countries in the 1950s and 60s. In New Caledonia, the production of new text books with a local orientation has been one of the main post-Matignon educational initiatives. The stated aim has been to tailor texts to the specificities of the New Caledonian situation rather than simply importing them from France. The CTRDP is the principal state institution responsible for implementing this policy. However, the Vice-Rectorat has also endorsed school publications from other sources.

One example of this is a school text produced in March 1992 on the history of New Caledonia and France [Société d'Etudes Historique de Nouvelle-Calédonie, 1992]. Aimed at upper-primary and lower secondary school pupils, the forty-two chapter book includes an endorsement from the Vice-Rector of the territory, J M Barre. Hailing the publication as representing a change of perspective, Barre notes:

"The history of France is not seen here from Paris from Bordeaux or from Marseille; it is seen from New Caledonia. Thus, the discoverers do not leave, they arrive" [SEHNC, 1992: p.2].

With regard to the history of New Caledonia, he describes the book as a new tool which enables the teacher to integrate New Caledonian history into what it describes as "broader educational perspectives" and "general history". Today's New Caledonian child, he writes, is the product of an encounter of several traditions, cultures and historical and human currents. "To neglect one of these currents in the action of education would be to impoverish that action".

What the book contains, however, is an entirely sanitised and pro-colonial account of New Caledonian history. The only mention of any form of Kanak resistance to French colonialism is a chapter devoted to the 1878 revolt [pp.88-90]. For the Kanak people, according to this account,
the arrival of sailors and traders had "upturned their way of life through the importing of new objects and marvellous instruments". As for the causes of the revolt itself, evidence of colonial excesses, such as those contained in General Trentinian's report detailed in Chapter Four, are ignored. Rather, the blame is placed on a combination of drought and a misunderstanding arising from the actions of one civil servant.

The illustrations, of which Barre spoke so highly, also reveal the colonial bias of the chapter. They consist of: a small drawing of "a New Caledonian guerrilla at the end of the nineteenth century"; a sketch entitled, "Canaque insurrection. View of the Boizot (early settler victims of the uprising) homestead the day after the massacre"; and a photograph of a group of French soldiers and allied Kanak fighters who suppressed the resistance movement. The caption reads:

"During the rebellion of 1878, some indigenous volunteers and European civilians, with their respective weapons, were adjoined to the armed forces for the pacification" [SEHNC, 1992: p. 88].

The chapter dealing with political developments in the territory from 1951 through to the post-Matignon period does not even mention the word "independence", let alone acknowledge the reassertion of Kanak political demands. Moreover, this chapter contains no reference to New Caledonia's place in the Pacific, despite its title, "New Caledonia, Territory of the Pacific". And wherever the Pacific is depicted in maps (for example, showing the spread of French language or troop movements during World War Two) colonial names that were abandoned more than a decade earlier are still used for Pacific island states such as Kiribati, Tuvalu and New Caledonia's nearest neighbour, the former French/British condominium of Vanuatu.

Despite its claims to focus particularly on those aspects of French history with relevance to New Caledonia and place local history in a wider context, the book contains only passing reference to the independence of other French colonies, accompanied by an emphasis on their continued and beneficial attachment to France. By contrast, French colonial expansion is portrayed in detail and in a very positive light.
Texts such as these, complete with the official endorsement of the territory's highest educational official, are every bit as political as the curriculum being promoted in the EPK. In 1985, EPK critics of the reforms of colonial schooling insisted:

"Of course we no longer learn about 'our ancestors the Gauls', but the ideological content of schooling remains" [EPK, 1985a].

What the production of these new texts reveal, however, is a redefinition of the citizenship functions of education in New Caledonia. The notion of citizenship being promoted is no longer crudely French; it is, in the first instance, New Caledonian. It reflects, however, a conception of being New Caledonian that is consistent with the pro-colonial interpretation of the Matignon Accords, and inconsistent with Kanak nationalist aspirations. By this view, the colonisation of New Caledonia (to the extent that it is acknowledged) is an historical fact, as opposed to a nationalist view of it as an ongoing process. New Caledonia is presented as a multicultural collection of different ethnic communities with equal legitimacy and rights and compatible interests. This contrasts with the nationalist view which postulates a fundamental divide between the settler community (or communities) and the indigenous, colonised Kanak people.

Publications such as this claim to show New Caledonia to itself. What they actually do is present a view of the territory which is comforting to pupils from pro-colonial backgrounds and fundamentally disturbing to the children of Kanaky.

Furthermore, their content and the timing of their introduction have close international parallels. In both the United States in 1965 [see Baker 1977] and Britain in 1981 [see Troyna 1984], rioting involving principally black youth was the catalyst for the introduction of reforms designed to make the curriculum more "multicultural". In New Caledonia, as in these comparable contexts, multicultural curriculum reform is designed to defuse black anger. As McCarthy has argued:

"It is precisely ... in its apparent open-ended inclusivity (while never violating the core
values that pertain to middle class American society) that multicultural education derives its hegemonic appeal. In so doing, it redirects issues of social conflict to the more innocuous area of cultural differences" [McCarthy, 1990: p.47].

10.3.2 Educational Achievement and Allocation

Given the above discussion of the development and citizenship functions of post-Matignon education as well as the promised improvements that individual Kanak people could expect in the new environment, the allocation function of education was brought into sharp relief. The legitimacy of the education system as well as, by extension, that of the entire social order, relied heavily on the capacity of schools to allocate rewards and qualifications in a fair manner. If equality of educational opportunity for Kanak pupils was not achieved, then it needed to at least appear to be achieved, or to be well on the way towards being achieved.

Equality of opportunity was the declared objective for New Caledonia's education system. And the Vice-Rectorat appeared supremely confident that it could be and was being achieved. From the outset, it stressed that the fulfilment of this objective did not involve a qualitative change in the way it ran secondary education in New Caledonia. Rather, it saw the task as continuing and supplementing the good work in which it was already engaged. Despite the statistical picture outlined in Chapter Seven, the Vice-Rector declared in 1981 that its efforts since 1965 had produced "spectacular results", that despite the "slight disparity" in achievement rates between various ethnic groups, it gave an assurance that "this gap is in the process of narrowing" and that what was needed was a continuation of the existing educational strategy [Brue, 1981]. The declaration of the Vice-Rectorat in February 1989 presents a very similar account:

"The flow of pupils and the school results (orientation at the end of third grade, brevet des collèges pass rates, numbers in the lycées, baccalauréat statistics) show ... that secondary education has already improved its results in a significant way. It is a matter therefore of accentuating and generalising this progress, notably in the areas where it has been the less
pronounced, and implementing a strategy capable of bringing the greatest possible number of pupils through to the 'terminal' class or to the point of acquiring real training" [Vice Rectorat, 1989b: p.29].

