Public Policy on Formal Education for Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Law, Business and Arts, Charles Darwin University, for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

July 2005
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work herein, now submitted as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Charles Darwin University, is the result of my own investigations, and all references to ideas and work of other researchers have been specifically acknowledged. I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not currently being submitted in candidature for any other degree.

C. A. CAMERON.

26 July 2005.
ABSTRACT

As the title of the thesis, “Public Policy on Formal Education for Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory”, indicates, the research field is primarily policy influencing formal education for Indigenous peoples in the Northern Territory (NT). The study examines the issue of the policy's failure, for the most part, to realise for Indigenous peoples in the NT outcomes that are equitable with those for other Territorians. The essential premise with which the study commences is that cultural difference, between the public service providers and their Indigenous clients and their circumstances, is primarily responsible for that failure.

The period covered is from the end of World War Two (WWII) to the end of the twentieth century. It is necessary, however, to venture briefly further back in history for adequate background, and some developments early in the 2000s are germane. The study has involved research in the histories of government, social and economic development, Indigenous affairs and education in the NT, policy theory and analysis, and public administration of education in cross-cultural situations. The thesis, as a result, comprises strands of history of public education in the NT, development of related public policy, and quantitative and qualitative analysis of the policy processes, the policies they produced and their implementation for Indigenous Territorians.

The term, “formal education”, is employed to denote primary and secondary schooling and post-school academic and training provisions, particularly to distinguish conventional, Western-oriented, public education from traditional Indigenous education. The principal issue is that, at the end of the twentieth century, Indigenous students' overall achievement in formal educational was unsatisfactory, distinctly below that of non-Indigenous Territorians, including non-native speakers of English, meeting neither providers' goals nor clients' expectations. Standards were perceived as having declined over the last quarter-century.

The findings are not conclusive, but they point distinctly to a gap between the civic culture of the public providers and the cultures of the clients and their circumstances as being the prime cause of public education policy's failing Indigenous Territorians generally. Paradoxes abound, however. The principal quandary is that as the process grew more inclusive, promoting client-ownership and -participation, and as resource allocations increased and specific needs were addressed, outcomes declined. No instant panacea has emerged, but rigour and accountability in formal education are recognised as fundamental and integral to the comprehensive approach required to address the wide-ranging inter-related societal problems assailing Indigenous Territorians. It is proposed as potentially advantageous that service delivery employ Indigenous instructional and learning styles, provided “culturally
appropriate” does not become a euphemism for patronising diminution of rigour. Ultimately, there is no gainsaying the reality that circumstances, including educational outcomes, in any community, remote, rural or urban, will only improve and be sustainable when they are given priority and sustained commitment locally.
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## ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACER</td>
<td>Australian Council for Educational Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AECG</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Consultative Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEP</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ed./eds.</td>
<td>editor/editors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Member of the Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTDE</td>
<td>Northern Territory Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTG</td>
<td>Northern Territory Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTTS</td>
<td>Northern Territory Teaching Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qld.</td>
<td>Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>South Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>Technical and Further Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWII</td>
<td>Second World War / World War Two</td>
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“Aboriginal education”¹ became, in the last three decades of the twentieth century, an area fraught with contradiction and contention and prone to judgemental observation. For twenty-six years during that period, 1974–99, I was involved in public education in the Northern Territory (NT), first as principal of an urban school, then in regional and system operational rôles. With the exception of 1990–91, when I was Superintendent (Darwin Aboriginal Schools), my responsibilities were for the full range of the public education clientèle, variously at local and regional levels and Territory-wide. They therefore always included services for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. I had trained specifically to teach in Australia's Territories² and had worked in the Territory of Papua New Guinea, exclusively with indigenous peoples, for twelve years prior to coming to the NT.

For the NT, the period generally was one of heightened political activity, constitutional reform, administrative change, demographic growth and social and economic development. One feature was the fact that despite ever-increasing commitment of resources, the educational achievement of the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth did not improve overall and may have declined. Amongst the contradictions that I discerned was perception that education was failing Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and was therefore largely responsible for their impoverished and increasingly dysfunctional circumstances, in juxtaposition with conviction that formal education held the panacea for those circumstances and for Indigenous Australians' future well-being. Other contradictions included critics' relative disregard, in an environment of frenetic change, confusion and competing priorities and demands, for factors that might hinder Indigenous Australians' educational achievement other than the respective performances of providers and clients, and the limited lasting benefit resulting from what I judged to be excellent performances by individual teachers sustained over substantial periods of time. That little research was conducted to ascertain achievement and the causes of failure, to address the latter and to identify, analyse and promote adoption of proven effective practice was also an anomaly. I gradually formed the opinion that the issue was embedded in cultural difference and that it was more complex and intractable than the more commonly touted explanations and resolutions appeared to suggest.

¹ As a public education official, I personally eschewed use of the term, “Aboriginal education”, as it was policy, in my understanding, to provide a common education service for all clients, regardless of ethnicity, location and circumstances other than where special, disability-related, needs obtained. “Aboriginal education” appeared more often than not to connote difference and discrimination.
² I trained as a teacher at the Australian School of Pacific Administration, 1960–61. Subjects in the Cadet Education Officer course included Principles and Practices of Native Education, Anthropology and Government.
The study began as research in the broad area of politics in the provision of education for the Indigenous peoples of Australia, in a quest to find the deep-seated cause, or causes, of its failure, generally, to yield beneficial outcomes for them. I intended initially to focus upon the Northern Territory as the principal case and to draw comparisons with experiences in the other jurisdictions. In the earlier stages of the research, it seemed that there was a dearth of directly relevant material upon which to draw; I then realised that there were in fact absolute masses of sources of information relevant to Indigenous Australians' education and its failure from which I needed to draw in order to develop a coherent account Consequently, it became apparent that the task I had undertaken was larger than I could manage in the context of research leading to a doctorate and that a tighter focus was required. It was therefore resolved that the study should be more exclusively concerned with the NT than originally intended and, since the issue stemmed from governments' policies on education, that it should become an exercise in public policy analysis.

The research project thus became a study of public policy on education for Indigenous Territorians from the inception of public administration of the NT. That there was an important historic element was obvious, giving rise to the topic's logical division into three distinct eras, successively when it was policy for Aborigines to be protected, when it was policy for them to be assimilated into the mainstream of the broader Australian society and when it was policy for them to self-determine. The period covered by the research had been loosely conceived as from the end of the Second World War (WWII) to the present day. Whereas there had been limited activity in the area prior to WWII, however, early policy on and growing attention to Aboriginal affairs between the wars signified for post-WWII policy developments and required some attention AD 2000, the end of the twentieth century, was identified as the end-point of the study, a pragmatic necessity occasioned by on-going developments in policy and policy-related activity stemming from recommendations made in a comprehensive review of education for Indigenous Territorians led in 1999 by former NT Senator Bob Collins. That cut-off point was appropriate in that it coincided with the NT Government's (NTG's) acceptance of the review report, Learning lessons (1999), and the (then) NT Department of Education's (NTDE's) commencement of implementation of the recommendations it detailed. The next logical cut-off point would not be until the end of 2004, in view of the fact that the Collins Review had been charged with providing direction for the first five years of a twenty-year period. Research on the developments of 2000–04 could be a discrete study per se.

Distinctions in other inter-related areas were found necessary as the study evolved. Consideration of policy analysis and cultural difference led me to realise that whereas
quantitative analysis could assess logistic aspects of the policy process, it could not accommodate subjective aspects of the process for the particular needs, dispositions and circumstances of the clients. Determination of the appropriateness of the policy process for Indigenous Territorians therefore required its quantitative analysis to be complemented with qualitative analysis. Similarly I registered that the frames of reference and ideas of the policy-makers and providers of public services would be likely to differ from those of the Indigenous clients, and that they could do so in dimensions and to extents that would vary with different client groups' respective situations and circumstances. I was also concerned that the term, “education”, should be comprehensive in its connotation, covering schooling at pre-, primary and secondary levels and the post-school options of adult education and training and tertiary pursuits. With that, and sensitivity to cultural difference and the cultural diversity of Indigenous Australians, came the further realisation that Western-conceived public education needed to recognise, respect and be distinguished from the life-long education that was, or in some instances had previously been, integral to traditional lore and practice in Indigenous tribal societies. I incorporated such distinctions in the study as it evolved and progressed, often being obliged to revise earlier work accordingly.

I have benefited from a great deal of support and co-operation throughout the study, from when I commenced it part-time and since converting to full-time after my retirement Dr. Alistair Heatley gave me my initial direction and impetus, and, after his untimely death, in October 2000, Dr. Dennis Shoesmith undertook supervision of my candidature. In both cases, I requested that these scholars supervise me, having experienced the calibre of their supervision in the course of previous studies. I was particularly appreciative of Alistair's sustained efforts on my behalf, as in relation to the other post-graduate students whom he was supervising, as his illness advanced. I was then most grateful that, despite his already very heavy supervisory load (as it subsequently became evident), Dennis was willing to undertake supervision of my research. Although my topic was a little outside his areas of specialty, he provided me with particular assistance in developing my thesis and in the areas of policy analysis and frames and ideas; notably, his directing my attention to overseas contexts led me to canvass policies on education for indigenous minorities in a sample of other countries, resulting in what I believe has proven an important perspective-setting element of the project. I have appreciated especially the academic rigour that both Alistair and Dennis demanded.

I am grateful to the many other professional people who helped me in the course of my research. The NTDE, now the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training, approved my access to archival materials and to serving staff who agreed to assist me.
Those people, and others, in the NT and inter-state, who participated in the research as interviewees were particularly generous with their time and the benefit of their experience, knowledge and ideas. In all instances, their commitment to the field and passion about the work involved was palpable, although in some instances some disillusionment was also evident. Their views were most helpful in developing my appreciation of the scenarios, past and present. That I have cited few of them individually in the thesis reflects the volume of information that was amassed and its consistency, it is not a negative comment on the value and relevance of their input. One of my regrets, in relation to the research conducted, was that time did not permit me to pick the brains of a substantial number of the people who indicated willingness to participate and whom I wanted to consult. I also regretted being unable to be more exhaustive in my perusal of the materials available. The help, more of a logistic nature, provided by staff in the University Library, the Northern Territory Library in Parliament House and the Higher Education and Research Branch of the University was valuable and appreciated.

There has also been considerable support for me personally, both from the people to whom I have referred above and from family and friends. Susan, our children, members of extended family and friends, largely former colleagues, have constantly encouraged me, with expressions of interest, enquiries on progress and discussion of related issues. Such support has been tempered with assorted ribald comments, including in particular, speculation on the stages of life observers will have reached by the time I complete the thesis. I am most grateful for Susan's advice, provided with her reading of the thesis as a “critical friend”. Demand for the opportunity to read what I had produced, as the project progressed, I found humbling, as I was growing increasingly conscious of the limited coverage I was able to give some important aspects. To keep things in perspective, I had to keep reminding myself of Dennis's oft-repeated advice, to avoid the trap of “taking the omnibus approach” to my study.
Chapter 1

Understanding Policy on Formal Education for Indigenous Territorians.

The complexity of Indigenous education is reflected in the vast bodies of published and unpublished literature on the subject, and in the breadth of issues canvassed by contributors to this review … of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory.

Learning lessons (1999).¹

At the turn of the twenty-first century, over two centuries after British colonisation, disproportionately high numbers of Indigenous Australians, successively officially “protected”, “assimilated” and accorded “self-determination”, were unemployed, impoverished, welfare-dependent, incarcerated and unhealthy. Generally, they had low levels of academic achievement in conventional Australian education.² Formal education, comprising pre-schooling, schooling and post-school education and training, long-hailed the key to the well-being of indigenous peoples in countries colonised by European powers, was perceived to have failed them. That failure was widely regarded as partly responsible for the sorry circumstances of most Indigenous Australians. The situation was put in perspective in discussion arising from a 1999 review in Australia's Northern Territory (NT) led by former Senator Bob Collins.

With some players in the Indigenous education arena, this complexity has fostered an analytical stance that argues unless the ultimate causes of poor educational outcomes are addressed, there is no point in pursuing shorter-term solutions. Alternatively, the issues are so complex, so huge, there are no solutions. Both approaches in the opinion of the review are equally destructive to improving outcomes.³

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² Some Indigenous Australians have been highly successful in formal education and in the mainstream. The success stories of several women, for instance, are recorded in Bin-Sallik, Mary Ann (ed.), 2000. Aboriginal Women by Degrees: Their stories of the journey towards academic achievement. St Lucia, Qld. University of Queensland Press.

Demographics and surviving traditionalism render the problem particularly serious in the NT. Bearing in mind the excerpts cited above, from Learning lessons (1999), the report of the Collins Review on educational provisions for Indigenous Territorians, this study examines public policy influencing formal education for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the NT. The unsatisfactory achievement from the services provided may be attributable to the policy and the policy process.

The Research Topic.

This study seeks to ascertain why most Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders have not achieved optimal outcomes from the formal education services provided. The issues are numerous: no single aspect can be treated in isolation from others, as each influences, impinges upon and/or depends on most others to some degree. Broad areas of issue include the provisions made, outcomes achieved, social, cultural and economic benefits, social and economic environments, cultural factors and prejudices. Research on the needs, priorities, expectations, values and attitudes of the clients is vital. One obvious focus is the appropriateness of policies, services and practices, another is the levels of and constraints upon fiscal commitment. An aspect for consideration is the wisdom, in a post-colonial and post-industrial social environment, of providing formal education founded in the needs of industrial society for peoples whose contemporary roots are largely pre-industrial.

Specific studies are required to explore Indigenous cultural factors and their significance in the substance, design and delivery of the services. Conversely, the imposition of British-derived values through programs implemented and outcomes sought could be examined. Another is enduring colonialism in formal education, especially for traditionally-oriented peoples in remote localities, which Cathryn McConaghy (2000) has explored. Identification and analysis of Indigenes' achievements in formal education are essential. Research on its contributions to Indigenous advancement and on racism, paternalism, altruism and indulgence in its delivery would be revealing. Aborigines' perspectives on formal education policy and practice in relation to Indigenous Territorians also need to be researched. There is the policy process itself to be considered as well. Given some unflattering perceptions of the formal education provided for Indigenous Australians, in the NT specifically, study of aptitude and commitment in the services, their delivery and the people involved could provide useful information.

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The principal focus of this study is public policy, in a cross-cultural environment, on and related to formal education for Indigenous Territorians. It is premised that cultural difference has caused formal education services to fail their Indigenous clients, not because of difference between cultural heritages but owing to difference between the culture of the policy system and the conditions of the clientèle it seeks to serve. The study will test a hypothesis, that the culture of the policy system was incompatible with the cultures and the circumstances of its Indigenous clients and that that incompatibility was responsible for the system's failing them. It will include such integral elements as Indigenous/mainstream interaction, the policy environment and the policy process. They will be explored as the study proceeds.

The need to make exceptional provisions for Indigenous Australians, for their well-being generally and for their formal education specifically, has long been recognised. Focussed legislation has been enacted and public policy formulated and implemented for well over a hundred years. Approaches to Indigenous management have evolved, changing in the light of expectation, experience and demographic trends, in response to popular opinion, as influenced by human rights commitments and social justice requirements and as resources have allowed. Late in the twentieth century, the impoverished circumstances, low achievement in formal education and limited active participation in the mainstream of a high proportion of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders demonstrated that, for most, fundamental needs were not being satisfied. In fact, in 2002, the NT Minister for Community Development Hon. John Ah Kit MLA, an Indigenous man, declared in the Legislative Assembly in Darwin that Indigenous Territorians were in crisis. He attributed responsibility for the situation both to “all governments of all colours over recent decades” and to the Indigenous peoples themselves. He won strong acclaim for his appraisal and for the courage manifest in his presentation. It may be argued that public policy on Indigenous affairs actually contributed to the situation portrayed by Ah Kit, a view to which McConaghy and Aboriginal Resource and Development Services consultant Richard Trudgen would subscribe.

The failure of formal education generally to achieve for Indigenous Australians outcomes that were equitable with those realised by non-Indigenous Australians was cause for concern Australia-wide and especially in the NT. In the social justice perspective, there were serious ramifications for policy-makers and providers, primarily governments; the economic

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aspects of the issue were also serious, in terms of public expenditure on services and welfare support and of limited return from such investment; and there were the inter-related social and cultural costs, arising variously from increasingly entrenched welfare dependence, marginalisation in relation to the dominant society and escalating dysfunction in families and communities. My study will focus on the public policy process, particularly policy-development, as it affects formal education for Indigenous Territorians.

The Problem.

Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are not alone as indigenous minority peoples who have experienced limited success in education systems introduced by European settlers in their lands. The circumstances of indigenous minorities in relatively developed nations have concerned authorities and institutions responsible for their well-being at the least from early in the twentieth century. A sample of overseas experiences will be considered, to enhance the perspective of the study's findings in the context of Indigenous Territorians.

Since British settlement, Australia's Indigenous peoples, in common with their counterparts abroad, have been the involuntary clients, or objects, of endeavours by governments and church-sponsored missions to “develop” or “advance” and/or “save” them. Although paternalistic, such efforts have generally been well-intended. Indigenous peoples’ “development” appears to have been regarded as synonymous with their “Westernisation”, to equip them to participate in the Australian Western mainstream. Initially, it was policy to civilise and Christianise the Aborigines, and the process then became more one of British socialisation. In recent times it has been given economic overtones and maintenance and recovery of traditional cultures have been encouraged. Colonial authorities and subsequent governments, missions and other non-government service providers took it as axiomatic that formal education in the Western praxis was the key to Indigenous advancement. That the conviction has endured to contemporary times is commonly evidenced in official
materials: the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training’s (DEET) *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP)* (1989)\(^9\) and the NT Department of Education’s (NTDE) *Learning lessons: An independent review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory* (1999)\(^10\) are two germane examples. It is worthy of note that there was substantial Indigenous participation in the consultation and documentation of findings in both instances. Formal education, however, generally failed to equip Indigenous youth to participate in the broader society in equity with their non-Indigenous peers, nationally and in the NT. That is the essence of the problem.

That formal education had been largely unsuccessful with most Indigenous citizens, despite extensive supplementary resourcing and endeavour over the last three decades, was a critical issue in late twentieth-century Australia. Apart from its having failed to have achieved for Indigenous Australians academic outcomes equitable with those realised for others, it was perceived not to have produced young Indigenous men and women prepared for the workforce, and thereby to have failed to generate economic return for the considerable public moneys invested. Data on academic achievement, derived from performances against various benchmarks set primarily for non-Indigenous Australia and publicised through various channels, indicated formal education services' relatively low success rate with Indigenous students. For example, the Australian Council for Educational Research's (ACER) (2002) study of achievement by fourteen-year-old students, 1975–98, in reading comprehension and mathematics, revealed poor achievement by Indigenous students in comparison with all others. It concluded that although achievement overall had “remained constant”, there were differences between individual participating cohorts:

For some groups, there has been improvement, most notably for students with language backgrounds other than English. For other groups, however, results indicate a significant achievement gap. The most significant gap is between Indigenous Australian students and all other students in Australian schools. Indigenous … students' scores suggest that they will be less likely to complete Year 12 at school, enter higher education or make a successful transition to employment.

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Provision of “support targeted at (Indigenous Australian students’) educational needs early in their school careers” was specified as a necessity.\textsuperscript{11}

Reports from other studies were consistent with the ACER findings. Jennifer Teasdale and Robert Teasdale (1996) found, from Australian Committee on Vocational Education and Training Statistics data, that although statistics showed overall Indigenous participation in vocational education and training to be similar to that for other Australians, in reality two-thirds of Indigenous participants were engaged in courses prerequisite for mainstream vocational education and training courses. Further, they were under-represented in the latter, particularly at advanced levels. They were also “under-represented in many fields of employment”, failing to realise the expectations of “concerted equity initiatives … (across) all streams and fields of VET” and the momentum anticipated, individual successes notwithstanding. A notable issue was the requirement that they do the preparatory courses to make up for “missed education”, especially in the areas of English literacy, numeracy and personal development, before they could engage in “real VET”.\textsuperscript{12} Studies of Australians aged 15–64 years conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 1996–97, indicated, \textit{inter alia}, that the incidence of Indigenous Australians' completing school and gaining post-school qualifications was a little over half that for other Australians, that almost two-thirds of Indigenous youth did not complete schooling and that Indigenes' English literacy skills were distinctly inferior to those of their non-Indigenous counterparts (see \textbf{Appendix A}).\textsuperscript{13} National benchmark testing data published by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (2000) indicated that Indigenous children's achievement in English literacy in Year 3 and Year 5 was, respectively, 15% and 25% below the national averages.\textsuperscript{14} In 2001 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published findings from its Program for International Student Assessment for fifteen-year-old students in thirty-two nations: Australia was ranked fourth in reading, but 35% of its Indigenous participants performed at the lowest standard, vis-à-vis 12% of its non-Indigenous participants.\textsuperscript{15} When one considers that the Indigenous


element is a little over 2% of the overall Australian population (see Appendix B), the magnitude of the Indigenous/non-Indigenous gap in the cited OECD measurement is starkly evident. It is the more remarkable for its juxtaposition with relatively high achievement by non-Indigenous participants.

The Commonwealth has supplemented State and Territory governments' recurrent fiscal commitments to public services, doing so in order to address priority needs, commonly to overcome specific disadvantage. Its supplementation of education systems' provisions, targeted “(t)o improve educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians”, was recently examined by the Australian National Audit Office (2002). When the audit was conducted, such funding was provided by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training under the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program and the Indigenous Education Direct Assistance program, derivatives of initiatives taken to implement the AEP from 1990.16 The audit team noted in its report, inter alia, that in 1999, 66% of Indigenous children across Australia attained the Year 3 reading benchmark, “some 20 percentage points below the figure for all Australian students”. It also observed that whereas aggregate reporting, 1997–2000, did not indicate variation in performance from region to region within jurisdictions, it appeared that “performance in general terms of remote students in the (NT) … (was) some eight to 10 times worse than the lowest performing region in Western Australia”.17 Notwithstanding the contradiction on regional variations in the auditors' record, inequity in outcomes from formal education obviously persisted nationally and was judged as acute amongst non-urban children in the NT.

ABS data on participation in formal education in Australia in 2003 indicated some potentially encouraging trends. Almost 126 000 Indigenous students were enrolled full-time in schooling, representing increases of 3.5% on the previous year's participation level and over 58% since 1993. In the NT, the 2003 full-time school enrolment of 13 714 Indigenous students represented increases of 4.5% on the previous year and over 18.4% since 1993.18 It should be noted, when considering such statistics, that they can be distorted, nationally

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16 The Commonwealth’s arrangements for administration of the long-term strategies identified by the Aboriginal Education Policy Task Force, 1988–89, to address issues in education for Aborigines in Australia were adjusted from time to time. The official nomenclature changed accordingly. The responsible Federal agency was initially the Department of Employment, Education and Training, it became the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, then the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, and, in 2001, the Department of Education, Science and Training. The AEP became the Indigenous Education Policy and the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program.


by increasing propensity to identify as Indigenous,\textsuperscript{19} and in the NT by the particularly high proportion of young people in the Indigenous population.\textsuperscript{20} Data enabling system-to-system comparison of gaps in achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students were not found, but the indications on participation and outcomes achieved, summarised above and in Appendix A, clearly comprised a serious concern for all providers nonetheless. It was grave for the Commonwealth as well, with its overarching responsibility for Indigenous affairs.

The magnitude of the issue in the NT was exceptional. Appendix B shows that whereas the Indigenous components of other jurisdictions' demographic profiles in 1998 ranged from 0.5% to 4% of their respective total populations, over 28% of the NT's population was Indigenous. The implications for Indigenous Territorians posed serious challenges for the NT Government and the Commonwealth. The most vital challenge for the well-being of Indigenous Territorians was the provision of suitable and effective formal education, its being held to be the key to their future. The scenarios depicted in Learning lessons and by Richard Trudgen, in Why warriors lie down and die (2000)\textsuperscript{21}, revealed the reality of declining achievement from the 1970s onwards. They served to signal the challenges facing the public education policy-makers, the providers and the Indigenous peoples themselves.

**The Study.**

This study will research policy related to formal education for Indigenous Australians in the NT, and will be documented in ten chapters. In this, the introductory chapter, attention is paid to preliminary matters. The problem has been identified, its severity indicated and its cause hypothesised. The aim and objectives of the study are to be specified and its significance considered. Cultural difference is central to the research, and relevant dimensions of “culture” will be examined. Public policy is to be analysed, so the need for a valid basis for policy analysis will be discussed. The research methodology and the documentation of the material generated will be planned. The literature and other resources consulted will be canvassed briefly. Documentation of the research can then proceed.

\textsuperscript{19} The ABS has consistently pointed to increasing inclination, since the 1967 Referendum, of persons of Indigenous descent to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander as tending to distort demographic data. E.g., ABS, 1994. Northern Territory’s Indigenous People: 1991 Census of Population and Housing. Darwin, NT. Commonwealth of Australia. P. 3.

\textsuperscript{20} Cameron, C. A. 1996. “‘Devolution’: Self-Management for Territory Schools”, Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts, Northern Territory University, for the degree of Master of Arts, Darwin, NT. Pp. 48–51.

The aim of the study is to test a culture-based explanation of policy's failure. In relation to formal education, fingers of scorn were commonly pointed at governments for under-resourcing services for their Indigenous clients, neglecting to provide adequate support for existing services and not having devolved appropriate priority-setting, decision-making and resource-management authority to the local level and/or provided support for such community participation and acceptance of responsibility. They were also accused of according the area low political and operational priority. Providers were criticised for inadequate professional planning, programming, co-ordination and support, use of inappropriate methodology, having low expectations of students to participate, apply themselves and achieve, failing to inform, consult and actively involve the community and lacking cultural sensitivity. The clients, their families, their communities and community organisations were also criticised, for according other matters priority over formal education, lacking the discipline, commitment and application required to take advantage of the services available and failing to provide appropriate support and encouragement for those directly involved in the services. Inevitably, cases based on individual instances could have substantiated most of the criticisms, and some generalisation may have been reasonable.

There were instances, however, where none of the criticisms applied, yet outcomes were unsatisfactory; and conversely there were some wherein several applied, but some students and trainees succeeded. Whilst generalised criticisms may have been justified to a degree, stereotyping was usually simplistic and damaging, achieving nothing constructive and exacerbating the problem.

Most situations in which formal education policy was implemented for Indigenous Australians were, in terms of resources, or staffing, or facilities, or in any of various other aspects, imperfect to a degree. Non-Indigenous students and trainees, for whom similar or the same policy was implemented, commonly also had to endure less than ideal situations, but they enjoyed significantly greater, but generally less than optimal, success in the outcomes realised. The significant difference was that whereas failure in policy implementation for mainstream clients occurred occasionally and could normally be

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22 E.g. incompatibility of Western cf. Indigenous frames, civic cf. Indigenous frames, and/or bureaucratic cf. Indigenous frames, resulting in unsatisfactory achievement of academic outcomes, rates of attendance and retention, students' application and their preparation for post-compulsory schooling, further education and training, employment and livelihood and/or other options in adulthood.

23 Collins, Bob, 2004. “Fix the blackboard jungle”, Northern Territory News, Saturday, May 15, 2004. Darwin, NT. P. 28. Collins’ assertion that, in 1999, he had been shocked to discover that the NTDE had no stated policy on secondary education for Indigenous students of compulsory school-age may have been misinterpreted as indicating absence of policy. The matter will be considered in the sixth chapter, in the context of community education, in the final quarter of the twentieth century, during which it was addressed.
remedied, it was wide-spread and common amongst Indigenes and was rarely, if ever, really remedied effectively.

Inappropriate policy, or policy foundation, appears likely to have been the crux of the problem, and consideration of the criticisms suggests that cultural difference largely explained the deficiency\(^{24}\). Critics tended not to consider the possibility that the problem really lay in there being two disparate worlds, an administrative one derived from the Western heritage, especially its civic culture, initially British and still largely so, and a social one comprising remnants of the Indigenes' heritage and their contemporary circumstances. This study will consider the effect of difference stemming from such disparity, where it is found to exist.

The study has four main objectives. They are to assess the appropriateness and efficiency of the policy process, to identify aspects of cultural difference which have implications for formal education for Indigenous Territorians, to assess the policy process's capacity to accommodate such factors and, with the benefit of the findings derived from achieving those objectives, to consider the way forward. The sequence of policy developments related to formal education for Indigenous Territorians will be explained in the contexts of the successive régimes of policy on Indigenous affairs, to protect, to assimilate and to enable self-determination. The major policy developments will be analysed.

Analysis of the policy will have quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The second chapter will combine consideration of policy analysis theory, approaches that may be taken and identification of an instrument appropriate for the quantitative analysis. A quantitative analysis instrument can measure the extent of policy-related activity, but it can contribute little to appreciation of the subtle, more subjective, aspects of the process and the policy produced. The latter are vital in a cross-cultural situation. The cultural dimensions must therefore also be considered, to identify the potential implications of cultural difference for the process. As each policy régime is considered, qualitative analysis able to accommodate cultural difference will be conducted, in tandem with quantitative analysis. The third chapter will be devoted to discussion of cultural difference in the process and the qualitative analytical approach to be taken, and an instrument will be devised. Establishment of an interface between the two approaches to policy analysis will be attempted.

Chapters 4 to 6 will concentrate upon relevant events in each of the successive policy régimes, with analyses of policy-related developments. The fourth chapter will be devoted

\(^{24}\) The relevant overseas research consulted tends to bear out this suggestion.
to the protectionist era, the fifth to the assimilationist era, from the early 1950s to the early 1970s, and the sixth to the era of self-determination, from the early 1970s to the end of the twentieth century. The seventh chapter will review experience in formal education for indigenous minorities in a sample of other countries to clarify further the perspective of formal education for Indigenous Australians in the NT. The eighth chapter will discuss some related developments in the 1990s, when formal education for Indigenous Territorians was increasingly under scrutiny. Critical studies culminated in the Collins Review in 1999 and in directions proposed in its report, Learning lessons, the principal focus of the chapter.

The ninth chapter will have two main sections. The first will comprise reflections of some people who worked in formal education for Indigenous Territorians under both assimilation and self-determination policy régimes; to inform the study's findings further; the second will pay attention to views of some independent critical observers at the turn of the twenty-first century. They will complete the study.

The tenth chapter will bring the thesis to its conclusion. It will summarise the study, consolidate the research findings and review the research instruments used. Discussion of appropriate direction for the first quarter of the twenty-first century will follow. My own ideas on key principles necessary for future progress, some from developed during my experience and others that have crystallised in the course of this study, will form the final section of the chapter.

Cultural aspects will be clarified in the third chapter. It is not a simplistic matter of difference between British-based white Australian and Dreamtime-based Indigenous cultural heritages: rather, it is the particular culture of the policy-makers and providers of formal education vis-à-vis the mix of the Indigenous clients' heritages and their contemporary circumstances. The concept of frames, effectively frames of reference, will be a vital element of the culture-based approach to analysis of the policy process. The aim is to be realised through synthesis of the conclusions drawn from the examinations conducted and reconciliation of the findings with the idea that the problem lies in a lack of connection, between providers and clients, attributable to difference between their respective cultural bases.

The period under scrutiny is the latter half of the twentieth century. It was a time when governments' efforts with Indigenous Australians, prominent in the NT, were extensive.

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and, although constructively intended, flawed and increasingly contentious. It also coincides with my own interest in the NT, from the early 1950s, and my engagement in NT public education, from 1974 to 1999, which included provisions for Indigenous Territorians and some involvement at the national level. My own experience and understandings will therefore contribute to the study.

**The Significance of the Study.**

The immediate significance of this study is that it stems from a hypothesis that failure of formal education for Indigenous Territorians arises primarily more from neglect of cultural difference in the policy process than from poor policy, policy implementation and response to it. Personnel involved tend to be held responsible for the failure of services to have achieved outcomes equitable with those of non-Indigenes. Those accused of inappropriate or inadequate performance or failure to perform vary according to the viewpoints of the accusers, who may be policymakers, providers, clients, evaluators, interest groups, advocates, activists or observers. Adverse judgements may be justified in specific instances, but, for failure to be as pronounced and as wide-spread as it is, the essence of the issue must lie somewhere other than solely in service delivery. Given the facts of some outstanding individual human performances, individual clients' successes, identified effective and appropriate programs, sustained efforts over half a century and evolution of policy with the benefit of experience and emergent ideas, the persistence of overall failure suggests a more deeply-rooted cause of the problem. The study will seek to identify that cause.

It is worthy of note that many who criticise policy implementation do so from within the frame of their own formal educational and social backgrounds. They judge the outcomes achieved, in their perception, by non-Indigenous students and trainees on the basis of their experience with, understanding of and achievement in mainstream schooling and training. White, Western and predominantly middle-class values and expectations therefore determine, albeit generally sub-consciously, the norm for such perspectives. Ironically, Indigenous detractors tend to judge from a similar frame. Appreciation and consciousness of significant cultural difference is thus unlikely to be present when judgement is passed on comparative attainment by Indigenes. That judgement tends to be based primarily on the criteria of academic achievement, participation and retention in schooling and post-school programs and transition to and retention in the work-force.

26 McConaghy fits several categories, having been employed by the NTDE in the 1980s as an educator, offering critiques of policy and practice in formal education for Indigenous peoples and acting as an advocate for Indigenous clients of public education.

27 E.g. instances of “good practice”, sprinkled where germane throughout Learning lessons.
Without rejecting the validity of such criticisms, the study searches beyond surface manifestations for a deeper, less obvious, cause of failure, one which may also explain why human endeavour in the field is vulnerable. The basis from which policy has been developed is examined and its appropriateness, with the policymakers' assumptions about how best to cater for the clients' particular needs, is challenged.\textsuperscript{28} Whether it is feasible and in the Indigenous clients' interests to implement policy, so alien in its original conception, is an element of the challenge. Appreciation of Aborigines' traditional instructional and learning styles may help. In order to generate dynamics appropriate for Indigenous learners/trainees, it may be necessary to adjust conventional pedagogy and logistics to a process that is more compatible with the clients' learning predilections.

If, in realising the aim of the study, cultural difference is found to be significant in policy failure, need for change would be indicated. Formal education policy and services that are more Indigenous in nature could be developed, founded in Indigenous cultural principles and teaching and learning styles, just as those for non-Indigenes are Western-based, allowing also for Indigenous cultural diversity, but ultimately still seeking to prepare young Indigenes for participation in and coexistence with the mainstream. Such revision would need to be well-managed, to obviate incipient apartheid in formal education: the ideal implied by Ah Kit (2002), wherein “each of us will no longer talk about ‘them’ or ‘the other’ … we will use the phrase ‘us mob’ and that will include all of us”\textsuperscript{29} , should be sought That ideal could be found in working from an Indigenous cultural base to realise Indigenous aspirations, to equip young men and women to participate in the mainstream, nationally and internationally, to achieve outcomes equitable with those of non-Indigenous Australians and to promote reconciliation between the first inhabitants and the more recent settlers. With appropriate foundation, necessary and desired outcomes would be identified and Indigenous pedagogy employed to realise them, at the least to the stage where advanced and different, or new, Western skills and knowledge were to be imparted. It would require institution of alternative or revised policy and services, as distinct from adapting mainstream provisions, and the outcomes sought could be enhanced in appropriateness, although they would change little otherwise. Traditionally-based options could thus be made available for students and trainees, their families and their communities.

\textsuperscript{28} It may be argued that “new ground” is no longer being broken, given McConaghy's research. Whilst there are some similarities in the two studies, she dealt with colonial legacy, whereas mine analyses a public policy and takes account of cultural difference.

Another challenge to formal education would follow, to support and enable those seeking to make the transition, for many from virtual exclusion from the mainstream, to competent active involvement in it. Retention of Indigenous heritage is a priority, but so too is Indigenous peoples’ acquisition of essential mainstream skills and understandings. *Learning lessons*, for instance, stressed that

(t)he predominant goal articulated in the review was the need for Indigenous children to develop their English language oracy, literacy and numeracy (sic) skills while maintaining their own language, cultural heritage and Indigenous identity.30

Services in formal education with an Indigenous cultural base should therefore be able to adjust in order to assist the transition for individual students and trainees and/or for families. Ultimately, as the transition nears completion, at varying stages but likely in adolescence-early adulthood age-range, the curriculum and methodology would become predominantly mainstream, but, ideally, would not lose its Indigenous cultural base. It would need to be approached in an Indigenous cultural frame, rather than by non-Indigenous operatives or Indigenous operatives with largely Western frames. Such a process, first in schooling, and subsequently in post-school study and training, would potentially gain client support as being appropriate, beginning with a traditional Indigenous learning system geared to the children’s practical and spiritual needs and phasing in provision to impart tangibly useful and necessary knowledge and skills for effective involvement in the broader society. Indigenous frames and consultative, decision-making and information-dissemination procedures would be essential.

From the discussion above, it is conceivable that this study may indicate need for a formal educational provision that is largely Indigenous in its foundation. In each location, given Indigenous cultural diversity, it would need to be devised from within the frame of the local community or language group, posing some logistic problems for the communities with significant representation of two or more language groups31. There would therefore need to be flexibility in the education system to allow for local language- and culture-based variations in the early stages of schooling, to mesh subsequently with prescribed curriculum and mixed methodology, implemented with rigour, as preparation for mainstream

30 NTDE, 1999. *Learning lessons*. P. 17. As a NTDE official, I commonly received similar advice from Indigenous leaders and elders in most parts of the NT, and elsewhere, occasionally with the qualification that whereas the school was responsible for “whitefeller education”, the community was responsible for “blackfeller education”.

31 Eg., Maningrida and Wadeye (Port Keats).
participation and realisation of other aspirations progressed. Commitment to such an alternative provision need not be mandatory, however, at the least not until its effectiveness were proven. Rather, it should be an option, with conventional mainstream-based policy and services retained where preferred.

The Public Policy System for Indigenous Australians.

Since colonisation, Indigenous affairs have been managed from within the frame of the dominant society. Public policy in the area generally, and particularly on Aborigines' formal education, has consequently been generated predominantly from the Western viewpoint as it evolved in Australia and the NT. Policy and its implementation have therefore also conformed with the civic culture prevailing in the mainstream, with public services delivered through administrative arrangements derived from Westminster.\(^{32}\) Even where the providers were church-sponsored missions, service provision was influenced by the bureaucracy, owing to missions' increasing dependence on governments to subsidise their operations.

The public policy system as it pertains to Indigenous peoples across Australia has thus been complex, in practice since British colonisation, although it was probably not recognised as such until late in the nineteenth century. As it evolved, so it became convoluted. Essentially, it was development and implementation of policy on managing and catering for the Indigenous Australians in their native land, conceived in a British frame of reference and as a result evolving from a Western civic base. It started with the early governors' instructions from London, to establish good relations with the Indigenes and to act in the interests of their well-being, growing eventually into large and manifold bureaucratic operations in the latter half of the twentieth century. As Australian autonomy evolved, direction from London was replaced with policy-development and legislation in the colonies, eventually States and Territories, using local resources, with local legislatures and administrations taking over from the British Houses of Parliament and the Colonial Office. More recently, public sector, non-government and interest group involvement has proliferated. During the main period covered in this study, the Indigenous peoples themselves increasingly became involved as active

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From the 1950s, I have read numerous materials dealing with colonisation in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australasia and the Pacific, and have lived and worked in Papua New Guinea, 1961–73, and in the Northern Territory since 1974. I came to take it as axiomatic, other than in the Spanish conquest of South America, that “indigenous advancement” was an element of colonisation, albeit as a tactic to exploit as well as out of altruism.
contributors in the process, having previously generally been simply its objects. Western thinking continued to predominate in the policy and its implementation, however, possibly reinforced by the Indigenous contributors.