Within this approach, it undertook a number of initiatives. These have included: the expansion and improvement of facilities through constructing new schools and upgrading existing ones; the use of the medium of television through the opening of Télévision Educative de Nouvelle-Calédonie (TVENC); the improvement of the territory's teaching workforce through a December 1988 ruling that even relieving teachers would be required to have a baccalauréat, as well as the opening of new Centres de Développement Pédagogiques (CDP) in Touho and Mou to provide inservice teacher training; the establishment of Secteurs de Développement Educatif Concerté (SDEC), including the creation of six new Zones d'Éducation Prioritaires (ZEP), described in Chapter Eight, in Canala, Lifou and Rivière Salée in 1989 and Houailou, Bouilari and Maré as well as a special plan Z for the politically-troublesome island of Ouvéa; an increase in the provision of preschool education; the extension of Innovation, Soutien, Aide au Travail Scolaire (Plan ISAT) to include include 64 schools by 1992; a renewed emphasis on the ALEPs, including granting them official status (they had originally been constituted as experimental institutions), evaluating their objectives and developing training programmes for their teaching staff; and the establishment of a programme of continuing adult education and training.

To manage these and other programmes, existing bodies such as the CTRDP have been strengthened and a host of new ones have been established including the Commission d'Observation et de Suivi des Actions Pédagogique (COSAP), a Centre de Conseil d'Action Pédagogique - Recherche Action en Formation d'Adultes (CCAPRA), and within the Vice-Rectorat itself, a Mission d'Action Culturelle en Milieu Scolaire, a Mission d'Enseignement du

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101 *la classe terminale* is the highest class in a lycée in which the baccalauréat is sat.
102 Educational Television of New Caledonia, which was opened in April 1990 under its original name of Télévision Scolaire de Nouvelle-Calédonie (TSNC).
103 Pedagogical Development Centres
104 Sectors for Concerted Educational Development
105 Innovation, Support, Assistance with School Work.
106 Commission for the Observation and Following of Pedagogical Actions.
107 Mission for Cultural Action within Schooling.
It is beyond the scope of this study to assess the merits of each of the above programmes. And it is not possible to isolate and quantify the extent to which they have met their respective objectives or the overall aims of educational reform within the framework of the Matignon Accords. What follows is an analysis of one of the new initiatives plus an assessment of the claimed successes of the overall approach.

10.3.2.1 Programme d'Enrichissement Instrumental

One of the main new initiatives, which it is instructive to examine in closer detail is a strategy for combating educational failure known as the *Programme d'Enrichissement Instrumental* (PEI). This programme takes the form of a series of fifteen exercises or "instruments" which require two to three hundred hours to complete, that is, two years if three or four sessions are conducted per week. The PEI has six stated aims:

1. to correct deficient intellectual functions;
2. to cause the acquisition of indispensable concepts and relations (left/right high/low before/after relations) which are the prerequisites to mental operations;
3. to develop personal motivation by prolonging in the living milieu acquisitions made through this programme;
4. to develop processes of internalised reflection regarding the relations between an action and its results, data to collect and strategies to implement;
5. to develop the motivation to succeed, to work for enjoyment and to discover that success is possible;
6. to develop autonomy of behaviour and move the pupil from an attitude of passivity to one that is more active and creative, starting from its own successes" [Vice-Rectorat, 1989b: p.21].

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108 Mission for French Teaching
109 Mission for Regional Languages and Cultures.
110 Programme of Instrumental Enrichment.
The Vice-Rectorat has made a substantial investment in this programme. In 1989, the PEI was introduced into every collège in the territory, with one teacher from most institutions and two from the larger ones being given specialist training in how to implement it [Vice-Rectorat, 1989a]. From 1989 to 1992, two more groups of teachers including those from the private schools were given the training, which was provided through the University of Paris V. In 1992, steps were taken to extend the programme to cover the territory's lycées [Vice Rectorat, 1992c: pp.28-9]. The Vice-Rectorat was so impressed with the programme that it sent one European teacher from New Caledonia to a training workshop in Jerusalem with the founder of the programme, and President of the Conseil Scientifique du Centre International d'Etude, Professor Reuven Feuerstein [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 25 February 1992: p.4]. On his return he was given a permanent position in Nouméa as the territorial trainer of PEI practitioners

The PEI, like so many specialised learning programmes that have emerged in recent decades, appeals to cultural deprivation theory as the explanation of educational underachievement. The Vice-Rectorat explicitly and uncritically accepts this view. The claim is:

"Many pupils, considered deficient or slow in light of what they produce, are actually unable to perform the tasks they are set because of a lack of 'cognitive modifiability', which is itself the result of a phenomenon of cultural deprivation. This situation is reversible and cognitive modifiability can be developed through mediated learning which is the aim of the PEI" [Vice Rectorat, 1992b: p.21].

This explanation of educational underachievement and its solutions mirrors in several ways the broader model of development being pursued under the Matignon Accords: it is based directly on cultural deprivation theory which, like the development model being pursued, has been found wanting in comparable contexts over many years; it has been developed and is being applied with little or no involvement on the part of Kanak people; it proposes a technocratic solution to a complex socio-political problem; and it reinforces the position of France and French institutions in the role of expert and provider.
In a more specifically educational context, it is susceptible to the many criticisms to which cultural deprivation theory has been subjected [see, for example, Rattansi, 1992]: its elitist view of desirable cultural traits; its denigration of the cultural personality of dominated groups; and its blame-the-victim approach to educational underachievement. In effect, the PEI treats educational underachievers as though they are a collection of individual patients who need to have their thought patterns rewired and their attitudes reprogrammed.

Do Kanak parents want their children to be subjected to programmes which are specifically designed to undermine or remove thoughts, values or attitudes which are an integral product of the children’s upbringing within Kanak culture, but which are deemed to be educationally undesirable? The thrust of Kanak objections to colonial education over the last twenty years would indicate that they do not, and there is no evidence of their having been consulted in any meaningful way by the Vice-Rectorat with regard to the introduction of the PEI. No doubt, however, the policy is proceeding on the basis of passing over the collective hope sof Kanak parents for the collective good of the Kanak people, and reinforcing the individual desires of individual Kanak parents for their own children to achieve.

In this regard, however, there is no evidence of the PEI being adapted to meet particular Kanak needs. Despite France’s commitments in the Matignon Accords to addressing the problem of Kanak underachievement, public declarations from the Vice-Rectorat describe the PEI’s objectives in general and not Kanak-specific terms. It is difficult to see, therefore, how this particular programme can be defined as part of France’s commitments to "ethnic rebalancing" in education. Statistics released concerning assistance given by the newly created CCAPRA (outlined above) to baccalauréat students reveal that of the twenty-two candidates to pass the exam (out of an original pool of forty-six), less than half were either Kanak or Wallisian [Vice-Rectorat, 1992c: p.18].

The extent to which the Vice-Rectorat is emphasising the programme indicates that their fundamental assumptions about the causes of Kanak underachievement, especially in regard to cultural deprivation theory, have progressed little from those espoused by Senes in the 1970s.
Whatever else it may do, the technocratic approach of the PEI has been introduced and is being applied in such a way as to reinforce France's ability to project itself as the expert in overcoming differences in educational achievement.

10.3.2.2 Measurements of Success

Without revisiting all the data on educational achievement levels that has been outlined and analysed in Chapter Seven, it is worth recalling that there is no evidence of a significant closing of the gap between Kanak and European educational performance in New Caledonia. Only one of the commonly used points of measurement, entry to Sixth Grade, showed any significant tendency for Kanak and European achievement to converge and this was a function of the European rate approximating one hundred per cent (and thus being unable to continue to improve) and a political decision to, in effect, abandon this particular examination as a selection mechanism.

However, the Vice-Rectorat continues to maintain, as it has since 1981 [see Bruel], that:

"These different data, and in particular the favourable evolution of the increasing rates clearly confirm the improvement as a whole of the school system in New Caledonia and even attest a true speeding-up of this progress" (sic) [Vice-Rectorat, 1991d: p.3].

It uses very questionable methods of selecting and presenting data to support its claim to be successfully meeting the aims of "contributing as much as it can and should to the construction of the country's future" by orienting itself "towards the struggle against educational exclusion and inequality and for success at school and by school" [Vice-Rectorat, 1992d: p.9]. By presenting much of its data by province or by educational establishment, it is only possible to approximate the relevant Kanak statistics. No ethnic breakdown is given of the rates of pupils repeating classes [Vice-Rectorat, 1992c: p.21]. Furthermore, although there is a clear overall improvement in these rates, there is no discussion of the extent to which they are affected by pupils being channelled out of collèges and into the growing number of vocational institutions where they study for less
prestigious qualifications.

There is also much made of the increase in numbers of pupils in the first cycle (sixth to third grades) of secondary school. Special attention is drawn to the particularly high rates in the Kanak-dominated Northern and Islands Provinces [Vice-Rectorat, 1992c: p.16]. However, these figures reflect little more than the effective removal of the secondary school entrance examination as a selection mechanism, as noted in Chapter Seven.

When it comes to analysis of the crucial baccalauréat statistics, the Vice-Rectorat's publication subtitled "Evolution and Rebalancing: Elements of Evaluation" [Vice-Rectorat, 1992c] makes a total of thirteen comments. Of these, eleven contain no mention of disparities between provinces or ethnic groups. The one commentary that does focus on Kanak baccalauréat results ignores the substantial drop in the Kanak pass rate from 1990 to 1991 (41.4 per cent to 37.5 per cent) and highlights the fact that "around one hundred" Kanak pupils passed the exam each year (96 in 1990 and 93 in 1991). Furthermore, it adds a false claim that of these Kanak students to have passed the baccalauréat, "a proportion greater than ever" gained the prestigious BESD [Vice-Rectorat, 1992c: p.18]. In fact, as shown in Chapter Seven, the proportion of Kanak BESDs among the total baccalauréats to be awarded to Kanak students had fallen steadily: from 50.0 per cent in 1989 to 46.5 per cent in 1990 to 34.4 per cent in 1991.

In order to place the Kanak baccalauréat figures in the most favourable light, the Vice-Rectorat chose not to compare them with the corresponding European statistics. Rather, they were compared with the appalling figures of the past: 19 Kanak passes in 1979, 30 in 1981, 62 in 1984 and 71 in 1988. It also fails to mention drops in the numbers of Kanak pupils passing the baccalauréat in 1986 (from 80 down to 58) and 1988 (from 76 down to 71). When these figures were presented for overseas consumption in an English-language publication, however, statistical manipulation became misrepresentation. Taken directly from the publication concerned [Vice-Rectorat, 1991d: p.7], Figure Twenty portrays an uninterrupted upward progression by using a mix of two- three- and four-year intervals and omitting years for which the data did not correspond with the desired pattern.
Although it acknowledges the existence of some residual disequilibrium, the Vice-Rectorat is generally satisfied with the results:

"The current figures confirm the existence of a sufficient (my emphasis) number of lauréats\footnote{holders of a baccalauréat} in all ethnic groups - and notably Melanesian lauréats - to advance effectively to all the forms of higher education - which is important - in order to constitute the cadres of tomorrow as well as the teaching corps, and above all else to join the ranks of teachers in the Provinces where there is a lower proportion of qualified teachers" [Vice-Rectorat, 1992c: p.18].

The education system in New Caledonia is still based on selection. As documented in Chapter Seven, there is no evidence of any significant trend towards the educational achievement gap closing between Kanak and European pupils. Wherever the gap appears to close to any marked degree, the selection point is simply moved to a higher level. Whatever overall increases in
standards may be involved, this process of qualification inflation places ever-increasing demands on Kanak students and retains them for longer periods within the education system.