A referendum held in 1967 led to substantial reform in policy concerning Indigenous Australians and the related policy process. The 1967 Referendum gave Aborigines status as “‘equal’ citizens”, to be counted in the Census, and the Commonwealth acquired power and responsibility to legislate nationally on Aboriginal affairs and to commit public moneys accordingly. Prior to that Referendum, the Commonwealth had been precluded from involvement in Indigenous matters, other than in the NT and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), the non-States whose administrations were a Federal responsibility. Each State had dealt with Indigenes in its jurisdiction as it had seen fit, resulting, according to Roger Gibbins (1988), in little related legislative activity. From 1967, the States remained responsible to cater for their Indigenous constituents, but the Commonwealth now had ultimate responsibility for Indigenous well-being, its legislation in the area was superior to that of the States and it was able to influence them in the provisions they made through fiscal allocations tied to its priorities. Arrangements thus became more labyrinthine for all concerned, but Indigenous affairs were given increased attention.

Conceptions of what is appropriate public policy in Indigenous affairs in Australia and how best to implement it are at the least as significant in the policy process as the arrangements made for its operation. Ideas are recognised by politics and policy analysis scholars as determining the principles underlying policy, its substance and the tenor and means of its implementation. Ideas in policy are commonly generated by the frame, or frames, within which policy directions, priorities and processes are conceived. It has long been so in Indigenous affairs in Australia. Bleich (2002), working ideas into policy analysis,

33 For example, thinking on schooling required for Indigenous Australian youth, as represented in the AEP, researched and developed with Indigenous leadership and involvement, was consistent with and in terms of conventional mainstream schooling.


36 E.g. House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, 1990. *Our Future, Our Selves: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Control, Management and Resources*. Canberra, ACT. Commonwealth of Australia. Pp. 87–90. The Commonwealth first budgeted for “Aboriginal advancement programs” in 1968/69, with $10M committed through the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, $5M to capitalise “Aboriginal enterprises”, $4M for distribution to the States for housing, education and welfare, $1M for programs in the NT and a further $0.1M to be paid “directly to Aboriginal welfare organizations” in State. In 1988/89, the allocation was $784M, $475M to be administered by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the balance distributed to other agencies, with a further $31M to the States and the NT under the *States Aboriginal Grants Act 1976*. 
acknowledged Rein and Schön's collation of uses of frames in policy-making (1993) and their application of the concept (1994). “Framing” in politics and policy-formulation may only have been labelled in concept as recently as the 1990s, but it is evident, from examples cited by Bleich, that it had been recognisable in practice decades earlier.37

Bleich explained a frame as “a set of cognitive and moral maps that (oriented) an actor within a policy sphere”.38 Where the policy sphere is public provision for Indigenous Australians, it follows that policy and its implementation are determined principally by a combination of involved politicians' and public sector employees' understandings of the Indigenous clients and their needs, commitment out of civic responsibility, with fiscal allocation from resources available to meet those needs, and beliefs about how official operations can best fulfil obligations. Official frames thus contribute heavily to the climate in which the public services for Indigenes are provided, from within a Westminster-based bureaucratic system.

The frames of officialdom may therefore be expected to dominate the Indigenous affairs policy process. There are others, such as those of involved non-government providers, notably church-sponsored missions, and individual interest groups, some likely to be allied in advocacy coalitions. Especially important, but historically largely overlooked, are the clients' frames: as noted previously, they may be as numerous and diverse as the Indigenous language groups extant and other Indigenous groupings whose particular interests may include but also transcend traditional affiliations and embody particular viewpoints, needs and expectations.39 There are also likely to be Indigenous interest coalitions. That Indigenous peoples had frames of their own was only really conceded and heeded towards the end of the twentieth century, in the wake of the 1967 Referendum. At that Stage it appeared, however, even amongst more open-minded policy-makers and service-providers, that it had still not been recognised that there was no single universal Indigenous frame, that Indigenous viewpoints were manifold and diverse, just as Indigenous peoples, like non-Indigenous peoples, were manifold and diverse.40 At the turn of the third millennium, the policy process, where it concerned Indigenous affairs, may thus have been deficient.

38 Bleich. P. 1063.  
39 E.g., established urban residents, fringe-camp dwellers, casual workers, trades personnel, public servants, professionals and academics.  
40 McConaghy. P. 136. In the context of “welfare colonialism”, McConaghy stated, “Indigenous people are talked about, done to and manipulated. Indigenous agency is frequently denied or presented in a totalising and homogenising way such that diversity and local specificity are obscured”, as exemplified in studies in Australian colonial history.
Pertinent frames will be considered further, in the contexts both of the theoretical basis of the study and, as relevant, in the successive policy eras.

A frame is shaped largely, if not predominantly, by cultural heritage and experience. Culture is therefore vital to the social policy process, as acknowledged jointly by sociologist Eva Cox and social philosopher Peter Caldwell (2000), in the context of “social capital accounting” and specifically in relation to the provision of public services for Indigenous Australians.\textsuperscript{41} Trudgen, referring to Yolŋu in north-eastern Arnhemland, emphasised that an understanding of “a people's ‘cultural knowledge base’” was essential for effective communication between “dominant culture” providers and their Indigenous clients, notably in education and health.\textsuperscript{42} I have alluded to diverse cultural dimensions, including traditional Indigenous culture, British culture introduced by the white settlers and the multi-culturality of contemporary Australian society. Others, such as civic culture, political culture, institutional or organisational culture and material culture, are also germane. The dimensions of culture will be discussed in the third chapter. They are to be integrated into the policy analysis, with policy process and frames of reference.

As this study analyses public policy, a theoretical basis for such analysis is required, for disciplined examination and valid findings. Relevant literature on public policy analysis will be consulted, with Australian works included. A model for application will be identified or developed, one which is theoretically valid and viable for use with policy on formal education for Indigenous Australians. Craig Matheson's dual-axial model, proposed in his paper, “Policy Formulation in Australian Government: Vertical and Horizontal Axes” (2000)\textsuperscript{43}, has potential for quantitative analysis, once a theoretical base is established. In Matheson's model, hierarchical interaction within a ministry or an agency, with delegation of work and upward provision of advice, occurs on the vertical axis, and lateral dealings, such as negotiation and consultation, occur horizontally. He developed it to explain public policy in Australia: its currency and its simplicity render it relevant and attractive. Given the unique nature of my study, however, any model will need some adaptation, qualification or supplementation, to accommodate relevant frames and cultural dimensions.

\textsuperscript{42} Trudgen. Pp. 113–20.
The model adopted will be applied to examine features of the policy and the policy process. Some control, objectivity and consistency in quantitative analysis of policy development and implementation, successively under the mantles of protection, assimilation and self-determination, will result. Use of the model should make for valid findings and credible conclusions. As a tangential benefit, it may also yield insights into the substance of the issue that could inform subsequent action. As noted above, analysis of a qualitative nature, to be linked with the quantitative analysis, will be required to deal with the cultural difference aspect.

**Disadvantage in Indigenous Australia.**

The reality of the overall failure of formal education for its Indigenous clients, whatever the causes may be, is integral to the more comprehensive issue of the disadvantaged circumstances of Indigenous Australians generally. In 1770, Captain James Cook reported that Aborigines “(lived) in a Tranquillity which (was) not disturb'd by the Inequality of Condition: The Earth and sea of their own accord (furnished) them with all things necessary for life”. Refuting privateer William Dampier's (1688) account of their wretchedness, Cook stated that despite outward appearances, they were “far more happier” than Europeans, suggesting that they may have been distinctly more at ease in a primitive equilibrium than were the British in their comparatively sophisticated and prosperous turmoil. Aborigines' lifestyle prior to British settlement, as Cook perceived it, certainly seemed more attractive than it had become towards the dawn of the third millennium.

Indigenous Australians' circumstances were deplored by the Commonwealth's National Population Inquiry in 1975.

In every conceivable comparison, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders stand in stark contrast to Australian society in general, and also to other ethnic groups, whether defined on the basis of race, nationality, birthplace, language or relation. They probably have the highest growth rate, the highest birth rate, the highest death rate, the worst health and housing and the lowest educational, occupational, economic, social and legal status of any identifiable section of the Australian population.45

The Inquiry obviously found Indigenous Australians ill the 1970s to be extremely disadvantaged in comparison with other Australians. Overall, they had benefited little from almost two hundred years of co-existence with the British settlers and subsequent immigrants and under management by public authorities and missions.

The disadvantage identified by the 1975 Inquiry persisted, as observers reported regularly. The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (1990), for instance, finding “many circumstances” in which official policies for Indigenous advancement were failing, endorsed an assessment that

those communities in most need are also those least able to implement any form of self-management in non-Aboriginal terms: (t)heir needs are greatest because their residents are the least acculturated to European systems and predominantly neither literate, numerate nor proficient in spoken English.46

Advancement and Westernisation were evidently taken to mean the same thing. It also seemed that limited Westernisation was seen to hinder advancement.

Tony Dalton, Mary Draper, Wendy Weeks and John Wiseman (1996) observed, in the social policy context, that despite the official end of the White Australia policy after WWII, prejudices and racism persisted.47 Some fifty years later, they judged the nation as “becoming more unequal in many ways”, the rich-poor gap increasing with “large numbers … still (living) below the poverty line”. They elaborated,

(t)hose most likely to be living in poverty include groups which have always had least power and status – women, migrants, Aborigines and people with fewer formal educational qualifications. Most of all, people in poverty are likely to be unemployed. While other factors, such as housing, are also significant, there is strong evidence that unemployment is the single most powerful determinant of poverty.48

46 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, 1990. P. 5. Acceptance of the reference to Aborigine’ “acculturation” suggests that Standing Committee members were thinking in assimilationist terms, when self-determination policy prevailed.
47 Reference to the White Australia policy was officially terminated in 1945, but it took up to another quarter-century for it to disappear in tacit practice.
The lot of Indigenous Australians, in comparative terms, had evidently not improved significantly over the preceding quarter-century. Dalton et al's assessment implied that they were prone to poverty from their racial and/or cultural background per se and their relatively low levels of formal educational achievement and work-force participation, with Indigenous women further disadvantaged by virtue of their gender. Indigenous disadvantage clearly remained widespread in the mid-1990s.

Another anomaly in the egalitarian multi-cultural Australian persona is noteworthy. When data on Indigenous Australians are considered and compared, two discrete groups, implicitly mutually exclusive, are commonly identified, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and other Australians. Whereas the former are Indigenous, the latter are mainly European but include all the other ethnicities represented in the population. Indigenes are similarly frequently distinguished from “the Australian mainstream”. That such distinctions should continue, both generally and in official documentation, bespeaks an entrenched tendency to stereotype, whether it be based on colour, race, disadvantage or the uniqueness of Australian Indigeneity. Such distinction may manifest another dimension of Indigenous disadvantage in Australia.

Low educational attainment looms large in literature about Australian Indigenes’ disadvantage, of which the sources cited are examples only. In this study, I refer to pre-, primary and secondary schooling, tertiary study and post-school training as “formal education” to distinguish it from traditional Indigenous education. It is ironic that poor achievement in formal education should feature so prominently in Indigenous disadvantage, when governments and missions have taken mainstream education as fundamental to Indigenous advancement. Aborigines' education was given priority from early colonial days and substantial public moneys have been committed through the successive specifically targeted policy eras since WWII. Indigenous Australians themselves have also given formal education for their youth high priority for over a hundred years.

There is no doubting either the extent of Indigenous under-achievement in formal education or the seriousness of associated problems. As noted, education systems' testing programs and ACER and ABS research have consistently found and recorded Indigenous students' generally low level of academic achievement. The 2002 ACER report on attainment in

literacy and numeracy by fourteen-year-old students was particularly telling and conveyed little optimism for improved educational outcomes for Indigenous students in the foreseeable future.51

This study is concerned with the reality that public policy has not achieved, for a preponderance of Indigenous Australians, equity with non-Indigenous Australians in outcomes from formal education. Since British settlement, successive macro-policies were devised specifically for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander affairs, and, as the twentieth century progressed, micro-policies were developed and implemented under their respective auspices. From the late 1940s, formal education was well to the fore, both being accorded priority as integral and fundamental to Indigenous advancement and being blamed for Indigenous advancement's perceived deficiencies. My study concentrates on the development, implementation and impact of public policy related to formal education for Indigenous Territorians.

Research Methodology and Documentation.

The project has been large, involving research of comprehensive scope. Extensive perusal of print materials was required. Primary references include parliamentary records, legislation, policy statements, official reports, media releases, statistical data, especially those compiled by the ABS, and education-specific articles and works related to formal education and its provision for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia and the NT. Relevant secondary materials are wide-ranging, predominantly devoted to public education in Australia and the NT, but include also works, articles and papers on history and pre-history, politics, anthropology, archaeology, sociology, public administration, public policy and policy analysis, the NT, Indigenous Australians, principally Aborigines, and social commentary. Materials written by Indigenous practitioners and observers were included. The Internet was also used, for access to relevant materials, especially those dealing with indigenous minorities overseas. Numerous interviews have been conducted, with persons, predominantly teachers, principals and administrators with relevant firsthand experience, knowledge and expertise dating from as early as the 1950s. A great deal of relevant information, and some not-so-relevant, has been obtained.52

In this, the introductory chapter of the thesis, the issue, the core research question and the reality of the problem have been established. The judgemental assertions, emotive and racist overtones and human rights-related innuendo and allegations which abound in the rhetoric

51 Rothman, Sheldon. P. ix.
52 It has been a challenge to sift the most directly relevant information from the mass gathered.
The research has several principal elements. First, theoretically valid approaches to public policy analysis viable for application in the arena of Indigenous Australia and the NT in the second half of the twentieth century are to be identified. Research in public policy analysis and identification of an apt model for quantitative analysis will be documented in the second chapter; qualitative analysis suited to cultural difference will be examined in the third. The public policy environment germane to Indigenous Australians and Territorians in the protection era will be introduced in the fourth chapter. It will provide background for post-WWII developments and clarify the frames at work in the latter half of the century, to place in historical-cum-social perspective the policy activity generated and to develop a Territory focus. The instruments for policy analysis will be applied first in the context of protectionism.

Records of research into policy influencing formal education for Indigenous Territorians during the assimilation and self-determination eras, with analyses and findings, will follow, in the fifth and sixth chapters respectively. The seventh chapter will be devoted to provisions for indigenous minorities in a sample of other countries, to enhance perspective and to identify aspects potentially useful to the NT. Several contemporary reports will be considered in the eighth chapter, with particular attention to be paid to the Collins Review's report, *Learning lessons*. The ninth chapter will round off documentation of the research with discussion of ideas expressed by former educators, each of whose service in the NT straddled the change in policy, from assimilation to self-determination, and those of informed independent critics at the turn of the twenty-first century. Both may inform future directions.

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53 Early implementation of *Learning lessons*, from 1999, coincided with restructure in the NTG, particularly in arrangements for schooling, training and employment. In further reorganisation, when the Martin Labor Government was elected in 2001, the previously discrete education agency became a major element of the super-agency, the Department of Employment, Education and Training, which embraced, as well as school education, the functions of training, public employment, work health and electrical safety. The NTG, its Department of Employment, Education and Training especially, sought to develop relationships with the Northern Territory University [renamed Charles Darwin University in 2003] that were closer than they had previously been.
The tenth chapter will conclude the thesis. It will record reviews of the research, the analyses, their findings and the process that evolved. It will also provide a synthesis of the findings, supplemented, inter alia, with ideas gleaned from experience abroad. This chapter will end with consideration of matters important to future directions.

A Review of the Literature Consulted.

The information sources consulted were numerous and ranged widely. As noted, most were print materials, some accessed on the Internet; interviews were conducted with a sample of personnel who were willing to contribute from their knowledge and first-hand experience and the views they had developed; some information was gleaned from the mass media; and my own knowledge, experience and views were also applied. Clearance by the Charles Darwin University Human Ethics Committee for consultation with people was obtained, and I adhered to its guidelines for such interaction. Approval by the NTDE (now the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training), with its constraints, for access to employees and official records, was obtained. The participants will be listed, each with his/her relevance to the project, in an appendix.

Print materials consulted are acknowledged in the Bibliography. They were mainly Australian, but some emanated from the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) and several from elsewhere. Most primary source materials originated from Commonwealth and NT Governments: they included parliamentary records, legislation, ministerial statements, political parties' policy platforms, official publications, policy statements, media releases, memoranda and records of meetings. Books comprised the majority of secondary print sources examined, predominantly the works of professional men and women involved in formal education and in the human sciences and services generally, recording their research and contributing their interpretations of events, situations and others' works. Some of the scholars are Indigenous Australians. Reference was made to articles in public policy, politics and education journals and on the Internet. Assorted conference papers and journal, newspaper and magazine articles were also collected during the study.

Works incorporating mankind's pre-history and Indigenous Australians' pre-history, history and culture abounded. The records of such researchers as V. Gordon Childe (1951)\textsuperscript{54}, J. S. Weiner (1971)\textsuperscript{55} and Christopher Stringer and Robin Mckie (1996)\textsuperscript{56} provided


Reynolds (1996)\textsuperscript{68}, Colin Bourke, Eleanor Bourke and Bill Edwards (eds.) (1998)\textsuperscript{69} and Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus (1999)\textsuperscript{70}. Oliver Furley (1969)\textsuperscript{71} was one of several useful sources on Britain's imperialism, assisting appreciation of the British colonisation of Australia and the subsequent experiences of her Indigenous peoples. Together, these and many other materials contributed helped to develop some perspective on Indigenous Australia in the twentieth century.

Historian Alan Powell (1982) etched the history of the NT since British settlement in Australia, principally in the twentieth century to the 1980s. In effect, I engaged his account against the archaeological, anthropological, sociological and broad historical background provided by the sources mentioned above. Evolution of public policy in the NT is recorded for posterity in the records of debates in the Legislative Council, 1947–74\textsuperscript{72}, and the Legislative Assembly, from 1974\textsuperscript{73}, with significant decisions enshrined in legislation, amended as required. Political scientists, especially Darwin-based Alistair Heatley\textsuperscript{74} and South Australian Dean Jaensch\textsuperscript{75}, contributed commentaries on the dynamics of NT politics. Other scholars, such as Peter Jull (1991)\textsuperscript{76}, Tim Rowse(1992)\textsuperscript{77} and Greg Crough(1993)\textsuperscript{78}


\textsuperscript{76} Jull, Peter, 1991. The Politics of Northern Frontiers. Casuarina, NT. NARU, ANU.


, contributed their understandings of Indigenous positions and perspectives, or frames, *vis-à-vis* the mainstream in northern Australia and the NT. More recently, journalist Rosemary Neill (2002)\textsuperscript{79} discussed conditions for Indigenes in Australia, including the NT, at the turn of the twenty-first century, as did Richard Trudgen (2000) in the context of *Yolŋu* in Arnhemland, and Cathryn McConaghy (2000) with her practical experience in formal education in the NT and an academic orientation. Such materials, supplemented with Census analyses and other survey-generated reports of the ABS\textsuperscript{80}, frequently consulted, helped develop appreciation of the dynamics of twentieth century NT, especially post-WWII.

The oft-invoked concept of culture required particular clarification. Related literature abounds, and numerous definitions were found. “Introduction to Cultural Anthropology” lecture notes prepared by John Wolford (2002)\textsuperscript{81}, based on the text, *Cultural Anthropology*, by William A. Haviland, and including identification of “important scholars”, proved useful. They were complemented with discussion of the concept by Kelly E. Friel (1999)\textsuperscript{82}.

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The civic culture dimension has been given considerable attention in North America in recent years. Gabriel A. Almond and Sydney Verba introduced their ideas on civic culture as early as the 1960s and refined them (1980) with the benefit of reflection and debate; their work was summarised by Jim Riley (?2003). Ralph Nader's (1988) paper on civic culture in the USA and Canada and Craig McGarvey's (1997) report on initiatives taken under The James Irvine Foundation's Civic Culture Program in California were consulted. Thomas Bridges' (1997–2002) essays on ten themes in the nature of civic culture, and Laura A. Reese and Raymond A. Rosenfeld's (2004) research into civic culture in urban policy-making were also consulted. Prem Misir (2004) distinguished civic culture from ethnic culture in the national perspective in Guyana.

From research in fifty countries, Geert Hofstede (1983) highlighted the importance of recognising and heeding cultural difference and of eschewing ethnocentricity in organisation and management in industry. Principles that he identified were found, at the University of Alaska, to be transferable to formal education for indigenous minorities, as expounded in a paper by Ray Barnhardt (1987). They were applied in rural Alaska, and the results

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were publicised in articles that he co-authored with Anagayuq Oscar Kawagley (2004)\textsuperscript{94}. USA-focussed articles by David A. Gruenewald (2002)\textsuperscript{95}, proposing a “critical pedagogy of place”, and Kris D. Guitierrez and Barbara Rogoff (2003)\textsuperscript{96}, examining culture-based ways of learning, looked account of cultural minorities, including Native Americans, in urban and rural settings, and formal educational provisions appropriate for them. Stephen Harris and Merridy Malin (1997)\textsuperscript{97} brought together a collection of articles, mainly of NT origin, that recognised the particular reality that the majority of Indigenous children in Australia attended urban schools.


The relatively new discipline of policy analysis required some delving for relevant literature. The works of Brian W. Hogwood and Lewis A. Gunn (1984)\textsuperscript{98}, G. Davis, J. Wanna, J. Warhurst and P. Weller (1998)\textsuperscript{99} and Tony Dalton, Mary Draper, Wendy Weeks and John Wiseman (1996) were useful introductions, and that of Peter John (1998)\textsuperscript{100} covered the approaches that have evolved. Articles by Craig Matheson (1998, 2000)\textsuperscript{101} were particularly


\textsuperscript{97} Harris, Stephen, and Merridy Malin, 1997. *Indigenous Education: Historical, Moral and Practical Tales*. Northern Territory University, Darwin, NT. Northern Territory University Press.


helpful in the Australian context, the more recent one contributing the model eventually adopted and adapted for the analysis to be undertaken in this study.

I perused masses of materials related or referring to policy on public education in the NT, and specifically in relation to Indigenous Territorians. Several stood out as important and useful. The principal ones of Commonwealth origin were the Watts/ Gallacher Report (1964) on formal education for Aboriginal children in the NT\textsuperscript{102}, the \textit{Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy} (AEP) (1989) and subsequent evaluation materials, the HR Standing Committee's report on management of Indigenous communities, \textit{Our Future, Our Selves} (1990), the report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991)\textsuperscript{103}, the Australian National Audit Office's “Indigenous Education Strategies” (2002)\textsuperscript{104} and ABS publications mentioned previously. Those of NTG origin included its foundation policy statement on education, \textit{Direction for the Eighties} (1983)\textsuperscript{105}, the associated information statement on provisions for Indigenous Territorians, “Education for Aborigines” (1984)\textsuperscript{106}, the Cameron/ Thiele Report on schooling and training for Aborigines beyond primary education in Indigenous communities(1986)\textsuperscript{107}, the NTG's amendment of education policy, primarily to focus on standards and to devolve functions for local self-management, \textit{Towards the 90s} (1988)\textsuperscript{108}, the nationally agreed \textit{Goals for Schooling} (1989)\textsuperscript{109}, materials related to implementing the AEP\textsuperscript{110}, \textit{Schools ... Our Focus}, implementing the findings of a 1998 review of education in the NT (1999)\textsuperscript{111}, the report from the Collins Review of education for Indigenous Territorians, \textit{Learning lessons} (1999),


\textsuperscript{104} Chapman, Alan, & John Hawley, 2002.

\textsuperscript{105} Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDE), 1983. \textit{Northern Territory Schools: Direction for the Eighties}. Darwin, NT. NTG.

\textsuperscript{106} NTDE, 1984: “Information Statement No. 6: Education for Aborigines: Strategies for Improving the Academic Performance of Aboriginal Students in Primary and Secondary Education”. Darwin, NT. NTG.

\textsuperscript{107} NTDE, 1986. \textit{Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities: A Planning Proposal}. Darwin, NT. NTG.

\textsuperscript{108} NTDE, 1988. \textit{Towards the 90s: Excellence, Accountability and Devolution in Education For the Future, Volume 2}. Darwin, NT. NTG.

\textsuperscript{109} NTDE, 1989. \textit{Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia}. Darwin, NT. NTG.

\textsuperscript{110} NTDE, 1991. \textit{National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education Policy: The Northern Territory Strategic Plan}. Darwin, NT. NTG.

\textsuperscript{111} NTDE, 1991. \textit{National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education Policy: The Northern Territory Operational Plan}. Darwin, NT. NTG.

Some of the materials consulted were written by Indigenous Australians or contained contributions from Indigenous sources. *Aboriginal Australia*, edited by Bourke, Bourke and Edwards (1998), the documents collated by Attwood and Markus in *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights* (1999), *Aboriginal women by degrees* edited by Mary Ann Bin-Sallik (2000) and Isabelle Adams' *Predictions* (1998) are examples. The research for and compilation of the Commonwealth's *Report of the Committee of Review of Aboriginal Employment and Training Programs* (1985), the Department of Employment, Education and Training publications, *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy* (1989) and *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (1994), and the ABS's *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey 1994: Detailed Findings* (1995) involved Indigenes in leadership and active participation, including their extensive consultation with Indigenous consumers and observers across Australia. Some presentations by Indigenous personages such as Lowitja O'Donoghue, Raymattja Marika, the late Charles Perkins, Patrick Dodson, Mick Dodson, Paul Hughes (supplemented, in his case, with wide-ranging face-to-face discussion), Rev. Dr. Djiniyini Gondarra and Noel Pearson were considered, for citing as appropriate. Recently, in the NT, *Learning lessons* was compiled from predominantly Indigenous management and research, with Collins the consultant. It generated the *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000–2004*, which was developed, under Indigenous leadership, by the Indigenous Education Branch of the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training, and was to be implemented as directed by a body whose membership was predominantly Indigenous.

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115 Towards the end of my research, I realised that I had obtained little contemporary Indigenous input. I had relied upon understanding of Indigenes' views gleaned from working, *inter alia*, in the Indigenous context, 1977–99, soliciting ideas about education throughout. In particular, in the latter stages, I had worked with successive Feppi chairs, the first Aboriginal community liaison officers, several of the earliest Aboriginal school principals as they trained in the AEP Mentor Scheme, two Indigenous officers of Territory Health Services in the context of the Aboriginal Hearing Program and in relation to school councils. In Alice Springs, I led official recognition of and initial support for the Aboriginal-run Yipirinya School, liaised on behalf of the NTDE with the Combined Aboriginal
The sources and materials listed in this review of the literature cover the principal aspects of the study. In the thesis, reference will be made to many others, and all items cited will be included in the Bibliography. Some not cited in the thesis but which contributed to the research nonetheless will also be included. There are others which, although relevant, are too peripheral to it to warrant inclusion.

Associations of Central Australia and was the senior of the two NTDE personnel working with representatives from about thirty-five Central Australian communities to negotiate a quite innovative arrangement for the Indigenous governance of Yirara College. At the national level, 1990–91, I was the only non-Indigenous member of the Co-ordinators of Aboriginal Education, a Standing Committee of the Conference of Education Systems Chief Executive Officers which was chaired by Paul Hughes and generally met quarterly. In relation to contemporary input, I reasoned that the work had already been done, in the consultation involved in the Collins Review, and it was recorded in Learning lessons. Besides, I could not have obtained Indigenous input as comprehensive or of comparable quality and candour.
Chapter 2

The Policy Environment.

This study involves analysis of real policy in a challenging and controversial field of endeavour in contemporary times. As stated in the first chapter, official documents have been studied, some participants' knowledge and perceptions have been solicited and the views of commentators recorded in relevant literature have been taken into account, as have my own experience, knowledge and judgement. That the policy was not static but was evolving throughout the period under consideration is germane.

Current and relevant public policy theory will be drawn upon to establish a theoretical model to apply to policy related to formal education for Indigenous Territorians. It must be able to accommodate the subject and to yield valid and useful information with which to test objectively the development and implementation of the policy. The main purpose of this chapter is to canvass public policy analysis theory and to identify and articulate a model for quantitative analysis. As signalled in the first chapter, the ternary concepts of culture, frames and ideas will be integrated into the analysis: their incorporation is, per se, largely subjective and therefore beyond the scope of a quantitative framework. Accordingly, strategies allowing qualitative analysis will be pursued in the next chapter and an intersection with the quantitative analysis will be sought. In the meantime, a bi-axial model conceived by Craig Matheson (2000) to analyse Commonwealth decision-making, distinguishing between hierarchical and lateral activity, will be considered for the quantitative analysis.

The central task is to ascertain why public policy on education has failed most of its Indigenous clients. Where the policy has achieved success, identification of the pertinent factors will be attempted. The Commonwealth and, since Self-Government in the Northern Territory (NT), the Northern Territory Government (NTG), have been the policy-makers. Working closely with church-sponsored missions and several other non-government providers, the Commonwealth and the NTG have also been the key education providers for Indigenous Territorians.

The analytic methodology to be applied will lend the study discipline. It is important to have defined control of analysis of such a multi-faceted, diverse and contentious field of activity. All significant aspects will be given appropriate consideration and balance will be sought in considering the viewpoints of the various parties involved. Particular effort will be made to appreciate and respect the different, at times quite disparate, positions of the assorted actors.
The analytic devices should ensure that the study is comprehensive, balanced, objective, perceptive and sensitive. Discussion of relevant concepts and review of contemporary policy analysis theory will follow, in the interests of clarity and to assist in justifying selection of a model for quantitative analysis of formal education for Indigenous Territorians.

**Public Policy and the Territory Environment.**

The term “policy” has wide-ranging connotations. Amongst the works consulted, Brian W. Hogwood and Lewis A. Gunn (1989) identified ten senses in which the term was commonly used, but did not attempt a concise definition1, and G. Davis et al (1988) found there to be no consensus on what constituted “policy” in Australia2. Carl Patton and David Sawicki (1988)3 and Peter John (1999)4, attempting definition, took “policy” to be synonymous with “public policy”. In this study, “policy” is taken to be “a settled course of action”, the conception favoured by Patton and Sawicki5 and consonant with the Greek origin of the word.

Various policies have influenced formal education for Indigenous Territorians. They range from comprehensive and inclusive macro-policies to micro-policies that are circumstance-specific. Macro-policies, of which assimilation, self-determination and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) (1989) are examples, tend to be stable and incremental in development and seek to be all-embracing. Some micro-policies are also relatively stable. That underlying the NT's cross-disciplinary, inter-agency Aboriginal Hearing Program is an example: it addressed schooling for students with mild-to-moderate conductive hearing loss, sustained from the middle-ear disease, *otitis media*. There may have been up to seven versions of policy related to the Hearing Program, one held by each of the interested parties. The official ones of the three partners, the Program Co-ordinating Committee, the NT Department of Education (NTDE) and Territory Health Services, did not vary significantly. Conversely, interpretations by the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), the Commonwealth's Australian Hearing Services, the Menzies School of Health Research and the Deafness Association of the NT, each with

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5 Patton and Sawicki, 1988. P. 38. Patton and Sawicki defined “policy” as “a settled course of action to be followed by a government body or institution” They noted that “policy”, “program” and “plan” were often taken to be synonymous but did in fact differ.
its own particular interest, could vary considerably. Differences in perception of the Program occasionally proved quite disruptive.6

Federally, in the NT and in other jurisdictions with significant Indigenous numbers, the political parties fielding candidates commonly have planks on Indigenous affairs, including education, in their electoral platforms. They are geared to and paraded in election campaigns, and those of victorious parties are generally reflected in official policy statements issued after they have taken office, especially when there is a change in incumbency. Particular interest groups, those concerned with Indigenous well-being and advancement in particular, parent bodies and relevant unions, generally have macro-policy positions, and they may influence the more prominent competing political parties. The interests that related to the Aboriginal Hearing Program exemplify the potential range of involvement in Indigenous issues. This study is primarily concerned with governments' officially stated policies on or affecting formal education for the Indigenous clientele in the NT, in particular with the dynamics of its development and implementation.

In the works on policy analysis consulted, governments' policies were consistently classified as “public policy”.7 Despite some variation, there was implicit agreement that an individual public policy was a course of action settled upon by a government for implementation for the benefit of its constituency or part/s thereof. In the United States of America (USA), Dean G. Kilpatrick (2000) offered useful clarification:

Public policy can be generally defined as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a government entity or its representatives. Individuals and groups often attempt to shape public policy through education, advocacy, or mobilization of interest groups.

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6 Micro-policies can also be ad hoc, to deal with situations not covered by stated policy and regulations but requiring some interpretation of them. When I was responsible for the NTDE’s policy on education for Aborigines, 1990–91, exchanges with the Secretary, then Geoff Spring, commonly followed the following pattern:

Spring: What's our policy on …?

Me: We don't have one, but the rule of thumb I apply if ….

Spring: Good. That's our policy. Write it down.

He thereby identified the prime source and ownership of public policy, outlined its principal elements and intimated some of the dynamics of a policy process. In his elaboration, he focussed mainly on law and the generation of funding to implement a policy. Heeding Kilpatrick's perception, this study takes “public policy” to be governments' settled courses of action, applied holistically to embrace conception, objectives, development, rationale, implementation, outcomes and review.

Davis et al considered public policy analysis in Australia to differ from that in Britain and the USA. Whereas evaluation tended not to feature in Britain, and central decision-makers, institutions, budgets and quantification appeared to enjoy priority ahead of social contexts in the USA, public policy analysis in Australia embraced decision-making processes, the substance of decisions and the politics of government as it sought “to understand what actually (happened) within that space called the state”. Davis et al identified a “policy ‘funnel of causality’” as a distinguishing feature of Australian analysis. In the funnel model, scrutiny began with the concept in macro-perspective in the broad socio-economic environment, and moved down to implementation and impact locally. It assumed progressive change in explanations at successive levels as an analyst moved his/her focus from the most comprehensive perspective to the most specific. Australian analysts were thus more likely to be holistic in their approach than were their UK and USA counterparts.

The funnel of causality concept is potentially useful. The study in hand starts in the Australian socio-economic environment and narrows, first to the NT and then to the local level, as initial generation of policy in relation to Indigenous Australians and Territorians was mainly at the national level and in the Federal perspective. The study is therefore concerned with Federal and NT governments' settled courses of action on formal education for Indigenous peoples, from conception in the Federal context to implementation and review, overall and locally, in the NT.

Governments' policies are typically implemented as public services by the agencies or departments (bureaucracies) which support them and the responsible ministers. Contemporary bureaucracy in Australia, as it has evolved to the turn of the twenty-first century, owes much conceptually to three early twentieth century thinkers: American

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10 “Bureaucracy” is understood to have been applied originally to government offices (bureaux) in France in 1900s. It translates into English literally from the French bureaucratic. In both languages, in more recent times, it has also come to connote “red tape”.
engineer Frederick W. Taylor was largely worker-focussed, concerned with efficiency in management of organisations, in co-ordination of functions to perform overall tasks and in operational cost-effectiveness; French industrialist Henri Fayol emphasised need for administrators to be specifically trained for management; and German sociologist Max Weber sought to obviate “frustrations and irrationality” in large and complex organisations to optimise their services to clients. Weber's work became particularly influential in the West after World War Two (WWII). His ideal “bureaucratic apparatus” embodied “functional specialization” in allocation of labour, a clear “hierarchy of authority”, systemic regulated “rights and duties of employees” and “procedures for dealing with work situations”, detached “interpersonal relations” and engagement and advancement of personnel “on technical competence”11 He regarded “the rational bureaucracy” as the key to organisation in the contemporary world, with employees salaried and appointments non-hereditary, made on merit alone.12 Weber focussed primarily upon organisations and tasks.

As bureaucracy evolved in the second half of the twentieth century, the organisational attributes advocated by Weber endured largely intact. In Australia, his “ideal type” of organisation was being questioned, however, with doubt expressed as to whether public agencies were in fact able to implement “the ambitious schemes of local politicians”, on the grounds that competence was not necessarily ensured by “a legal-rational structure and practices”. Concerns about limitations in public servants' expertise and scope, and consequent expensive errors, were countered, inter alia, with the argument that “ministerial decisions”, rather than administrative errors, contributed to “many public sector mistakes”, leading to the suggestion that “the efficient rule of bureaucrats (was) being interrupted by political ‘irrationality’”.13

Davis et al (1988) concluded that the public sector in Australia, with its three tiers of government and its assorted public agencies and statutory authorities, was “perhaps too fragmented to dominate the policy process, but (had) powerful institutions able to advocate projects and influence ministers”. They added,

It is a public sector so involved in the economy, and so committed to providing resources and infrastructure, that it is often intertwined with the private sector to which it is so frequently, and unflatteringly, compared14.

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14 Davis et al. P. 59.
Many attributes of Weber's ideal legal/rational bureaucratic model may have been present in the structure, but provisions for the efficiency that Taylor and he envisaged had been eroded, and personalities and biases, at the least those of politicians, intruded. Weber and Taylor would have been aghast at the fragmented, and consequently inefficient and uncertain, nature of service provision for Indigenous Territorians that developed from the 1970s.

Since WWII, recognition of the significance of the human element of organisations emerged and gained momentum. In the USA context, Robert G. Owens (1995) asserted that it had become “obvious … that the key to understanding organization (lay) in understanding the human and social dimensions”. It was realised that “human motivation, aspiration, beliefs, and values (had) wondrous power in determining the effectiveness of efforts to lead and develop organizations”. As a consequence there developed, both in organisational theory and in organisations' management in practice, “the struggle between centralized authority and individual freedom, between entrenched power elites and ordinary people”: bureaucracy persisted, but behavioural, non-bureaucratic, approaches to administration were gaining ground.15 The impersonality Weber had advocated in bureaucratic processes was thus being eroded from within public sector ranks as well as through politicians' asserting their personal preferences.

Such ideas were reflected to a degree in recent restructures of NT public education. Towards the end of the twentieth century and into the next, the NTDE, renamed the Department of Employment, Education and Training, re-centralised its operations, and functions and responsibility were increasingly devolved directly to the education communities.16 Human and organisational dynamics, within the bureaucracy, within the individual education communities and at the interfaces between the bureaucracy and the communities, grew increasingly vital to the implementation of public policy on formal education in the NT. The extent and quality of human interaction have been of exceptional importance in the context of Indigenous Territorians, a fact not always grasped by key provider personnel.

16 Owens wrote of calls in the USA for schools to be restructured” so as to increase the power of teachers to make critical educational decisions, facilitate collaborative decision making, and create collegial growth-enhancing school cultures”. P. 327. In the NT, systemic restructures occurred, with decision-making and responsibility for the culture of schools devolved to school councils, comprising teacher, parent and community representation, student representation as well in secondary education institutions, with a principal performing for his/her school's council both an official advisory rôle and an executive rôle.
Figure 2.1 depicts a public policy system, derived in part from a model proposed by David Easton (1953)\(^\text{17}\). The diagram features a system, or dynamo, operating with inputs, “withinputs”, outputs and feedback. The dynamo is a government, complete with its political, bureaucratic and operational elements. It is hierarchical. The initial inputs are primarily electorate demands and expectations, official and electoral commitments, established law and obligations under external conventions by which government is bound, with fiscal resources derived from taxes. At the cabinet and government level, policy is finalised through negotiation, legislation is enacted and resources are committed, and ministers are given responsibility for policy carriage. A ministerial portfolio is typically supported by a public agency, comprising professional and administrative personnel who develop and implement policy and provide related advice under ministerial direction. Notwithstanding the hierarchical structure and the vertical flow of activity, there is normally also lateral internal liaison in policy development, implementation and review. Lateral internal activity may extend to relevant areas in other agencies, so it occurs both within the individual agencies and between them but still within the government. Internal activity, both hierarchical and lateral, generates “within-puts”.