In 1984, two high-ranking officials with responsibility for education in French overseas domains, described the brevet in New Caledonia as "a diploma held in high esteem by the islanders and regarded as an appropriate standard for most children to reach" [Laurens and Vareille, 1984: p.118]. Today, the brevet has lost much of its value as a school-leaving qualification. Growing numbers of private and public institutions in the territory, including the Vice-Rectorat itself, will accept nothing less than a baccalauréat for prospective employees. And with this trend, the issue of tertiary education has begun to come into sharper focus.

10.3.3 The Development Function of Education and Training: The Case of Operation 400 Cadres

Of the select group of Kanak students who succeed in obtaining their baccalauréat, an even smaller group continue to pursue tertiary studies. Of this successful minority Kanak students who enter university in France, between seventy and seventy-five per cent drop out before completing their course of study. Even at the newly opened Université Française du Pacifique (UFP) in Nouméa, only ten out of seventy-four enrolled Kanak students in the institution's first three years (1987-90) obtained a qualification [Zappi, 1992]. The head of mission at the DOM-TOM Ministry, Christian Dubreuil, has gone as far as declaring:

"The UFP remains a white university where segregation is still strong" [Le Monde de l'Education, April 1992: p.22].

Thus, despite the belief by the Vice-Rectorat in New Caledonia that "educational development must be an integrated aspect of the overall development of the territory" [Vice Rectorat, 1991a: p.10], it has been severely lacking in delivering advanced qualifications and training to Kanak students. In an attempt to address this, a key educational measure introduced by the Matignon Accords was "Operation 400 Cadres". The objectives of the programme, which aimed to train
forty Kanak people each year for ten years for positions of middle and senior management, was spelled out in a letter from the DOM-TOM Ministry to the French High Commissioner in Nouméa:

"The aim of this programme, which concerns particularly Kanak cadres, is the rebalancing of the exercise of responsibilities in the territory. It is a matter, therefore, of training cadres who will be able, after training, to be employed in positions of responsibility in the economic, social and cultural life as well as the administrative life of the territory, and to contribute to its influence in the geographic zone of the Pacific."

The programme would involve people aged from twenty-two and forty, who would pursue defined courses of advanced study and training for between one and five years. Applications would be considered by the 400 Cadres Commission, a group of fifteen, including local government officials and representatives of unions, employer groups and educational bodies [Objectif Cadres, Number 6 January 1992: p.2]. This commission would select which applicants to interview (of the 231 applicants in 1990, 104 or forty-five per cent were interviewed for forty positions) and, on the basis of these interviews as well as discussions with employers and consideration of available courses, forward a recommendation to the Ministry in Paris where the ultimate selection is made [Objectif Cadres, Number 2 February 1990: pp.1,4].

When the trainees arrive at their destination, they are provided with a welcome, accommodation, transport, subscriptions to relevant journals and other incidentals, and a special tutor is made available to them. They also receive a generous allowance. As one recipient, Philippe Yiwiwéné, remarked:

"Without financial problems, with a well-defined study objective and the guarantee of a worthwhile job, the verdict is pretty positive" [Le Monde de l'Education, April 1992: p.22].

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112 Rocard had originally referred to "four hundred Melanesian cadres", however this was later amended to be mainly Melanesian on the grounds of wishing to avoid "encouraging racial discrimination" [Reveil Kanak. Number 2 November 1989: p.4].
By the end of 1992, 161 people had received or been selected to receive training [Le Monde, 4 February 1993]. Of these, all except one Westpac Banking Corporation employee who was attending an internal Westpac course in Australia, had attended French institutions. Of the first 131 trainees, 75 per cent were Kanak and 82 per cent men [Mission Formation]. Of the 85 trainees to return to New Caledonia by the end of 1992, 61 (or 72 per cent) had passed their prescribed courses. In the eight editions to December 1992 of Objectif Cadres, which describes itself as the "liaison newsletter of the '400 Cadres' Programme", there is no ethnic breakdown of pass rates. An FLNKS discussion paper of the programme reports that of the first 75 Kanak trainees, 31 were still pursuing their studies, 24 had successfully completed them and returned to the territory and 20 had failed [FLNKS unpublished].

Operation 400 Cadres has attracted criticism of two types from independence activists. Some have questioned the entire foundation of the operation. Others point to its limitations; the fact that relatively short-term training courses will not increase the number of Kanak doctors113 for which seven to eight years tertiary education is needed [Wabete interview], or the fact that the entry criteria are pitched too high for an under-qualified Kanak population.

One undeniable effect of Operation 400 Cadres is that it will accentuate inequalities among Kanak people. This can be clearly seen in the selection criteria. Apart from a few exceptions, trainees are drawn from the small group of Kanak who have already succeeded in the French education system by obtaining their baccalauréat. What is more, another selection criterion is that trainees must already be employed and be assured to return to that or another specified position on their return. The combination of these two criteria ensures that any individual benefits from the programme will accrue to only a very small group of Kanak people who are already relatively privileged. Furthermore, as it is designed to increase the skills and/or qualifications of those currently employed, the programme will not significantly increase the number of Kanak people in high positions.

The restrictive criteria for the programme also impose severe limitations on the programme's own

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113 The single qualified Kanak doctor is practising in France.
objectives by making it very difficult to find sufficient numbers of Kanak people who qualify for selection. The 1989 census revealed a total of only 664 Kanak holders of the baccalauréat. The 1989 census revealed a total of only 664 Kanak holders of the baccalauréat, fully six per cent of whom came from Lifou (278) or Maré (117) [Arréghini and Waniez, 1993: p.89]. By extending the criteria to include others, for example those who had got to the point of sitting the baccalauréat, this figure would increase significantly - to around 1,400, less those who had sat the exam more than once. It would also have the potential to encourage a fairer geographic spread of trainees.

Recruitment difficulties led at the end of 1992 to the extension of the selection criteria to include a limited number of trainees under the age of 22 who had fulfilled a number of strict educational requirements [Objectif Cadres, Number 7]. However, at a meeting of the committee established to oversee the application of the Matignon Accords, the FLNKS President, Paul Neaouytine, expressed concern that Operation 400 Cadres was getting bogged down because of a lack of candidates and called for more goodwill to be shown through a further relaxation of the selection criteria to "take account of the level of general training of the Kanak élite" [Kanak, Number 151, November 1992: p.14].

Models of "development" which focus on the training of élites are, however, fraught with difficulties. The assumption upon which such strategies are based is that the specialised training will benefit not only the individuals who receive it, but also the wider community. Already, those who have participated in Operation 400 Cadres have been accused of failing to apply their training back in the community. "Those who return," declared Roger Pouityela, "have no idea about their role and are not participating in any action for development" [Le Monde de l'Education, April 1992: p.22].

Whereas in post-independence contexts the wider community to benefit from the training would be nationally defined, in New Caledonia the expectation is that the interests of the Kanak people in general will be advanced by the creation of a better trained Kanak élite. As noted in Chapters Eight and Nine, however, conflicts of interest between Kanak élites and the broader Kanak populations can easily emerge. Indeed, as noted in Chapter Two, the widespread phenomenon of
neocolonialism is predicated on precisely such a conflict among colonised peoples. The French Government and settler business interests are enthusiastic about the need for a Kanak élite [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 14 September 1992: p.2]. Lafleur has stressed the importance of creating "a Melanesian élite which is able to understand what must and must not be done and thereby transmit this message to others" [Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, 28 September 1992: p.3]. As with the reform of the school curriculum, Operation 400 Cadres appears to have been designed to appease Kanak people who have long criticised the lack of high level skills that have been made available to them by the selective French education system. In this regard, Kanak critics who have branded the programme as a "charm operation by French neo-colonialism" [Structure Nationale des EPK] are quite correct.

More seriously, however, is the danger of it being used as a cooption mechanism. Those who are given specialist training will end up with an even greater interest in preserving the status quo. Conscious of the effect of this in other colonial contexts, France and its pro-colonial allies could justifiably expect that some if not most of the new Kanak élites will simply join the ranks of the existing élite. Their class interests, it is hoped, would override their national or ethnic interests and they would either abandon or significantly alter whatever commitment they might have had to radical structural change. This outcome is even more likely when the cooption exercise is accompanied by a political demobilisation, such as that which has been generated by the Matignon Accords in New Caledonia.

Kanak activists are left facing a dilemma. Almost without exception, they recognise that Kanak people are in need of developing their collective base of skills and knowledge. However, fast-track approaches to skills shortages run the grave risk, as outlined above, of being counter-productive to what activists perceive to be the interests of Kanak society overall.

Some see a possible resolution in a greater emphasis on what this thesis terms "citizenship" functions of education; that is, focusing on levels of involvement in and commitment to struggles for the broader collective good. Within the EPK, for example, in addition to assessments of competence, explicitly political criteria were applied in choosing who would undertake specialised
training overseas [D. Wéa interview]. Similarly, Moenteapo has argued that technical training is rendered meaningless or even counter-productive unless it is organised in the context of clear, collectively defined social ends:

"Why do we train people? If we create engineers who will go and explode bombs in Moruroa, or we create doctors who are compromised with the pharmaceutical companies... If we create people who are incapable of saying that this system of values on which the current world is based is not good, and who submit themselves to every decision because the rules say this or that... These are cadres for whom, for what class interests, for what society, for what world?" [Interview with Gabriel Moenteapo]

Ultimately, however, no matter how rigorously they are applied to programmes like Operation 400 Cadres, citizenship considerations cannot be expected to provide a substantial enough counterweight to the impact of the magnification of class differences.

10.4 Conclusion

The Matignon Accords were entered into by elements within the independence movement who were, in a fundamental sense, acting under duress. In an equally fundamental sense, the Accords represent not only a concession of the Kanak independence movement's inability to force France to grant independence, but also a denial of the capacity of Kanak people to function and develop independently of France. As such, the Accords are a classic example of Blaut's concept of independence, if it is finally conceded, being presented, not as a fruit of struggle, but as a graduation ceremony [Blaut 1987: p.22]. To continue the metaphor, it could be said that the political, economic and social courses of study which must precede this graduation have been designed to ensure the ongoing allegiance of the graduate.

The model of development embodied in the Accords is having a marked impact on colonial relations to the detriment of the Kanak independence movement. Kanak people are becoming
increasingly integrated into and dependent on colonial structures and institutions. The independence movement is wracked by division. And, more basically than differences of political opinion, unprecedented levels of class division among Kanak people are appearing and, in some sectors, being actively fostered.

Within these divisions and uncertainties colonial education has been reinforced. Many new policies and programmes that have been introduced or strengthened have not, by the Vice-Rectorat's own admission, represented any significant change in orientation. For decades, they have aimed to integrate Kanak people into colonial society. In the context of a political strategy which endorses this emphasis, the process can be engaged more effectively and can be legitimated by reference to its adhesion to an agreed programme of socio-economic development and political consensus.

A prime rationale for those within the independence movement who entered into the Accords was that an unfavourable balance of power left them little option. However, one of the consequences of this strategy has been to generate an even less favourable balance of power. French hegemony in New Caledonia has been enhanced through this. Through the Matignon Accords, the Kanak independence movement has become locked into a process from which it will be very difficult to extricate itself.
Chapter Eleven

Conclusion

11.1 French Colonial Education and Kanak Resistance

This task of this thesis has been to examine the politics of colonial education in New Caledonia; to analyse, in other words, the role that education has played and is playing in the development of colonial relations in New Caledonia. The thesis has shown that the importance of education in shaping these relations has varied dramatically. At times, Kanak education has been an issue of only marginal significance. In other periods, it has been a crucial factor in colonial relations. Equally, there has been wide variation in the degree of agreement that has existed between France and the Kanak people on the issue of Kanak education. Sometimes, there has been a virtual consensus. At other stages, opinion has been polarised between apparently irreconcilable views. And, most significantly, within the Kanak independence movement itself the issue of education has at times been a unifying factor and at other times a divisive one.

Without a clear understanding of these historical patterns, it is not possible to make an accurate assessment of the current situation and future prospects for Kanak education. In order to analyse this history as this study sought to do, a theoretical model was needed which would be capable of explaining the dynamics of colonialism and the particular functions of education within this context. Since no existing model had the explanatory power to do this, a new theoretical framework had to be constructed.

Informed by a number of different theoretical traditions, the framework that was developed for this thesis comprised two separate but related models. The first focused on the nature of colonial
relations and the struggle between competing colonial and anti-colonial interests. The second addressed the specifically educational dimensions of this conflict. This framework has made it possible to clarify the imperatives and the possibilities that confronted the protagonists at each phase of New Caledonia's colonial history. It has also permitted an analysis of the ways in which this conflict has been played out in the educational arena.