Figure 2.1 A Typical Public Policy System

Outputs are the services delivered by the operational personnel and their impacts amongst clients and in the community generally. Consequent to the delivery and impacts of the services, some clients and other interested parties convey in response their observations to the provider, commonly at all levels. Their feedback thus becomes additional input to the process, generated by policy implementation. The funnel of causality is evident, progressing from the conception of jurisdiction-wide policy to its impact at individual points of service delivery. Whilst activity within the dynamo can be structured and regulated, as it normally is in a public policy system, input is less so, and feedback is certainly not constrained. Also, unforeseen developments such as natural disasters, massive industrial action or operational blunders can wreak havoc with the best of well-ordered processes.

Davis *et al* warned against reliance upon “any mechanistic or structural metaphor for government”. Whereas a machine was normally predictable and reliable in its output, a
government was not. They observed that in Australia the public had learned how to “play off local, State and (F)ederal administrations”. In effect describing some of the policy dynamics that Figure 2.1 seeks to illustrate, they elaborated,

departments and agencies become the arena around which pressure groups compete. They are the focus for, and embodiment of, policy demands. Because such groups have specific demands, and are more interested in their own cause than in overall government coherence, they encourage a contradictory state.

As a result, Australian governments and the agencies they established were prone to inconsistency, even contradiction, in their policy directions and the initiatives taken. Hence, operationally, they were not entirely reliable or predictable in their outputs.\(^{18}\)

A policy system of the type illustrated in Figure 2.1 managed Indigenous affairs in each of the States until 1967 and in the Commonwealth with respect to the NT until 1978. Activity was principally in the public sector, with some input from Indigenous cause advocates. After the 1967 Referendum, which gave Canberra substantial authority in Indigenous affairs in the States,\(^{19}\) input from the Commonwealth and the Indigenous peoples themselves, as well as their non-Indigenous advocates, and especially proliferating Indigenous organisations, grew steadily. It accelerated with the December 1972 election of the Whitlam Labor Federal Government and its promulgation of self-determination policy.

In the unique case of the NT, the situation was the reverse of that in the States. The Legislative Council, from its inception in 1947, constantly made representation to Canberra on Territorians' behalf, with Indigenous matters prominent\(^{20}\), but the Commonwealth was responsible for administering Indigenous affairs in the NT. Devolution of functions from Canberra to the NT Legislative Assembly began with its inauguration in 1974, and from Self-Government, 1978, the NTG was given responsibility for delivering most public services in the NT, including those for Indigenous Territorians. The Commonwealth

\(^{19}\) The Commonwealth had been responsible for administration of Australia's Territories since 1911, so in 1967 it was already responsible for Indigenous affairs in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and the NT.
nonetheless retained responsibility, *inter alia*, for oversight of Indigenous affairs in the NT, and made supplementary provisions. It now had a relationship with the NTG similar to that which evolved with the States after the 1967 Referendum. Figure 2.2 illustrates Commonwealth-NTG arrangements in relation to Indigenous affairs since Self-Government.

![Diagram showing policy system for Indigenous Affairs in the NT from Self-Government.](image)

Figure 2.2 The Policy System for Indigenous Affairs in the NT from Self-Government.

Policy matters were now negotiated between Darwin and Canberra, but the Commonwealth was the superior partner, with power to overrule the NTG, to impose its will through legislation and to enforce it with tied fiscal grants. It thus ultimately directed policy in the NT, and the NTG reported on its implementation and provided related advice. As the
Commonwealth was directing policy, it provided finance stringently tied to its priorities for implementing the policy, and the NTG was not in an economic position to quibble: it could neither refuse to co-operate nor decline the finance. Rather, it was obliged to account for Commonwealth moneys expended. The Commonwealth monitored its performance and the NTG submitted for additional current funding and future allocations in accordance with Commonwealth guidelines. All other matters aside, an active Commonwealth/NTG interface was assured.

**Approaches to Policy Analysis.**

European colonisation of the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australasia and the Pacific, from the sixteenth century, involved concurrent conquest of peoples and lands, exploitation of natural resources and “civilisation” of the native inhabitants. The new settlers typically sought to convert the indigenes from their traditionalism to Western *mores*, Christianity especially. In retrospect, it may appear incongruous that the colonists should have tried so uncompromisingly to impose Western culture upon traditionally-oriented non-European peoples. It was really quite straightforward: the conquests were conducted by the imperialist states to enhance their power and wealth, and they justified them on the grounds that they were “extending the benefits of ‘civilization’ … (as it had evolved with) the racial, material and cultural superiority of the white races, to the inferior peoples of backward lands”.

They did so zealously, with varying success. Amid the overt ethnocentricity of the imperial powers, the ground was fertile for Social Darwinism to gain the momentum it enjoyed from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. Britain, with her Empire in its prime comprising up to fifty possessions in the Americas, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Australasia and the Pacific region, was one of the more influential imperial powers.

British colonisation of Australia stemmed from need for an alternative destination to the American colonies for transportation of convicts as well as imperial competition with rival European powers. The pattern of colonisation was essentially the same as that elsewhere, however: taking possession of the land, by force if necessary, establishing a presence and taking advantage of the natural resources, and endeavouring to enlighten the native inhabitants. Policy derived from the macro-frame of the British civic culture, with its ideas on imperial expansion and indigenous “advancement”, was applied from the outset, and British-based Australian civic culture subsequently evolved to the present day.

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22 “Frame”, when used in the context of ideas, signifies the reference base, or standards or values, from which the particular ideas are formulated. “Frames and ideas” will be discussed in greater detail in the course of elaborating the cultural dimension of the study in Chapter 3.
experience and changing ideas, it developed slowly, the essential policy frame coming, at least largely, to embody attributes of the legal/rational bureaucratic framework that Weber advocated. As policy for Indigenous Australians was conceived and developed from within the Western legal/rational frame, it is valid and necessary to study it from within that frame. Whether it is necessary, or desirable, that such policy should come also, or alternatively, from within an Indigenous frame will be given consideration as well.

Literature has been consulted for familiarity with public policy analysis debate pertinent to the study and to establish a model with which to examine and evaluate the policy under scrutiny. In particular, the validity of analysis that focuses on ideas will be investigated. An approach that is able to take account of ideas as paramount determinants in public policy will be sought. In the process, it must be recognised that a very high proportion of the Indigenous peoples, especially, but by no means exclusively, those who were traditionally-oriented, did not operate from within the Western world-view of the policy-makers. It should also be acknowledged that the impact of the dominant Western society had generated widespread dysfunction. Consideration will therefore also be given to the ability of the model selected to analyse what really happened, or did not happen, with the policy. Integration of culture, frames and ideas into the process, to be pursued particularly in the third chapter, may help to bridge gaps.

The discipline of public policy analysis evolved from the 1950s, with some diverse understandings of its core business. Patton and Sawicki developed their view of its basic “prospective” and “descriptive”, or retrospective, categories, acknowledging Charles E. Lindblom's (1958) perception of “the interaction of values and policy”. The policy under review had been evolving for many years, it was in place and being implemented, so its analysis will be retrospective, ascertaining how it was developed, implemented and revised, and what it did or did not achieve. The policy was concerned with social transformation, so a significant part of the analysis will be qualitative, a dimension not allowed by Patton and Sawicki.

Davis et al understood public policy analysis to involve

observing politics, and tracing how economic and social forces, institutions, people, events and circumstance interact … (offering) a way of exploring how policies were chosen, and a method for judging their impact.24

They canvassed studies of public policy in Australia, finding them to be increasingly holistic, a trend previously noted. Public policy analysis in Australia therefore involved study of how the components’ interaction with each other to produce “the specific forms and practices” that operated in the public sector and generated and shaped outcomes. Most Australian policy analyses were thus, to some extent, implicitly qualitative in nature. In common with scholars in Scotland and the USA, Davis et al found that a tidy theory on decision-making was generally not feasible: a policy was tied to the problem it sought to address, it was devised through complex competitive negotiation “of expert opinion weighed against electoral imperative, of competing interests seeking to advance self-interest through a favourable choice”. They cited Samuel P. Huntington (1961), who held that policy was determined in political arenas, where “participants, groups, organisations, social movements and classes (sought) to redefine the feasible given the inheritance of the past”, not in logical settings. Study of processes in such activity constituted public policy analysis. The arena concept and its interpretation by Davis et al suit this study, recognising as they do participants, history, processes and innate complexity.

It is widely agreed that public policy in contemporary Western society is tortuous. In the USA, Max Neiman and Stephen Stambough (1998) asserted that no matter how one endeavoured to explain the process, “in actuality, (it was) disorganized and chaotic … not a pretty sight”. John dismissed the logical and neat stages heuristic approach as simplistic and unrealistic, commenting “(r)eality is messy”. As the discipline evolved, however, rational choice theory, somewhat perversely, had considerable influence. Given the complexity of both public policy and the arena of formal education for Indigenous Territorians, simplicity must still be sought in analysis, as far as possible, to reach informative conclusions.

Nikolaos Zahariadis (1998), in the USA, compared three theoretical approaches. He chose rational choice, advocacy coalitions, as proposed by Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith (1993), and multiple streams, as proposed by J. W. Kingdon (1995), on the grounds of their popularity amongst policy scholars in the 1990s, their potential facility as explanatory

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25 The 1976 Royal Commission into Australian Government Administration, Hugh V Emy (1976) and R. F. I. Smith and Patrick Weller (1979) were relevant sources
devices and their current use by analysts. He characterised each: rational choice theory was concerned primarily with individual actors and their respective self-interests; advocacy coalitions theory gave primacy to actors grouped by shared value priorities and beliefs, wherein ideas tended to hold sway over interests; and multiple streams theory fell between them, accepting that ideas and events gained decision-makers' attention but seeing that interests and opportunities explained how “the streams of problems, solutions and politics” intertwined to generate policy output, with timing in a volatile political environment likely to determine the response to a problem. Zahariadis concluded that each model could contribute to analysis of a policy, but that whereas rational choice, albeit useful in prediction, was simplistic, multiple streams and advocacy frameworks tended to concentrate on descriptive accuracy at the expense of prediction. Some convergence of the three appeared desirable.

In Scotland, Hogwood and Gunn listed commonly-accepted characteristics of policy analysis. Each is applicable to the study in hand: formal education for Indigenous Territorians is a “real-world” situation, so the analysis, ipso facto, is applied practically; it is inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary analysis of policy, requiring that pertinent sociological, medical/psychological, linguistic, fiscal, cultural and administrative factors be taken into account; sensitive planning of services is essential for clients' awareness, and hence acceptance and support of them; and if services are not client-oriented, clients will not embrace them and optimal implementation cannot occur. An approach allowing applied analysis, with interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary perspective, sensitive negotiation and client-orientation is thus required.

John argued that “change and stability in public policy” arose from “symbiosis between ideas and interests”. No single approach could offer full explanation of public policy dynamics, and he canvassed the potential of a combination of approaches to do so. Dwelling on the complexity of the policy process, he observed that confusion and unreality often resulted from analysts' trying to simplify it by dividing it “neatly … into analytical pieces”. He believed that “analysis (must) penetrate the contingent and evolutionary world of changing interests, ideas and policy problems”. germane to the purpose of this chapter,

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32 Zahariadis. P. 446.
he saw need for research to have “a framework or a theory to make sense of the policy process as a whole”.34

John concluded that an evolutionary approach to analysis of public policy in a Western society had advantages over more rigid ones. It could register a “causal mechanism”, include “ideas and interests” and depend upon the “continual interaction and changing nature of the policy environment”. He conceded that it was not an ideal approach, being unable to examine the nature of the process of selection of policies, but he judged it the most appropriate available, being holistic and in practice able to take account of the “evolutionary processes (which created) all the conflict, inequality and incoherence ...(as distinct from) progress and order … of Western democracies”.35 Application of frames, as conceived by Bleich, to answer the question, “What's going on in there?”,36 to be considered in Chapter 3, may yield insight into policy selection, thereby in part overcoming John's reservation about an evolutionary approach.

Australian Martin Stewart-Weeks (2000), like John, accepted that society was volatile. He referred to the persuasive impact human capital was beginning to have upon public policy in the contemporary West. He saw the “constantly changing natural and human environment” as requiring response with “a wide array of practical skills and acquired intelligence”.37 Stewart-Weeks perceived “a new public policy” emerging, with “rules and expectations … significantly different” from those which had been familiar for the preceding fifty years or so. He saw “the logic of social capital” embedded in and fundamental to the contemporary public policy process as it evolved, instinctively “subversive and radical” in overhauling traditional operations.38 He remarked upon change occurring in systems, notably in the USA and the UK, with “a new politics and a new approach to public governance”. The change was being effected, in his view, at least partly in response to demographic dynamics and evolution of values. He maintained that, in late 1990s Australia, such change was resulting from a combination of three factors: citizens' increasingly practising self-help out of frustration with perceived ineffectuality of public policy; younger generations' pragmatism, or positivism, opting for “what works and what gives the best result” in any given situation, and rejecting traditional ideologically-based “prepackaged ideas”; and increasing questioning of governments' raisons d'etre in the disposition or

38 Stewart-Weeks. P. 276.
condition of contemporary society. He identified seven ideas as providing particular stimuli for the evolution of “the new public policy”: “commitment to strategic investment” on the part of public and private sectors and voluntary bodies; “focus on systemic change”, wherein time-honoured conventions and constraints were expediently ignored or changed where they were deemed inappropriate; “commitment to information and transparency” for accountability; development of “effective partnerships that (drew) on resources, energy, skills and commitment” from governments, private enterprise and the community; recognition of the reality of problems in society and devising responses that were correspondingly “complex and integrated”; focussing upon “people and places” as the bases for structure and process in public policy, as distinct from expecting general compliance with blanket policy; and developing new strategies to “‘scale up’ leading practice and breakthrough ideas” to promote their speedy and widespread adoption as standard. None of these ideas was new, either in general public policy or in policy related to formal education for Indigenous Australians, but their assembly and cogency as a set of drivers of policy evolution are useful.

The “people and places” idea is particularly important in the Australian Indigenous context. It allows for difference between language groups, communities and their circumstances and for small locally-focussed bodies to influence policy and its local implementation. The ideas listed by Stewart-Weeks thus support holistic provision of public services in local communities and could promote the ideal of their integration. His ideas may therefore inform future directions in formal education for Indigenous Territorians, warranting their incorporation in the analysis.

Stewart-Weeks viewed leadership, knowledge and innovation as essential to transformational change wherein the basis of the relationship between the community and “the system” devised to serve it was substantially remodelled. Leadership was required, by bold savants in government and across the community, to ensure that the government both heard and heeded “the ideas, concerns and values” of the community and was prudent about intervening; conversion of effective “leading edge” local initiatives into standard practice needed information on relevant “skills, experience and expertise” to be readily available for their adoption and adaptation elsewhere; and a strategy was required to promote integration of innovation into initiatives as they were undertaken. With all three elements in place, Stewart-Weeks argued, public policy could respond to the complex needs of contemporary Australia. The extent of appropriate leadership, knowledge and innovation and their

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articulation in policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians will be considered. Analysis that heeds Stewart-Weeks' view of the contribution that social capital can make, combined with frames of ideas, may yield an evolutionary approach such as that envisaged by John.

**A Model for Holistic Quantitative Analysis of the Policy.**

A model that enables an ideational approach and holistic and comprehensive analysis of public policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians is required. Frames and ideas are central to the study. The education industry is labour-intensive, involving human interaction throughout working hours and beyond, between teachers and support staff and students/trainees and resource personnel and parents and elders and interests, local bodies and organisations. The industry's effectiveness is heavily dependent on that interaction, so social capital is an important consideration.

Other interests also signified, even in the earlier evolution of policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians. Government predominated, with what it promoted as and/or understood to be appropriate provisions for Aborigines. Missions worked closely with the Government, and economic interests and lobby groups that supported Aborigines exerted influence. As related interests grew in number and diversity, competition between them increased. In the meantime, the vitality of ideas grew: as authorities justified policy and policy-based initiatives, interest groups began to harness their arguments to press their cases. Such generalisation conforms largely with John's account of the evolving relationship between interests and ideas.

In the Federal perspective, Indigenes were relatively few in number and fragmented in their distribution. For Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to have their cases heard and heeded, their advocates therefore had to be well-organised. They had to rely heavily upon the social justice network for tactical support and promotion of their aspirations and upon the dominant society's sense and acceptance of responsibility. In the NT, Indigenous representation may not have been as vulnerable as it was Federally, due to Aborigines' relatively high numbers in the population and their growing involvement in political and administrative processes and in service delivery. Equitable outcomes from human services remained elusive, however, being realised by relatively few. The support of effective advocates thus remained essential to productive formal education for Indigenous Territorians.

Craig Matheson (2000), investigating decision-making in the Australian public sector, shed light on the process and introduced a model potentially useful for quantitative analysis.
of policy related to formal education for Aborigines in the NT. He studied rationality, *vis-à-vis* political incrementalism, in Commonwealth decision-making, finding that most decisions were reached rationally, being mainly technical and handled in the bureaucracy. Conversely, political players virtually always involved themselves in politically contentious issues. He listed

the dispersal of power, the self-interest of policy actors, multiple criteria of rationality, differences of opinion about likely outcomes, multiple goals, the reactive nature of decision-making, heavy workloads, large amounts of information, intractability of problems and bureaucratic orthodoxies

as factors hindering rationality, but not vitiating it totally.41 Ideally, formal education for Indigenous Territorians would be approached rationally, as a technical issue straightforwardly comprising curriculum and its implementation with formula-generated resourcing, and achieving appropriate and equitable outcomes. In reality it is in a political arena of contention, and myriad human factors as well as the inhibitors to rationality listed by Matheson abound. There are also contradictions, such as clients' commonly having poor self-image in relation to formal education and to mainstream Australia, yet depending upon white, predominantly middle-class, operatives to deliver goods and services, and taxpayers to fund them. Diagnosis of why formal education services achieved poor outcomes for Indigenous clients must therefore look beyond curriculum, methodology, resources and employment prospects. The human and cultural realities point distinctly to political decision-making.

In contrast with Davis *et al*, Matheson noted a tendency in Australia for narrow focus in public policy studies. He remarked upon neglect of “its over-arching properties”, an observation similar to John's view of policy analysis in England. Matheson focussed upon one comprehensive attribute, the vertical and horizontal dimensions, or “axes”, of decision-making: the vertical axis represented hierarchical authority, as in relationships in the public sector, and the horizontal axis represented societal inputs, as in the relationships involved in the “bargaining, negotiation and persuasion” that led to decisions' being made (see Figure 2.3). His appreciation of the policy process, illustrated in the bi-axial framework, allowed an holistic evolutionary approach to analysis. In assessing Australian governments' performances (1998), he detected increasing reliance in recent years on vertically-generated

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policy and reduced use of horizontal relationships. It resulted in improved consistency and logic in policies, at the expense of public consent and popular support. In his view, governments in the late 1990s would have been well-advised to engage the political and social dimensions of policy-making more and be less focused upon technicality. It would have been wise to do so in Indigenous affairs, for effectiveness as well as in the interests of civility. The public, especially the Indigenous constituents, needed to have the sort of awareness and ownership that active involvement can provide. It is also a simple matter of courtesy to familiarise the human targets of any policy with that policy.

In Matheson's conception (as depicted in Figure 2.3), the vertical policy-generating process had several distinguishing features, principal amongst which were “the delegation of work to subordinates and an upward flow of advice”. In such an arrangement, policy-formulation could occur well down the hierarchy, with successive condensation and adjustment to satisfy the broader perspective as drafts passed through more senior levels, effectively ascending the funnel of causality, until they were finally endorsed at agency head, ministerial or cabinet level. Before the work began, however, direction on what was required would have come from the minister or the senior executive, descending the funnel. As it did so, there was

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usually constant consultation within the agency and across the relevant ministerial offices, to ensure that the final draft conformed with the preferences and purposes of the minister and was consistent with other policies and the government's overall policy direction. If Federal Cabinet were involved, three key agencies, Treasury, Finance and Prime Minister and Cabinet, could have dominant interests and influences, requiring policy to be formed and refined through cross-cutting consultation with relevant agencies and non-government bodies and between ministerial offices. Hence, in the vertical plane, policy formulation was constrained, with downward and upward flows of ideas geared to a government's political, partly ideology-driven, and administrative agendas.

Conversely, in the horizontal plane, policy was generated laterally, amongst personnel within varying ranges of levels, from “acts of negotiation, consultation, persuasion, compromise, bargaining, cooperation and agreement”. It allowed for exchange, discussion and promotion of ideas between politicians and officials across agencies, with non-government service providers, private enterprise, unions and interest groups, amongst which some formation of advocacy coalitions was likely. Various devices, “horizontal processes”, to streamline negotiation and enhance efficiency, were widely used: they included policy co-ordination through intra-agency, inter-agency and intra-government committees and councils, with some extra-official involvement when necessary, and standing and ad hoc advisory and consultative bodies which included representation of relevant official, other provider, client and staff stakeholders. Agencies commonly had secretariats to co-ordinate policy internally and to ensure consistency with and awareness in other agencies, distributing information and soliciting input through circulation of briefings and draft cabinet submissions to legitimately “interested parties”. Such arrangements were supplemented by informal ones (e.g. discussion between actors “after hours”, often despite disparities in official rôles and seniority). Formal and informal networks linking “policy communities” (cf. Sabatier, “policy sub-systems”) also contributed to lateral policy-development.

The two-dimensional concept of policy decision-making recognised the complexity of the activity and its potential for tension. From the hierarchy, the vertical plane, governments...
could obtain well-researched and coherent advice that fitted their objectives and could withstand negative criticism, enabling them “to take necessary but unpopular decisions”. Negotiation “amongst equals”, horizontal activity, on the other hand, could hinder efficient decision-making and effective enforcement of implementation, but brought wider lateral thinking to bear, enabled consensus to be reached and potentially broadened ownership in policy-formulation, potentially easing implementation and enhancing outcomes. Centripetal forces tended to operate in the hierarchical dimension, centrifugal ones in the consultative one.

Opportunity existed for policy to be initiated by public servants well down the hierarchy or by interest groups outside the agency, as well as by politicians and senior officials. Matheson noted that in the Hawke and Keating Labor Governments, 1983–96, policy tended to be initiated more at the ministerial or ministerial office level, and hence became heavily hierarchical in its development, making for “greater coherence and technical rationality”, with limited involvement of other interests. Political costs, to the Labor administrations and the subsequent Howard Coalition governments, were apparent, with growth of public cynicism and decline in the electorate's confidence in governments as technical expertise dominated the process, evident especially in economic rationalism and in perception of increasing arrogance and insularity on the part of politicians and senior officials. As consultation with the public waned, governments also failed to market their policies effectively. Recognition of public disillusionment with contemporary federal government could well result in a reverse swing towards more time-consuming but politically sound consensual policy-development. Rationality and the public and national interests need not be casualties when there is a balance between vertical and horizontal activity. They may well be enhanced. Implementation may be expected to be more effective when official imposition and community ownership are balanced, with consequent public awareness, than when policies are predominantly imposed in the face of growing cynicism, antipathy and apathy or paranoia, as tended to be the trend towards the end of the twentieth century. The development of the AEP (1988–89) was an exception, with substantial lateral involvement, as was also the case with the NT's initial policy on education, from mid-1979, when the function was devolved with Self-Government. In both instances, clientèle awareness, ownership and confidence benefited.

Ideally, in the context of this study and with reference to the bi-axial model, illustrated in Figure 2.3, hierarchical activity, within the Government, should perform multiple functions,
and consultative activity, between the Government and the community, should perform two. Regardless of its actual origins, an initiative would officially be proposed by the responsible minister, in accordance with government policy and cabinet deliberations and normally as advised by the agency. The agency would develop the initiative, applying the official frame and the ideas it held or generated on its overarching goals. Early in the developmental stage, the agency would engage in consultation on the proposed initiative with the community, most likely through a formally established consultative body or bodies representative of the providers and the \textit{clientèle}. In policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians, other interested parties such as the NT AECG (or equivalent), the NT branch of the Australian Education Union, the NT Council of Government Schools Organisations and tertiary education institutions, would also be involved. The Commonwealth, with its responsibility in Indigenous affairs, and commerce and industry should participate in the process as well. The NTG, through its public education agency, would thereby engage the frames of other principal stakeholders to glean their ideas on a proposed initiative and hence to enable a decision, in practice thoroughly informed and visibly so, to be taken by the Education Minister and/or Cabinet. Concurrently, such lateral engagement would enable and promote public ownership of the policy and onward dissemination of ideas about the initiative and proposed implementation strategies.

Once a decision is taken, the agency is responsible to implement it, maintaining and enhancing the collaboration and communication facility established in consulting with the clients and other stakeholders. In essence, the vertical activity is leadership in initiating a proposal, facilitating both the proposal and a decision on it, and then implementing the decision, all within the official frame. The horizontal activity is engagement between the official frame and other frames relevant to the proposal, to exchange knowledge, understandings and values germane to the initiative, thereby assisting the decision-making and supporting implementation, preferably stimulating innovation in the process. Combined, the frames and the ideas emanating from the involved stakeholders generate the policy goals and directions, and the bi-axial model explains the processes through which they are or are not realised. Such a process operated, 1980s-'90s, in developing and implementing the AEP. Although there was some contention in negotiations at times, the policy was developed and implemented with awareness and ownership on the part of each interest involved and information was widely disseminated amongst Aborigines both formally and by word of mouth.

If policy-related activity were quantified, a policy process could be represented as the function of the two variables, vertical and horizontal activity. Hierarchical official
will, control, operations, expertise, efficiency and responsibility would be combined with lateral lobbying, consultation and negotiation between the government and other major stakeholders. From such quantification, the balance in a policy process could be plotted, at least notionally, on a conventional graph.

Figure 2.4 presents a simple conceptual schema proposed for representing a notional mix of vertical and horizontal activity in policy-related activity as a function on a conventional graph. Its use involves plotting hierarchical, or vertical, activity as a comparative quantity along the $y$ axis and consultative, or horizontal, activity as a comparative quantity along the $x$ axis. The balance of the activity may be seen through combining the resultant $y$ (vertical) and $x$ (horizontal) co-ordinates and recording the point of their intersection on the graph as the policy activity function.

![Figure 2.4 Plotting the Mix in Policy-Development.](image)

The graph has been divided into five sectors, labelled A, abutting the $y$ axis, to E, abutting the $x$ axis. The notional function of a policy would be plotted in one of the five sectors.
into which the graph has been divided. Where the $x$-$y$ mix is reasonably equitable, or evenly balanced, as occurred in the development of the NTG's initial policy on school education, it would be recorded in the C sector; where activity was principally or virtually exclusively in the vertical plane, as appears to have been the case in the Burke NTG's “Foundations for the Future” policy in 1999, it would be recorded in the A sector; where there was moderate predominance of vertical activity in the mix, as in the NT Board of Studies' revision of its special education policy in 1996, it would be recorded in the B sector; policies negotiated largely, but not exclusively, with consultation, as in the development of the AEP nationally, would be recorded in the D sector; and those in which there is minimal vertical activity, as appears to have been the case in conceiving the Commonwealth Teaching Service, would be recorded in the E sector. Such ratings, estimated from observations rather than derived from precise data, are arbitrary, but the framework, extended as a graph, allows comparison of extents and mixes of activity in policies. The use of educated estimation and approximation, rather than detailed analytic data obtained with application of arbitrarily prioritised and weighted criteria, is justified by James Coleman's (1975) contention:

> For policy research, results that are with high certainty approximately correct are more valuable than results which are more elegantly derived but possibly grossly incorrect.

As Patton and Sawicki put it, “it is better to be roughly right than precisely wrong”.47

Development of the AEP, particularly pertinent to this study, is useful to illustrate such plotting. It was developed by an Aboriginal Education Policy Task Force, 1988–89, appointed by the Commonwealth and chaired by Paul Hughes, a prominent Indigenous education professional-cum-academic and advocate from South Australia (SA). It drew on extensive contemporary documentation in the area, notably reports from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, the National Aboriginal Education Committee and a review of Aboriginal employment and training programs, the last led by Indigenous Queenslander Mick Miller. The AEP was developed under the auspices of the Commonwealth and jointly with all States and Territories, and consultative workshops of Aboriginal community representatives were conducted in each jurisdiction and a special additional one on Thursday Island. An Aboriginal Reference Group, comprising representation of AECGs in all States and Territories and Thursday Island and Australian Teachers Federation48 nominees, monitored the initiative to ensure Indigenous input. There

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48 The Australian Teachers Federation was reconstituted as the Australian Education Union.
was also discussion with and between senior personnel in Commonwealth, State and Territory public education systems, non-government providers and some institutions.\(^{49}\) The involvement of the public education systems ensured hierarchical activity, of necessity quite extensive, to initiate, support and expedite the development of the policy, but there was more extensive activity in the consultative process. Vertical activity was thus substantial but lateral activity was even more so, and the nett result was that the process could be plotted in the D sector of the graph, towards its outer limit.

I reason that policies with which related activity in the hierarchical dimension is relatively equitably balanced with that in the lateral one are most likely to have an ideal mix on both theoretical and pragmatic grounds. In the theoretical perspective, there are three main counts: the degree of official influence should ensure sound levels of efficiency and technical veracity and of compliance with overall policy direction, legal commitments and quasi-legal obligations; the degree of client involvement allows for satisfaction of “‘the democratic imperative’ … that ‘those who will be substantially affected by decisions made by social and political institutions must be involved in the making of those decisions’”\(^{50}\) in the context of an important policy; and comprehensive stakeholder representation in the consultative process should optimise contribution, or opportunity for same, of ideas from the full diversity of frames relevant to the policy and for which the policy is relevant. Such balance also affords three tactical advantages: real client involvement should optimise client ownership of the policy, which has implications for public commitment and generation of support in implementation, onward dissemination of related information and general acceptance in the community; tangible active involvement of the community, especially with important, complex and sensitive initiatives, has the political attributes that it can be perceived positively in the electorate and that it can be cited by the government in the event of contention; and there are the realities that with unity of purpose and performance on the part of the government and a diversity of interests and agendas in community representation, the government does not lose ultimate control of the policy, and its position is reinforced by its being the resource-provider when it comes to implementation. Seen in such a light, there appear to be very good reasons, other than in emergencies, for governments not to try to monopolise public policy.

Policies that may be plotted in the C sector ought therefore to be most likely to approach the ideal. The B and D ones should also have public credibility, deriving from a reasonable


\(^{50}\) Bullock and Stallybrass (eds.), 1977. P. 458.
mix, but with activity in one plane greater than in the other, as with the AEP. A policies would differ greatly from E policies: the former should be disciplined, well-researched, efficient and consistent with the government's policy direction but would lack breadth of input and/or public ownership and acceptance; and the latter, conversely, might have real breadth of input and public ownership, but would most likely be unpalatable to officialdom in that they could diverge from public policy direction, come from outside the official frame and require the bureaucracy and the government to adjust to them. Further, the demands and expectations to which governments are subject, the legal constraints upon them domestically and the international covenants to which the nation is committed would quite likely be overlooked in developing E sector policies, usually making them unworkable and unacceptable. As a result, A policies would most likely be adopted and implemented, shortcomings notwithstanding, but possibly without expediency if there were any contention, whereas E policies would generally be unlikely to be endorsed.

The bi-axial model is consonant with John's preferred approach to policy analysis. It allows for evolution, with analysis of policy from conception and formulation, through implementation, monitoring and evaluation, to review. If embedded in the process, in addition to analysing a policy, it has potential for use in maintaining its dynamism, through promoting interaction between the human elements, or frames, that ought to be involved, and hence between the pertinent ideas, and enabling that interaction to be monitored and adjusted to maintain impetus, direction and balance. Actors' benefit can also be optimised, their learning through sustained involvement and feedback from on-going analysis. As it can embrace the range of policy-related activity, it may help in programming a policy's evolution and anticipating outcomes. With the benefit of frames, it may help both in forestalling problems and in identifying causes of unforeseen developments. For this study, it has particular attraction and credibility in having originally been conceived and applied in the Australian Federal context.

The bi-axial framework appears able both to analyse policy quantitatively and to promote its evolution. It is thus apt for the arena of public policy on Indigenous well-being, including formal education for Indigenous Territorians. In keeping with Matheson's concept, hierarchical activity, within the Commonwealth and the NT Governments, will be plotted on the $y$ axis and consultative and other lateral activity on the $x$ axis. The mix of actors, and hence of frames and ideas, will render the horizontal plane unique: Commonwealth and NT Governments and West-oriented non-government providers and interest groups, all likely to include some Indigenous personnel, will be involved with Indigenous organisations and advocacy groups and the range of Indigenous viewpoints, including their engagement
in service-delivery, traditional to non-traditional cultural orientations and dysfunctionality. Frames could prove valuable in analysing such activity.
Chapter 3

Cultural Difference.

Social justice is … a life of choices and opportunity, free from discrimination.

Mick Dodson, ca 2003.¹

(T)he right to education is fundamental to social justice.

Chris Sidoti, 2001.²

There is an important unquantifiable dimension to policy related to formal education for Indigenous Territorians, the quality of participants' involvement in the policy process, that of the Indigenous clients in particular. It is a complex and volatile area. Participants' ideas and the interests they represent compete in policy arenas, as discussed in the previous chapter, and they can merge, even become virtually indistinguishable. The integrity of ideas and interests can be further compromised, to a degree at least, as they engage and are manipulated in the arena, especially in the evolution of policy advocacy coalitions, as identified mainly by Paul Sabatier (1991, 1998) and discussed by Peter John (1998)³

As well, ideas and interests mutate none is likely to remain static for long, although those deriving from significant enduring institutions, such as cultural heritage, ethnicity, ideological persuasion, value system or national identity, tend to be relatively stable. Policy process protagonists normally owe their involvement to the offices they hold and to recognition of relevant expertise they possess, their ideas and/or the interests to which they adhere and their ability to articulate their positions. The dynamics of participation, in conveying ideas and representing interests, is vital to the process, especially where differing cultural heritages obtain, as in the policy under scrutiny. In the absence of ready-made devices to assess quality of participation, an analytic instrument must be contrived.


The political motivations of decision-makers and civil servants, and the context within which policy is framed, mean that interests and ideas are in practice difficult to prise apart. Furthermore, the relationship of policy innovation to policy continuity is not always clear. Ideas have to be placed in the (complex) context of social and economic forces and institutions as well as the motives and operations of key personalities.\(^4\)

It has been so with policy on Indigenous advancement, including the provision of formal education, in Australia and in the Northern Territory (NT), but ideas, more than interests, appear to have been central in public policy on formal education for Indigenous Australians. This study will incorporate the prominent human concerns in the policy area, the cultural backgrounds that have provided the bases for relevant ideas and how those ideas have shaped the policy. It is largely one of social transformation to realise social justice for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

**Education in Social Transformation for Social Justice.**

The need to achieve social justice for disadvantaged peoples often appears in discourse about their condition in society and in treatises and submissions that seek to have disadvantage issues addressed. According to a recent (2004) articulation of social justice, it involved

> recognition of the importance of attaining substantive equality for diverse groups of people who have been under-represented in both education and employment. The four key principles ... (of) equality, access, participation and rights (apply).\(^5\)

Former Australian Human Rights Commissioner, Chris Sidoti (2001), casting about for a satisfactory definition of social justice, could find none better than that of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Social Justice Commissioner, Mick Dodson (1993).\(^6\)

Dodson provided a tangible Indigenous perspective:

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Social justice is what faces you in the morning. It is awakening in a house with adequate water supply, cooking facilities and sanitation. It is the ability to nourish your children and send them to school where their education not only equips them for employment but reinforces their knowledge and understanding of their cultural inheritance. It is the prospect of genuine employment and good health: a life of choices and opportunity, free from discrimination.

Endorsing Dodson's elucidation, Australian Museum Online (2003) declared simply that social justice entitled Indigenous Australians “to the same rights and services as all other citizens”. There was the qualification, however, that social justice had been “difficult to achieve for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders because of a history of government and colonial racism”. Social justice for Indigenous Australians thus required that detriment sustained since British settlement be overcome and equity with other Australians achieved.

The Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (2004) elaborated upon the concept in the context of Aborigines' status as the first Homo sapiens inhabitants of Australia.

Social justice also means recognising the distinctive rights that Indigenous Australians hold as the original peoples of this land, including:

- the right to a distinct status and culture, which helps maintain and strengthen the identity and spiritual and cultural practices of Indigenous communities;
- the right to self-determination, which is a process where Indigenous communities take control of their future and decide how they will address the issues facing them;
- the right to land, which provides the spiritual and cultural basis of Indigenous communities.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission advocates for the recognition of Indigenous Australians and seeks to promote

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8 Cf. the First Nations in North America.
respect and understanding of these rights among the broader Australian community.\(^9\)

From the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission perspective, social justice for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders thus involved more than overcoming disadvantage and enjoying the opportunities and benefits of Australian citizenship in equity with other Australians. Whilst such a state would include the right to pursue spiritual and cultural observances, the other rights sought as “original peoples”, to self-determination and traditional lands, are exceptional, reaching beyond equity with other Australians. Such aspirations are held in common with indigenous minorities in other countries, several of which will be considered in the \textit{seventh chapter}. What “self-determination” and land rights connote in the Indigenous Australian context and their viability in contemporary Australia will be discussed in \textit{Chapter 6}. In the meantime, in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities perspective, to gain social justice. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders must be transformed socially to overcome their comparative disadvantage in Australian society and their rights as the original human inhabitants of Australia must be fulfilled.

Sidoti rated education as essential to realise social justice. The right to education was integral “among economic, social and cultural rights”; it followed that, “as a right, … (education was) important for social justice”. He cited the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1999):

\begin{quote}
Education is both a human right in itself and an indispensible means of realizing other human rights. As an empowerment right, education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalised adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities. Education has a vital role in empowering women, safeguarding children from exploitative and hazardous labour and sexual exploitation, promoting human rights and democracy, protecting the environment and controlling population growth. Increasingly, education is recognised as one of the best financial investments States can make.
\end{quote}

The Committee's recognition of education as a human right, in Sidoti's view, made it “fundamental to social justice ..., to the full enjoyment of many other human rights

and to the exercise of social responsibilities including respect for human rights”. He drew attention to the fact that “a good education” supported peoples' “right to health, employment and participation in political and cultural life and the exercise of freedoms”, including those of speech, religion and belief. It was a right to which people were entitled “without discrimination”. He also pointed to the Committee's having balanced “the social and economic importance of education” with “the more personal purpose of individual fulfilment and development”:

(T)he importance of education is not just practical: a well-educated, enlightened and active mind, able to wander freely and widely, is one of the joys and rewards of human existence.\(^\text{10}\)

The vitality of education for human well-being was widely recognised. In the case of Indigenous Australians, it had the dual functions of key to social justice through social transformation and key to individual personal development and fulfilment.

Ideas, stemming variously from professional, official, social and cultural values, have been highly influential in policy on formal education for Indigenous Australians.

The policy has embodied the ideas-derived strategies and goals by means of which it has been expected that enduring Indigenous disadvantage should have been redressed. Formal education, however, is commonly seen to have failed its Indigenous clients, yet it is still expected to remedy injustice.

The concept of equity for Indigenous Australians with non-Indigenous Australians has long been prominent on the Indigenous agenda, with formal education commonly perceived as the means of its achievement. In one of many submissions made by Indigenes to authorities, William Cooper, for example, on behalf of the Australian Aborigines' League (1936), appealed to the Premier of New South Wales. He sought “full citizen rights … as enjoyed by white people and naturalized aliens … (to) be accorded to all aborigines”, with training and resourcing to enable them to become self-sufficient farmers. Significantly, schools of “the same standard as schools provided for white children” and using the same curriculum, to provide equitable educational opportunity and potential entry to the professions as “(had) been possible for other natives … in other parts”, were a priority.\(^\text{11}\) Cooper's conception of equity was fourfold: in status as Australian citizens, in participation in the economy, in

\(^{10}\) Sidoti. Pp. 6–7.

educational opportunity, and with the indigenous inhabitants of other colonised countries, in entry to and practice in professional rôles. Obviously formal education was regarded by the Australian Aborigines' League as integral to Aborigines' quest for participation with equity and independence in mainstream Australia.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP), over fifty years later, was to have similar goals. Three of its four main purposes were to achieve for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students equity with non-Indigenous students in their access to, participation in and achievement of outcomes from formal education services. The fourth purpose was to have an Indigenous perspective, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement, in education-related decisionmaking. It was reasoned that

(ther) the educational arrangements and procedures established from non-Aboriginal traditions have not adequately recognised and accommodated the particular needs and circumstances of Aboriginal people. Not only have Aboriginal people been consequently disadvantaged, but Australian society generally has not come to understand and appreciate the significance of Aboriginal culture. … Education is fundamental to enabling Aboriginal people to exercise their rights and participate in Australian society.

Belief that formal education was critical to social justice for Indigenous Australians had obviously endured, as had its failure, largely, to achieve the goal. Provisions made were perceived by Indigenous Australians and their advocates to have failed, due to their having been devised in a Western frame that neither comprehended nor took account of Indigenous culture. It was implied that Indigenous lore should be integral to the curriculum, in a judicious mesh of Western and Indigenous ideas. Reference was also made, in the previous chapter, to the Commonwealth's obligations under international covenants to which it was a signatory, which defined standards for the protection of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, bringing a legal dimension to bear. The AEP sought to effect social justice for Indigenes, and associated ideas were driving the cause, pragmatically, legally and morally.

12 Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1989. “Summary”, in National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP). Canberra, ACT. Commonwealth of Australia. P.1. It was stated that “Aboriginal” implied Torres Strait Islander as well.

The influence of ideas in the policy process will be important in the analysis. They signified both prior to and during the period of principal focus. The next chapter will indicate that, from British settlement to the 1930s, Indigenous affairs were influenced by a mixture of interests, largely those of rural settlers, and white officials' ideas about the Indigenous peoples and their interests. In the fifth and sixth chapters, it will be shown that, during the assimilation and self-determination eras, and especially after the 1967 Referendum, although non-Indigenous interests continued to exert influence, their ideas about the Indigenes and their well-being were developing, while Indigenous peoples' own ideas were increasingly voiced, heard and heeded. Parliaments and public agencies, however, were the principal sources of ideas about Indigenous Australians, assisted sometimes by academics and other advisers, some Indigenous persons but generally whites. Changing ideas about the Indigenous peoples and changing appreciation of their interests have been principally responsible for the evolution of policy in the area.

Ideas are paramount in policy to effect social transformation. It is evident, from earlier discussion, that key parties' ideas have been acknowledged by contemporary scholars as central to the policy process. As early as 1936, J. M. Keynes was an ardent but lone advocate of ideas, “for good or evil”, as determining “history and the policies of government”, and he regarded “the power of vested interests (as having been) vastly exaggerated”. By the 1990s, ideas had come to the fore, having won recognition as an essential element of policy. Views varied on which, ideas or interests, were primary in influencing choices made. John found general consensus that both were present and important but not on which dominated. Ideas had come to be regarded as vital in the policy process but advocacy of interests in identifying the most appropriate, or “best”, ideas and determining their adoption remained a policy driver. The issue therefore turned on what caused policy change.

Bruce Doern and Richard Phidd (1988), in their discussion of public policy in Canada, explained it as “an amalgam and interplay” of ideas, structures and processes. “Ideas” were the substance of policy, “structures” referred to organisations and bureaucracies across public and private sectors, and “processes” were the dynamics of policy-making, typically volatile

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14 E.g., Prof. A P. Elkin, for the Commonwealth, 1930s–40s.
15 E.g., former Senator Bob Collins, for the NTG, from late 1990s, and for the Commonwealth, early 2000s.
16 Mitsuru Shimpo, a Canadian of Japanese descent, was one exception. His report from his study, *The Social Process of Aboriginal Education in the Northern Territory* (1978), was submitted to the Director of the NT Division of the Australian Department of Education.
17 Parsons. P. 169.
as decision-makers endeavoured to cope with “uncertainty and … a changing environment”. Doern and Phidd regarded the main ideas of state politics as basic to the structures and the processes and to permeate them.\textsuperscript{19} The system, as they viewed it, was thus in perpetual idea-driven evolution.

Doern and Phidd advocated comprehensive initial examination of any public policy field for awareness of the full range of ideas underlying the national political life. They saw policy fields as typically having three dimensions, “economic”, “social” and “foreign/territorial”, each embodying particular sets of ideas, some of which were likely to be shared to some extent with one of the others or both of them. Their holistic approach was represented in a diagram, reproduced here in Figure 3.1.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3.1.png}
\caption{The Public Policy Triad: Policy Fields and Ideas.}
\end{figure}

The social dimension obviously predominates in formal education for Indigenous Australians. With reference to Doern and Phidd’s conception, some ideas in the economic and territorial dimensions are also likely to pertain, and some social ideas may be shared with them. For instance, the concept of equity, in terms of opportunity, redistribution and equality, especially regarding rights and material well-being, is central to policy on Indigenous affairs in Australia; but so too is efficiency, in outcomes from public moneys invested; regional sensitivity, at jurisdictional and local levels, and national integration are applicable; and internationalism, through obligation under humanity-oriented covenants, also applies. In the contentious arena of Australian Indigenous affairs, in particular in the


contexts of formal education and minority rights, attitudes and views, ideas, and the intensity of their expression constantly fluctuate. As Doern and Phidd put it, “many ideas merge and separate and rise and fall as policies evolve and society changes”.\(^\text{21}\) Swings in official thinking and public opinion relating to Indigenous Australia bear out their assessment.

In his *Political Economy of Fairness*, Edward E. Zajac's (1995) prime goal was to contribute constructively to the fairness-economic efficiency debate in the USA, thereby to improve elucidation of the salient issues. He sought to articulate pertinent concepts and terminology, seeing ideas, as Keynes had, as essential to understanding apt policy, and hence to its development.\(^\text{22}\) Zajac advocated fairness in economic policy: he conceded that an able theorist could, *ex post facto*, explain policy purporting to be based in fairness as really stemming from self-interest, invoking a rationalist explanation to refute fairness theory. He rejected the aptness of rational choice for fairness and justice, however, arguing that positive theory was better able to deal with fairness issues than was normative theory. He reasoned that “the main goal of a positive theory (was) for it to ‘work’”. As well as being able to explain policy phenomena, it should also “have more predictive power” than other theories. Enthusing about advances in positive theory in relation to economic justice and fairness, he stressed that such achievement was inter-disciplinary, springing originally from equity theory developed by psychologists and sociologists in the 1960s.\(^\text{23}\) The pertinent points from Zajac's work are that he concluded that fairness and justice theory was positive, essentially ideas-based, and had originated in a quest for social equity. As principles of fairness and justice and social equity are basic to and prominent in policy on formal education for Indigenous Australians, Zajac's reasoning alone justifies adoption of an ideas-based approach to the analysis to be undertaken.

Recognition of ideas in policy analysis over the last half-century co-incidentally paralleled the evolution of public policy in Indigenous affairs. As scholarly rating of ideas moved from there being a minor consideration to centrality in public policy analysis, policy on Aboriginal affairs moved from interest-based protection through the increasingly ideational assimilation and self-determination policy régimes. Also, in the 1990s, the concept of inclusion emerged as a universal ideal, with reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians a major outcome sought. Two other swings were reflected as policy evolved: whereas the interests of the white settlers originally dominated, the aspirations

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\(^\text{21}\) Doern and Phidd. P. 367.
of the Indigenes became more prominent, especially after the 1967 Referendum; and expectation that Aborigines were doomed to die out was confounded by their recovery. They were officially recognised as Australian citizens and as the first inhabitants of the country. Reconciliation was championed from the early 1990s. The germination of ideas leading to action, generally, however, appears not to have changed greatly. They have come mainly from governments, or been accepted and enacted in response to advocates' lobbying, more than in response to articulation from Indigenous grass roots. Ideas remain of paramount importance nonetheless.

Erik Bleich has recently (2002) advanced integration of ideas into policy analysis with “policy frames”. Frames, he argued, could direct policy-makers in developing policy and help to explain policy outcomes. He described frames as “cognitive maps … (encompassing) definitions, analogies, metaphors and symbols that (helped) actors to conceptualize a political or social situation, identify problems and goals, and chart courses of action”. Frames were “multidimensional ideas relevant to a particular policy sphere that (served) to organize information, empower certain actors, define goals, and constrain actions”. In other words, a policy frame was the frame of reference, comprising the relevant knowledge, understandings and expectations, assembled in an orderly manner, that could be brought to bear on a specific issue. The perceived quality and relevance of an actor's appreciation of the issue, or that of a group, would determine the status accorded the actor or group in addressing it.

The frames concept lends itself to the policy under consideration. In the light of Bleich's insight, the frames brought to bear on formal education for Indigenous Australians may be expected to differ significantly. The frame of the policy-makers and providers has evolved from industrial Britain and been conditioned by the Australian environment, the ethos of government and, in particular, interaction, with a white majority perspective, with Indigenous peoples since British settlement. The clients' frames, in contrast, have evolved from the Dreamtime, and have been conditioned by interaction, as a disadvantaged displaced minority, with Europeans for over two centuries. Rev. Dr. Djiniyini Gondarra OAM (2000), of the Golumala clan, exemplified the difference with a problem of communication between government and mission personnel and Yolŋu in Arnhemland in the 1980s, essentially a

25 Bullock, Alan, and Oliver Stallybrass, (eds.), 1977. The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought. London, UK. Fontana Books. P. 243. “Frame of reference” was explained as (t)he context, viewpoint, or a set of PRESUPPOSITIONS or of evaluative CRITERIA within which a person's (PERCEPTION) and thinking seem always to occur, and which constrain selectively the course and outcomes of these activities.
matter of unconnected frames: there was “the old way” of Yolŋu, in which “(the) elders would sit down and talk through and analyse problems together, even if it took a long time”, and there were “Balanda telling (Yolŋu) in a foreign language and style what they thought (Yolŋu) should know”. In Gondarra’s assessment of the status quo in Arnhemland, after two centuries of white settlement and two decades after the 1967 Referendum, a colonialisist frame was still manifest, where Indigenous peoples were concerned, amongst white government officials and missionaries.

The frames concept may prove apt in explaining such gaps. A government's frame is likely to be a cohesive assembly of ideas, derived primarily from a Westminster-based system embodying Western civic culture. The clientèle, conversely, may have several frames, influenced in varying degrees by cultural heritages, with some common ground stemming from traditional lore, and diverse aspects arising from linguistic factors, locations and environments, circumstances, aspirations and experiences. The frame of the NT Government (NTG) would therefore differ distinctly from those of its Indigenous clients, reflecting cultural difference.

**Cultural Dimensions.**

As signalled in the first chapter, this study is to test the hypothesis that incompatibility of the culture of the policy system with the clients' cultures is at the root of the failure of public education policy for most Indigenous Territorians. McConaghy would have regarded an approach to analysis of policy on Indigenous Australians that took serious account of cultural difference as “culturalist”. In such an approach, viewed from her frame, “‘Indigenous culture’ … (would have been) ‘already read’”, or stereotypically assumed. For her, culturalism embodied “the ideologies and discursive regimes of universalism, cultural racism, and cultural incompatibility” that “(perpetuated) a ‘two-race’ binary”. Within such a frame, “anthropological notions of ‘culture’ and the ‘two-race binary’ … (were) the primary analytical tools for deliberations of pedagogy”27. With “anthropological notions of ‘culture’”, she appears to have alluded to Indigenous culture as deduced by anthropologists in the context of their discipline's evolution-of-man tradition. By “‘two-race binary’”, in tandem with “anthropological notions of ‘culture’” in the Australian context, she implied a view, to which she took exception, of the dichotomy of black Indigenes and white European settlers that had evolved in the context of those earlier anthropological ideas. She would

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27 McConaghy. P. xi.
have associated Elkin and others, such as the ethnocentric F. J. Gillen and W. Baldwin Spencer, pioneers in the study of Aborigines in Central Australia, with such a school of anthropology.

McConaghy's stance indicates a need to clarify the concept of “culture” for the purposes of this study. Zuweng Shen (?2004) observed that it was a term used frequently in most walks of life yet one of the most difficult to define. The several attempts to define “culture” to which he referred all embraced individual groups’ inherited and learned social mantles, including their frames of reference. One that he cited, made in the context of nursing, defined the concept as the

learned, shared and transmitted values, beliefs, norms, and lifeways of a particular group that guides (its members’) thinking, decisions, and actions in patterned ways.

It was consistent with others in the substance specified, importantly in its framing of group members' ideas. Of particular significance was its extension of culture from application to ethnic heritages to embrace fields of endeavour. The latter was reinforced by Mark Healy’s (?2004) consideration of definitions of culture, which included “government, … the economy, … education, … family, … religion, … tribe, clan” as component social institutions. Language was a particularly important component of culture in its sense of “learned behaviour”, as it was a major means for transmitting culture. Healy elaborated: “cultural landscape” was both “the forms placed on the physical landscape by human activities” and “how people (arranged) the physical space around them”; “sequent occupancy” was “the notion that successive societies (left) their cultural imprints on a place, each contributing to the cumulative cultural landscape”; “acculturation” was “cultural modifications resulting from intercultural borrowing”, commonly implying the impact sustained by an indigenous culture from “the imposition of a technologically more advanced culture”, as in colonisation, involving “a one-way transfer of cultural traits”; and “transculturation” was “the two-way exchange of cultural traits between societies in close contact”.

31 Healy. P. 3.
Healy was at pains to dispel any idea that culture and ethnicity were synonymous, as members of a discrete group learned their culture, whereas their ethnicity was biologically determined. He pointed out that an ethnic group may be divided culturally and that “(e)thnic conflicts” were normally really “cultural conflicts”, between different cultural groups rather than different races.

Observing that there was considerable variation in cultures around the world, Kelly E. Friel (1999) isolated four common “basic components (of a culture): symbols, language, values, and norms”. Symbols, recognised as having specific meanings by everyone sharing a particular culture, provided the basis upon which all other components were established; language was “a complex system of symbols” used for communication between members, primarily within the cultural group; values were “basic guidelines for good and desirable behavior”; and norms were rules to ensure the observation of the values within the society, with norms of ethical importance labelled “mores”. The clarifications of the terminology offered by Healy and Friel are not necessarily definitive, but their information should prove useful in interpreting cultural dimensions of the public policy process.

John Wolford (2002) cited a systematic definition of culture by British anthropologist E. B. Tyler in 1871,

that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Wolford considered it an “excellent definition and still usable”, with the reservation that although it described what culture comprised, it neither explained its composition nor what its component parts did. He favoured William A. Haviland's perspective:

Culture is a set of rules or standards shared by the members of a society, which when acted upon by the members, produces behavior that falls within a range of variation the members consider proper and acceptable.

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32 Healy's paper actually read, “the same ethnic group can be divided biologically” but it was apparent, from the Rwandan and Bosnian examples with which he illustrated his point, that where “biologically” appeared, “culturally” had been intended.
33 Healy, Pp. 3–5.
Haviland elaborated, listing as “(c)haracteristics of culture” that it was “learned …, shared …, symbolic …, (and) integrated”, declaring,

society is a group of people who occupy a specific locality and who share the same cultural traditions. Social structure is the relationships of groups within a society that hold that society together.\textsuperscript{35}

Haviland's cultural anthropology-based definition and discussion of culture satisfied Wolford's demand for explanation of why the component parts were present and what they did. The components, including the four basic ones identified by Friel as being common to all cultures, the reasons for their presence and the tasks they perform will be taken as the essence of culture in this study.

Participants in the 1982 Mexico City World Conference on Cultural Policy, sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, (UNESCO) defined “culture” in its heritage sense. They agreed, in consistency with the more recent views of scholars Healy, Friel, Haviland and Wolford, that it comprised

the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or social group, … not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs\textsuperscript{36},

a basis for a composite of inherited ideas, an inherent frame. Homo sapiens evidently sprang from common origins, but diversity in cultures and languages evolved as the species migrated around the planet, groups adapting to the environments they encountered and some modest genetic mutation occurring.\textsuperscript{37}

Late in the eighteenth century AD, it is likely that, from respective experiences and the environments in which they had occurred, no greater difference between cultures had

\textsuperscript{35} Wolford, Professor John, 2002. ‘Lecture Notes for Chapter 2 (of) William A. Haviland, Cultural Anthropology, 10\textsuperscript{th} edition’, “Anthropology II – Introduction to Cultural Anthropology” St. Louis, Missouri, USA. Department of Anthropology, University of Missouri. \url{http://www.umsl.edu/~wolfordj/courses/a11ws02}.


\textsuperscript{37} Current scholastic accounts of human evolution consistently hold that Homo sapiens originated from common stock in central Africa, gradually emigrating to occupy habitable parts of Earth. There were relatively minor biological mutations, but substantial cultural diversification occurred. E.g.: V. Gordon Childe, 1951 (1979); J. S. Weiner, 1971; J. D. Mulvaney, 1975; R. V. Jackson, 1988; Christopher Stringer and Robin McKie, 1996; Mulvaney and Johan Kamminga, 1999; and Noel Brandt, 2002.
evolved than that between the Indigenous Australians and the British. Whereas the former remained hunters and gatherers, Britain, emerging from the Napoleonic Wars with the Industrial Revolution advanced and prominent as an advanced power, was described as the world's "leading maritime, commercial and manufacturing nation". The proposition to be investigated is that the underlying problem with formal education for Indigenous Australians, specifically Territorians, arose from differences in the cultural bases of the Indigenous clients and of the mainstream decision-makers and providers: formal education in Australia was derived from a British model, a product of the Industrial Revolution, and evolved in implementation for all Australians, including the ethnic minorities for whom its cultural basis was alien. The implications of cultural difference for the suitability and effectiveness of public schooling and training for Indigenous Territorians is the principal area of contention in the study.

The UNESCO's "Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies" (1982) began

> The world has undergone profound changes in recent years. The progress of science and technology has changed man's place in the world and the nature of his social relations. Education and culture, whose significance and scope have been considerably extended, are essential for the genuine development of the individual and society.

It was thus agreed that education and culture were joint social development vehicles. With such perspective, formal education as it had been developed in the West, comprising schooling and training, delivered in the main in or through institutions, was devised to equip youth with skills and understandings for effective life and livelihood in contemporary times; and culture, relayed down the generations, in the home and the community, by persons identified as having such responsibility, equipped young people with frames that had evolved over the aeons of their peoples' earthly existences and with knowledge, values, beliefs and mastery of practices that were cherished as appropriate for societal and individual well-being. Culture is therefore significant for young people's education in any context.

The Mexico City Conference participants committed themselves on the "Cultural Dimension of Development" principle. They went so far as to declare that

39 UNESCO. "Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies." P. 1.
(b)alanced development can only be ensured by making cultural factors an integral part of the strategies designed to achieve it; consequently, these strategies should always be devised in the light of the historical, social and cultural context of each society.40

A society, therefore, could reasonably expect account of its cultural heritage to be taken in the formal educational provision made for it. Conference participants, by implication, would have taken integration of Indigenous cultural factors in education policy developed for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders as fundamental. With the benefit of hindsight, and in view of some measures taken abroad, it is logical that such provisions should have been made, although the simplicity of the concept may belie the complexity of its application in practice. The UNESCO position on tangible and intangible heritage, updated in 200141, is consistent with the 1982 “Declaration”, indicating the relevance cultural heritage is deemed to have globally in the twenty-first century. Although not binding on Australia, it is valid as a guide for Indigenous development. Integration of cultural heritage factors into formal education for Indigenous Territorians will be considered. Study of provisions made for some indigenous minorities overseas, albeit less comprehensive and without analysis, will enhance the local perspective.

Political culture and civic culture crystallised as concepts over the last half-century. The ideas involved are likely to be manifest amongst Indigenous Territorians in ways quite different from their manifestation amongst public education policy-makers and providers. Those ideas are relevant to this study and need to be clarified. They permeate society, including public administration especially, in the contemporary West, effectively extending Max Weber's legal/rational ideal order into the polity, emphasising citizens' rational involvement in public affairs. In Australia, they derive largely from the British heritage.

Gabriel A. Almond (1956) proposed the notion of political culture as “(the) particular pattern of orientations to political action … (in which every) political system (was) embedded”.42 Refining the idea, he and Sidney Verba (1963) argued that the political culture of a polity comprised “civic virtue and responsibility, … participatory and pluralistic democracy, … order through rational bureaucracy, … (and) stability through modernisation”, reminiscent of Weber's thinking, all actually or potentially existing in an ideal state. Almond elaborated his conception of political culture further with G. Bingham Powell (1996), as

40 UNESCO. “Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies.” P. 3.
“the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations towards politics among the members of a political system, ... the subjective realm which (underlay) and (gave) meaning to political actions”. Almond and Verba (1980) reviewed their 1963 exposition in the light of subsequent debate which had shown, inter alia, that there was no consensus on precisely what “political culture” and “civic culture” denoted.43 Ronald Chilcote (1981) drew from their review the idea that the political culture of a society stemmed from constituents' knowledge and understandings of the political system and their perceptions of it. The Weberian concept of three levels of involvement emerged: “parochial”, wherein constituents were mainly uninvolved; “subject”, wherein they were marginally, passively, involved; and “participant”, wherein they were actively involved. In Chilcote's view, political culture was the linkage between a political system and the developments within it.44

Political culture, as conceived by Almond and Powell, pervaded the polity. It evolved as linkage between the system, or government, and politically-related activity in the polity, and was therefore a feature of jurisdictions and political parties. It may be typed broadly, as Chilcote proposed, on the extent of public involvement in practice. In Australia's diverse population, a wide spectrum of types of political culture may be expected. With government through representative democracy at federal, State/Territory jurisdictional and local/community levels, regular elections and relatively ready public access to elected representatives, a high degree of participation could be expected, with parochialism likely to be correspondingly low. However, complacency in comparatively prosperous, safe and stable Australia, cynicism about government and public administration, politicians and public servants and wide-spread apathy ensured that most citizens were in the subject category, contributing generally only through the mandatory vote.45 Chilcote's ideas about levels of public involvement in political activity have potential for application in the qualitative analysis of policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians.

Civic culture in a polity is an element, or function, of its political culture. Max Kaase and Kenneth Newton (1995) concluded from Almond and Verba's 1963 exposition that it afforded the populace opportunity to be involved in the political system “beyond the vote”. There was a participatory ideal, but conversely it opened the way to public interference in the “relationship of trust between rulers and ruled” that was implicit in public participation's

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45 Major issues can disturb the calm, with outbursts of public activism, as witnessed over Australia's military involvement in Vietnam in the 1970s and currently as a member of the “coalition of the willing” in Iraq.
being restricted to the vote. Official exclusivity was thus implied. It referred to the mental *modus operandi* of public administration, applied in implementing governments' policies, embodying in particular Almond and Verba's notion of “accepted conceptual premises”, or official lore. It was influenced, but not readily disturbed, by the elected representatives it served, whose policies it implemented, and by the participant strand of the political culture. Derived and evolving from the Westminster model, public administration in Australia was generally stable (cf. Sabatier and Kingdon on stability in policy), both with changes in governments and despite increasing contemporary trends to politicise the upper echelons of public sectors. Stability, and hence consistency, were fundamental to the civic cultures which conditioned the mind-sets of Australian public sectors.

In concept, civic culture ideally embraced a whole community, in local, regional and national perspectives. Thomas Bridges (2002) argued that no liberal democracy “(could) even be established, let alone flourish, … (without) significant numbers of persons” being able to rise above the fabric of their primal familial, ethnic, class and religious identifications and enabling the state to treat all its citizens effectively “as free individuals and to treat all individuals as equals”. To meet such a challenge, a liberal democracy was obliged to “generate some form of countervailing civic culture” able to “create and sustain civic identities”. In order to do so, “educational processes” had to be devised to ensure “the effectiveness and reproduction of that civic culture” and to inure it to attempts at sabotage by disaffected factions within. A civic culture required “an ongoing process of persuasion” to secure citizens' adherence to the generally accepted behavioural norms of the society whilst not relinquishing their individual “particularistic cultural” identities. Expectations of citizenship, in Western frames, thus comprised the persuasive force of the civic culture. Whilst there were similarly expectations of citizenship in Indigenous frames, differences in cultural heritages made it unlikely that they would be the same as those applicable to other Australians.

Craig McGarvey (1997) rated “creating an effective ‘learning partnership’” the greatest challenge in developing civic culture. The key goal of the Californian Civic Culture Initiatives of The James Irvine Foundation, whose programs he directed, was development of inclusive communities. It was premised on beliefs that they were built on “shared

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experience” in solving social problems and that it was necessarily an education initiative, being an issue of culture and therefore involving learning behaviours. It was important to forge a partnership between “the practice-building of communities and the knowledge-building of applied research”.

Laura A. Reese and Raymond A. Rosenfeld (2004), initiating research in policy-making in fifteen North American “large central cities”, also focussed on civic culture at the local level. In their conception, it was an “independent variable” of three component parts, “the community power system, the community value system and the community decisionmaking system”. They proposed local civic culture as a means for understanding how municipal policy-makers weigh the interests of different groups, govern the local community, frame local goals, engage in decisionmaking and ultimately select and implement public policies. The components of local civic culture shape what issues are problems, what solutions are possible, how decisions are made, who is involved in decision-making, and “who gets what” out of policy outcomes. More specifically, local civic culture can provide the theoretical framework for understanding local dynamics and explaining variation in local public policies. … Local civic cultures represent systems of individual and group interactions in a public policy-making context that inherently necessitates the “allocation of value” with processes reflecting both individual and community values and goals.

Local government was thus a “collective activity”, its dynamics effectively “a system of cultural interaction”. At the local level, public policy, then, was a “dependent variable”, generated by the ideas and priorities prevailing in the contemporary civic culture of the community. Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana, Prem Misir (2004), provided insight with his pragmatic application of the civic culture concept at the national level in Guyana, in the context of ethnic cultures and national cohesion. There was a groundswell for “race-ethnic problems” to be solved with “a common ethnic culture” for the six ethnic groups which comprised the Guyanan population. Consistent with the theoretical construct proposed by Bridges, Misir argued for the development of “a universally-shared civic culture that (came) from the common civil code of the Constitution, the Judiciary, Parliament and

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other similar-type instruments” as “the common Guyanese culture”. No groups would then be obliged to relinquish their ethnic cultures to assimilate into a common one.51

It may be construed, from the literature consulted, that civic culture is a mantle which both evolves and is manipulated in the interests of order, cohesion and harmony in culturally diverse communities or polities. It may therefore provide a pragmatic but principled basis for government from local to national levels and determine priorities and parameters for making and implementing public policies. With respect to formal education for Indigenous Territorians, three dimensions of civic culture therefore come into play: the Federal one underlying the Commonwealth; the NT one, underlying the NTG; and the local one, underlying local and community government councils and other local decision-making mechanisms, school councils in particular. The Commonwealth and the NTG both signify. Local government in urban centres normally has little involvement in public schooling and training, but community government in predominantly Indigenous communities can both influence policy and practice in education service delivery and contribute to operation. Civic culture at the Indigenous education community level is therefore also important.

The frame of a discrete human group is determined primarily by the cultural background shared by its members and communicated using the language they have in common. The term, “culture”, is used in its primary sense, embracing the full range of characteristics of a discrete people, relayed through successive generations. Literature and rhetoric on Indigenous affairs in Australia is littered with “cultural difference” and allusion to it.52 Some policy-makers, many providers and their clients have acknowledged and asserted the importance of recognising and respecting Indigenous culture and being duly sensitive to ensure that services are practically appropriate and effective.


The multiplicity of cultural dimensions *per se* would have been alien to Indigenes in Australia in earlier stages of white-black contact, as they were to most of the new settlers. Today, however, many Indigenous Australians are acutely aware of the political culture of the dominant society and the prevailing civic culture, largely through the many policies which affect them directly and which they may manipulate. Few, however, other than those in responsible *rôles* in the public sector, would be familiar with the frames, the political and bureaucratic adaptations of the civic culture, within which policies are conceived and developed and from which services emanate.

Recognisable cultures develop in the operation of organisations and in discrete occupations. The culture of an organised body is usually conceived of in contexts such as public agencies, commercial enterprises, schools, hospitals, defence or law-enforcement forces, interest-focussed entities or other formal institutions. The frame of an organisation, as in a society, the ideas about its operational base, stem from its personnel's customs and experience and thereby constitute the basis of its culture. It is another area in which there is likely to be cultural difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Specifically, there is likely to be cultural difference between a public agency, in the instance in question the NTG's education agency, and, despite its relatively high number of Indigenous employees\(^{53}\), its Indigenous *clientèle*. In perspective, anthropologists and sociologists have found that the ancient tribal societies of Sahul, Greater Australia, were complex organisations, developed in accordance with their inter-related Dreamtime-derived imperatives, domestic and spiritual practices and hunting and gathering routines.\(^{54}\)

Morton Fried (1967) identified “legitimacy” as “one of the most central yet difficult concepts” in a political system.\(^{55}\) Societal organisation, he argued, stemmed from the nature of the authority that shaped a society's operation. Weber had taken the rational/legal authority of the corporate body, the most conspicuous form of authority in the West, with its “body of generalized rules, … legally consistent and claiming to cover all possible ‘cases’ of conduct within (its) jurisdiction … and universalistic” in its objectivity. Its authority derived from its objectivity; where there was “an organized administrative staff”;

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the structure was bureaucratic. Understanding and expectations of logically structured order and formally legislated rules would thus be central to organisational culture in a society managed under rational/legal authority. Mainstream Australia is such a society; most of Indigenous Australia is not.

“Traditional authority” was Weber's second authority type. It was received in the natural course of events rather than being legislated or otherwise imposed. Like the first, it was regulated, containing “a body of concrete rules”, but their justification could have been as basic as their always having prevailed. It also contained “a system of statuses of persons who (could) legitimately exercise authority” but no formal hierarchy. Another distinguishing feature was that within “the concrete traditional prescription of the traditional order” and its authority system, an individual person normally had “a sphere of arbitrary free ‘grace’” to exercise at his/her discretion, provided it did not impinge upon the established order or the status system. Long-established practice, precedent and unquestioning belief, however, would be key elements in the organisational culture in a society in which the authority derived from tradition. Before British settlement, Weber's notion of traditional organisation had existed for Indigenous Australians from time immemorial. In some remote communities, it endures to some extent, but it has largely broken down.

Weber regarded rational/legal and traditional authority systems as apt for “a settled permanent social system”, stable and liable to change of a “routine” nature only. He did not differentiate between the legitimacy of an authority secured by law and that of one based in custom. His third authority type, “charismatic”, was in direct conflict with established legitimate authority. A charismatic leader, he reasoned, was “in some sense a revolutionary … in conscious opposition to some established aspects of the society”. Charismatic authority is not directly relevant to this study, but it has been prominent in black-white interaction. Many non-Indigenous pioneers of the Outback, notably explorers, pastoralists, prospectors and early officials, possessed charisma; it has diminished in significance in the managerialism of contemporary administration and the imperative for enterprises to realise outcomes, primarily economic, in their endeavours. In contrast, charismatic Indigenous

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leaders have increasingly played important rôles in Indigenous affairs, demonstrating knowledge and skill to work the system to realise ends important to them.

As the study proceeds, organisational cultures in Indigenous and non-Indigenous contexts will be observed. A predictable result is that the frame of the non-Indigenous Australians involved will conform for the most part with Weber's “rational-legal” type. That of Indigenous participants, other than provider employees, will most likely be found to conform with the “traditional” one, albeit less profoundly. When Britain first colonised Australia, the dichotomy would have been distinct, with free white settlers purposeful and supposedly regulated and Indigenous inhabitants truly traditional. It is appropriate to apply the concept of organisational culture in the present-day NT. Any findings are unlikely to be clear-cut, however, due to the affects of white settlement and public administration on Indigenous Territorians.

Vocations also develop their own cultures, each deriving from a frame evolving from the particular rôle. For example, teachers, police officers, physicians, graziers, accountants and builders are all influenced by the ethos and characteristic styles of their respective occupations, as well as by their own individual heritages and world-views. Occupational cultures inevitably affect institutions: an agency providing information technology, schooling and training, health or customs and immigration services is influenced by the mores of its component parts, the services they provide and their delivery structures and operations. In a public agency providing a range of services, such as a department of health and community services, co-ordinating operations and balancing the budget are priorities. At senior and executive levels, where accounting also signifies, a culture develops that is more managerial than occupational, regardless of incumbents' earlier rôles.

In formal education, organisational and occupational cultures are likely to generate tension as they interact In the NT, institutions in primary, secondary, tertiary and other post-school sectors, of different sizes and compositions, make comprehensive and specialised provisions in urban, rural and remote locations for mainstream, mixed and Indigenous enrolments and communities. One may expect each to have its own ethos and distinctive organisational style, evolving through the interaction of its charter and its operation, the community it

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61 E.g., the late Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Lowitja O'Donoghue, Evelyn Scott, Eric Wilmot, Patrick Dodson, Mick Dodson, Paul Hughes, the late Charles Perkins, Roberta Sykes, Marcia Langton, Mary Ann Bin-Sallik, Aiden Ridgway, Murrundoo Yanna, Linda Burney, Noel Pearson, Geoff Clark, Albert Namañjira, the late Sir Douglas Nicholls, the late Neville Bonner, Jimmy Chi, Ernie Dingo, Deborah Mailman, Galaruy Yunupingu, Mandhawuy Yunupingu, the late Gatjel Djerrkura, John Ah Kit, Marion Scrymgour, Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann, Shirley Nirrurandji and Chippy Miller, to mention a few. Pre-WWII, the outlaw, Nemarluk, was a hero amongst his own people in the NT.
serves, its clientele's expectations, the resources available and the occupational ideas and personalities of the people involved. In the smallest of such institutions, four operational fields exist: the professional leadership and management level which gives direction and shoulders responsibility; the administrative unit, which enables the institution to work; the professional element, which delivers the services; and para-professional ancillary support for service delivery. They must integrate seamlessly into a team operation for optimal achievement of intended outcomes, requiring the culture of the institution to support and promote effective communication, mutual recognition and value of the occupations, cultures and other attributes and rôles of all elements and their operatives. Commitment to professional and personal development is an important aspect. Organisational and occupational cultures are thus potentially aspects of difference between policy-makers and providers and their clients in conceiving and implementing policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians. They must be taken into account in analysing the policy.

Juxtaposition of Indigenous Australians with public policy is inherently anomalous, another factor to be incorporated in the qualitative analysis. Dean G. Kilpatrick (2000) specifically pointed out that in the Western liberal democratic tradition, public policy was inevitably devised differently from its development in other contexts. The clientele of the policy in question is for the most part distinctly non-Western. Another dimension of cultural difference is thus manifest: the policy, having been conceived, developed, resourced and delivered from within the frame of the mainstream civic culture, was essentially Western; accountability for the public moneys committed, a fundamental tenet of that policy base, was required; and, with the fragmented distribution of Indigenous Australians, including Territorians, prior to British settlement and subsequently, it is unlikely that there was ever any prudential mantle comparable with public policy in the lore and customary law of traditional Indigenous societies, so the only model available was the British one. Again, frames may help bridge the inevitable conceptual-cum-cultural gap, when the analysis is reviewed in the final chapter.

62 My perspective on optimal operation in public schooling and training was developed over almost forty years in the Papua New Guinea and NT systems, as teacher, headmaster/principal, superintendent/director and occasionally acting in senior executive rôles.
64 Further work will still be required, regardless of the findings, as they will have been reached from within my frame, which has evolved from a white Christian middle-class background and involvement in delivery of public education for forty years or so. An Indigenous frame, possibly a composite one of several Indigenous persons, needs to be applied.
Actors' ideas are diverse, all deserving recognition. Policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians, Western-based, should not be considered in isolation from the clients' culture and belief system, circumstances, dispositions and expectations. It would be unrealistic, however, if the situations of the Indigenous peoples and the services provided for them were considered in isolation from the mainstream, as priorities are determined, policies are developed and services are delivered from the political and civic frames of the white middle-class milieu. The respective world-views of the decision-makers and providers and of their clients, by virtue of their respective cultural heritages, their experiences since white settlement and their circumstances, although coinciding in varying degrees in some instances, generally differ. That policy-making, notwithstanding involvement of the clients in the process, should occur in a location remote from the clientèle, as has been the case, is an obvious anomaly. Less obvious, but just as pertinent to policy's viability, is that related decisions reached are based on understandings, reasoning and assumptions in the official frame, not in any Indigenous frame.

A possible explanation of limited Indigenous advancement, in terms of the goals set, is that measures taken have been inappropriate or taken inappropriately. Related policy was conceived initially with the ethos of British civic responsibility, in its colonial perspective, devised to fulfil aspirations the Indigenous inhabitants were thought to need, and implemented accordingly. There ensued a prolonged period when belief that Aborigines were doomed to extinction, reinforced with the (then) popular idea of “survival of the fittest”, extrapolated from Charles Darwin's (1859) doctrine of evolution by natural selection, and it became policy to “protect” them until they died out. From the 1930s, mainstream concern for Indigenous well-being grew, and, since the 1960s, Indigenous input to policy, programs and service delivery has increased. Such input has tended, however, to be provided by, or via, Indigenous persons who have succeeded in the mainstream, and who, as a consequence, may have been inclined to view their peoples' interests largely from within mainstream, or quasi-mainstream, frames. Anomalies have resulted, with inherent differences between the official frame and the mental sets, or frames, of the clients.

Representative democracies have particular civic cultures, largely but not entirely manifest in the official frames of their public administrations. Effective involvement for most citizens can extend beyond the vote, but a comparatively low proportion of Australians avail themselves of the opportunity. Rather, the civic culture tends to be based on an in-
principle relationship of trust between constituents and governments. Influence in policy-related decision-making, as a consequence, rests in a higher echelon which is predominantly Western and middle-class. Where there is activism in the community, as Kaase and Newton found in Western Europe, it tends to be “disproportionately concentrated among the middle and upper class”, adding another dimension to the influence of the more privileged and affluent in society. The same holds true in Australia. Our much-vaunted egalitarianism, supposedly distinguishing Australian society from the English stereotype, as John Hirst (2001) pointed out, amounts to little more than “nobody (feeling) better than anyone else, or higher … only better-off”. The influence upon Australian governments of any persuasion exerted by such sectors as big business, banking, media proprietorship, industry and rural and mining interests suggests that the input of the “better-off” is heeded to a high degree and that they have ready access to the halls of power. Hence, some professional associations' and unions' efforts notwithstanding, there would in practice generally be limited Indigenous contribution to the affairs of state, whether it be through elected representation, within the bureaucracy or as an influential interest. Towards the end of the twentieth century, input on Indigenous affairs was exceptional in that Indigenous voices were heard, notably through the peak body, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, now discredited and disbanded. Generally, however, participant involvement was likely to be mostly in the province of the “better-off”. Some Indigenous constituents may have had “subject” involvement, with the majority of other Australians, but most were “parochial”.