One of the main tensions within the Kanak independence movement, which emerged from the historical struggle against colonial education and which has dominated recent debates, is the question of whether to wage the struggle within the existing colonial institutions or to adopt a more separatist strategy and abandon those institutions in order to establish an alternative Kanak-defined system. Although it has not been expressed in these terms, this tension has some parallel with the debate between the relative merits of reproduction and resistance theories of education. Resistance theorists accuse reproductionists of being too deterministic by not allowing for the transforming power of human agency and reproduction theorists claim that much of what is labelled as resistance does not actually challenge the reproductive power of the education system to any significant degree.

The radical critiques of French colonial education that were developed in the 1970s were essentially reproductionist. They argued that the high rates of educational failure amongst Kanak people was not just an unfortunate phenomenon that could be remedied by the right reforms. Rather, they viewed it as the predictable outcome of an education system that was a vital institution in the reproduction of colonial relations including an ethnic division of labour in New Caledonian society.

This analysis of education became an important dimension of the overall critique of French colonialism and proved an important mechanism for politicising and mobilising the Kanak nationalist movement. A major difficulty arose, however, when it came to the issue of devising strategies for resisting colonial education.

Because of their adherence to reproduction theory, it is not surprising that activists soon began to
question the worth of waging struggles to demand reforms of the existing system. Some years
before resistance theory had been articulated in academic circles, Kanak activists were becoming
frustrated that their critique of colonial education was not providing them with any guide to action.
They could see that there was little point in trying to reform an essentially unreformable education
system. Yet, other than that, their only hope lay in achieving the even more difficult task of
overturning the entire colonial order.

When these kinds of concerns eventually led to the creation of the EPK, a heated debate developed
between those who supported and those who opposed the initiative. Each group which analysed
the colonial education system did so according to reproduction theory. And each group criticised
the other by using the argument that reproduction theory makes against resistance theory. The
anti-EPK group accused its opponents of accommodating the colonial education system by
withdrawing from it instead of engaging in resistance struggles against it. The EPK supporters
accused their critics of being unrealistic in expecting that the colonial education system could ever
be reformed to the point of being anything other than an instrument of colonial domination.

This study has revealed two clear conclusions about Kanak educational resistance. The first is that
successful campaigns of have been waged from within and from outside of the colonial institutions.
Using the former strategy, Kanak and pro-Kanak students, parents and teachers provoked an
unprecedented crisis in the colonial education system from the 1970s through to the mid-1980s.
They exposed the system's failure to advance the interests of Kanak people and forced the issue of
Kanak education to become the central preoccupation of the territory's educational authorities.
Using the latter approach, the EPK also caused the colonial authorities major concerns - to such an
extent that they went to great lengths to undermine it, even to the point of warning other
governments against allowing any support for it.

The other conclusion, which tends to lend weight to reproduction theory, is that strategies of
educational resistance such as those outlined above have only been able to succeed to the extent
that they have been part of a broader political struggle. When the independence movement has
been able through struggle to dominate the political agenda, it has also been able to dictate the
terms of the debate over Kanak education. Correspondingly, however, France's ability to regain
the political initiative through the Matignon Accords has also allowed it to reassert itself in the area
of educational reform.

Indeed, since the Matignon Accords there has been a powerful congruity between France's
political, economic and educational programmes. At each level, France has been able to make an
unequal contest of its conflict with the Kanak independence movement. The reassertion of its
coercive power, as exemplified by the Ouvéa massacre, enabled it to place strict limits on the
political options available to the independence movement. In the economic area, France's position
is being strengthened by the perceived need among some sections of the independence movement
to operate in accordance with the relentless logic of capitalist market forces. The difficulty for
those within the independence movement who accept this logic is that unless strategies for
economic development and rebalancing are consciously designed to respond to more socially
defined criteria, they are likely to reinforce dependence on France and generate unprecedented
levels of inequality among Kanak people.

Approaches to the issue of Kanak education in the post-Matignon period have been heavily
influenced by these political and economic strictures. In fact, they complement each other as part
of the same basic orientation inasmuch as they share the assumption that Kanak society is in a
process of integrating itself into a French-dominated New Caledonian society. Just as it did with
its military and economic power, France has been able to reassert its authority in the educational
area by exerting its technical power. Once it had conceded that its military and economic
weakness imposed particular limits upon it, the Kanak independence movement had little choice
but to also accept the educational corollary of this. In so doing, the movement has left itself with
virtually no grounds, let alone actual power, to oppose or even influence in any substantive way the
wave of educational and training programmes directed towards Kanak people that are being
introduced by the French authorities.

The decision by some elements within the independence movement to engage in the process
established through the Matignon Accords proved highly divisive. That division has since
deepened; from a disagreement over assessments of the probable outcome of such a strategy, to one which is rooted in the material conflicts of interest that the strategy is generating. These divisions can only worsen as Kanak society becomes increasingly subjected to the logic of market forces. The remarkably homogenous class composition of Kanak society, which has provided a powerful unifying base for the independence movement, is being targeted by this process. And this is being facilitated by educational initiatives whose aims include the creation of a Kanak élite, and the more effective integration of Kanak people into colonial society.

Viewed in a global context, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and a corresponding strengthening of international imperialism, the Kanak independence movement has been subjected to similar constellations of pressures that have recently forced major concessions out of much stronger liberation movements in Palestine and South Africa, with Northern Ireland likely to follow soon. This does not bode well for the prospects of Kanak socialist independence.

Interestingly, to the extent that there remains any hope for achieving this goal, it is likely to come from the growing ranks of disaffected Kanak youth who count among their number most of the former pupils and animateurs who were formed in the brief life of the EPK.

11.2 Future Research

This thesis opens the way for two main kinds of future research: historical and comparative. The first of these would involve focusing on a particular moment or subject in the historical analysis. The EPK is one aspect that lends itself to future research. This study examined the many different forms of pressure which forced the closure of so many EPK and the failure of the network to retain its national coherence. This could be complemented by a detailed study of one of the remaining EPK with the aim of determining what particular features have enabled it to survive; whether these are related to the nature of the particular local community, the organisation or methods used in the school, the influence of key individuals or other factors.
Further analysis could also be made of the many post-Matignon educational reforms. This study analysed them according to their stated aims. However, it would be highly instructive to build on this critique and assess them after a few years on the basis of how they have been implemented and what their actual impact has been on Kanak education and wider colonial relations.