Involvement of Indigenes in government in the NT increased from the mid-1970s. Significant numbers have been employed by the NTG, and by the Commonwealth in the NT, and some middle-management appointments have been made. Indigenous presence in the NT Parliament is also established: each regular Legislative Assembly election has returned at least one Indigenous Member, the first Indigenous minister, John Ah Kit, was appointed in 2001, and in 2004 a second, Marion Scrymgour, was appointed. Most Indigenous Territorians, apart from those working full-time, are in some way governments' clients. The way in which they view public services is determined, as for others, largely by their particular experiences, competing priorities, knowledge of the system and cultural and local

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environmental factors. It therefore differs somewhat from perception in the “carpetland”, or official, frame.

Providers have typically tried to address their services' perceived failure by urging both operatives and clients to try harder and apply themselves better, implicitly tending to blame them. The interests of the Indigenes, as conceived by the providers and by the clients, have had much in common, but ideas on the purpose of the policy, what was to be achieved and how it was to be achieved, differed. If cultural difference, and hence differences in ideas and consequent limitations on mutual engagement in implementation, are at the root of limited effectiveness of services, a case could be made to give Indigenous organisations control of the resources normally managed by public agencies. This is reminiscent of a catchcry amongst Indigenous activists in the 1990s. Stringent requirements to account for expenditure of public moneys pose challenges, but such a radical measure, potentially, could at least enable Indigenous ideas to be aligned with human services for Indigenous clients.71

That there is cultural difference where there are different heritages is an axiom. As noted in the frames context, cultural differences also developed amongst Indigenous Australians, over the millennia prior to white settlement, due to the country's great distances, wide ranges of geographic and climatic conditions and sparse population. Physical conditions would have generated some cultural divergence amongst the white settlers, and it is accentuated by the breadth of ethnicities now represented. There is similarly difference within each of the derivative cultures: the political culture of the NT and the policy and operational culture of its administration are different from those prevailing in other jurisdictions, inter alia, for the logistic reasons of population characteristics, historic factors, economic circumstances, location and distances; and institutions and occupations have cultures peculiar to their respective ethoses, operations and environments. The foregoing indicate the dimensions of cultural difference likely to apply in the public policy process, throughout the funnel, at national, jurisdictional and local levels.

71 It would be interesting to see to what extent Indigenous parents in urban settings would in practice keep their children in mainstream schools, should such a measure be taken. Initiatives and experience in formal education for indigenous minorities overseas may yield useful insights. In the NT, the independent Indigenous Yipirinya School in Alice Springs is a case in point: 1988–89, an Indigenous parent, Chris Poulson, a Warlpiri man employed by the Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDE) as an assistant adult educator, transferred his son from the urban, predominantly Aboriginal, Traeger Park School to Yipirinya because the latter was “an Aboriginal School”; Poulson returned some months later with the request that his son re-enrol at Traeger Park, telling me that Yipirinya was in fact “an Arrernte school”, not an “Aboriginal” one after all. In another instance, ca 1991, a prominent Indigenous leader in the Tiwi Islands, Cyril Rioli, totally rejected my idea that a weekly-boarding high school be established some distance from the communities on Melville Island to provide an alternative to the generally unsatisfactory and unsuccessful arrangement whereby secondary-aged Tiwi Islands students boarded in Darwin to attend high schools. Rioli said that he wanted Tiwi students to attend “proper schools”.
Practically, culture is a major issue in public policy for Indigenous Australians. There are some common attributes, such as the prominence across Australia of the Rainbow Serpent in the Dreaming. However, Indigenes living in their traditional environments, for example, in the Tiwi Islands, in Central Australia, on Cape York Peninsula, in the Torres Strait Islands and in the Kimberley area, are nonetheless quite distinct from each other. In the rhetoric, “cultural difference” commonly refers to difference between Indigenous Australian and mainstream cultures, but policy developers need to be sensitive to differences between Indigenous peoples as well.

A characteristic shared by Indigenous Australians, wide-spread but by no means uniform, is the human and cultural impact sustained from white settlement. Many have moved to a degree, generally involuntarily, into a cultural hiatus between their heritage and the European-dominated framework. Cultural conciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, whether desirable or not, is difficult to achieve, however, given the differences between their respective heritages and the experiences of both since the arrival of the latter (to be considered in Chapter 4). Differences in heritage and the general social disadvantage of Indigenous Australians are exacerbated for the elderly, poverty-stricken, disabled and substance-addicted and -damaged elements of the Indigenous population. They also need to be taken into account sensitively in Indigenous affairs policy, especially in the human services.

In comparison with other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, Australian public policy caters quite well for disadvantage. Provisions made are not ideal, however, governments' intentions and claims and the level of fiscal commitment to the area notwithstanding. In reality, implementation of policy to address the needs of the disadvantaged often fails to realise the panaçæas for which the policy is conceived. A probable partial explanation is that disadvantaged groups have their own cultures. They stem from the nature of the disadvantage, largely unfamiliar to mainstream Australia and to the official frame. It is also possible that, whilst clients may be included in the policy

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72 In 1997–99, I led implementation of policy on educational provisions for students with disabilities and impairments in NT schools. The policy had been revised for consistency with the Federal Disability Discrimination Act and the NT Anti-Discrimination Act. Locally, the rôle included working with parents and parent organisations, teaching and support staff and unions and professional associations, other agencies and the public generally, to explain the policy, its underlying principles and implementation processes. At the national level, it involved activity related to policy development and implementation, including specifically in remote Indigenous communities. The distinct cultures of different disabilities (e.g. hearing impaired, sight impaired, wheelchair bound, paraplegics) were clearly in evidence, and it often appeared to be the case also with parents and carers of people with particular disabilities.
process, the quality of their participation is lacking. That aspect of their involvement will be the focus of qualitative analysis of the policy.

Indigenous Australians' disadvantage are is recognised. They comprise an ethnic minority with cultural heritages alien to the dominant blend. They have as many cultures as they have language groups. There may be more, such as those whose native tongues are extinct and speak English, or a form of English, and dwell in or around urban centres where they may nonetheless be marginalised in relation to the mainstream. Other Indigenous cultural entities may be identifiable, amongst those who participate easily and with success in the mainstream, some adhering as much as they are able to their native heritages nonetheless, and others eschewing them.

Cultural factors exacerbate the complexity of public policy. The innate incongruity, per se, of juxtaposing Western-based public policy with its Indigenous clientèle in the NT has been acknowledged. In addition to difference in cultural heritages, the specific derivatives of both Western and Indigenous heritages also signify. The frames which individual actors bring to the policy process may be largely determined by their respective cultural heritages, but the actors are also influenced by the particular culture of the specific and general ideas giving rise to their involvement. For instance, involved officials will have a professional frame or a bureaucratic one, or both, and they may also have a ideological one. In terms of the bi-axial framework, they have much to offer in the horizontal plane of the policy process, as well as contributing hierarchically. Even with the best of intentions, their knowledge of the subject in the official perspective, their experience and skill in negotiation, their relatively articulate use of English and their commitment to achieving the outcomes the government seeks can make it difficult for parents and community representatives to have equitable involvement and influence. This is especially so for Indigenous men and women, although there are many shrewd negotiators amongst them.

The bi-axial model can illustrate frames coming to bear on each other. Intra-system activity, in the vertical plane, occurs within the legal/rational administrative structure of Western civic culture (in which Indigenous employees are engaged in the NT). The frame of the Australian mainstream civic culture is important, largely determining governments' service responsibilities, provisions and expectations, their perceptions of clients' needs and their grasps of official operations, including constraints. Lateral activity, in the horizontal plane, involves consultation, lobbying and negotiation, with several partially overlapping frames likely: one may expect the national civic cultural frame, from which professional-cum-administrative official frames derive, the Western-based frames of non-government service-
providers, those of non-Indigenous interest groups, shaped by their rôles as client advocates, and the clients' own frames, as numerous as their distinct backgrounds. Within each frame, there is a specific set of ideas, understandings and expectations of formal education, differing from one frame to another in accordance with respective backgrounds and rôles in the process.

The presence of cultural difference in the process poses a challenge for analysis of the policy. The bi-axial model does not take account of the quality of lateral activity, recording only quantitative estimates of hierarchical and lateral activity and balance between them. Indigenous interests such as peak bodies (e.g. the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission), formal organisations (e.g. Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, land councils), service providers (e.g. legal services, academia, focussed elements of education agencies) and advocacy groups (e.g. Combined Aboriginal Organisations of Central Australia, relevant unions) should be involved, that involvement should be appropriate and their input should be considered. Two factors need to be appreciated: Indigenous members of recognised stakeholders, such as the bodies noted above, and their delegates, are likely to have been relatively successful in formal education; and each body has its own political agenda. It is also possible that negotiators may not be in direct contact or in tune with the people on whose behalf they purport to speak, and they may not be accountable to them. Representation and accountability in such negotiation are primarily Western and bureaucratic concepts, derivatives of the civic culture. The difficulty does not invalidate the bi-axial model per se, but quality of lateral activity is beyond its analytic capability and requires qualitative examination.

Non-Indigenous officials in a hurry can become frustrated when consulting with Indigenous men and women. They may deal with individual persons or delegations who qualify the views they express, saying that they cannot speak on behalf of others in their respective communities or groups; and occasionally, conversely, opportunists present their views with an attempt to sell their children short and that they, the intruders, should have been involved. Afterwards, an elder from one of the remote localities, quietly apologised to me for the fracas and angrily declared that the urban-dwelling “yella-fellas” could not speak on behalf of “bush black-fellas”. The incident was believed to have resulted from manipulation by a white educator employed by the NTDE, but it was not proven. The initiative was relocated to a Top-End community school, where it proceeded smoothly and successfully. Courses subsequently developed for community education centres were soon in demand for purchase interstate and remained so up to at least ten years later.

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73 In the late 1980s, I convened a meeting of delegations of Indigenous men and women from some thirty-five remote Central Australian communities for consultation on instituting a pilot project, developing curriculum for secondary-aged students from the bush. The meeting had barely begun when it was irretrievably disrupted by a group of urban-based Indigenous activists who gate-crashed the gathering, abused the NTDE personnel present and told the bush delegates that they were about to be deceived with an attempt to sell their children short and that they, the intruders, should have been involved. Afterwards, an elder from one of the remote localities, quietly apologised to me for the fracas and angrily declared that the urban-dwelling “yella-fellas” could not speak on behalf of “bush black-fellas”. The incident was believed to have resulted from manipulation by a white educator employed by the NTDE, but it was not proven. The initiative was relocated to a Top-End community school, where it proceeded smoothly and successfully. Courses subsequently developed for community education centres were soon in demand for purchase interstate and remained so up to at least ten years later.
own individual cases as representative when they are not, as occurs in the mainstream. Such realities mean that real client involvement requires wide direct input (as with the AEP and the Collins Review), with account taken of the clientèle's diversity. There are other challenges in seeking input: shyness, embarrassment and disillusionment with and/or ignorance of systemic processes, can inhibit articulation of needs; and officials may be given the responses they are perceived to want, out of courtesy or in order to be rid of unwanted attention. Also, non-Indigenous consultants can be adept at soliciting responses they deem appropriate, or prone to doing so unintentionally: they may hear selectively and interpret creatively. Human nature notwithstanding, cultural difference is the nub of that problem, to be taken into account in collecting and collating data in the policy process, and hence in its analysis.

Failure of policy on formal education to have realised intended outcomes for most Indigenous Territorians is attributed to various factors. Amongst providers, the competence, personal suitability and rate of turnover of teachers, their expectations of Indigenous students and suitability of curriculum and teaching methodology are blamed, as are the adequacy of systemic support and resource provision. Amongst the clientèle, poor student attendance, low family and community support, lack of local commitment and dysfunction are handicaps often cited. Tangible purpose in schooling, especially in practical terms, is also a difficulty. For instance, in 1985, Country Liberal Party Member for Victoria River, Terry McCarthy, stated that there was “very little future in education for Aboriginal people”, with high unemployment and scant employment opportunities in remote communities.74 Attendance at bush schools is still promoted, however, with the prospect of enhanced employability.

In 2001, the Martin Labor Government amalgamated several previously discrete entities to form the Department of Employment, Education and Training. The NTG “(recognised) the links between school education and employment and education, training and employment”. It argued that the new arrangement would “(enable) the building of better pathways between schools, training and skilled jobs”.75 The direct link between schooling and work-force participation, not specifically for Indigenous Territorians but inclusive of mem, was as firmly embedded in policy as ever.76 Given the scarcity of employment opportunities in

locations such as those to which McCarthy referred, and Indigenes' very low level of engagement in paid jobs in those areas, the prospect of employment could hardly motivate attendance at bush schools. The anomaly highlights the industrial focus of NT education policy for all clients.

This study seeks neither to verify nor to disprove surface explanations of Indigenous failure in the NT education system. Rather, it works from belief that where these explanation apply, as they sometimes do, they are not the causes of the crisis but symptoms of a more fundamental and widely pervasive problem. I believe the system should take account of culture-based difference between policy-makers and service-providers, on the one hand, and the Indigenous clientèle on the other. The task is to ascertain whether cultural difference really is a critical factor.

**Qualitative Analysis.**

Qualitative analysis of policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians and the policy process is therefore needed. It will complement the quantitative analysis to be conducted using the bi-axial framework, ensuring that attention is paid to all those subtle and not-so-subtle manifestations of cultural difference. Before it can proceed, however, its theoretical legitimacy and how it may be conducted need to be explored.

Peter John's (1998) concise definition of policy analysis, “policy-oriented research which aims to improve public decision-making”, belied its wide scope. Having worked through approaches taken, he stressed that “good explanations … (were able to) incorporate the contrasts between policy change and stability and understand the differences between policy sectors and countries”. A comprehensive approach, distinct from “a tight conceptual scheme … (applied to) one part of the policy process”, could take “as its baseline … the complexity, fluidity and changeability of the modern policy process”. It enabled “the relative importance of different processes in policymaking systems” and policy dynamics to be understood. That simplicity should be a casualty was not out of place, as a policy process was complex: understanding and explaining it was difficult, requiring use of syntheses of pertinent theories rather than a single limited one. Amongst synthetic approaches, evolutionary theory was apt as it sought “to incorporate the dynamic interplay between factors for change and

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adaptation … and constraints on that action”. John thereby recognised subjectivity in policy processes, additional to their objectivity, for which quantification was possible and valid. Qualitative analysis is required where there is subjectivity. It abounds in public policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians.

Carl V. Patton and David S. Sawicki (1986) had previously cautioned against over-reliance upon formulae-generated data in policy analysis. In choosing a policy, they asserted, “(e)fficiency alone … (could not) be used to select the preferred alternative”, advising analysts to include subjective pros and cons and ease or difficulty of implementation, as well as graphic representation of quantified data, in advising clients on the options available to them. They added that “(p)references of citizens, politicians and officials (could) influence the policy eventually adopted, even when these preferences (were) inconsistent with economic rationality”. Political viability, vis-à-vis options developed from “technical, economic, or ethical criteria”, was another factor. Brian W. Hogwood and Lewis A. Gunn (1984) were definitive, embracing “an important role for qualitative judgement in analysis”. 80

G. Davis, J. Wanna, J. Warhurst and P. Weller (1988) rued the paucity of public policy analysis in Australia and its limited prospects. They asserted that “(t)echnique (could not) be substituted for politics” in policy development:

Major public policies are the outcome of a complex game of negotiation, of expert opinion weighed against electoral imperative, of competing interests seeking to advance self-interest through a favourable choice. There are no single ‘best’ options for any player in this game, for the ‘best’ outcome depends upon what others do. The process will not be improved by insisting upon rational comprehensive or strategic incremental procedures. Rather, politics must be made more explicit in the policy process.

They concluded that “(t)he best option (was) the one which (persuaded), the best policy process the one which (encouraged) argument”. 81 Politics, a particularly imprecise field of activity, was a prime element in policy processes that ensured “ambiguity of objectives”.

81 Davis *et al.* P. 123.
with efforts made “to satisfy several constituencies at once”, and “significant economic and social constraints” were inevitable. Davis et al did not favour formalised review of policy, lest it lead to increased “influence of sectional interests, judges and policy analysts”. They declared,

Political judgement should not be overruled by technical or judicial criteria as though these are uncontested and unbiased. The seductive jargon of technical objectivity should not be allowed to disguise its ideological basis.

What really mattered was the decisions made and who made them. Quantitative analysis is not invalidated by the perspective expounded by Davis et al, but their stance serves to point up the importance of engaging qualitative assessment as well.

The dynamics of input in public policy in Australia, discussed and illustrated in Chapter 2, was exemplified to some extent by Davis et al.

Economic and industrial policy involve large and organised forces working through state and private institutions. Such policies are influenced by those in society with wealth, power and position: by government, business and the unions.

The social policy process did not quite follow the same pattern. Public policies on education, however, “(were) supported, criticised and influenced by highly organised lobbies from the public and private sectors”. Such a policy arena had

important professional interests seeking to protect (their) position, a plethora of experts to argue for particular outcomes, and new technology changing the parameters of the possible.

Education, like health, attracted substantial fiscal resources, allocated to “concentrated and vociferous” groups with “a high sense of their own value”. The vitality of the rôles they played in the policy arena, and hence in decision-making in the economic and industrial contexts, was conceded. With the dynamics of such participation, laterally and in the official hierarchy, high levels of subjectivity could be expected. Tony Dalton, Mary Draper, Wendy Weeks and John Wiseman (1996), discussing social policy in Australia, largely

83 Davis et al. P. 186.
endorsed Davis et al’s appraisal. Dalton et al effectively advocated institution and encouragement of lateral activity. The human traits identified as integral to the process relating to policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians ensured substantial subjectivity.

Robert G. Owens (1995) focussed on the evolution of education administration in the USA from the 1950s. He traced a swing from the “theory movement” to “emerging postmodern thought” in the 1990s, wherein pragmatism was more prominent, and education administrators were coming to be seen as “critical humanists who (hoped) to change individuals as well as organizations for the better with the ultimate hope of improving social conditions”. When the fifth edition of his Organizational Behaviour in Education was published, twenty-five years after the first, Owens was convinced that qualitative research was needed “to support the human issues of the postmodern era”. Such research is therefore obviously needed, in relation to formal education for Indigenous Territorians at the turn of the third millennium.

What qualitative analysis may entail needs attention. At a time when purists held that only quantitative evaluation, scientifically-based, produced valid data, Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln (1989) defended qualitative evaluation. In the constructivist context, they argued for qualitative study as well as quantification:

(I)t should not be inferred … that only quantitative data are admissible within the conventional paradigm. Qualitative data are not only admissible but may at times prove to be equally useful, or at least complementary.

They advocated use of “human instruments” in evaluation, dismissing “(o)bjections that humans (were) subjective, biased or unreliable … (as) irrelevant” on the grounds that “there (was) no other option”. They deemed human adaptability an advantage, and the methods employed, those that came naturally to humans, “clearly qualitative”:

… they collect information best, and most easily, through the direct employment of their senses, talking to people, observing their activities,
reading their documents, assessing the unobtrusive signs they leave behind, responding to their non-verbal cues, and the like. It is for this reason that qualitative methods are preferred.87

Further, Guba and Lincoln supported use of an investigator's "tacit knowledge", what he/she knew, about the issue under scrutiny. They observed that selection of an issue for study normally indicated "that a good deal (was) already known or understood" about it.88 Their arguments vindicate my bringing my experience and understandings to bear and exercising my judgement in this study, human fallibility notwithstanding.

“Qualitative enquiry”, according to Owens, sought to “understand human behavior and human experience” from within the actors' frames rather than from the researcher's frame. It was a quest “to illuminate social realities, human perceptions, and organizational realities”, distinct from and “untainted by the intrusion of formal measurement procedures”. He advocated an approach to reveal “human behaviour in the real world in such terms as cultural norms, deep-seated values and motives arising from cherished tradition, and community values”, allowing “insight, understanding, and illumination not only of the facts or the events in the case, but also of the texture, the quality, and the power of the context as the participants in the situation (experienced) it”.89 The quality of Indigenous actors' involvement, as I perceive it, is to be assessed, as well as the dimensions and extent of the policy-related activity. The nature of that participation is important, so the approach favoured by Owens is helpful.

Loraine Blaxter, Christine Hughes and Malcolm Tight (2001) cited R. Sherman and R. Webb's assertion (1988), that “(q)ualitative’ (implied) a direct connection with experience as it (was) ‘lived’ or ‘felt’ or ‘undergone’”. Owens' view (1995) was similar. Their clarifications are germane: this study examines policy and the policy process as experienced, or “undergone”, by Indigenous Australians and Territorians. In discussion, Blaxter et al stated that “(q)ualitative research … is concerned with collecting and analysing information in as many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible”.90 That stance further substantiates qualitative analysis as appropriate in this study, in that it acknowledged need to examine facets of society which may not lend themselves to quantification.

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88 Guba and Lincoln. P. 176.
89 Owens. P. 261. The italicisation is Owens'.
Joseph A. Maxwell (1996) proposed an interactive model of research design (see Figure 3.2), with the qualification that he “(did) not believe there (was) any one right model” for the process. He stressed interaction between the elements of qualitative research, distinguishing the dynamics involved from more structured and sequential quantitative research. His model recognised

the importance of interconnection and interaction among the different design components … Purposes, Conceptual Context, Research Questions, Methods (and) Validity.

FIGURE 3.2 MAXWELL'S INTERACTIVE MODEL OF RESEARCH DESIGN.

In the interactive model, as he conceived it: “purposes” required the researcher to identify what he/she sought to accomplish; “conceptual context” required that the dynamics perceived in the phenomena to be researched be identified; “research questions” were to specify aspects to be studied; “methods” were to specify the conduct of the study, and “validity” required the researcher to consider how he/she could be mistaken. The lines between the “design components”, in Figure 3.2, “(represented) the two-way ties of influence or implication”. It was stressed that these were by no means the only connections, but the most important ones.91

Maxwell elaborated on each of the elements of his model. He considered qualitative research in a study as valuable: it helped participants to understand “the meaning … of the events, situations and actions” in which they were involved and how they perceived them; it helped them to understand “the particular context within which” they were acting and how it affected them; it revealed “unanticipated phenomena and influences” to them, leading to their formulating theories about same; it helped them to understand “the process (through) which events and actions” were generated; and it enabled them to develop causal

explanations” of process outcomes. His appreciation of qualitative research and the research design model that he proposed essentially allowed or encouraged researchers and other participants in a research process to make subjective assessments of environmental phenomena of interest to them. In similar vein, Darin Weinberg (2002), generalising, observed that people notice and appreciate some facts rather than others according to whether they deem these facts relevant, useful, valuable, important or interesting in light of their own particular concerns.

He thereby highlighted subjectivity in qualitative research, attributing researchers’ priorities to their respective backgrounds, the frames they brought to bear in projects.

Blaxter et al allowed that qualitative research could be open-ended, leading to “in-depth study”. Maxwell was more definitive, taking for granted that it was necessary and advantageous for qualitative research to be open-ended:

(T)he open-ended strategy that (research purposes) require give qualitative research an advantage in addressing three practical purposes:

1. Generating results and theories that are understandable and expertentially credible …
2. Conducting formulative evaluations, ones that are intended to help improve existing practice rather than simply to assess the value of the program or product being evaluated …
3. Engaging in collaborative or action research with practitioners or research participants …

He evidently believed an open-ended approach made for useful and valid findings, constructive monitoring of the matter under scrutiny and a dynamic research process.

Principles of qualitative research, as identified by Guba and Lincoln, Owens, Blaxter et al and Maxwell, inter alia, are applicable to analysis of the quality of Indigenous participation.

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94 Blaxter et al. P. 64.
in the policy process as it related to their formal education. Indigenous Australians and Territorians have experienced, or “undergone”, the process in a variety of ways and degrees of involvement, the model proposed by Maxwell provides a useful guide to examination of the nature of their involvement, and endorsement of use of open-ended approaches permits pursuit of emergent ideas without undue constraint. As well, recognition of subjectivity as a legitimate factor allows for some innovation.

Qualitative analysis of Indigenous involvement in the formal education-related policy process will now be detailed in terms of the “components” of Maxwell's interactive model. The “purposes” of the analysis are to ascertain the appropriateness of the participation in the policy process by the clients of the policy. The “conceptual context” is policy development and service delivery, from within the frames of the Western civic culture of governments based in Canberra and Darwin, for the Indigenous clientèle, whose ties with the Dreamtime, fragmented population and language group distribution, experience of white settlement and contemporary circumstances have resulted in a range of generally non-Western frames. A set of “research questions”, to specify the aspects in which information is to be sought, needs to be devised. The questions will be crafted to gauge the appropriateness of provisions made for Indigenous participation. The “methods” with which the study will be conducted are examination of the provisions made to engage the clientèle, as I understand them, with the questions devised for the purpose, and collation of the responses. In the Western civic culture perspective, a high level of “validity” in the findings is assured, as I am relatively well-informed in the field. In Indigenous clientèle perspectives, however, the findings may not be regarded as valid: my assessment is made from the background of a public provider with an appreciation of Indigenous clients' concerns, whereas their assessments are made from cultural bases and in circumstances that, for the most part, differ from mine. It follows that similar research should also be carried out from within an Indigenous frame, or Indigenous frames. Our respective findings could then be compared and, if possible, merged, to reach a more balanced conclusion than I am likely to reach by myself.

Owens held that an investigator should be remote from the subject under scrutiny, to “ensure maximum detachment from it”. With this study, such distance from the subject is not feasible, with my having been involved in it, in different capacities and at various stages, over a quarter of a century, but I shall be as disinterested as I can be. I shall obtain most data on policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians from print materials. They will be supplemented with information provided by involved persons in open-ended

96 Owens. P. 262.
interviews using a check-list of items to be covered, and by my own experience and observation. As acknowledged above, my perceptions will contribute particularly in the qualitative analysis. I can only reiterate my belief that the subject should be examined also with an Indigenous perspective.

In accordance with Maxwell's third and central research component, a set of seven simple questions will be applied to each of the policy situations to be analysed, to ascertain the quality of Indigenous participation in the process. They will seek to identify the range of participation, the form of that participation and its pertinence, participants' knowledge of the process and grasp of proceedings and the impact of their input. The questions' foci are aspects I understand to be important to Indigenous Territorians involved in policy-related consultative processes.

1. Who participated in the policy process?
2. Where did the participation occur?
3. How were participants involved?
4. To what extent were participants familiar with the process?
5. To what extent were participants aware of the substance of negotiations?
6. To what extent was participant input evident in the policy and its implementation?
7. What feedback was provided to participants as the process progressed?

These questions will be applied to arrangements typically made in each of the eras, under protection, assimilation and self-determination, and for the Collins Review.

Qualitative analysis will be applied to the policy process in tandem with quantitative analysis. The findings from the analyses will be considered in relation to each other. They will be consolidated in a summative statement, with features suggestive of cultural difference highlighted. The overall study's conclusion will include review of the summative statements, with further consolidation.
Chapter 4

Protection Under the Commonwealth.

It had been (the Aborigines') land for thousands of years. They were hunters and gatherers without domestic animals – apart from the dingo – without crops, fixed dwellings or encampments. They stored little, they lived in the present, secure in the knowledge that the land would feed and the sea would provide. They saw themselves as integral to the land – it was a place of spirits, guarded by ancestors, with stories and rituals associated with every piece of it. It was owned by no one and, within the natural boundaries of the tribe, owned by everyone.

John Bailey (2001)

This chapter traces evolution of the political, social and cultural Australia and its Northern Territory (NT) pertinent to the Indigenous peoples when it was public policy to “protect” them. As stated previously, policies, programs, their objectives and practices to realise them are held to flow both from and to be constrained by frames of ideas founded in experience, including tradition. Human interaction, cultures and conditions and public policy relating to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders will be scanned. Consideration of their formal education, to the early 1950s, will follow.

Background to Twentieth Century Indigenous Australia.

Prior to British settlement, traditional lives of Indigenous Australians may have been dismal, as William Dampier described them in 1688, serene, as Captain James Cook believed in 1770, or idyllic, as John Bailey imagined. Research has Homo sapiens emerging in southern Africa and migrating, gradually settling habitable parts of the planet, and reaching Sahul, Greater Australia, some 40 000–30 000 years BP (before the present), possibly earlier.

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2 Bailey, John, 2001. The White Divers of Broome: The true story of a fatal experiment. Sydney, NSW. Macmillan. Bailey was envisaging north-western Western Australia (WA), before white settlement, a scenario such as Dampier may have encountered.


Given their dependence upon and domination by the natural environment and vulnerability to the vicissitudes of natural phenomena, in which their spirituality and tribalism evolved, it is likely to have been a harsh, daunting and uncertain existence. Whatever the case may have been, British settlement from 1788 brought that era to an irrevocable end.

The new settlers sought to enlighten the Indigenous inhabitants' existence, through “christianising” and “civilising” them. They tried to fit them to the British model, conceived within the imperialist frame both to meet the Indigenes' best interests and to expedite colonisation. British education was viewed as fundamental to Indigenous accommodation in the Australian society envisaged. Despite passage of time and lessons from experience, frustration and failure, such ideas about Indigenous advancement endured. They spread with white occupancy of the land from the late 1700s, from the south-east to the west, centre and far north. In the process, armed conflict, introduction of diseases and overall dislocation devastated the Indigenes. Their numbers plummeted from 250 000–300 000, possibly many more, to a nadir of about 70 000 before recovery began, mid-twentieth century. Table 4.1 summarises the data available. The earlier figures are largely estimates, but the patterns of decimation and subsequent recovery that occurred across Australia are evident.

TABLE 4.1 Estimated resident Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Australia, 1788–1966.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>Vic.</th>
<th>Qld.</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>Tas.</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>40000</td>
<td>11500</td>
<td>100000</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>52000</td>
<td>35000</td>
<td></td>
<td>251000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>8065</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>26670</td>
<td>3070</td>
<td>5261</td>
<td>23263</td>
<td></td>
<td>66950</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>6067</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>15454</td>
<td>2741</td>
<td>17671</td>
<td>17973</td>
<td></td>
<td>6047</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>11560</td>
<td>1277</td>
<td>16311</td>
<td>4296</td>
<td>24912</td>
<td>15147</td>
<td></td>
<td>73817</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>12214</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>18460</td>
<td>4972</td>
<td>16215</td>
<td>17157</td>
<td></td>
<td>70678</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>14716</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>10696</td>
<td>4884</td>
<td>18276</td>
<td>19704</td>
<td></td>
<td>79253</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>23130</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>41700</td>
<td>7760</td>
<td>21890</td>
<td>24120</td>
<td></td>
<td>122100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes on Table 4.1.

The 1788–1966 statistics are from official estimates. Discrete data for Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) were not provided but were declared to have been included in the total. Prior to 1967, Aborigines were not yet included in Censuses.


Coherent policy on formal education for Indigenous Australians was not formulated until the latter half of the twentieth century. Notionally, it had been an element of protection
policy, which, in the 1940s, had effectively obtained for over a century.\textsuperscript{5} The British Houses of Parliament, colonial authorities and subsequent Australian governments recognised need for and obligation to provide schooling and training in technical skills for Aborigines. Advocates of Indigenous advancement, Aborigines themselves as well as the protectors and missionaries to whom teaching and training functions mostly fell, had similar belief. The purposes of such formal education were in-principle, however, not formalised in declared policy, but generally intended to Westernise and Christianise the Aborigines in an idealised British image. Formal education was to equip them for the new Australian society.

Dissatisfaction with provisions under protection policy was voiced by Aborigines as well as by their supporters.\textsuperscript{7} That white superiority and need for Westernisation had been instilled in and accepted by Aborigines is evident in the Victoria-based Australian Aborigines League's constitution (1936), which specified “the progressive elevation of the aboriginal race by education and training in the arts and crafts of European culture” as an immediate priority. The League joined forces with the New South Wales Aborigines' Progressive Association to lobby for “an improved and more relevant Aboriginal affairs policy”.\textsuperscript{8}

The efficacy of protectionism was being questioned in the 1930s. Review of relevant policy was initiated by Minister for Interior John McEwan in 1939,\textsuperscript{9} but little progress was made until after the Second World War (WWII).\textsuperscript{10} Prominent anthropologist A. P. Elkin was a forthright critic who exerted some influence with the J. B. Chifley Labor Government, 1945–49. Alan Powell (1982) noted Elkin’s advice to a 1948 conference of senior Commonwealth and State Aboriginal affairs officials, to “(improve) health, education and welfare services” for Aborigines and to develop “a consistent policy for Aboriginal


\textsuperscript{6} Policy to protect Aborigines, conceived in London, was introduced in 1839, when Robinson was appointed chief protector of Aborigines in the Port Phillip District. Protection was legislated in Victoria in 1869 and 1886, Queensland, 1897, WA, 1905, New South Wales (NSW), 1909, and South Australia (SAX 1910, and by the Commonwealth for the NT in 1911.


\textsuperscript{10} Bolton, Geoffrey, 16 April 2002. Research seminar on Sir Paul Hasluck. Northern Territory University, Darwin, NT.
advancement”. Minister for Territories Paul Hasluck announced new policy on Aborigines in 1951, phasing out protection and introducing assimilation. It was to be a significant development for Indigenous Territorians.

South Australia, the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory to 1950.

Before Self-Government in 1978, the NT was administered from afar, and in some respects will remain so until statehood is achieved. Initially, it was a remote part of the Colony of New South Wales (NSW), South Australia (SA) annexed it in 1863 and it became a Commonwealth Territory in 1911 under The Northern Territory (Administration) Act (1910). NT Administrators, appointed by Governors-General for five-year terms, had limited authority and discretion and were accountable to successive ministers. Commonwealth laws applied and public services were performed by the Administrator's Department. Territory residents paid taxes, but representation in parliament was not granted until 1922, when a non-voting Member of the House of Representatives seat was allotted. The NT was attached to SA for Senate representation. In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, NT administration lacked support and direction from Canberra, and little development took place, other than modest defence provision which increased during WWII.

Alistair Heatley (1990) described 1947–72 as a period of “(s)tability and change” in constitutional development in the NT. The first move towards autonomy occurred in 1947, with institution of the Legislative Council. It was a small step, with “(s)ecure government control … ensured by (the Council's) membership, composition and voting procedures and by … legislative constraints”. The Council had authority to “make ordinances for ‘the peace, order and good government of the Territory’”, but was given no effective say on major policy. “Community education”, as urban schooling was known, had remained

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13 Wilson & Estbergs, P. 21. Wilson and Estbergs cited a record of the NT’s transfer to the Commonwealth in which its population was detailed as “739 adult males (European), 166 adult females (European), 125 Japanese, 107 others”. The omission of Aborigines may have been a manifestation either of the disregard in which they were widely held in officialdom or of an assumption, underlying protectionism, that they would die out in due course, or both.
14 Wilson & Estbergs. P. 25. Leading Darwin citizens, including Harold Nelson, were jailed in 1920 for refusing, on principle, to pay taxes, declaiming “no taxation without representation”.
15 Wilson & Estbergs. P. 26. Nelson was elected the NT’s first Member of the House of Representatives in 1922. The seat was enhanced slightly in the 1930s, to allow the incumbent some involvement in House business.
with SA's hands NT administration transferred in 1911. All matters concerning Aborigines, including schooling and training in bush communities, however, were Commonwealth's responsibilities. Canberra continued to handle Aboriginal affairs and other services, such as health and Crown lands, after the inception of the Legislative Council, local consideration of fiscal matters was heavily constrained, and the Commonwealth held superior legislative authority, with power to over-ride Council legislation. Despite its limitations, the Council played an important rôle in constitutional development, asserting the NT's political expectations and thereby generating reform. It may well have been that the constraints upon the Council, with Canberra's perceived intransigence, worked for the NT's advancement, fuelling elected Members' ire and the strength of their articulation of local demands.

The Coalition held Federal office from 1949 until its defeat by Labor, led by E. G. Whitlam, late in 1972. NT affairs were administered successively by the Department of Interior, to 1951, the Department of Territories, 1951–68, and Interior again, 1968–72. Powell observed that the thirty years after WWII “transformed the prospects of the Aborigines” in the NT. The period to which he referred was from 1945 to the replacement of the Legislative Council with the Legislative Assembly in 1974 and the election of the Coalition, under J. M. Fraser, in 1975, coinciding with Heatley's period of “(s)tability and change”. Some awareness of the NT situation when it was policy to protect Aborigines needed, to appreciate these scholars' observations.

Overall, Aborigines in the NT were not as severely affected by white settlement as their countrymen elsewhere. Powell observed that, in contrast with the annihilation that had occurred in Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales, NT Indigenes “survived to form, long after, the vanguard of black regeneration”. They had to endure alien occupancy and British law nonetheless. SA initially administered their protection, with the NT Medical Officer also Protector of Aborigines. When he was appointed in the 1860s, F. E. Goldsmith was briefed to win their trust, “preserve their institutions and, above all, to ‘endeavour to make them comprehend … that they (were) British subjects, and that as such, they (were) amenable to, and protected by, … (SA) laws’”. Powell stated that early protectors had neither authority nor resources and tended to be unaware of NT realities beyond the vicinity of Darwin.

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17 Heatley. P. 12.  
18 Heatley. P. 15.  
19 Powell. P. 232.  
20 Powell. P. 110.  
21 Powell. P. 126.
Under Adelaide administration, interaction varied. Some tribal groups in the western desert and central Arnhem Land had little or no contact; productive arrangements and relations between the Iwaidjas of Cobourg Peninsula, the Cobourg Cattle Company and officialdom developed; and elsewhere, where Aborigines resisted intrusion and the establishment of cattle stations, conflict resulted in numerous black deaths, some white deaths and the abandonment of some new ventures. Overt hostilities waned and Aborigines accepted and adjusted to the white presence, moving into what Elkin (1938) termed “intelligent parasitism” mode.\footnote{Powell. Pp. 128–34.}

The Commonwealth undertook responsibility for Aborigines' protection in 1911. Legislation to protect Aborigines in the NT provided for the appointment of a Chief Protector and Sub-Protectors. Employment of Aborigines was subject to their control, Asian employment of Aborigines was forbidden, and the Administrator was authorised to prohibit their presence in specified areas, of which Darwin's Chinatown was the first The Chief Protector could exclude whites and Asians from Aborigines' camps or “take any Aborigine or half-caste into custody”, and was appointed “guardian” of all Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children under eighteen years of age. Anthropologist Baldwin Spencer, Chief Protector in 1912, according to Powell, was a White Australia adherent: he enforced restrictions on association between Chinese and Aborigines zealously, but perceived “the well-established … black-white mutual dependence” in the pastoral industry as “working reasonably well”. With only a Chief Protector and two Protectors, administration of the legislation was very limited, so police officers were also appointed Protectors. Spencer had more sympathy for traditional Aborigines than for those camped in the vicinity of the towns. He was concerned about “new contact between white and black”, and although he held to the official stance, that “the Aborigines were a dying race”, he believed that they could survive “under the right conditions”. He recommended as top priority to support their survival the establishment of tribal reserves, and in 1920 NT reserves more than doubled in area to total over five thousand square miles in thirteen locations.\footnote{Powell. Pp. 161–62.} The policy to protect Aborigines whilst they survived remained a manifestation of the British colonial frame, now transplanted in Australia and influenced somewhat by the Social Darwinist ideas of natural selection and survival of the fittest which had currency at the time. There was a trace of altruism, however, as Spencer showed.

WWII proved beneficial for some Indigenous Territorians. When evacuations were effected, from December 1941 and after the 1942 Japanese bombing of Darwin, Aborigines, other
than mixed-race children and a few Darwin residents, were not included. From Powell's account, productive co-operation between Native Affairs staff and the military developed. Coastal Aborigines in the vicinity of Darwin were relocated to supervised camps inland. A successful venture at Mataranka led to the development of well-run Aboriginal labour camps near army camps from Koolpinyah, near Darwin, to Alice Springs: men, the majority of the army's Aboriginal workforce, worked in a range of labouring rôles, some with responsibility, and female employees were engaged in military hospitals and hostels. Conditions were relatively good: camps were orderly and hygienic, there were medical services, children were given basic schooling and cultural observance was encouraged, with leave allowed accordingly. Increased fertility amongst women, due to conditions generally and to health services, was a positive outcome. Recognition of Aborigines' ability to contribute, and reduced racism amongst field operatives, were others, contrasting with attitudes that endured in military headquarters in Melbourne. There were some problems, such as those arising from soldiers' pursuit of Aboriginal women, pastoralists' objection to the army's raising Aborigines' expectations of postwar employment conditions and officers' occasionally giving expedience priority over culturally-sensitive judgment in personnel matters. Although uncertain about the war's ultimate impact on Aborigines in the NT, Powell felt that the experience would have helped prepare them for “far-reaching change in the post-war world”.24

Elkin (1951) described the Indigenous Australian scene in the early post-WWII years:

There is an unsettlement, a ferment … among the younger virile Aborigines who have any contact whatever with non-natives … Cultural diffusion and mixing are going on apace. Many want the best of both worlds, the old and new. Others … want a fair deal and good education. Some of the inducements … are not laudable, being but the froth and jetsam of western culture; but that, too, is part of the change, the rate, and desire for which was very much increased during the 1940s.25

His observations applied in the NT, given his field-work in northern SA, the Kimberley and Arnhem Land. The appeal of Western goods and services would have been acute for people who had been exposed to military-related activity.

In his “present picture” of Indigenous Australia (summarised in Table 4.2), Elkin (1954) categorised Aborigines on his perception of their situation relative to white settlement. They ranged from strong traditional orientation, through degrees of detribalisation to approaching mainstream assimilation. In the NT, they dwelt in remote communities, on pastoral properties, in camps around predominantly white concentrations, at government and mission settlements and in townships and urban centres. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data indicate that, mid-1940s, the decline in numbers was arrested, at 13 000–14 000, and they began to regenerate. Post-WWII, NT Aborigines were estimated to total about 15 000 (see Table 4.1), some 40% of the population thought to have lived in the area in 1788.

Table 4.2 shows Elkin's appreciation of Aborigines' lifestyles in the NT in the years following the war. Traditionally-oriented groups, living in their homelands in Arnhem Land and the Centralian desert areas, either left alone by the whites or successfully having resisted their intrusion, comprised a significant element. Of the larger communities, mostly government and mission settlements, about half were on the coast, particularly in Arnhem Land, there were two near Katherine, two north of the Tanami Desert and nine in the Centre. Some groups adapted themselves to the cattle stations, retaining some of their traditional ties and commitments. Others camped around urban centres and townships on the Stuart Highway and at Borroloola, and a small proportion lived in the urban centres and

26 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 1990. Aboriginal People in the Northern Territory, 4107.7. Darwin, NT. Commonwealth of Australia. Pp. 3–4. The ABS conceded uncertainty about the accuracy of early figures, due to the levels of estimation, rather than counting, used. Contrary to the data recorded, it concluded that the decline in numbers in the NT persisted “until probably the 1950s”. An excerpt from the NT Administrator's 1937 report stated that the total then may “not (have exceeded) 10,000".
townships. Only traditionally-oriented Aborigines in remote locations could avoid being greatly affected by the newcomers' activity, protection policy and the recent military effort.

An idea of the number of Territorians of mixed descent known to be and/or identifying as Aboriginal can be formed from circumstantial data. According to Powell, there were 58 in 1911, approximately 500 in 1922 and 770 in 1934. By the late 1940s, then, assuming continued increase, likely augmented with the military presence during the war, there could have been well over 1 000. Noting Mulvaney and Kamminga's (1999) observation that, towards the end of the century, as few as a quarter of all Australians identifying as Indigenous may actually have been of purely Indigenous descent, the figure may have been much higher. A 1936 amendment of the *Aboriginals Ordinance* reveals a rationale for exceptional treatment of children of mixed, part-Aboriginal, descent under protection as being to raise their status with “exemption of certain halfcastes from all or any provisions”. The way was thus made for those deemed ready for the mainstream to be recognised as regular citizens.

As for population distribution, linguistic data specific to the NT in the late 1940s have not been found. They may be deduced to a degree, from Rob Amery and Colin Bourke's (1998) assessment of Indigenous languages. Of the estimated 270 languages spoken in Australia prior to British settlement, only about twenty had survived as “strong”. Twelve of these were spoken in the NT, as were thirty-one, just under 50%, of the “severely threatened” ones. Most loss would have occurred as the population declined, from early contact to the 1940s, possibly the 1950s; the predominant use of English, often to the exclusion of native tongues, and its virtually exclusive use in public utilities and commerce, would also have contributed, despite the recovery of Indigenous numbers. The loss was substantial, although evidently less so than elsewhere, but it was not necessarily arrested by demographic recovery.

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29 Mulvaney & Kamminga. P. 149. Cf. a Social Darwinist prediction, made about a century ago, that of “the Aboriginal race”, only mixed-race people would ultimately survive. In 1968, Charles Perkins claimed that there were “approximately 250 000 others like (him)” across Australia, of mixed descent and identifying as “Aboriginal Australians – proud of (their) country and (their) race”. (Attwood & Marcus, 1999. P. 242.)
30 Wilson & Estbergs., P. 33.
31 Amery, Rob, & Colin Bourke. “Australian Languages: Our Heritage”, in Bourke et al (eds.). Pp. 122–29, 138–39. It should be noted that efforts were being made in some areas across Australia to recover languages that had been all but lost.
32 See Appendix C.
Some redress may have been effected, where viable bilingual education programs in schools and language recovery programs were instituted and sustained.

A state of conquest prevailed as the new settlers spread. The humanitarian efforts of some were all but eclipsed by atrocities perpetrated. Charles Rowley (1986) rated the white pioneers “out of control of governments once the frontiers extended beyond the first settlements”, as they occupied most of Australia and established their presence in relation to Aborigines. He asserted that, as recently as the 1980s, as one proceeded “towards the centre or the far north”, persistence of “the colonial relationship between settler and indigene” was increasingly evident, epitomised in “shameful scenes of degradation” in urban fringe camps. The remoteness of central and northern Australia from the more populated areas and the recency of white occupation may have resulted in prejudice in pre-1950s NT being more acute than in areas where whites were longer established and Aborigines less in evidence.

Implementation of protection for Aborigines in the NT, initially administered from SA, was chequered. In 1908, the SA Government transferred Aborigines' protection from medical officers to police, an ironic move in view of the reprisals the latter conducted when whites were killed or their property was tampered with. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, police in the NT were, in Powell's words, “thinly scattered over a mighty wilderness, (facing) a daunting task”. They dealt with “matters (ranging) from murder and horse stealing to missing persons and … divorce” and were expected to perform extraneous duties such as customs and stock inspection, act as justices of the peace and administer the estates of deceased persons. “(T)he clearly impossible task of administering law to Aboriginal people” was now added.

The SA Masters and Servants Act (1884), referred to in McConaghy's (2000) account, enabled Protectors to indent an Aboriginal child. In practice, it occurred from about seven to twenty-one years of age, as an “‘apprentice’ to any willing master” who would pay the “apprentice” in “food and shelter” in return for services rendered. Protection, only legislated in SA in 1910, specified inter alia that moneys due to any Aborigines be paid

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33 NTDE, 1989. *Handbook for Aboriginal Bilingual Education in the Northern Territory*. Darwin, NT. NTG. P. 3. In 1989, the program “(embraced) 14 different languages, 16 schools and about half the (NT's) traditionally oriented Aboriginal students”. See Appendix C.
to the Protector or his delegate and disposed of at that officer’s discretion.\textsuperscript{37} No doubt such measures were well-intended, but they were patronising in the extreme and created untold opportunities for exploitation and manipulation of vulnerable Aboriginal youth. They yield some insight into the official frame, where Aborigines were concerned, as it had evolved to that stage.

Legislation to protect Aborigines in the NT was enacted again by the Commonwealth in 1911, when it assumed administration of the NT.\textsuperscript{38} It provided for a Chief Protector, the first of whom was Herbert Basedow. He was soon succeeded by Spencer, who, as noted, supplemented his meagre staff by appointing police officers Protectors. Spencer also advocated reserves for the benefit of traditional Aborigines. He dealt with the issue of Aborigines camped around Darwin summarily, establishing the Kahlin Compound. All were relocated there, regardless of tribal affiliations.\textsuperscript{39}

Spencer was concerned about Aborigines of mixed descent, favouring “part-coloured” children's removal from their mothers. Powell acknowledged “the part-coloureds’ … one notable champion”, Chief Inspector of Aborigines J. T. Beckett: in 1915, in the face of “continuing charges of immorality and degeneration”, he recorded that

\textit{(w)here half-caste girls have been given a chance and kindly treatment they do not go wrong … (and the boys) are for the most part strapping, well set-up young men, quick, alert and courageous and all good horsemen.}

Beckett lost his job in 1916, as had Spencer’s successor, W. G. Stretton, in 1914, in economy measures taken by Administrator J. A. Gilruth. Aboriginal protection oversight went to the Government Secretary, who knew “nothing about Aborigines”.\textsuperscript{40}

Responsibility for Aborigines in the NT was next re-located to health administration.\textsuperscript{41} The \textit{Aboriginals Ordinance} (1918) enhanced Protectors’ powers considerably. In the context of the inimicality of British law for Aborigines in the NT, Colin Tatz (1979) noted that it prohibited them from drinking, possessing or supplying alcohol or methylated spirits,

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{38} Wilson & Estbergs. P. 21. The Commonwealth's ordinance for protection of Aborigines in the NT was recorded as adapted from the SA legislation.
\bibitem{39} Powell, Pp. 161–64. Wilson & Estbergs evidently overlooked Basedow, recording Spencer as the first Chief Protector. The Aborigines for whom the Kahlin Compound was established, other than the Larakia people for whom the area was home, would have been early “itinerants”.
\bibitem{40} Powell. P. 164.
\bibitem{41} Wilson & Estbergs. P. 20. Under SA administration, responsibility for the protection of Aborigines in the NT had been transferred from medical officers to police in 1908.
\end{thebibliography}
being within two chains of licensed premises, possessing firearms, marrying non-Aboriginal persons without permission or “(having) sex across the colour line”. As noted, however, “a ‘civilised’ black” with attributes deemed appropriate for the mainstream, could be certified exempt from such restrictions.\textsuperscript{42}

Blood was shed in the NT's frontier days, when it was policy to protect Aborigines. Numbers of casualties are uncertain.\textsuperscript{43} Aborigines killed whites and Asians for reasons ranging from resisting intrusion in their lands and disputes over women to opportunistic murder of lone travellers and prospectors. In some instances no tangible reasons were evident. Powell pointed out that “(m)urder and robbery of trespassers was justifiable under Aboriginal law”: in an Indigenous frame, any alien presence would have been a trespass. Reprisals, effected by police, punitive parties with or without official sanction, and pastoralists, in response to cattle-killing or other incidents, could be extreme, “justifiable under no law but total war”. Wholesale slaughter at times ensued without culprits' necessarily having been identified. Such measures, euphemistically termed “quietening” or “dispersing” the Aborigines, evidently had tacit official support and endorsement by aware non-Aborigines.\textsuperscript{44}

Dr. C. E. Cook held the dual offices of Chief Medical Officer and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the NT, 1927–39.\textsuperscript{45} Powell described him as purposeful and firm in

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Recently, writer Keith Windshuttle has called into question the reliability of accounts in which oral history was an element E.g., ‘Did the Bells Falls Gorge massacre happen?’ (“P.M.”, ABC, 13 August, 2001, \url{http://www.abc.net.au/pm}); ‘Sunday’ (Channel 9, 25 May, 2003).}
\footnote{Wilson, W.R. (Bill), 1996. “Sillitoe's Tartan in Northern Australia: A View of Black and White Policing in the Northern Territory 1884 to 1935”. A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours). Casuarina, NT. Northern Territory University. Pp. 84–97. (N.B. Where cited, W. R. Wilson is identified as “Bill Wilson”, to distinguish him from Helen J. Wilson, who is identified as “Wilson”). \textit{Inter alia}, Powell and Bill Wilson both highlighted official reprisals in the Centre in 1928, one in the vicinity of Coniston Station, another near the Lander River, with apparently indiscriminate slaughter of Aborigines by police and significant brutal contribution by Aboriginal trackers. Public outcry at the Aborigines' treatment resulted as news spread to the more settled areas of the country, and officially approved punitive expeditions subsequently ceased. The personnel involved in these incidents were exonerated. Without excusing violent acts committed in the name of the law, Bill Wilson pointed out that the police were acting as was expected of them, overtly and covertly, by their senior officers, administrators and politicians. He considered an observation by Henry Reynolds (1982), “that frontier violence was political violence”, apt. He noted that in the mid-1930s, Europeans in the NT still regarded Aborigines as “an uncivilised race”. In balance, Powell stressed that some cattlemen and police did much to protect Aborigines from the excesses of the whites, but that “(t)he living memory of great wrong … overshadowed the work of compassionate men”.
\footnote{Wilson & Estbergs. P. 28. C. E. Cook was the last official to perform both \textit{rôles}. (N. B. He is identified as “Dr. Cook”, to distinguish him from Captain James Cook, who identified as “Cook”).}
\end{footnotes}
exerting his authority to control Aborigines' employment and in efforts “(to separate) town blacks from alcohol and opium, … white men from black women and tribal Aborigines from all whites except officials and, reluctantly, the missions”. He went to the extent of checking that movies screened at Kahlin Compound to ensure that the Aborigines were not exposed to anything that might “lower their respect for the white man”. Powell judged Dr. Cook's discharge of his responsibilities “(to fit) the times”: it was consistent with measures proposed in 1928 by J. W. Bleakley, Chief Protector of Aborigines in Queensland, whom the Commonwealth had engaged to investigate the Aboriginal situation in the NT. The 1931 gazettal of the large Arnhemland Reserve was an early outcome of Bleakley's report.  

Proliferation of progeny from mixed relationships, mainly between white men and Aboriginal women, was a concern. Despite efforts to “check the breeding … (of) half-castes”, the NT's part-Aboriginal population was found, in 1932, to be growing nearly fifty times faster than were the whites. Dr. Cook endeavoured to address the perceived threat to white Australia: like Spencer, he had children of mixed descent across the NT removed from their mothers and placed in “half-caste homes” where, as they grew, young women were trained in domestic service and young men mostly in stock-work. Their lives were strictly controlled, especially where movement and marriage were concerned. Dr. Cook's goal was “to breed out females' colour”, advancing them to the standard of whites to be absorbed “by mating into the white population”. Powell observed, “in the context of the time”, that such assimilation was well-intended but took no account of the lingering grief it generated.

Dr. Cook restricted white access to the Arnhem Land Reserve. Missionary activity grew in the 1920s, notably Catholic, Church Missionary Society and Methodist missions in Arnhem Land. They effectively became agents of the Government, which in turn came to depend upon them for stability in managing Aboriginal affairs. Powell did not regard churches and missionaries as purely altruistic in their motives:

> British power fed British arrogance … they believed themselves to be the favoured of God, and sent their missionaries to the heathens so that they might be instructed in His worship and in their duties as humble servants of the superior race.

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47 Powell. P. 187.
48 Dr. Cook was powerless, however, Powell noted (p. 185), to restrict Japanese pearlers' access from the sea and the reprisals Aborigines took against them when they “violated tribal law”.

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In perspective, Powell observed that whereas some missionaries were deservedly widely respected, others “were outright bigots and many had little tolerance of Aboriginal custom”, and consequently caused problems. Pastoralists disapproved of missions, claiming that the Aborigines they trained were “spoilt and useless for stock work”, a common retort to which was that “(the Aborigines) had merely learnt to recognise exploitation when they saw it”. Also, anthropologists berated missions for hastening the *démise* of the Indigenous heritage, rejoinders to which suggested that the anthropologists only sought the culture's preservation for their own ends.49 Despite having some interest in common, unity in purpose and perspective concerning Aborigines was obviously not a feature of the frames involved.

The Commonwealth engaged anthropologist Donald Thomson to work amongst tribes in eastern Arnhem Land, 1935–37.50 “Policy in Native Affairs in the Northern Territory”, his report, was tabled in Parliament in 1938.51 It had political impact, drawing McEwan's declaration that future policy on Aborigines would be to “(raise) … their status so as to entitle them by right and by qualifications to the ordinary rights of citizenship”. The Department of Native Affairs was established in 1939, charged to “(bring) Aborigines to full citizenship by assimilating them into white society”.52 As the new agency's first head, E. W. P. Chinnery, another anthropologist, assumed responsibility for Aborigines in the NT.53 WWII intervened, and the policy proposed by McEwan lay more or less dormant for a decade.

Elkin stood out amongst the anthropologists. He studied Aborigines in northern and central Australia for over fifty years, championing their causes and disseminating in white Australia his progressively updated findings about them. Unlike some, he saw need for Aborigines to move with the times and adapt to the mainstream, but to retain their cultures as they did so. His advocacy of policy to assimilate Aborigines into the mainstream and his efforts, and those of like-minded colleagues and others, forced “reluctant governments” to try to address reconciliation of black and white interests.54 That Native Affairs field staff increasingly engaged in anthropological studies may be attributed, at least in part, to Elkin’s influence with governments and to the fact that he held the Anthropology chair at Sydney University from 1933.

49 Powell. Pp. 185–86.
50 Powell. P. 185. It is worthy of note that Thomson was engaged in an era characterised, nationally, by an upsurge in Indigenous political organisations and activity in support of their causes (see Attwood and Markus, 1999, Part 2, ‘1920s–1950s’, pp. 58–169).
51 Wilson & Esbergs. P. 36.
53 Wilson & Esbergs. P. 36.
As evident from the preceding discussion, the circumstances of the NT's Indigenous population under protection policy varied. The spread of British settlement had taken its toll, augmented by influxes of Asians. Aboriginal numbers had been depleted, there had been social and cultural degradation, diseases and the trappings of Western and, to a lesser extent, Asian societies had been introduced and racism and Indigenous dependence developed.\textsuperscript{55} The impact of alien occupancy in the NT was obviously severe, if less so than elsewhere. Some tribal groups were relatively untouched and able to pursue traditional lifestyles and livelihoods, but other survivors were affected to some degree with numbers significantly diminished, languages, cultural heritage and spirituality damaged or lost, and humanity degraded. Some, however, had managed to adjust to the new settlers quite effectively and, at least to a Western eye, appeared to be benefiting from participation in the mainstream.

By the mid-1900s, protection policy had failed to protect most Aborigines effectively from the adverse impact of whites, but it may have helped some to survive. Despite dire predictions, extinction no longer threatened them. Many had experienced Western ways, some gaining related experience and skills. At the end of WWII, population numbers had begun, or were about to begin, to rebuild, with a growing proportion of people of mixed descent and youth attracted to aspects of the dominant society. As noted, a relatively high proportion of Indigenous Territorians led traditionally-oriented existences in their tribal lands, and those more affected by the newcomers and protectionism lived variously, on managed settlements, on pastoral properties, in fringe camps and in townships and urban centres. A key point is that the NT's Indigenous peoples did not comprise a discrete homogeneous element of the overall population for whom it was appropriate or valid to generalise. Their needs, aspirations, preferences and expectations had become quite diverse.

After Japan surrendered Timor in 1945, the military withdrew from the Top-End. Other than the social impact, its main legacy comprised communication and transport infrastructure and power and water reticulation. Civil administration returned late in 1946\textsuperscript{56}, with Darwin, as Powell put it, “in poor shape” and war detritus littering Darwin Harbour and strewn across the Top End.\textsuperscript{57} Plans had been afoot, led by H. C. Coombs, to reconstruct Darwin on a grand scale, to rebuild the economy and to ensure that defences would be more adequate than they had proven in 1942. As it transpired, the NT and Darwin were not priorities

\textsuperscript{55} The impact of the whites upon the Indigenes commands attention. However, Powell (pp. 113–16) pointed out that Chinese outnumbered Europeans in the NT, 1878–1911, some organising prostitution of Aboriginal women in Darwin, and thereby also contributing to their degradation.


\textsuperscript{57} Powell. P. 213.
alongside demands for development in the south: when the Coalition won office in 1949, the proposed “new Canberra of the north” was shelved. Under public pressure, the Government allowed evacuees to return to Darwin from early 1946, before adequate reconstruction had been effected. During the ensuing “hut and hovel era”, according to Leith Barter (1994), civilian residents had to rely upon their own resources and co-operative ventures for food and shelter, enterprise and entertainment.58 Darwin was left to redevelop gradually, more or less in its previous image. Chinatown was an exception, in that it was not rebuilt because the younger Chinese were merging with the mainstream.59

In 1945, the Commonwealth, Queensland and WA formed a joint North Australian Development Committee, primarily to address northern defences. Related issues were identified, and the Commonwealth, having taken control of income taxation in 1942, was to be the principal source of funding for northern development.60 The Australian Labor Party, then in office, had long supported political participation by Territorians, and was being pressured by the Labor Party branch and unions in Darwin. The NT Development League, based in Alice Springs, with R. C. Ward prominent, demanded political advancement of the NT,61 leading to introduction of the Legislative Council in 1947. Politically, it was a modest step forward, and economic development lagged far behind it in substance.62

In the industrial context, Bernie Brian (2001), labelled 1946 Darwin “a place of transients”, limiting recruitment of union members somewhat.63 Powell stressed that Darwin had from its inception been “a government town”, owing its pre-eminence to “the accident of first successful settlement, … being the seat of government and … (possessing) a port”. Defence contributed to post-war development, especially when the Korean War (1950–53) supplemented the impact of the 1942 bombing. The NT Development League and the “highly articulate” elected members of the new Legislative Council found reconstruction frustratingly slow. Powell asserted, in balance, that the speed with which post-war change occurred was really “remarkable” by comparison with anything that had happened previously.64

59 Powell. P. 219. It was ironic that, in 2002, a commercial Chinatown was proposed for the Mitchell Street tourist precinct in a quest to regenerate vitality in Darwin's commercial centre.
61 Heatley. P. 12.
62 Powell. P. 220.
63 Brian. P. 212
64 Powell. P. 229.
Numerically, senior public servants initially dominated the Legislative Council. Of the fourteen Members, six were elected, seven were senior Government officers and the Administrator, who presided, had a deliberative vote as well as a casting one. The inception of the Council heralded prolonged wrangling with the Commonwealth over jurisdictional independence for the NT. The Chifley Labor Government held that Canberra's control over NT affairs should be commensurate with the Territory's fiscal dependence and that the relationship should evolve as the NT's economic circumstances changed, a position with which the Opposition substantially concurred. Heatley noted that the derision of A. M. Blain, the NT's Independent Member of the House of Representatives, 1934–49, as he declaimed against the paucity of powers devolved to the Legislative Council and the heavy control retained in Canberra, was reflective of the feelings of NT self-government advocates. Heatley stressed that the Council, mainly through its elected Members, later joined by non-official Members, and occasionally supported by official Members, played the key rôle in constitutional reform and political development from its inception to its dissolution in 1974 to make way for the fully elective Legislative Assembly. The Council was established under Labor, but from 1949 to 1972 it dealt with Coalition Governments in Canberra.

The elected Members of the Council, with Ward to the fore, were credited with “(forging) what was to be accepted as the authentic Territory ideology”. Heatley identified distinguishing features: “deep faith” in the future of the NT and “fervent commitment” to constitutional development; commitment to “self-determination” for the NT and its ultimate status as a fully-fledged member state in the Australian federation as “legitimate aspirations” whose realisation was inevitable but felt to be severely hindered by Canberra's control; and perception of the Commonwealth bureaucracy, locally and in Canberra, as “wasteful, inefficient and expansionist … dedicated only to preserving its own power and influence” and “the major impediment” to advancement. The Legislative Council's resolve and tactics, Heatley emphasised, won the reforms achieved, they were not benevolently bestowed by the Government. He conceded, however, that the quest for a more representative legislature could have been balanced with demand for greater local fiscal and executive authority and increased devolution of powers.

Commonwealth public servants really dominated Territory affairs heavily. The “federally appointed bureaucracy”, Julie Wells (1995) observed, “held extraordinary powers over both administrative and legislative proceedings in the Territory, whether administering from

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67 Heatley. P. 15.
Canberra or Darwin". Its authority over Aboriginal affairs, with Elkin's advice, was absolute: it directed the Legislative Council to refer all matters concerning Aborigines to Canberra. Its resolve was evident in its rejection of award rates for Aboriginal employees and exclusion of the North Australian Workers' Union from a 1947 conference convened by the Interior Minister to discuss regulation of Aboriginal employment with pastoralists. The exceptional power of public officials in Darwin and Canberra, identified by Wells with respect to Aboriginal affairs, prevailed also in other vital fields in the NT.

The Commonwealth's responsibility for Indigenous affairs in the NT had dated from 1911. Geoffrey Partington (1996) believed its first four decades' performance earned it only a reputation for distinctly poor care for Aborigines. Nationally, however, public concern for Aborigines in the NT was unlikely to generate much political pressure for measures to effect redress, as there were very few Aborigines in evidence where most other Australians lived, on the eastern and southern seaboards. Besides, it was believed that traditionally-oriented Aborigines could not discharge citizenship responsibilities in a democratic system. It was also perceived that people of mixed, part-Aboriginal, descent were progressing to the mainstream quickly and well. Intervention in their interests was therefore considered unnecessary.

In early 1950s NT, after the Great Depression, WWII and Darwin's devastation in 1942, a reasonable degree of normalcy had been restored. The population was rebuilding and problems were being managed. Wilson and Estbergs recorded much activity, in resumption of civil administration and private enterprise and in new ventures. The Legislative Council, despite its limited functions and authority, was making its presence felt and Territorians' aspirations known in Canberra, especially through the efforts of elected

69 Powell. P. 232. Patrol officers engaged post-war were required to study anthropology, native administration and law at the University of Sydney.
70 Brian. Pp. 218–19. From the early 1930s, the Communist Party had advocated equal rights for Aborigines, it encouraged the union movement to do likewise and the North Australian Workers Union won recognition of Aborigines in the Works and Services Award (1946). The Government, disregarding regulations on employment of Aborigines recommended in the 1946 Carrington Report that it had commissioned, held that the Aboriginals Ordinance (1918) “took precedence over the award”, thereby ruling out relevance of the union and the award. The union's support for Aborigines in this instance contrasted with its stance two decades earlier, when it had boycotted hotels that employed Aboriginal labour (Wilson & Estbergs. P. 28.).
Members. Nonetheless, their calls for independence notwithstanding, the Commonwealth remained firmly in control, and it retained exclusive control of Aboriginal affairs.

Post-war, Canberra paid more attention to Indigenous Territorians. Over the preceding thirty years or so, Aboriginal reserves had been gazetted across the NT, and missions, operating under the auspices of several churches, had been established in the larger communities. Aboriginal camps continued to grow on pastoral properties and around townships and urban centres. In 1950, the Commonwealth's Office of Education accepted responsibility to “(educate) … full-blood Aboriginal children”. The next year, P. M. C. Hasluck, personally concerned with Aborigines' well-being, assumed the new Territories ministerial portfolio. The Department of Territories, effectively the Department of Interior extended to embrace Aboriginal affairs, was responsible to administer Australia's internal and external territories.  

Formal Education for Indigenous Territorians under Protection.

For all that formal education was assumed, from initial contact, as fundamental to Indigenous interests, coherent policy and programs only eventuated post-WWII. Eleanor Bourke (1996) intimated that, under protection, there was no clearly formulated policy on education for Indigenes in Australia beyond its being identified as basic to their Westernisation and Christianisation. Howard Groom (1998) held that, from white settlement, education for Indigenous Australians had been applied in three ways: forced upon them, withheld from them or provided in inferior quality to “(deny them) real opportunities for development”. Whereas, traditionally, life-long education had been life-related and integral to their existence and the responsibility of all, after white settlement, the government schools of the 1800s, such as they were, sought to transform the Indigenous peoples through re-educating the children, preferably in isolation from parental influence. By the 1860s, in Groom's account, the schools were closed as parents boycotted them, having found that European learning helped them in neither white society nor their own, and did not combat racism. Missions were made responsible to protect Aborigines, including educating them, but the authorities retained a high degree of control over the children.
The missions endeavoured to “(civilise) by tuition”, training Indigenous children “in habits of ‘industry, cleanliness and order’”. Schools emphasised Christianity, there was supplementary instruction in elementary English literacy and numeracy, and boys were trained in farming and trades and girls in domestic duties. Groome observed an anomaly in such arrangements, with missions supposedly training children for the mainstream yet in practice effectively segregating them from white society in the process. With a few exceptions, missions eschewed traditional culture, perceiving it to be counter-productive to their Christianising purpose, use of Indigenous languages was harshly discouraged, and some children were isolated from their parents. Several public education systems were responsible to oversee mission schools’ operations, but, according to Groome, they purposely often hindered students’ development of skills with their demands. Some allowed Aboriginal children to be excluded from government schools if local white pupils' parents objected to their attendance. Where their attendance was allowed, internal segregation was common.77

Consistent with Groome's assessment, Ronald Fitzgerald (1976) rated the provision made “always second-rate”, in keeping with “a view of Aboriginals as inferior beings”. He recorded Aboriginal children's exclusion from regular public education, legislated and in local practice, to satisfy white parents' objections. Under protection policy, from the mid-1800s, children living on reserves could expect “a limited amount of education … usually of four years' duration and carried out by untrained reserve managers or missionaries”. An outcome of exclusion from regular schooling provision, noted as a source of enduring bitter resentment, was that Aborigines did not receive the education needed to train for mainstream occupations. They were thereby “prevented from becoming self-reliant members of the community”.78

Legislation to protect, as noted, made Chief Protectors guardians of Indigenous youth. This enabled them to remove children, mainly those of mixed parentage, from their families, and place them in private homes or institutions for “care, control and training”, both to enable their absorption into the mainstream and as potential cheap labour. Groome cited a finding that it had been a strategy to break down Aboriginal culture as well.79 There was a belief, supposedly stemming from psychological research in the 1880s, that Aboriginal children were intellectually inferior to others, having smaller and functionally more limited brains. Although the idea was eventually discredited, it nonetheless conditioned teachers to have

79 Cf. Dr. Cook’s initiative in the NT in the 1930s.
low expectations of Indigenous children, of was perceived to do so.\textsuperscript{80} It no doubt also fed belief that young people of mixed parentage were more likely than “full bloods” to benefit from “care” and, as a result, to fit more readily into the dominant society.

Traditional education, evolved from the Dreaming, was practised by the Indigenous peoples when the first whites, naval and military personnel, established a presence in the NT, 1824–49. It is maintained in varying degrees to the present day. Before 1863, English-style schooling was evidently limited to white parents' efforts with their own children, although Gerry Tschirner (1982) noted “mention of private attempts at educating the Aborigines and the few white children of the new settlers”.\textsuperscript{81} The environment for formal education for Aborigines in the NT in the protection era would have differed little from that of other rural areas, other than in its sparse population, vast space, immense distances, harsh conditions and management from afar. It was laden with racism, manifest in antagonism, resentment and paternalism, as was the case elsewhere.

From the late 1800s, church missions in the NT carried out welfare-related work with Aborigines. Successive SA administrations, 1863–1910, contributed little to their education. In Tony Austin's (1985) record, no such provision, “(b)eyond providing grants for Missions, in the knowledge that part would probably be spent on formal schooling” was made.\textsuperscript{82} Influenced by Charles Darwin's \textit{On the Origin of Species} (1859) and popular social theories of the latter nineteenth century, official and middle-class white public perceptions of Aborigines, like those of Spencer, commonly included lack of civilisation, inferiority to Europeans, low mentality and immorality, “a child race, with child-like minds and manners”, although some conceded that they could be taught and trained to a degree. There was some disquiet about “mission-educated blacks”, however, their reputedly having proven the most accomplished criminals.\textsuperscript{83} In Sue Russo's (1989?) interpretation of arrangements, SA Governments dodged responsibility for schooling for Aborigines but allowed it to be provided by missions and occasionally new settlers. SA's support for missions was deemed paltry, usually provided in the form of rations.\textsuperscript{84} When NT administration passed

\textsuperscript{80} Groome. Pp. 174–76.
\textsuperscript{84} Russo, Sue, and Grant Rodwell, 1989? (undated). ‘An Interpretive History of Aboriginal Education in Australia and the Northern Territory’, #10/89 in “Point Counterpoint”, Faculty of Education,
to the Commonwealth, “altruistic missionaries” were providing what schooling Indigenous Territorians received, in contrast with “free, compulsory and secular education … introduced elsewhere”. The missions, in their protection of Aborigines, were seen to contribute to their “pacification” and, in Austin's words, “if it suited (them) to play around with some schooling, it was at little cost to secular authorities”. 85

In his account of Aboriginal adult education in the NT, Henry Harper (1989?) pointed out that in 1888 the Lutherans at Finke River and Hermannsberg were running adult literacy courses with texts in Arrente as well as operating schools for children. Their ideas about Aborigines, formed in frames influenced by “successful” experience in Africa, India, the Pacific and New Guinea, held them to be “people whose culture and tradition was a liability, but (who) with a healthy environment which promoted obedience, a work ethic, discipline and … the Christian word, … could be saved”. The Lutheran missionaries believed training in any “industry” to be as high a priority as “the Christian word”, making for Aborigines' self-sufficiency and giving them “stable occupations on the missions (where) they would stay in the healthy environment, marry good Christian boys and girls and have good Christian babies, free from evil traditional culture and lifestyle”. Literacy was important too, for Christian conversion. Harper judged the Lutherans' approach as broadly typical of those of most of the missions subsequently established. 86 Austin observed that the missions demonstrably proved that the Aborigines were intelligent and educable, but that the potential cost of making formal educational provision for them put paid to official recognition of such reality. 87 Administering the NT had proven expensive. 88

After establishment of the Lutheran missions, others followed. Jesuits missions opened at Rapid Creek and Daly River, both soon abandoned, an Anglican mission opened on South Alligator River, a Christian Mission Society mission opened on Roper River and Father Gsell led work on the Roman Catholic mission on Bathurst Island. Reverend John Flynn was appointed Superintendent of the Australian Inland Mission in Alice Springs in

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85 Austin. P. 26.
87 Austin. P. 26.
88 Tschirner. P. 7.
1912.\textsuperscript{89} Over the next three decades, the Methodist Goulburn Island Mission opened, the Christian Mission Society established missions at Oenpelli and on Groote Eylandt, the latter with a “home for halfcaste children”, the Methodists established missions at Milingimbi, Yirrkala, Galiwin’ku, and Croker Island, the last with a “home for halfcaste children”, and the Catholics established missions at Port Keats and Alice Springs, the latter later moving to Arltunga. The missions were established as Indigenous welfare providers when WWII hit Darwin.

Elkin perceived introduction of “inviolable reserves … (for Aborigines to) continue their wonted way and so survive” as the sole sign of official optimism, in protection policy, for Aborigines' future. The first in the NT had been gazetted in 1892, others followed, and all were re-gazetted under Commonwealth legislation in 1912. The Kahlin Compound in Darwin has been mentioned; in 1920, South West, Oenpelli and Daly River Aboriginal Reserves were gazetted, and the large Arnhem Land Reserve, incorporating Oenpelli, and reserves at (New) Wolwonga and Jay Creek followed. Darwin's Bagot Reserve was gazetted in 1938 and the Kahlin Compound was transferred there. After WWII, Hooker Creek, Yuendumu andBeswick River Reserves were gazetted. Children on supervised reserves were to receive schooling.

Tschirner described the period under SA administration “(e)ducationally … (as) a period of many beginnings, both government and private”.\textsuperscript{90} After a private school was started, in 1873, in the Wesleyan Church in Palmerston\textsuperscript{91}, the township's first public school opened in 1877. Public education at the time was not for whites only, but some such notion must have given rise to an enquiry that elicited from the SA Council of Education the “(ruling) that it had no power to exclude Aboriginal children from a public school”\textsuperscript{92}. S. Russo stated that “public opinion” ensured that no Aboriginal or Asian children enrolled in the Palmerston school.\textsuperscript{93} A school at Pine Creek followed, to cater also for the nearby goldfields, and two private schools opened in Palmerston. An attempt to educate “a few Aboriginal children” was made by a member of the Plymouth Brethren in 1911\textsuperscript{94}, apparently to little avail.

\textsuperscript{89} Hams, Brigid, 2001. ‘Flynn, John’, in Davison et al. P. 261. Hains noted that Flynn is criticised for “inattention to Aboriginal welfare”, but the health and communications infrastructure that he pioneered was eventually to serve them, with the whites, in remote locations.

\textsuperscript{90} Tschirner. P. 7. The italics are Tschirner's.

\textsuperscript{91} Palmerston was re-gazetted Darwin in 1911. The Wesleyan Church was rebuilt after devastation in a cyclone in 1897; in 2001, long-disused and derelict, it was eventually relocated to the George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens, refurbished, and re-opened for community use.

\textsuperscript{92} Tschirner. P. 8.

\textsuperscript{93} Russo, S. & Rodwell. P. 1.

\textsuperscript{94} Tschirner. P. 9.
provision for them: schools at Kahlin and Alice Springs were duly established.\textsuperscript{95} Beckett's observations, in 1915, about Indigenous youth of mixed parentage in institutions indicated that he thought their needs were catered for adequately.

The materials consulted on initial schooling provisions in Alice Springs enabled some understanding of what actually happened. Tschirner's account, the Central Lands Council's “An Alice Springs Aboriginal Chronology” (2003)\textsuperscript{96} and the ABC Online article, “The Bungalow” (2005)\textsuperscript{97}, between them, indicate mat schooling for white children and for children of mixed, part Aboriginal, descent, started in 1914. Mrs. Ida Standley was the first teacher, teaching there until 1929. The children of mixed parentage dwelt in a shed known as The Bungalow and had lessons for an hour and a half per day. After fifteen years, the Bungalow operation was relocated out to Jay Creek (now Iwupataka) in 1929 and then to the Alice Springs Telegraph Station site four years later. Its school enrolment started with Topsy Smith's children and a smaller family in 1914 and grew to a total of over 130 in 1935.\textsuperscript{98}

J. I. Rossiter, an inspector from Queensland, took charge of public education in Darwin in 1913. In the interests of establishing some order, he introduced “standard curriculum, text-books and methods”. He was responsible for introducing “(the) native school in Kahlin Compound for Aborigines and half-castes”, the first secondary education classes and “separate classes … for Asiatics”. That year, Administrator Gilruth reported the NT school enrolment as 150, including thirty students at the “Aboriginal School at Kahlin Compound”.