The other type of future research which could build upon this study would be to apply it to a comparison with other colonial contexts. That is, the broad trends identified within New Caledonia with regard to education and the development of colonialism could be set against those of another country.

Maori education in New Zealand would provide an instructive subject for such a comparison. It would be particularly interesting to compare the EPK experience with the growth of the Maori educational initiatives of kohanga reo and kura kaupapa Maori. While there are clear parallels between them, there are also important differences: the reaction of the state; the condition of the respective indigenous cultures particularly in relation to language; and the relationship between the educational initiatives and the broader nationalist struggle. Any or all of these could provide a focus for future research.
Appendices

Appendix One

Letter to the French Government

From the native soldiers and sailors of the Pacific Battalion, volunteers of the Free French Forces, November 1945.

The native soldiers and sailors of New Caledonia and Dependencies, all volunteers to come to the aid of France and liberate her from oppression, would like to take advantage of their stay in Paris to acquaint Your Excellency with their hopes and aspirations with regard to the improvement of their social, economic, cultural and political condition and the future of their ethnic community in the context of a reformed statute for the colony.

The Caledonian and Loyalty Island soldiers, combatants of Bir-Hakeim, Tunisia, Italy and Alsace, the Caledonian and Loyalty Island sailors of the landings in Midi, Greece and the convoys of Africa and Russia, ask for nothing for themselves but they think they have an important duty to fulfil and they believe that the sacrifice of a great number of them and the four-year voluntary combat that they conducted under General de Gaulle, authorises and qualifies them to be the spokespeople and the interpreters of all their native brothers from New Caledonia and Dependencies, whose voice until now has never been able to make itself heard by the Government of France.

They consider that their acts have proved to France, in an unquestionable way, the loyalty and love of the native population of New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands and that, having thereby made up for the mistakes committed by their ancestors, they deserve to be considered as true sons of France, and to have gained the right to the concern and attention of her government.

Members of the resisting French empire and proud to have participated actively in the liberation of
the mother-country for which a large number fell without ever having seen and without having the joy of touching her soil, native New Caledonians and Loyalty Islanders hope that they in turn will be liberated from an outdated and, too often, oppressive and unjust regime that tends to keep them in a morally, intellectually and economically inferior condition.

This is why the soldiers and sailors of New Caledonia and Dependencies would like, as spokespeople of their brothers, to draw the attention of Your Excellency and the French Government to the principal aspects of their past and present conditions and very respectfully present their hopes and desires to achieve a material improvement and to have their social and administrative status reformed with the aim of conserving, within the context of the ideals of France's colonising mission, the old native society to which they belong and outside which they could only be uprooted in their own land.

In the tremendous hope that you will be able to give these hopes and desires your most generous attention, the volunteer soldiers and sailors of New Caledonia and Dependencies request that you advise the Government of France and its leader, General de Gaulle, of their unfailing attachment, of their loyalty and of their pride in being French.
Appendix Two

Black View of the White Problem

An article by Nidoish Naisseline from *Le Canaque, Homme Libre*. Number 1, February 1969

Last summer *La Voix du Cagou* accused a small group of leftist students of practising
demagoguery over indigenous students and trying to beguile them. For its part, *Le Drapeau* was
ironic about the alleged role of the spokesman imposed on certain indigenous politicians by the
Caledonian Union.

These two examples taken from two important newspapers in Nouméa allow us to analyse the
attitude that the European community has towards the Canaque and the consequences of it for the
latter, and to explain the meaning of our struggle.

Indigenous politicians and students make public speeches and write denouncing the abasement of a
people ... Whites cannot believe their eyes. "Impossible! They have been pushed into criticising us.
They are far too stupid to hold such views!" one hears from upper Caledonian circles.

Isolated from changes in the evolution of ideas which Western nations have known from the
beginning of this century, the European community remains obstinately attached to a Darwinian
view of inter-racial relations typical of civilised people of the nineteenth century. They attribute to
the indigenous people such qualities as great footballers, fantastic dancers, marvellous war chanters
— but they do not recognise in them the ability to think, to love, to choose between right and
wrong. If man becomes truly man from the time he thinks, then according to certain things one
hears in Nouméa, the indigenous people would be at the boundary between animal and human.

The white community denigrates coloured people wherever it encounters them. It ridicules parents
References

Books and Articles


In New Caledonia two different groups coexist. To deny this difference would be dishonest and out of touch with reality. To deny the differences about aspects of the human situation risks creating some dramatic reversals, the day when those differences end up imposing themselves.

Dialogue between the two ethnic groups requires mutual recognition. But when we consider the wide circulation in the heart of the Caledonian community, of this newspaper which, on the subject of reserves, insisted firmly on the opposition between French justice and Kanak injustice, French wisdom and Kanak obscurantism, we have every right not to believe in the possibility of a true dialogue.

Those who in the name of the whole person have decided to struggle for the humanisation of New Caledonia must, above all else, free the white and the native from the mythical prison in which they are locked in order to allow the establishment of a true dialogue.

Education will certainly remain the most effective method for the formation and liberation of peoples, because it is directed at children, and because it reaches the great masses, to which can be added the formation of adults, always understanding this major concern: how to ensure that people judge themselves objectively, as they are, and no longer through images imposed by fear and terror.

A new struggle has been born, that of the liberation of the indigenous people: to give them their opportunity, to see them finally restored in all their dignity and, along with all Caledonians, responsible for the happiness of everyone.
believing everything the white man tells him, and he becomes compliant in his own oppression.

And so, this Caledonian society, which well-wishers believe to be peaceful, is in fact permeated with violence — violence against the dominated, violence against the disinherit ed.

To those of us who have decided to restore the Melanesian personality, two ways are open: dialogue or "revolt". Just as in bacteriology the scientist combats the conditions which feed the microbe colonies, so we must combat the society which favours the exploitation of human labour and racism.