\textsuperscript{95} Tschirner. P. 9. Tschirner rioted some doubt about the timing in Alice Springs, observing that prior to 1911 “a Mrs. Ida Standley appears to have opened a state school for white and part-coloured children at Alice Springs, but it is possible that this school was not opened until after the visit of the Administrator, Mr. Gilruth, in 1916”.


\textsuperscript{98} Central Land Council, 2003. Pp. 1–2. The building known as The Bungalow was built in the town of Stuart in 1914. That entity was relocated, to Jay Creek (now Iwupataka) in 1928, and to the Telegraph Station site in 1932. Stuart was renamed Alice Springs in 1933.

ABC Online, 2005. Pp. 1–5. The structure was a basic iron shed, erected between the rear of the Stuart Hotel and the police station to house Topsy Smith and “her seven part-Aboriginal children”. “Senior Constable Stott, Protector of Aboriginals” supervised its operation. Living conditions were rated as “less than substantial”, and they deteriorated. 45 children and 3 Aboriginal women were in residence at the move to Jay Creek, to a less adequate facility. 60 children were involved in the subsequent move to the Telegraph Station site, increasing to over 130 in 1935. Ida Standley was appointed “Matron of the (original) Bungalow and school-mistress to the children of Alice Springs”, performing these \textit{rôles} until she retired in 1929. Her daily teaching duties involved 4.5 hours with the white children and 1.5 hours with the “part Aboriginal children”, the lessons for the latter conducted in a police cell. The Ida Standley Pre-School, in Parke Crescent near Heavitree Gap, now commemorates the pioneer NT educator.
The total increased to 246 in 1915, with thirty-nine at Kahlin. The “half-caste boys” were moved to Pine Creek in 1932, and subsequently, in the 1930s, to Alice Springs. V. L. Lampe succeeded Rossiter in 1914. In 1936, by which time he was designated Supervisor of Education in the NT Public Service, public school enrolments had grown to 572, “(comprising) 47% European, … 33% part-coloured and 20% Asian and others”.

Compulsory school attendance came into force in 1918. Secondary education then commenced in Darwin, to be replaced in 1925 with scholarships for students' attendance at high schools in Queensland, and Queensland curriculum was adopted for NT schools. Schools opened in Tennant Creek, 1935, and in Katherine, 1945, in which year urban schools in the NT moved to SA curriculum and their staffing from Adelaide commenced. Aboriginal reserve schools were expected to follow the SA primary curriculum, and it was used with any Aboriginal children attending urban schools. Compulsory attendance was intended for urban settings. It would have been unenforceable, other than in principle, in bush schools.

It is evident, from this resumé, that progress with and commitment to formal education for Indigenous Territorians were manifestly tentative, tardy and spasmodic. There was no sustained thrust. A school for Aboriginal children, primarily for those of mixed descent, were established at Kahlin, and limited schooling for Aboriginal children of mixed parentage commenced at The Bungalow, Alice Springs, in 1914.

Training “halfcaste girls” as nursing aides in “Aboriginal hospitals” began in 1933, the Commonwealth subsidised “halfcaste homes” on Groote Eylandt, Melville Island and Croker Island, and St Mary's Hostel for Aboriginal children from remote localities opened just out of Alice Springs. The Commonwealth eventually accepted responsibility for education of “full-blood Aboriginal children” in 1950.

The war effort contributed to Indigenous participation in the NT economy. The Indigenous personnel directly involved gained employable manual and technical skills, developed

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99 The transfer of “the half-caste boys” from Darwin to Alice Springs, via Pine Creek, presumably contributed the growth at the Telegraph Station site in the 1930s.
100 Tschirner. Pp. 9–11.
102 Harper & Rodwell P. 6–7. Harper & Rodwell understood that the Commonwealth did not accept responsibility for “Aboriginal education” until 1955, when Aboriginal Adult Education was allocated to the Special Projects Division of the Welfare Branch of Native Affairs.
understandings of construction, maintenance and related operations and derived confidence
and status from having been treated with unprecedented equality. They also acquired
some useful “contacts” amongst whites destined, postwar, for public sector positions. Some
Indigenous Territorians were able to gain paid jobs and housing as a result, but, being
Aboriginal, they “could not enter hotels or RSL clubs to have a beer”. This anomaly,
according to Harper and Rodwell, was the sole reason for the first exemption papers to be
issued, in 1947, and for the 1953 regulation that “(exempted) half-castes from the Aboriginal
Protection Act”. Those exempted and their families were thereby given access to urban
schools and to employment in “skilled and unskilled positions on the wharf, railways and
the Department of Works and Housing”. Harper and Rodwell observed,

(while there were few executive level Aborigines in the public service, almost all the senior
clerical positions … (and) trades and teaching jobs held by Aborigines in Darwin, … were
until recent times families of people granted exemption in 1947 and after 1953.

“Full-blood Aborigines outside of Darwin”, however, gained little from the war.103 In
balance, however, the coincidence of Japanese aggression and shortage of white labour
appears to have achieved more for Indigenous training and employment, with entry to and
engagement in the mainstream, than had any public policy under the Commonwealth's four-
decade “watch” in the NT to that point, or previously.

Development of new policy for Aborigines, proposed by McEwan pre-war, proceeded
a decade later. From 1951, Territories Minister Hasluck could pursue his concern for
Aborigines' welfare within his portfolio. Remarking upon his intellectual superiority vis-à-
vis the State ministers responsible for Aboriginal affairs, Rowley (1986) noted Hasluck's
belief that Aborigines would gain “political equality and citizenship” through education.104
In the meantime, Elkin observed that younger Aborigines were growing restive. Soon
after being given responsibility for Territories, Hasluck articulated the policy of Indigenous
assimilation.105

Analysis of Policy Under Protection.

Information obtained on protection and associated policy on formal education for
Indigenous Australians and Territorians renders analysis simplistic. All related activity was
apparently hierarchical. Colonial administrators were under instruction to “christianise” and

103 Harper & Rodwell.
104 Rowley. P. 117.
105 Powell. P. 232.
“westernise” the Indigenous inhabitants and church-sponsored missions endeavoured to accomplish the task. Although representations were made, by Aborigines themselves as well as by advocates and sympathisers, no indication that they were heeded was found, at least until the 1930s, with no public input apparently sought. As noted, protection's origin in practice was in Tasmania in the 1830s and it subsequently became public policy, initially determined by the British Parliament, in all jurisdictions in Australia other than Tasmania. Robinson's appointment as the first Chief Protector no doubt stemmed from reportage on his relocation of survivors of conflict in Tasmania to Flinders Island, ostensibly for their own good. Hence there must have been input from local colonial administrators in the policy's initiation. NSW Governor George Gipps is known to have reported that it was not effective in its implementation, but it was re-affirmed in London.

The legislation of protection in the Australian colonies, subsequently States, 1869–1911, and amendment of the different acts, per se required debate in the legislatures and processing in the bureaucracies. There must therefore have been some input from senior officials at least, and possibly also from field operatives, but the whole implementation process appears to have no been less hierarchical than the preceding determination of policy and issuing of directions had been. No indication was found that input on implementation of the policy from the churches or their missions was sought or heeded, at odds with the significance of the rôles expected of and attempted by the latter in the process. Non-involvement of Aborigines, other than as the objects of the policy, and the provisions with which it was implemented were consistent with ideas in the authorities' official frames and their modus operandi at the time.

Despite the limitations of the data found on protection and associated provision of formal education, the policy can be quantified and recorded on the bi-axial framework (see Figure 4.1). It can be plotted on the y axis, as the preponderance of the activity, such as it was, was hierarchical: the hierarchical activity evidently amounted to little more than decisions in legislatures and administrative arrangements and limited field work, so it was small in extent; and although the authorities appear to have initiated no external lateral activity,

106 Attwood & Markus. Pp. 30–167. Attwood and Markus compiled 200 short-listed examples of “Aboriginal voices … (in) Aboriginal politics” from 1837–1998 92 were dated from 1837 to 1951: few of these dealt with protection policy per se, but all concerned Aborigines' conditions in the protectionist era, when ideas in the official frame largely determined them.
108 Input from Elkin and Thomson did not contribute to protectionism. Rather, they contributed to its abandonment and to policy subsequently adopted.
109 Powell. P. 187. Powell observed that “government interest in full-blood Aborigines was normally at a low ebb” as recently as in the 1930s.
there was community input, heeded or otherwise, in submissions from Aborigines and their supporters and reportage in newspapers, so a low level of lateral effort may be recorded on the \( x \) axis. Activity recorded on the axes may be correlated and plotted on the framework. Its A sector location, close to the \( y \) axis and at a very modest distance from the intersection of the axes, indicates that the policy-related activity is assessed as having been almost entirely hierarchical and very limited in extent. Policy-related activity that is exclusively hierarchical and very limited is not *ipso facto* poor, but is unlikely to be constructive. Public participation in this instance was very limited.

![Diagram of axes with points A, B, C, D, E and labels](image)

**FIGURE 4.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS UNDER PROTECTION.**

The assessment will be completed with qualitative analysis. Indigenous participation in the policy process will be assessed using the instrument drafted in Chapter 3. Given the way the policy was managed, its qualitative analysis will be simplistic (see Table 4.3), as the quantitative analysis was. Three pragmatic issues emerge: first, neither missions, significant providers, nor Aborigines, the clients, had ownership, and hence could not be expected to have real commitment, not having been parties in the policy process yet expected to implement the policy; second, whereas colonial and church authorities had their respective mandates, Aborigines had not been involved in identifying either need or how to address it, so their inclination to embrace the policy and its implementation, to accept responsibility in the process and to strive for outcomes which were alien to them, could hardly be
expected; and third, lack of marketing of the policy and the programs with which it was to be implemented would have meant that the target recipients had very limited appreciation of what was being attempted with them, its purpose and how they were to benefit. The third would have been exacerbated by the clients' natural resistance to alien measures imposed by alien humans who were commonly overt in their assumed superiority over and contempt for Aborigines, who in return saw them as intruders, usurpers, bullies and enemies. The aptness of the policy and the process is a further concern: there is no evidence of any effort to ascertain and accommodate Indigenous views, aspirations and priorities, the implications of Indigenous culture for the substance of programs, appropriate methodology and operational arrangements, or the implications of Indigenous circumstances for formal education derived from industrial Britain. I have stressed that, in cross-cultural dealings, the quality of consultation is important, but at this stage, under protection, there was evidently no provider-client consultation.

TABLE 4.3 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS UNDER PROTECTION

| Who participated in the policy process? | Participants were, in the main, public officials, church leaders, missionaries, teachers and Indigenous children and some consultants, and there may have been isolated instances of limited involvement of Indigenous parents. |
| Where did the participation occur? | Policy conception and development occurred mainly in parliaments and public agencies, and also in mission head offices, with implementation in school rooms and workshops, mainly in mission buildings in Indigenous communities and government facilities in Darwin and Alice Springs. |
| How were participants involved? | Office-based officials and mission authorities determined policy, field operatives implemented it as their supervisors saw fit, children and trainees were expected to attend and conform with operatives' expectations, and parental involvement amounted to little more than being told what was expected of them and their children. |
| To what extent were participants familiar with the process? | Office-based officials and mission authorities knew their responsibilities, but the direction they provided really only conveyed to operatives that they were expected to teach children and train |
young men and women. Parents and community members were generally not part of the process. Negotiation, where it occurred, was the province of parliaments and office-based officials and mission authorities, with little relayed to field operatives or the clientèle.

To what extent were participants aware of the substance of negotiations?

To what extent was participant input evident in the policy and its implementation?

No indication was found that external input had any impact upon the policy or its implementation. It can be assumed that the churches which sponsored missions assisting with implementation had some influence. There was no suggestion of any Indigenous influence on the process, other than in providers’ perceptions about what it was appropriate to provide for them.

What feedback was provided to participants as the process progressed?

No indication was found to suggest that any policy-related feedback was given to field operatives or to the clientèle.

The policy and its implementation, in the earlier days, would have been consistent with contemporary British frames on colonial administration and the management of indigenes in colonised countries. There would have been an element of altruism in the latter, and personnel in authority would generally have adhered to required procedures. After first having secured Britain's interests and those of the new settler elements, it was essentially a matter of applying British ideas to what were assumed to be the best interests of Aborigines, or what their interests, as perceived in the colonial frame, ought to have been. A nett result, represented in Figure 4.1 and Table 4.3, by early twenty-first century standards, reflects policy and a policy process that are hierarchical, exclusive, expedient and, practically, neither efficient nor effective. They were inadequate in the thinking brought to bear and the ownership generated. The policy's being in place for over a century and judged to have been failing virtually from its inception suggest limited order and, at best, lack of rigour in monitoring, evaluation and review in the public policy process, not to mention administrative commitment to service. When viewed with a Western-oriented turn-of-the-millennium NT frame, the policy appears to have been doomed to fail, notwithstanding provisions available to enforce compliance.

In perspective, it appears that protection policy's Indigenous clients were perceived not as active participants in the process but merely its objects. It must be acknowledged, nonetheless, that there were some successes, even if isolated, to which Attwood and Markus's collection of politically motivated statements by Indigenous writers, including
Territorians, bears witness. At least half of those items, probably more, came from men and women most of whose Western education would have occurred under protection: they were written in English, using a communication medium and a language alien to them, and conveyed effectively, often articulately, views on issues similarly not hitherto embraced in their frames. Given the lack of a sound policy base, such success must have been attributable to combinations of exceptional students, exceptional teachers and exceptional circumstances.

**Summative Statement.**

The public policy process, for protection of Indigenous Australians and Territorians and their formal education, 1830s–1940s, was severely limited and had little constructive impact. The process was exclusive, owned and dominated by providers and hierarchical in its operation. It involved a low level of activity. The policy and the strategies to implement it were imposed upon the Indigenes. Participation by the *clientèle* in the process, to the extent that it occurred, was limited to participants' being the objects of the policy and the implementation strategies.

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Chapter 5

Formal Education to Assimilate Aborigines.

In 1937 the Commonwealth Government revised its policy for Aborigines and, for the first time, stated that any attempt at assimilation would have to be preceded by some system of education for the Aboriginal people.

B.H. Watts and J.D. Gallacher (1964)²

The Commonwealth's policy for all Indigenous Australians changed in 1951 from protection to assimilation in the mainstream. Compared with the protectionist era, the assimilationist one was brief, officially barely two decades in duration, but vital in activity and, viewed with a Western frame, notable for progress in Indigenous advancement. It was arguably the period in which outcomes achieved by Indigenous students and trainees most satisfactorily fulfilled the policy objectives, at the least in primary schooling, preparation for the workforce and on-the-job training. The policy to assimilate was paternalistic and no less culturally disruptive than protection had been. The era and the concept, in the Northern Territory (NT) as elsewhere, were ultimately rendered disreputable as a consequence.

Post-World War Two (WWII), determination of policy and ultimate responsibility for Aboriginal affairs remained firmly in Canberra. In 1947, the NT was granted its own legislature, the Legislative Council, and from the outset it took particular interest in the place and well-being of Aborigines in Territory affairs, enacting in the 1950s and 1960s, at the behest of the Commonwealth, legislation to implement assimilation policy within its boundaries. Related activity in the NT in the public provider hierarchy increased considerably, particularly in formal education for Aborigines, and substantially, if more modestly, in the lateral dimension. It would therefore register on the bi-axial framework more markedly than had been the case under protection.

Under assimilation policy, formal education for Aborigines became a real priority. The excerpt above acknowledged the rôle envisaged for education in assimilation of Aborigines of mixed descent. After WWII, momentum regenerated and principles underlying assimilation and the function of formal education crystallised further in the official frame. The Watts/Gallacher Report, Report on an Investigation into the Curriculum and Teaching Methods used in Aboriginal Schools in the Northern Territory (1964), was particularly

important. It was the first public policy statement on formal education for Indigenous peoples in the NT.

This chapter examines policy related to schooling and training for Indigenous Territorians under assimilation. The distinct but related endeavours of the policy to assimilate Aborigines, of Commonwealth administration of the NT and of the NT's post-war development prevailed. The Menzies Coalition's 1951 extension of the Interior ministry to form Territories and allocation of the portfolio to Member of the House of Representatives Paul Hasluck were significant. Hasluck's own skill, intellect and concern for Aborigines' well-being and his extensive service and sustained effort were to prove vital in the policy process.

**Territories Minister Hasluck and the Policy to Assimilate.**

As Territories Minister, Hasluck was responsible for both policy on Indigenous Australians and the NT. Pre-war, Interior Minister John McEwan had introduced policy to assimilate Aborigines of mixed descent into the mainstream, and the Department of Native Affairs was established for Indigenous administration. In 1951, Hasluck promulgated assimilation as policy for Aborigines generally. He explained that it meant, “in practical terms that, in the course of time, … it (was) expected that all persons of Aboriginal blood or mixed blood in Australia (would) live like white Australians (did)”. Assimilation was to “(govern) all … aspects of native affairs administration”:\textsuperscript{4} it was the overarching direction for all strategies, programs and operations pertinent to Indigenous Australians. In the official frame, their formal education was thus expressly a function of the policy.

Precisely what the policy was to achieve was subsequently re-defined. The 1961 Native Welfare ministerial conference specified that it meant

\begin{quote}
that all Aborigines and part-Aborigines are expected to attain the same manner of living as other Australians, and to live as members of a single
\end{quote}


Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, as other Australians.

The 1965 Native Welfare Conference, according to Henry Reynolds (1972) to tone down implied enforcement of assimilation, modified the stance to its (seeking) that all persons of Aboriginal descent will choose to attain a similar manner of living to that of other Australians as members of a single community.\(^5\)

It was not stated, however, that they would be given, or expected to accept, the responsibility inherent in citizenship.

The policy to assimilate Indigenous Australians was universal, to be implemented by State Governments in their respective jurisdictions. In the NT, Hasluck's portfolio made him responsible for its implementation as well as being its sponsor, which situation prevailed for his twelve years as Minister for Territories. His successors, to 1972, were Country Party Ministers C. E. Barnes, P. J. Nixon and R. Hunt. They did not have his degree of influence with Cabinet, each served in the portfolio for a relatively short time and none had comparable talent, commitment or knowledge.

Subordinate policies were adjusted under assimilation and public opinion shifted during its life as policy. Academic J. B. D. Miller's sole reference to Aborigines, in his *Australian Government and Politics* (1964), was that

(a) the fringes of settlement, and beyond, one finds the aborigines, the descendants of the original inhabitants of the country. … The smallness of their numbers means that these dark people are not a political force, and are never likely to be one, but the backward state of many of them is often a reproach to white Australians who come across it for the first time. International interest is also embarrassing.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) Reynolds (ed.). P. 175.
\(^6\) Miller, J.B.D., 1964. *Australian Government and Politics: An Introductory Survey*, third edition. London, UK. Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd.. P. 18. Miller was at the London School of Economics and Political Science when the book was first published (1954), and he was ANU Professor of International Relations when the 1964 edition was finalised.
His perception may have reflected that of most non-Indigenous Australia's perception of Aborigines at the time. Post-war, public awareness was growing, however, with ideas becoming less negative and pessimistic, enduring racism notwithstanding.

Reynolds felt that change in mainstream understanding and attitude was for the most part confined to “the young, the educated and the urban dweller”, whereas

(i)n the more remote parts of the continent, where the majority of the Aborigines live, vestiges of nineteenth-century racial ideology still flourish rankly enough to damage race relations during the last quarter of the century.

He saw their relative disadvantage in “housing, income, education, nutrition and health” as unchanged, their having derived little benefit from “the new Australian affluence”. He offered no remedies, but it remained an axiom in the official frame that education was the key to Indigenous advancement.

The Northern Territory, early 1950s to early 1970s.

There was significant progress in the NT, from post-war consolidation to December 1972, when the Australian Labor Party replaced the Coalition in office. The challenges of providing formal education for Indigenous Territorians were more cohesively and energetically addressed in the 1960s than at any other stage, at the least until the 1990s, realising return for the public moneys invested. It may be that Aborigines' circumstances in the 1960s, viewed in retrospect, were at their most propitious for achievement in schooling and training, despite providers' paternalism. Appreciation of development of the NT at the time will give context to the evolving policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians.

Administrative dynamics influenced public arrangements for Indigenous Territorians, possibly more than they did those for others. They determined the legislative, administrative and political environment, or official frame, within which provisions were conceived, devised and made. Relations between the Legislative Council and the Commonwealth during the 1950s-60s were also to contribute to the tenor of development generally, especially in relation to the Indigenous component

The period from 1945 to Labor's displacement of the Coalition in 1972 featured modest but important constitutional development for the NT. There was continuity in

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7 Reynolds(ed). P. 176.
policy, but progress in administration was slow, as it had been previously, the NT's “politicole-constitutional advance” shackled to its economic dependence; in contrast with its previous evident disinterest and limited spasmodic effort, however, the Commonwealth was now consistent and steady in its approach. Socio-economic activity grew, from the mid-1950s, with economic and demographic development to support “phased constitutional enhancement” 8. Policy in key areas, including Aboriginal affairs, remained fast in Canberra, but gestures to devolve minor functions to the NT Legislative Council, and concomitant increase in out-posted official support meant a shift of some activity down the hierarchy. The Council's introduction, its elective element in particular, had made for lateral activity in the NT. In terms of the bi-axial framework, interaction between endeavours locally, along the vertical and horizontal axes, allowed for and recognised the Territory's growing maturity.

Progress in managing post-war NT, in Alan Powell's view, was “remarkable … compared to all that had gone before”. It never satisfied the “highly articulate” and forthright elected Members of the Legislative Council, however. During his ministership, Hasluck maintained the “gradual constitutional development” instituted by Labor: he was credited with “patiently and perceptively handling the turbulence caused by the attempts of the elected members to hurry the pace of self-government” 9. The Council's efforts were vital to subsequent constitutional reform, with elected and non-official nominated Members the “prime advocates”, occasionally supported by official Members. In 1958, Hasluck spoke of a future “North Australian State”, implying eventual statehood for the NT, a goal reiterated by the Governor-General in the mid-1960s. After 1968, it apparently waned as a priority for Canberra 10.

The Council was bent on constitutional reform, particularly to increase its elective element. Small concessions were granted, such as the NT's Member of the House of Representatives, then J. N. Nelson, being allowed to vote on NT matters 11. The Government held to “evolutionary and progressive … constitutional development”. Eventually, in 1965, the position of the Administrator in the Legislative Council was replaced with that of a President, elected from the elective Members, and in 1968 the NT Member of the House of Representatives was granted full voting rights 12.

11 Heatley. P. 19. Powell. P. 230. Powell cited Member of the House of Representatives D.E. Fairbairn's comment at the time that “the only way to deprive oneself of a vote in my country (was) to be certified as insane, to be convicted of treason or to move to the (NT)”.
12 Heatley. Pp. 19, 21–22. Harry Chan was the first elected President of the Council.
Throughout the 1960s, there was substantial expansion in NT administration, in both Darwin and Canberra. Entrenched intra-bureaucracy tensions, between operational and administrative staff locally and between NT-based officials and their counterparts and superiors in Canberra, were exacerbated, angst arose over exceptional growth in management at the expense of operations and there was increased subordination, tighter control and greater direction of the units in the NT “by the burgeoning corps of southern-based officials”. It was widely perceived, amongst senior officials in Darwin and the elected Members of the Legislative Council, that bureaucrats, not politicians, determined policy on the NT in Canberra.\(^\text{13}\)

Party political rivalry also came into play in the NT, from the mid-1960s. The Legislative Council commonly had two or more Members with Labor affiliation, a North Australia Party surfaced briefly, and the Country Party, introduced in 1966, won four seats in the 1968 election. From that point, elected Members were divided along party lines.\(^\text{14}\) In Heatley's view, “the strategic issue of timing and speed of reform” thus eroded the solidarity that had hitherto typified the Council.\(^\text{15}\)

Hasluck relinquished Territories in 1963. He had been a capable, articulate, influential Liberal Cabinet Minister in the post. His successors were inexperienced junior ministers from the minor Coalition partner.\(^\text{16}\) Only Barnes (1964–68) held the portfolio for more than a couple of years, and none impacted significantly on evidently diminishing interest in reform for the NT. Heatley stressed that the modest advances actually achieved were “always reluctantly conceded”: if the Legislative Council had not “continually harried” the Commonwealth, notwithstanding its stated commitment to regular constitutional review, none may have occurred at all.\(^\text{17}\)

Little constitutional reform occurred in the early 1970s. In 1972, the Commonwealth conceded for the first time “the principle of transfer of limited functions to local control”,


\(^{16}\) Powell. Pp. 230–31. Heatley. P. 21. Powell noted that the elected Members did not rue losing Hasluck at the time but that his efforts came to be appreciated with hindsight and experience, “the ebullient and aggressive ‘Tiger’ Brennan (likening him (in 1971) to ‘a good old uncle …, the only Minister who (had) done any good for the political advancement of the Territory’”. Heatley rated Brennan “one of (Hasluck's) persistent and most vocal adversaries”.

\(^{17}\) Heatley. P. 21.
without actual commitment. In October that year, a “limited and cautious” offer was made to the Legislative Council, wherein the Commonwealth “(retained) executive responsibility and overriding legislative authority on pivotal areas”, including education and Aboriginal affairs, its veto and reservation powers, and authority to regulate where the Council did not endorse required measures. In the meantime, the NT was to try to generate revenue as the States did. Ultimately, it came to nought, as Labor was returned in the December Federal elections before the Council could debate the offer. Prime Minister Gough Whitlam was invited to declare Labor's position on the NT and to arrange dialogue between appropriate ministers and Council members. A critical moment in the NT's constitutional saga was thus reached, with Aboriginal affairs still firmly under Commonwealth control.

As the Council toiled for constitutional reform, other dynamics pertinent to the provision of human services were changing. The population was growing, its composition was altering quite dramatically, there was gradual economic development and substantial growth in public services. Aborigines, although increasing in number, ceased to comprise the majority. Services for them, formal education in particular, neglected under protection, became a growth industry.

As the population grew, social dynamics changed. Most increase occurred in the urban centres: Darwin and Alice Springs grew to generate “the amenities that urban dwellers (expected)”. In the late 1950s, non-Aborigines outnumbered Aborigines for the first time; and in the late 1970s they did so by 3 : 1. Table 5.1 shows that the Aboriginal population in the area to be defined as the NT was estimated at 35 000 in 1788, but the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1990) thought there may have been up to twice that number. An Aboriginal Census in 1944 found that they had dwindled to fewer than 14 000; they recovered to nearly 20 000 in 1961 and over 28 000 in 1981. The point to note is that although non-Indigenes were outstripping Indigenes numerically, the latter were themselves increasing rapidly.

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### TABLE 5.1 POPULATION OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1946–76.\(^{23}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Non-Indigenes</th>
<th>Indigenes</th>
<th>Indigenes as % of Territory Population</th>
<th>Territorians as % of Australian Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>27,015</td>
<td>10,868</td>
<td>16,147</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>33,632</td>
<td>16,469</td>
<td>17,163</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>44,481</td>
<td>24,774</td>
<td>19,707</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>56,504</td>
<td>34,192</td>
<td>22,312</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>86,390</td>
<td>63,009</td>
<td>23,381</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>97,090</td>
<td>71,590</td>
<td>25,500</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{23}\) Heatley. P. 2. The table from which the data is taken was compiled from Censuses. Some discrepancies exist in such data, but they do not gainsay the population dynamics.

Proliferation of Territorians of mixed descent, part-white/part-Aboriginal, has been noted. Reference has also been made to Asian influences: progeny from Asian-European and Asian-Aboriginal liaisons, legacies from trepang-harvesting, gold-mining, Chinese immigration and the pearling industry, resulted in the Darwin population's containing “a vigorous strain of Malay, Indonesian and Filipino blood”.\(^{24}\) Afghan camel drivers and pedlars venturing to the Outback around the turn of the twentieth century also contributed in central Australia. A rich racial and cultural mix in the NT population has continued to evolve.

Reconstruction and development in Darwin, 1950s-60s, attracted new groups of migrants as builders and businessmen, with Greeks the most numerous. Noting that the newcomers were accepted “with the casual tolerance which (had) become one of the most endearing features of the town”, Powell cited signs of Darwin's growing cosmopolitan substance: in 1966, Harry Chan, a businessman of Chinese descent, was distinguished with election as the town's mayor and as the first President of the Legislative Council; and in 1970, Tony Vrettos, a Greek-born Darwin wharf worker visiting Greece, was apprehended for protesting against its military regime, Darwin unionists were outraged, and ensuing nationwide industrial activity disrupted Greek-based business in Australia and led to Federal intervention on his behalf.\(^{25}\) People of mixed descent, Chinese and Greeks remain strong elements of Darwin's population.\(^{26}\)

\(^{24}\) Powell. P. 224.
\(^{25}\) Powell. P. 229
\(^{26}\) John Anictomatis, current NT Administrator Ted Egan's predecessor, is of Greek descent.
The evolution of the NT racial and cultural mix diluted the British-derived official frame to some extent. In the public sector, there were potential implications in the longer term for design and delivery of services for Aborigines. The public sector culture, however, until the 1960s very much that of colonial administration, could be expected to accommodate new ideas only gradually. Employees were required to adjust to “the system” more than it would adjust to them.

Legislated assimilation of Indigenes was at odds with the evolution of racial plurality for everyone else. One could speculate on the potential there may have been for a nexus between the natural development of the casually tolerant mainstream and public policy and strategies for its absorption of Indigenes. It appears that co-existence of whites, mixed-race people of many descents and peoples of many ethnicities could evolve per se, but that artificial coercive measures were considered necessary for a similar outcome with Indigenes. Aboriginal people of mixed descent were thought to be assimilating well, so intervention was deemed unnecessary in their case.

After the war, economic activity became more focussed than it had previously been. By the early 1970s, only mining, always an impermanent field of endeavour, and the fluctuating pastoral industry, were reliable sources of revenue. They did not give the NT an economic base auguring well for self-sufficiency and autonomous government. Federal spending on public services contributed significantly to the development of the urban centres during the period. National and international security, in particular, stimulated growth and vitality in Darwin and Alice Springs: the experience of WWII and activity related to the wars in Korea and Vietnam were catalysts to upgrade northern defence capacity, and the Centre was boosted with the joint USA-Australian defence space base established at Pine Gap in 1968. Commonwealth funding for human services, education, health and welfare especially, and for development of infrastructure also increased.\textsuperscript{27} Table 5.2 indicates growth in the NT's population and the Commonwealth's fiscal commitment, steady under the Coalition and increasing substantially in the first fiscal year of Whitlam Labor administration.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Fiscal Year} & \textbf{Population} & \textbf{Commonwealth Expenditure} \\
\hline
1953/54 & 30 431 & $5 500 000 \\
1963/64 & 54 476 & $11 000 000 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Growth in Population and in Commonwealth Expenditure, Northern Territory, 1953/54 – 1973/74.\textsuperscript{28}}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{27} Powell. Pp. 220–27.
Fiscal Year | Population | Commonwealth Expenditure
---|---|---
1973/74 | 101,233 | $170,000,000

28 Powell. P. 228. ABS, *Northern Territory in Focus*, 1998. P. 43. The data were derived from Powell and supplemented from the ABS.

The life of the policy to assimilate Aborigines coincided, as evident above, with a period of change and some progress for the NT. Modest constitutional advance was won, despite Commonwealth resistance, control and authority to over-ride. The Legislative Council sought self-government and statehood as Canberra strove to peg NT autonomy to its fiscal dependence. Demographic dynamics were spectacular, the population virtually trebling over two decades, with Indigenous numbers recovering to a degree and an influx of non-Indigenous. Economically, the Territory fluctuated with demand, supply and fickle prices. The pastoral industry was subject also to climatic phenomena. Notwithstanding parsimony, as perceived by the Council, the Commonwealth contributed most to growth, in its service provision, infrastructure development and defence initiatives, the associated employment and deployment of personnel, and other related expenditure. Dependence upon and control by Canberra therefore endured as the reality, especially where Aborigines were concerned.

**Introduction of Indigenous Assimilation Policy.**

In this study, policy to assimilate Aborigines is taken to apply from its declaration in 1951. It had been conceived earlier as a direction in public policy for Aborigines of mixed descent; it applied to all Aborigines from 1951 to the late 1960s/early 1970s, coming into effect officially in the NT in 1954. Aspects of the concept, however, had actually been applied for as long as there had been policy related to Aborigines.

Commentators, understandably, can confuse protection and assimilation policy and practices. Assimilation practices were applied before assimilation became public policy. Stuart Macintyre (2001) pointed to attempts to assimilate in early colonial days, manifest in efforts to convert Indigenes to Christianity, to Westernise their lifestyles and to integrate them into the British-based economy. He attributed their failure to authorities' having

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29 E.g., Neill. Pp. 29–30. Neill, who dubbed Hasluck “the architect of ... ‘welfarist’ assimilation”, lamented assimilation, focussing largely upon practices when it was policy to protect Aborigines. She charged authorities with applying assimilation with “brutal excesses ... especially during the interwar years” (when Elkin was decrying protection as negative and unsuccessful and advocating assimilation policy as positive).

E.g., Wells, Julie T., 1995. “The Long March: Assimilation Policy and Practice in Darwin, the Northern Territory, 1939–1967”. Thesis submitted for Doctor of Philosophy, History, Faculty of Arts, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Qld.. P. 1. Wells focussed on assimilation in Darwin, covering the period from McEwan's 1939 policy statement, “New Deal”, which was based on a “nexus between successful assimilation of individual Aborigines and citizenship”, to the 1967 Referendum.
resorted to protection from the mid-1800s. He understood the assimilation concept to have evolved through successive “notions of race, ethnicity and culture”, with attempts to civilise a race perceived as heathen and backward, needing salvation. Protection became discriminatory, seeking, on the one hand, to separate Aborigines from “Australian society” and, on the other, to absorb into that society people of mixed descent. A strategy to achieve the latter was the removal of children of mixed parentage from their Aboriginal mothers to prepare them for the mainstream. Long before it was declared policy, assimilation of people of part-Aboriginal descent had thus operated under protection, when extinction of “full bloods” was still expected. Focus on people of mixed descent moved from racial distinction to tacit genetic manipulation, with “half-castes” calculated to intermarry with whites. Aboriginality could then survive in the mainstream.

The quest to assimilate sprang not from altruism alone, in Peter Read's (2001) view. Between the World Wars, Indigenous leaders organised themselves for political ends. They sought to close reserves and achieve for their peoples equal rights as Australian citizens. Read saw them as “militant, … (set on Aborigines' being) one recognisable people and … deeply conscious of the injustices visited upon them” and attributed adoption of the policy to assimilate “almost all Aborigines” partly to their stance. Post-WWII, realising that extinction no longer threatened, the Commonwealth urged “training all indigenous Australians to adopt the Australian way of life”.

Accordingly, “(a)ssimilation was served both by the removal of discriminatory laws and the intensification of discriminatory practices designed to break down separate Aboriginal identity”. Children's removal has been judged the “most tragic” of those practices, but it did have strong and enduring support.

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33 Macintyre. Pp. 41–42.
34 Northern Territory Legislative Council, 1969. Northern Territory Legislative Council Debates. Darwin, NT. Northern Territory of Australia, Commonwealth of Australia. “The Debates”, pp. 1245–47. E.g., Rupert Kentish (Member for Arnhem) defended removing children of mixed descent from their mothers, claiming that “many of the coloured folk in the Territory … (owed to it) their present happiness and skill and well-being and their homes”, having been “given an education and … a new outlook in a new culture and way of life, … (becoming) coloured people with a white outlook”. He saw them as benefiting from “short-term cruelty” rather than being left to “long-term cruelty … in Aboriginal camps”. He stated that “their ability and the adaptability of their brain to fit into our culture”, was, in his perception, “quite ahead of the normal Aboriginal capacity here”. In his perspective, “a half-caste child … left in an Aboriginal camp would grow up as a half-caste Aboriginal. Transplanted to European schools amongst European children and surroundings, and culture, they grow up as a half-caste white person. The difference … is mainly in outlook, and mis
Mention of assimilation in Australia typically calls to mind policy on Aborigines. It is worthy of note, however, that other policy, notably that related to post-WWII immigration, also sought to assimilate. Difference, regardless of ethnicity, was actively discouraged, at least until the 1960s.\(^{35}\) As implementation of Indigenous assimilation proceeded\(^ {36}\), retention and/or development of the cultural entity grew in importance and anomalies in practices under the policy were increasingly evident and unacceptable. In 1971, Prime Minister William McMahon announced that it was no longer Commonwealth policy to assimilate Indigenous Australians. As Macintyre observed, however, “not all public servants noticed the change”, and it was not until Labor won office in 1972 that assimilation was really abandoned as public policy on Aborigines. Some commentators maintain that assimilation ended at the 1967 Referendum, and that integration was then adopted. Others suggest that assimilationist practices have survived to the present day in the NT.

Wells identified three significant features of assimilation of Aborigines in the NT. Reference has been made to two, the Coalition's holding Federal office, 1949–72, and Hasluck's tenure as Minister for Territories, 1951–63. The third was H. C. Giese's service as Director of Social Welfare, 1954–72. His contribution to the policy's implementation in the NT was vital.\(^ {37}\)

The Department of Native Affairs had been introduced in 1939. In the NT, the *Aboriginals Ordinance* was amended in 1953 to redefine “aboriginal” and remove reference to “half-castes”, and the Welfare Branch of Northern Territory Administration replaced Native Affairs. The *Welfare Ordinance* (1953) then repealed the *Aboriginals Ordinance* (1953): it introduced assimilation, to take effect from 1957, and made the Director of Welfare legal guardian of all declared “wards”. In theory, any Territorians could be “wards”, but the term was really a euphemism for “Aborigines”: the criteria for declaring a person a ward, … by reason of

- his manner of living;
- his inability, without assistance, adequately to manage his own affairs;
- his standard of social habit and behaviour, and

outlook, of course, has great influence on their future and their potential to work, and in everything they do.”

\(^{35}\) Macintyre. P. 42.
\(^{36}\) Goodall, Heather. “Aboriginal land rights”, in Davison *et al.* P. 6. Goodall saw assimilation as a strategy used by “all state governments … to resocialise (landowners)”.
\(^{37}\) Wells. P. 2.
• his personal associations, stands in need of such special care or assistance as is provided by this Ordinance,

covered characteristics of Aborigines as perceived by the legislators. As people who were eligible to vote could not be declared wards and there was no Aboriginal suffrage, virtually only non-exempted Aborigines could be wards. Certificates of exemption from Ordinance provisions were introduced for Aborigines deemed not to need “special care and assistance”. As a result, about eighty were not listed in the Register of Wards that the Director was required to compile. When Giese was appointed Director of Welfare, the Welfare Ordinance (1953), complemented by the Ordinance to Provide for the Training and Employment of Wards (1953), gave him extensive responsibility for and authority over Aboriginal Territorians' lives.

Regulation of Aborigines' assimilation and the arrangements made were well-intended, as Neill noted, but paternalistic. The laws and the control and functions given to Giese and Welfare attracted criticism from Aborigines' advocates, and some anomalous situations that arose received wide publicity. Powell cited two: artist Albert Namatjira, an exempted person, was gaoled for giving alcohol to one or more non-exempted persons; and Welfare opposed marriage of a white stockman to an Aboriginal woman. Both were topics of protracted debate in the Legislative Council. Powell observed that press coverage bent on vilifying the legislation tended to gloss over the complexity of such cases and to obscure public opinion's strong support, in the 1950s, for the policy and its implementation, including endorsement by “the anthropological lobby”. He believed contributions by Native Affairs and Welfare Branch, “in preserving the lives of Aborigines and preparing them to cope with the white man's world”, did not receive due recognition.