Little by little, with the advance of technology, the gap between the affluent and the deprived speeds up. That is true not only at the level of the economy but also in the cultural sphere, from the attainment of responsibility and finally in the blossoming of the person.

We choose to struggle with those who have not had a chance in life because of their race, their birth, and the economic and social conditions of their environment.

The natives are those who have not made the choice. They have to put up with being subjected to the whims of the great important people of the economy and the political system who, with a stroke of the pen, can exclude natives from their lands and close a mine, thereby consigning many workers to unemployment.

Placed in an objective situation of injustice by a political-economic system — capitalism — which puts into the gap between the rich (individuals, classes) and the poor the central driving force of its dynamism and the foundation of its ideology, the natives can only liberate themselves by resorting to the 'positive negation' of their misery.

The liberation of the indigenous masses will be achieved by destroying this system which is based on the confiscation of the economy for the profit of a minority.
schools and the least negotiable roads have been given, while the whites, from whom nothing has been taken, are given the most modern schools and tar-sealed roads.

Aliens in a paradise-like image of New Caledonia made for tourist consumption, the young native soldiers in France praise the marvels of their island: "Chateau Royal! Biarritz! Anse Vata!" But they avoid mentioning that they have never set foot in the Chateau Royal, and that they live either at Sainte-Marie not far from the muddy swamps, or at Montrave beside the municipal dump. They are jubilant with pride when they learn about the increase in mineral production in New Caledonia, while not one indigenous person enjoys these riches. On the mountainsides their parents and friends are digging, shovelling and breaking up the earth in the search for the ore which allows the well-to-do to build themselves palaces and lead the good life.

Armed with the Bible, the missionaries instilled into the beliefs of the natives that pre-colonial history was dominated by barbarism. Bewitched by the Christianizers, the natives, grateful to the church for having rescued them from darkness, gave generously of their hard-earned money, without being able to perceive the torture hidden behind the mask of Christ.

The Protestant church of New Caledonia is made up in part by a Reformed Church consisting essentially of whites, mostly racist; it is a wealthy church, self-satisfied, and paying no attention to anything outside itself — not even evangelism. Evangelism? Instruction is given to 'others', the simple-minded, the poor, those who cannot speak French. On the other hand are the indigenous churches which, strongly influenced by the missionaries, regularly require a large number of converts to bow to it. In the mission stations of Nediva and Do Neva, children are forced to undergo multiple oppressions: from intellectual totalitarianism through under-nourishment to sexual terrorism. Convinced of their inability to provide a suitable education for their children, and resigned to approve of everything done by the missionaries, no native parent did anything about these infanticides.

"Worse than physical destruction, exclusion from employment and blows, worse than death itself, is the internal destruction, the constant degradation of the coloured man" — because he ends up
as idiots. The motivations of European students do not differ in any way from that of the
organisers of the Colonial Exposition: to show people in metropolitan France a minimising image
of the first inhabitants of New Caledonia.

It is in the interests of the colonisers to animalize those that they dominate. If the descendants of
cannibals, instead of acting like clowns, begin to think about their problems and talk about the
oppression of which they are the target, the metropolitans themselves might start asking themselves
questions about the co-existence of the two ethnic groups in New Caledonia.

To legitimate his dominance and superiority, the coloniser needs to ridicule the colonised.
Subjected to a huge campaign of depersonalisation, the indigenous person cannot remain himself.
From the moment they open their eyes onto the world, the blacks of New Caledonia have to learn
to despise themselves. Everything combines to persuade them of this: pleasure, money, beauty and
God are white; they — they are Canaques. How could they not feel that they were inferior beings?

Thanks to those means of intoxication — the press, the church — the coloniser has fixed in the
minds of the colonised people that exploitation of the land and of their labour, and the rape of
coloured women, have been done for their greater good.

Not one indigenous person found fault with the following passage about the reserves which
appeared in *le Drapeau*. "For there to have been exploitation in principle, the exploiter would
have to have been the only one to make a profit and the exploited the only one to suffer a loss.
Now if we compare on the one hand the value of the lands which are no longer available to the
original inhabitants and the value of everything that has been brought to those original inhabitants
(roads, schools, sanitation), no one will dispute — indeed no one will dream of disputing — that
there have been undoubted profits for the original inhabitants."

Drugged by the colonialist press, the indigenous people end up accepting everything it tells them.
Unless they come off that drug completely, it will be difficult for them to discover the truth about
the indigenous people, from whom the most fertile land has been taken and to whom the shabbiest
in the eyes of the young Kanak, making them feel guilty for not having made him into a descendant of Asterix. At school the ideal mother is always represented as a white woman. As youngsters, my friends and I avoided being seen by the teacher in the company of our parents, the latter ending up representing for us, thanks to the French school, everything that we ought to forsake and forget in order to become proper men.

Through attractive magazines the Europeans ridicule young Canaque men in the eyes of the island women, setting up the young white as the fashionable type of handsome masculinity. Other victims of this brainwashing are young coloured women who make themselves available to any white man at all, hoping, through his affections, to gain a veneer of whiteness in their lives.

Television programmes and presenters that enjoy referring to the "little nigger" head in the same direction: to make an ass of the indigenous person. Seeing that in New Caledonia the worth of a coloured man is determined by his ability to handle the French language, to make him speak that way is to imprison him in a wounding image of himself. The popularity of such programmes proves that the collective New Caledonian conscience is racist: it takes pleasure in ridiculing non-whites.

In 1931, to meet the needs of the Colonial Exposition, some Kanaks were brought to France. They were formally instructed to act consistently as cannibals, that is, to walk around naked, not to speak French, and to appear to eat raw meat. To the protests of these people, unwilling to present a false image of their civilisation, the reply was that it was necessary for the honour of New Caledonia and France.

In 1966, true to the vocation of their forebears, Caledonian students in Paris had some native soldiers dance at their Pacific Night, to the applause of well-wishers charmed to see the gestures of the descendants of cannibals and to hear their war cries. To the protests of indigenous students furious at this public assault on their Melanesian culture, the reply was: "You are raising false problems! We must, hand in hand, make New Caledonia known in France." In other words, for the good of New Caledonia and the honour of France, the indigenous people must pass themselves off
Le Calédonien. 21 July 1953


*Cahiers d'Education Nationale*. June 1983


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