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40 Powell. P. 233.

Douglas Lockwood (1968) cited some cases to exemplify potential difficulties and triumphs in mixed marriages and for their progeny. In his account it appears, that as the 1950s and 1960s progressed, people of mixed descent, whilst making their way in the white man's worlds of work and sport, were not being assimilated into the mainstream to the extent that authorities perceived or claimed, nor were they losing touch with their Indigenous roots.\textsuperscript{41} He held, possibly naively, that, at the time of writing, “(r)acial prejudice (had) all but disappeared” in Darwin.\textsuperscript{42} Giese, for instance, whose powers over Aborigines' lives included approval of who could wed whom, opposed mixed marriages as a matter of policy.\textsuperscript{43}

Lockwood recognised Giese's public image “as a man of the highest integrity … (whose) dedicated contribution to Aboriginal welfare (had) been exceptional”.\textsuperscript{44} It was fulsome praise, from a journalist for a forthright senior public official who held and exercised wide-ranging powers. It is germane that Giese voiced caution in relation to policy on Indigenous affairs, terminology especially. Powell recorded his reporting, in 1966, that, during a recent study tour in North America, he had heard the terms “assimilation” and “integration” uttered virtually only in historical contexts. He warned that it would be advisable

\[
\text{to discontinue … use (of the terms) when referring to official government policies; they do not in fact describe present policies and their use can lead to overtones of racial arrogance and intolerance.}\textsuperscript{45}
\]

Giese's adjustment is remarkable: in the latter 1960s, without lessening commitment to assimilation, he urged heed of and respect for Indigenous culture in the educative process, as advocated by Watts and Gallacher, and cautioned against use of terms potentially bearing racist innuendo. Canberra appeared unimpressed, however, and other events and trends were about to change directions, especially in Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations and the management of Indigenous affairs.

In the 1950s and 1960s, pockets of Indigenes and their advocates were increasingly active and attracting publicity.\textsuperscript{46} A combination of influence from trends overseas\textsuperscript{47}, outrage

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{42}Lockwood P. 266.
\item \textsuperscript{43}Powell. P. 233.
\item \textsuperscript{44}Lockwood. P. 183.
\item \textsuperscript{45}Powell. 236.
\item \textsuperscript{46}E.g., the extensive coverage in 1965 of the action of the University of Sydney's Student Action for Aborigines, a bus trip dubbed the Freedom Ride, led by Charles Perkins through rural NSW to investigate Aborigines' conditions and expose racial discrimination.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
at perceived injustice at home\textsuperscript{48}, associated protestation, and growing contact between Indigenous communities, potentially embryonic pan-Aboriginality, generated efforts to form effective Indigenous interest bodies with national perspective. A significant outcome was formation, in 1958, of the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement, led by leaders of its main affiliates, in 1964 renamed the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Though dominated by non-Aborigines, it was “a multi-racial organisation which always had Aboriginal leaders … and … tried to include and promote Aboriginal perspectives”. From the outset, members of the Council for Aboriginal Advancement questioned assimilation, and Douglas Nicholls is credited with stating, in 1958, that Aborigines sought instead integration with retention of identity.\textsuperscript{49} Causes undertaken included repeal of discriminatory legislation, extension/restoration of Aborigines' voting rights, entitlement to welfare benefits, and wage equity for those engaged in the pastoral industry. The issue of land rights escalated in the 1960s.

The Advancement Councils' main achievement was having discriminatory provisions removed from \textit{The Constitution}, realised with the 1967 Referendum.\textsuperscript{50} Voters were asked whether they approved

\begin{quote}
the proposed law for the alteration of the Constitution entitled “An Act to alter the Constitution so as to omit the words relating to the people of the Aboriginal Race in any State and so that Aboriginals are to be counted in reckoning the population”.\textsuperscript{51}
\end{quote}

A majority voted “Yes” in each of the six States, with 90.77\% doing so overall.\textsuperscript{52} There was a clear message for all Australian governments.

In reality, the result of the 1967 Referendum was less significant, technically and legally, than it is popularly believed to have been. For instance, it has been widely assumed

\begin{flushright}
47 E.g., the civil rights movement in the USA, utilisation of direct action to protest over issues, and the New Left in British and American politics.
48 E.g., the testing of weaponry in outback SA (between 1946 and 1970), malnutrition amongst Aborigines in the Warburton Ranges (1957) and Namatjira's trial (1958).
50 Attwood & Markus (eds.). Pp. 18–21.
51 Attwood & Markus (eds.). Pp. 212–13. The prime trigger for the referendum was to remove the nexus, Federally, between the numbers of Representatives and of Senators. It failed, and the 1967 Referendum is noteworthy for its endorsement of Aborigines' equity in citizenship.
\end{flushright}
to have given the Commonwealth *entrée* to Aboriginal affairs: the Commonwealth had been responsible for Aborigines in the NT since 1911 and, through the fiscal grants provision of Section 96 of *The Constitution*, could have played an influential rôle in relation to Aborigines in the States if it had so chosen. Even after the resounding “Yes” to equity in Indigenous citizenship, five years or so passed before much activity ensued. Symbolically, the Referendum outcome was very important: it eventually generated programs and commitments designed for constructive change. It was therefore “an event of lasting practical significance”.

Indigenous “development”, or “advancement”, to participate in the mainstream, was lent new impetus. The momentum was to last for the remainder of the twentieth century, with policies, strategies and services tailored and implemented accordingly. In the last quarter, processing land rights claims and, where successful, allocation of tracts of lands to their traditional owners, began to address their dispossession. The losses sustained in Indigenous languages, racial integrity, discrete tribal entities and individual and collective self-sufficiency and dignity, and hence loss also in cultural heritage, were less readily restored.

**Formal Education to Assimilate Indigenous Territorians.**

Education was to be provided for Aborigines in the NT in the context of constitutional development, demographic and economic growth and Indigenous assimilation. Formal education was both integral to the policy to assimilate and a benefit of it. The quest to assimilate Aborigines into mainstream Australia, *ipsa facto*, required their formal education. To function in the broader society competently, partaking of its goods, services and opportunities as responsible citizens, they required mainstream schooling and they needed preparation for competent and productive engagement in its economic activity. Obviously, schooling and training for Aborigines were required to develop in them the skills, understandings and values required for effective mainstream participation, just as they were for other Australians. That they should have such opportunities was also fundamental to the principles of equity with other Australian citizens espoused by McEwan and Hasluck.

In fact, seen in this perspective, assimilation did not differ greatly from the earlier quest to “Christianise and civilise”, other than there being less overt emphasis on religious conversion. The earlier quest had been a goal pursued in vain by fragmented colonial administrations, however, whereas assimilation was blanket policy for universal application by a Federal government in a representative democratic political environment.

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Formal education was to be fundamental to Aborigines' assimilation. English literacy, numeracy and Western understandings were considered necessary both to catalyse and to enable them to assimilate, and there were the dual assumptions that it would be in their best interests to do so and that, as familiarity with the mainstream developed, they would also aspire to assimilate. Assimilation policy triggered effort to provide formal education for Indigenous Territorians universally.

Authorities were criticised for having provided little Western education for Indigenes from white settlement in the NT. Activity in formal education galvanised from promulgation of the policy to assimilate. The Commonwealth Office of Education accepted responsibility in the area and it was subsequently transferred to the NT Administration Welfare Branch in Darwin. When Betty Watts and Jim Gallacher began their study, public schooling and training for NT Aborigines had grown, in thirteen years or so, from virtually nothing to substantial provisions. By 1963, taking into account subsidy of missions and pastoral property managements, development of curriculum and materials and provision of support services, the Government was making about half the total effort. Its entry to education for Indigenous Territorians was conspicuously late, but it had been in train, in principle at least, for some time.

The 1937 Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities had been convened in response to the growing demand for equity in citizenship at the time. It gave initial direction to Indigenes' schooling and training. Of the two classifications, “natives of aboriginal origin, but not of full blood” and “full-blood natives”, the latter category was subdivided into “the detribalized living near centres of white population”, “the semi-civilized” and “the uncivilized native”. Public authorities were, inter alia, to gear their efforts to

… the education of children of mixed aboriginal blood at white standards, and their subsequent employment under the same conditions as whites with a view to their taking their place in the white community on an equal footing with the whites …;

… educate to white standard, children of the detribalized living near centres of white population, and subsequently to place them in employment in


lucrative occupations, which will not bring them into economic or social conflict with the white community;

... keep the semi-civilized under a benevolent supervision in regard to employment, social and medical service in their own tribal areas ... (t)he ultimate destiny of these people (to) be their elevation to (the condition envisaged for “the detribalized”);

... preserve as far as possible the uncivilized native in his normal tribal state by the establishment of inviolable reserves ....56

Formal education was thus explicitly to be a means of engineering assimilation. The Commonwealth was to assist the States most in need of help “in the care, protection and education of natives which, unless extended, (would) bring discredit upon the whole of Australia”. That the States were “contributing the whole cost of the care of the natives in the Northern Territory” was noted.57

Several trends were emerging in the embryo policy to assimilate Aborigines. There was a strong overlay of paternalism; assimilation was initially intended for people of mixed descent; a system not unlike South Africa's apartheid was envisaged for “full-blood natives”, notably in segregated work and social arrangements to obviate impingement upon whites' activity; formal education and employment were to be fundamental in assimilating people of mixed descent, they were potentially available also to “the detribalized” and not ruled out for “the semi-civilized”; and the Commonwealth's involvement in fiscal arrangements was not just altruistic but born also of political pragmatism. There is irony in the States' funding Indigenous management in the NT, when the Commonwealth had been responsible since 1911.

In 1947, Directors of Native Affairs in Queensland, South Australia (SA) and the NT drafted direction in education for young Indigenes.58 It complied with the concept of assimilation, but the earlier direction was modified a little: need for specialised expertise to teach Aborigines was recognised, education was to be provided more inclusively, for Indigenes of “full … blood” as well as for those of mixed descent, and the idea of incentive was introduced A 1948 Commonwealth/States conference of Aboriginal affairs authorities concluded that public education for Indigenes should expand, endorsed the three Directors’

draft direction and proposed joint development of “standard regional curricula … to fit the Aboriginal into the State economy”. It was specified that in mission education programs, teachers should be “trained in methods of native education” and curriculum should “conform to the standard regional curricula” to be developed.\textsuperscript{59} With its accomplishment in teaching English as a foreign language to European migrants, the Commonwealth would implement the program in the NT and English would be the language of instruction, except where circumstances required teachers “to have some knowledge of the native tongue”.\textsuperscript{60} The Office of Education was responsible for NT Aborigines' schooling from 1950 until it was devolved to the Welfare Branch in Darwin at the end of 1955.\textsuperscript{61}

When the Office of Education undertook responsibility for education for Indigenous Territorians, twelve missions were already established providers. To date, the Government had made no organised operational provision.\textsuperscript{62} The missions' activity was maintained, with growth, and the Commonwealth established schools in larger Government settlements, introduced small schools on some pastoral properties, subsidised pastoral property proprietors to employ teachers on others and subsidised missions to upgrade and/or extend their school facilities. With assimilation policy, Commonwealth responsibility for Aborigines' formal education and the fundamental rôle of education in realising assimilation, the 1950s and 1960s saw galvanisation of initiative and effort It was purposely to support overarching social engineering policy\textsuperscript{63}, however, not education's being provided for its own intrinsic value. (See Table 5.3 for relevant data.) When Watts and Gallacher conducted their study, twelve Government schools in Aboriginal communities had 1 065 students enrolled, mission schools had grown from twelve with 597 students to sixteen with 1 558, and eighteen Government and subsidised schools had been started on pastoral properties, from the first in 1950 to the ten operating in 1963 with a total of 266 pupils.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{59} Watts & Gallacher. P. 31.


\textsuperscript{61} Watts & Gallacher. P. 32.

\textsuperscript{62} Giese. P. 14. Public provision to date had been for students of mixed descent only.

\textsuperscript{63} Barrett, Michèle, and Barry MacDonald, in Allan Bullock, & Oliver Stallybrass (eds), 1977. \textit{The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought}. London, UK. Fontana Books, P. 579. The “social engineering” idea is applied in this thesis in consistency with its sense as outlined by Barrett and MacDonald, “(t)he planning of social changes according to a blueprint …”.

\textsuperscript{64} Watts & Gallacher. Pp. 32–36.
TABLE 5.3 ENROLMENTS IN ALL NT ABORIGINAL SCHOOLS, 1950–1963.\textsuperscript{65}

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<tr>
<td>Enrolments at Government Schools in Aboriginal Communities:</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>1 065</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrolments at Mission Schools in Aboriginal Communities:</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>1 033</td>
<td>1 237</td>
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<td>Schools on Pastoral Properties (Government and Subsidised):</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>266</td>
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<td>Totals:</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>1 061</td>
<td>1 626</td>
<td>2 112</td>
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N.B. Indigenous students enrolled in urban “community schools”, supervised from Adelaide, were not taken into account.

\textsuperscript{65} Watts & Gallacher. P. 36.

Staffing schools for Indigenous Territorians was never easy. The office Education accepted that teachers in schools for Indigenous students should be qualified and have specialised preparation. Teachers were generally recruited by the Commonwealth Public Service, and, from 1959, some were seconded from State systems. New appointees were required to attend six-week induction courses from 1950. When Welfare became responsible for Indigenous Territorians' education, that requirement remained, first at the Australian School of Pacific Administration in Sydney and then in Darwin and Alice Springs. In 1960, the School of Pacific Administration, in association with the Balmain Teachers College, introduced a two-year course for trainees destined to teach in NT Aboriginal schools. It was similar to that already in place for Cadet Education Officers training for the Territory of Papua New Guinea, but distinct in its Anthropology and Principles and Practices in Native Education.
courses. Two other colleges, Kelvin Grove in Brisbane and Claremont in Perth, also trained teachers for NT Aboriginal schools in the 1960s.66

Teacher: pupil ratios have always posed problems. Government settlement67 schools had lower ratios than mission schools. For example, settlement schools averaged 1 : 30.6 in 1950, compared with missions’ 1 : 66.3; the ratio fluctuated in the former, with a high of 1: 33 in 1952, a low of 1: 22.8 in 1957 and a more typical 1 : 26.6 in 1963; in mission schools, it had dropped to 1 : 36.2 by 1963. The 1948 ministerial conference decided that the Office of Education would collaborate with the missions, subsidising recruitment of qualified teachers and work on facilities. An offer to include mission recruits in Office of Education training courses had not been taken up when Watts and Gallacher began their study.68

By 1964, all teachers in Government pastoral properties schools were qualified. Staff in subsidised pastoral property schools, employed by station managements, were generally not qualified. When enrolment at a subsidised school exceeded twenty, engagement of a qualified teacher was negotiated with the station management.69

Formal involvement of Indigenous personnel in schooling began in 1953, when the first Aboriginal teaching assistants were engaged. The rôle envisaged for them combined the logistic support functions of an urban primary school teachers' aide with involvement in children's schooling (e.g. correcting pupils' work and providing some practical instruction) and dealing with culturally sensitive matters. Teaching assistants in bush schools grew in number. The Commonwealth subsidised their employment by missions. Welfare ran training courses for teaching assistants in Darwin, 1960–63. They were trained in planning, presenting and supervising lessons and developing teaching aids, and their own academic levels were raised. By 1964, over sixty assistants had taken part in one or more of the courses and their rôles in schools ranged from “purely material assistance through occasional classroom responsibility to complete charge of a small class”, with five in the third category.70 The foundation was thereby laid for Aborigines to play vital rôles in their schools.

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66 Watts & Gallacher. P. 37.
67 A “settlement” was a Welfare-managed Indigenous community. It was commonly formed by forced co-location of two or more tribal groups. Warrabri, for example, was established in 1955–56 on Alyawarra land, its population comprising Warramunga, Warlpri, Alyawarra and Kaititja elements (spellings vary), the first two the more numerous, as reflected in the name coined for that settlement. Pastoral property camps were distinct from settlements.
69 Watts & Gallacher. P. 38.
70 Watts & Gallacher. Ps. 38,40.
An Aboriginal pre-school experiment, commenced in 1954 at The Bungalow, by then at the Alice Springs Aboriginal Reserve⁷¹, was judged to have had positive outcomes. *Inter alia*, it had shown early introduction to schooling, English language usage and supervised hygiene to be beneficial. In practice, Aboriginal pre-schooling was spasmodic, hindered by teacher turnover, limited availability of qualified staff, use of unqualified and partly-trained staff and loss of teachers trained to teach Aboriginal children to urban pre-schools. Watts and Gallacher concluded that, in ten years, pre-schooling for Aboriginal children had been proven beneficial but had not become standard in and integral to school offerings.⁷²

Momentum in Indigenous Territorians' formal education increased, 1950–63, and with it supervisory and professional support provisions. In 1951, a Senior Education Officer was appointed to liaise with Canberra and to supervise schools. Two District Education Officers, based in Darwin and Alice Springs, were added in 1958. In 1963, the Welfare Education hierarchy was restructured to comprise an Assistant Director, three operational Inspectors, an Inspector of Curriculum and Research, Supervisors of Adult Education and Publications, Manual Training and Home Management, Itinerant Specialist Teachers of Art, Music and Physical Education and an Assistant Pre-School Officer.⁷³ The Government had become manifestly serious about formal education for Aborigines, albeit in the context of assimilation.

Indigenous assimilation in the NT was supported by “special curricula and teaching methods” employed in temporary “special schools” for Aborigines. Direction was determined by the post-war meetings to which reference has been made. Curriculum came first: it was drafted at a 1949 conference which addressed Aboriginal children's formal education. The curriculum aims were:

• To provide a course of instruction appropriate to the particular needs of the Australian native.
• To assist the native to develop his abilities to the full.
• To help the native to adjust himself to living in a culture controlled predominantly by white people so that he may eventually be able to accept the full responsibilities of citizenship.
• To make the school an integral part of each native settlement so that the adult as well as the child can participate in its activities.

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⁷² Watts & Gallacher. P. 40.

The third was geared to assimilation, and therefore so was the fourth. Conference participants included appropriate personnel from the Department of Native Affairs, the Welfare Education Section, the NSW Department of Education and A.P. Elkin, then Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney.\footnote{Watts & Gallacher Pp. 41–42. Giese. Pp. 15–16, p. 17.} There was evidently no direct input from Indigenous Territorians or field practitioners.

The Office of Education elaborated. Subjects to be taught were English, “Native Language (where appropriate), Arithmetic, Social Studies, Health Education, Nature Study, Art and Craft Work [including (pre)-vocational training] and Religious Instruction”. English was to be the language of instruction, ““except where local conditions (e.g., where natives are still in a tribal or semi-tribal state) (rendered) bilingual instruction desirable””.\footnote{Sommerlad, Elizabeth, 1976. Kormilda, the way to tomorrow? a study in aboriginal education. Canberra, ACT. The Australian National University Press. P. 9. Sommerlad noted that a 1961 Commonwealth Conference on teaching English as a second language recommended taking a bilingual education approach, implicitly with Aborigines. Nielson, C.M., 1983. “Changes in N.T. Education: Implications for Curriculum”. (Assignment in Curriculum Design and Implementation). P. 6. Nielson noted that Indigenous languages in school curricula was considered but rejected on practical, not educational, grounds.} In 1950, a “provisional curriculum” was distributed, to be trialled. The English, Number, Social Studies and Natural Science syllabuses were revised, 1952–53, and reviewed at a conference of teachers in 1953, duly amended and re-issued as the curriculum for NT special schools. An oral English program followed in 1955, those planned for music, art and craft and physical education did not eventuate, and the Office produced “a special series of reading primers”, The Bush Books.\footnote{Watts & Gallacher. P. 42.} Thus, by the mid-1950s, curriculum for use with Aboriginal children had been developed, teachers had an English program and support materials and they had been actively involved in the curriculum process, in design and development as well as in implementation.

The Office of Education specified the aims of the NT special schools in 1951:

- To equip Aboriginal children ultimately to support themselves and their families in the economic structure of the Northern Territory.
- To encourage the improvement of Aboriginal environmental conditions, both domestic and communal.
- To discover and provide for the development and talents and creative abilities of Aboriginal children.
- To bridge the gap between the Aboriginal and the economy in which these people must ultimately assume places as independent units.
The aims for the schools, as for the curriculum, reflected Welfare's strategy to have formal education effect social change. The schools were “special” as they had that task to perform and thereby differed from conventional schools; they were temporary, to meet an interim need, the fulfilment of which would equip young Aborigines to succeed in the mainstream system and no longer need “special” schooling. Whereas the Office could only recommend directions in education for Aborigines to the State authorities, it dictated them in the NT.

Welfare rated adult education vital to Aborigines' assimilation. Accordingly, adult classes were introduced at missions and settlements from the early 1950s. Technical personnel working in those communities were growing in number, making for an increasing range of adult education and training offerings. By 1964, over forty Government employees were providing instruction to “(part-time) classes in general education, health and hygiene, child care, home management, social studies, political education and trade training”. Introduction of formal education for Aboriginal adults instituted a Western-based approach to life-long learning, quite distinct from the traditional one they had pursued from time immemorial.

The Watts/Gallacher Report.

By the early 1960s, assimilation of Aborigines had applied officially for a decade or so, as had their formal education, conceived in the official frame as integral to the policy and vital to its effect. Hasluck wanted the process reviewed and to capitalise upon the NT experience. Accordingly a Working Party, comprising Dr. B.H. Watts, University of Queensland Lecturer in Education, and J.D. Gallacher, Welfare Branch Inspector of Schools, was commissioned “to investigate the curriculum and teaching methods used in Aboriginal schools in the (NT)” in 1963. They were to:

• lay down precise principles which should govern the construction of the curriculum;
• review the curriculum in the light of such principles and recommend a comprehensive course of instruction;
• recommend teaching methods appropriate for Aboriginal children at various levels in the primary schools, bearing in mind changes in the curriculum; and

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77 Watts & Gallacher. P. 41. Use of “special” invites speculation on Welfare perspective. In 1990s Australia, “special education” was education for physically handicapped children. (The Macquarie Dictionary, 1991. P. 1679.) In England, in 1944, it was legislated “to meet the special needs of pupils with marked disabilities of body or mind”. [ Donald C. Watt, in Bullock & Stallybrass (eds.), 1977. P. 593. ] Was Aboriginality deemed a condition to be treated?
78 Watts & Gallacher. P. 42.
79 Gallacher had commenced his NT service as head teacher of Areyonga School in 1951.
• … conduct a number of pilot experiments in a limited number of schools on certain aspects of curriculum and teaching methods.\textsuperscript{80}

The Watts/Gallacher Report (1964) was submitted to Barnes, Hasluck's successor. It was a vital contribution, the most significant of the assimilation era and of greater moment than any other study specific to the NT until the Collins Review report, \textit{Learning lessons} (1999).

The main focus was primary schooling, but the authors included ideas on post-primary and adult education. The Report was accepted: it was the first comprehensive statement of public policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians. It was authoritative until 1972 and relevant until the education function transferred to Darwin in 1979\textsuperscript{81}, remaining so, although no longer in use, until \textit{Learning lessons} was promulgated. Watts and Gallacher stressed that Aboriginal children's schooling was integral to “the total Welfare programme for Aborigines in the (NT)”\textsuperscript{82}, assimilation.

The Report gave tangible direction to Indigenes' formal education in the NT. It detailed the \textit{rôles} schooling and training should play in the assimilation process. Giese proclaimed it just as relevant nationally and for other ethnic minorities as it was in the NT. He lauded especially its recognition of Indigenous culture, with inherent “cultural differences” and their implications for schooling.\textsuperscript{83}

In 1961, Hasluck had elaborated his perspective on assimilation. Commitment to assimilate Aborigines meant that the Commonwealth would direct

\begin{quote}
its work in nutrition, health, hygiene, schooling, housing, vocational training, employment and the removal of legal restriction so as to promote the advancement of the people towards life \textit{in} and \textit{with} the rest of the Australian community and on exactly the same conditions as those enjoyed by all other Australians.
\end{quote}

A ministerial conference in 1963 declared that the policy was to ensure that

\begin{quote}
all Aborigines and part-Aborigines will attain the same manner of living as other Australians and live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{80} Watts & Gallacher. “Preface”.
\textsuperscript{81} I recall Gallacher, mid-1970s, ruing decline in Indigenous communities in the Top End under post-Welfare arrangements, urging application of the principles and practices he and Watts had advocated and asserting that their Report's endorsement as policy had not been rescinded.
\textsuperscript{82} Watts & Gallacher. P. 43.
\textsuperscript{83} Giese. Pp. 23–24. Powell (P. 236) made a similar observation.
observing the same customs and beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians.

Accordingly,

any special measures taken for Aborigines and part-Aborigines are regarded as temporary measures, not based on race but intended to meet their need for special care and assistance, to protect them from any ill effects of sudden change and to assist them to make the transition from one stage to another in such a way as will be favourable to their social, economic advancement.  

Such statements defined the context in which Watts and Gallacher worked through the purposes of formal education for Aborigines in the NT. They would have known of studies, 1960–62, of the Territory’s educational needs, and a Legislative Council Select Committee’s recommendation (1962) that a discrete Education Branch of NT Administration administer education for Aborigines and regular public education together. Reasoning included pre-emption of anticipated pressure for “educational service identical with that for the European population” for Aborigines, with “one control for both types of schools” and their eventual integration.  

Willis maintained that there was resolve, implicitly in Welfare, to keep education for Aborigines apart from the mainstream.  

The measure proposed would have meant moving education for Aborigines from the Welfare Branch, which had hitherto provided its direction and to whose policy and operations it was integral. It would also have meant that Giese, with his advocacy of formal education in assimilation, would no longer be involved. The idea was not inconsistent with the stated purposes and expectations of assimilation policy, however.

Watts and Gallacher discussed whether aims of schooling for Aboriginal children should differ from those of primary education for others. The latter were related to children's mastery of certain basic skills, acquisition of essential knowledge, development of desirable attitudes and promotion of their own development. They divided deliberations on the issue

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84 Watts & Gallacher. P. 43. Giese. P. 1. I assume that the Working Party focussed mainly upon Aborigines not of mixed descent, but those of mixed parentage were not explicitly excluded. Giese, Gallacher’s immediate superior, made his perspective clear: “I strongly believe that the educational needs of part-Aboriginal children and Aboriginal children … are … fundamentally different. These differences do not arise from inherent intellectual differences but from cultural differences, including language”.


86 Willis. P. 46.
into four segments, the cultural perspective, individual differences amongst the children, need for an overall educational provision that embraced all age groups and need for planning to embrace training needs and employment prospects for school leavers. The nett result was a set of principles for educational provision for Aborigines in the NT.

On cultural factors, Watts and Gallacher considered experience abroad. They also heeded cautions from Elkin on education for Aborigines in relation to their cultural heritage. They concluded that their schooling must aim

> to help the children to an understanding of European culture and, through this, of their own culture, so that they themselves will be able to make their own choices, to assume direction of their own lives and to solve their own problems, achieving their own integration of Aboriginal and European beliefs and ways.

They reasoned that such objectives could be realised with appropriate pedagogy, academic and practical syllabus-based activity and recreational extra-curricular pursuits, led by teachers whose acquaintance with and respect for Indigenous culture would enable them to interact productively with both children and parents. Part-time engagement of “skilled Aborigines” was urged, to provide cultural enrichment, teaching assistants were to be accorded significant status in schools and parents were to participate in school-related activities. Such involvement, they argued, would “ensure a continuity between the children's lives at home and their hours at school”. In their view, the children should derive from formal education both “understanding and appreciation” of their heritage and “understanding” of social and economic white Australia.\(^\text{87}\) Formal Western schooling was to support assimilation. Importantly, however, and evidently at odds with the assimilation goal conveyed from Canberra, Watts and Gallacher advocated incorporation and reinforcement of Indigenous culture in the formal education process.

Watts and Gallacher heeded the contemporary thinking that education programs should cater for individual differences amongst children. They deemed it an urgent consideration for Aboriginal children: the range of individual differences that obtained for them was the same as that for others, but they had to contend also with differences in their “(stages) of acculturation”. In each location, as a result, curriculum structure and school operation needed to be arranged so as to optimise equity of educational opportunity for every child, “(to ensure) that educationally advanced children” could realise their academic potential, and

\(^{87}\) Watts & Gallacher. Pp. 44–47.
that the large number of children still very close to tribal beliefs and tribal patterns of living will receive an education which is meaningful to them in their present lives and which will provide them with opportunities for further growth.

Parents and the community were thought to influence differences among children. Group acculturation, “levels of intelligence, parental schooling, parental interest and competence in English, and parent and child aspirations” were important interacting factors. It was stressed that “advanced” children must have “the opportunity to develop folly”: they were expected to progress rapidly, although, due to linguistic and cultural factors, less so than European children. As adults, it was assumed they would contribute valuably locally and in the wider community. Special efforts were also to be made for “less advanced” children: their progress in Western education would be hindered by limited English language mastery, late initial enrolment and irregular attendance with prolonged absences, and the problems such traits posed for viable practice, so “learning-by-doing” was required for these children. A culturally appropriate strategy was thus advocated, albeit out of expediency.

A pragmatic dual approach was devised. Especial provision was to be made for children likely to succeed academically, to prepare for mainstream education, with the best provision possible under prevailing circumstances for the rest until they became “educationally advanced”. Watts and Gallacher noted that the regular education to be provided for primary school-aged Aboriginal children of high potential was to achieve for them more than primary schooling did for non-Indigenous children, including “critical appreciation of two cultures”, and that it would be more difficult for the former to realise optimal outcomes in the process than it was for the latter. It was a scheme born nonetheless of common sense in the broader context of assimilation.

From experience overseas, Watts and Gallacher noted that limiting education to primary school-age children had been “ineffectual in … social change” and confusing for target societies. “Aboriginal education and Aboriginal progress” were seen to be inter-woven, with children's schooling only part of education for change: attention had also to be paid to catering for pre-school-age children, young people completing primary education and adults. Watts and Gallacher were anxious to maximise the scope of education to obviate a tendency, when only primary education was provided, for young people to teach older people, thereby effecting rôle reversals and making for previously non-existent conflict-laden

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89 Watts & Gallacher. P. 48.
generation gaps in homes and communities. The whole Aboriginal community was therefore “the unit to be educated”.

The priority outcomes to be sought from adult education were examined. Purposes and principles of adult education in social change had been identified in observation in French territories in Africa, and summarised in a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) publication (1955):

> Education should enable individuals to improve their living conditions and to understand, interpret and exploit the achievements of progress for their own use by incorporating them, through adaptation, in their own social structure and civilisation, it being understood that the aim … is to create a situation in which individuals themselves contribute actively to the shaping of their own future.

The UNESCO clearly regarded it important for peoples undergoing social change to have “ownership” and responsibility in the process. Extension education courses, such as those provided in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea and the South Pacific, were required, to augment adult education for NT Aborigines. Heeding anthropologist Margaret Mead, Watts and Gallacher stressed that such courses must “arouse in the people discontent with their present way of life”, a prerequisite for social change. Education for Aboriginal adults was thus to effect social change by fomenting dissatisfaction to catalyse aspiration and endeavour to improve their lot.

Watts and Gallacher rated pre-schooling a priority. Centres for Aboriginal children, although operating spasmodically, were found to have proven valuable to children's development and subsequent success in school. Pre-schools in communities could “serve the cause of assimilation” in four respects:

- by preparing the children to adjust to the European social environment which requires different personality characterisation and independence of a slightly different sort at perhaps an earlier age;
- by inculcating acceptable personal hygiene habits at an early age;
- by introducing the English language; and
- by cushioning the child's entrance into the primary school.

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90 Watts & Gallacher. P. 49.
The last was rated “more important” in Aboriginal pre-schools than in urban settings. Mothers' involvement in settlement and mission pre-schools was also considered important: they came to the pre-schools with their children and were instructed in child care, thereby developing an “intimate association” with the pre-schools and hence “a more favourable attitude towards education”. The pre-school was thus conceived of as having the dual purposes of preparing children for mainstream primary schooling and promoting mothers' awareness and value of the process, thereby making for home support for children's schooling.

In formal life-long educational provisions for Indigenes, there was a gap between the notional primary and adult stages. Provision was required for adolescents and young adults whose non-Indigenous counterparts engaged in junior secondary studies and then moved on to senior secondary and tertiary studies, trade or vocational training, employment or other post-school options. Some “more advanced” Indigenous students were to proceed to urban high schools for secondary education, with support Most “less advanced” students needed more time than the regular primary school allowed to master English adequately, for functional literacy and to realise “their full potential”. They required post-primary education, in settlements and missions, to “extend their basic education and develop necessary vocational skills”.

The interests of Aboriginal students with potential for secondary education were paid close attention. Watts and Gallacher were aware that it was insufficient simply to transfer the students from their home communities to hostels in the urban centres so that they could attend high schools: it would make for poor social adjustment which would mitigate against realisation of academic potential. They argued that extreme change, from a familiar socio-cultural environment to an alien one, exacerbated by very small representation from the widely differing tribes, would cause homesickness and loneliness and jeopardise academic success. They added that support to enable students to adjust from special schools at home to secondary studies in urban centres was not available in the high schools, where there were neither understanding of their backgrounds nor sensitivity to their language difficulties. As well, secondary teacher-student relationships and teaching methodology would be strange to them.

92 Watts & Gallacher. P. 50.
Transitional residential schools were proposed. The strategy was to have suitable residential school staff support students destined for secondary education in their transit from special schools to high schools. A period of a year or so, before the students actually entered high schools, was envisaged, during which they might be led to develop acceptable social habits and social skills and to adjust attitudes and values. Throughout this period they would receive wise personal guidance from staff primarily concerned with their welfare. In addition, teaching staff could concentrate on providing those experiences which contribute to language development, to fuller concept development and to widening the horizons of the children so that they might be brought to a stage where they could, with expectation of success, enter the normal (high) school situation.

Participation in the urban community and in recreational activities available to young people in town was to be part of the process. Watts and Gallacher believed it was “the ideal way in which the children (could) gain security and confidence and so develop attitudes conducive to educational and social progress”. A transitional residential school's task was thus to acculturate, adjusting students' perspectives, attitudes and conduct to equip them for secondary school studies and urban living.

The final aspect of the aims addressed by Watts and Gallacher was employment. They conceded that training and employment openings, other than in settlements and missions, were limited, but economic development was expected to create jobs for “qualified Aborigines” as well as for whites. The settlements and missions, as they developed “with the normal range of municipal and other public services”, were expected to offer wide-ranging opportunities. Watts and Gallacher thought that some able young Aborigines, like Europeans, would wish to venture further afield for training and employment and that they should be able to do so, ideally remaining in the NT and contributing to the advancement of their peoples. It was expected that once they completed formal schooling, their

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95 Sommerlad. P. 1. Sommerlad credited Giese with the idea, his motive being “to remove the potential secondary pupil from the reactionary influence of his or her parents”, in parallel with Governor Macquarie's approach at Parramatta early the previous century.

96 Watts & Gallacher. P. 52. Sommerlad. Pp. 64–65. It appears that Watts and Gallacher did not complete the “transitional residential school” item: they did not mention that after the transitional year, the children were to attend high schools as regular students and board in the residential schools, with supervised homework, tutorial assistance, organisation for sports and other community activities, and attention to personal welfare and links with home. Sommerlad understood students to reside at a transitional residential school for two years only, men to transfer to foster homes or hostels, a plan foiled by logistics.

97 Watts & Gallacher. P. 52.
aspirations, motivation and associated initiatives and strategies, and gradually those of their communities, would conform to mainstream patterns. Effective assimilation was assumed to follow in due course.

The Working Party proceeded to compile a set of principles to guide planning education for Aborigines in the NT (see Table 5.4). In accordance with Welfare policy and education's rôle in realising its goals, schooling and training provisions and their intended outcomes were concerned primarily to assimilate Aborigines into the mainstream. Some inconsistency may be perceived, however: public statements tended to convey that assimilation was to be done to Aborigines, eradicating the Indigenous frame in the process; the Working Party, conversely, in a significant departure, regarded elements of choice, activity and responsibility for Aborigines themselves as feasible and desirable, and, consistent with Elkin's views and heeding experience abroad, by implication, that Indigenous culture should be retained, not jettisoned. It was also unequivocal on the need for the totality of a community to be educated, not just its school-aged young, to remedy and obviate social disruption as well as enabling assimilation. In discussing school-aged youth, Watts and Gallacher had consistently asserted that formal education had to achieve for Indigenous students more than it did for non-Indigenous students, that the process, other than for supported high-achieving adolescents, therefore needed to be different and that the teaching and support skills required were not available in regular schools.

**TABLE 5.4 PRINCIPLES FUNDAMENTAL TO PLANNING EDUCATION FOR ABORIGINES.**

- Aboriginal children should have full equality of educational opportunity with all other Australian children.
- The education of Aboriginal children must take cognisance of the European and Aboriginal cultures and must be developed in such a way as to help the Aborigines to achieve their own integration of Aboriginal and European beliefs and ways.
- The Aboriginal culture must be recognised and respected by all teachers and instructors.
- Curriculum content and methods of instruction should be so planned and organised as to ensure to the fullest extent the transfer of school learnings to village living.
- Education, as an instrument of social progress, must be conceived as a continuing process, and emphasis should be placed on the development of appropriate programmes for all age groups. Every effort should be made to lessen the dichotomy that exists between the old and the young.
- Education must be a basic concern of all settlement and mission staff members. Whatever their specific field, their primary function must be seen as educational, directed to the continuing development of the Aboriginal people.
• There should be recognition that the education of Aborigines, at this stage of social change in the Northern Territory, is a special field of education and that all who work in this field need special training if educational planning and action are to be fully effective.

98 Watts & Gallacher. P. 53. The validity of their assessment, reflected in the principles identified, is not disputed. The emphasis they placed on the exceptional nature of formal education for Indigenous Territorians, however, could also be perceived as reasoning against the mooted amalgamation of the two school systems through exposing regular schooling and the special needs of Indigenous students from the bush as largely incompatible.

Watts and Gallacher dwelt on their appraisal of existing primary school provisions for Aboriginal children. English and Arithmetic Tests had yielded data indicating a wide range of achievement, with high rates of low achievement and low incidence of significant achievement. Similar patterns of achievement emerged in other areas, but there had been some success. Acquisition and retention of academic knowledge and skills were impeded by limited attendance at school and opportunity for application outside the school, in the home especially. Schools' operations had not all succeeded in conveying the value of education to their communities, but where they had, parents aged between twenty and forty years had begun to demand adult education.100

Watts and Gallacher identified five significant factors hindering children's progress in the education-for-social-change process. They were

the lack of realism in the concept of education, the lack of professional support to teaching staff, deficiencies in the training of teachers for this special work, irregular attendance by the children and inadequate buildings and facilities.

They asserted that Welfare had long been aware of the hindrances but that limited funding, “priorities within the total programme” and inability to develop a “cadre of professional staff” prevented their being addressed.101 Identified inhibitors were examined. The syllabuses were judged to have been unrealistic for a high proportion of children, being, other than where special provisions had been devised, “too close” to the State syllabuses from which they had been adapted, showing that the Office of Education had no grasp of “the level of social development and acculturation of the children … (or) the importance to the children of their own social and cultural heritage”. It was thought that pupils found little of value “to their real lives” in the Western education provided.102

100 E.g., low awareness of life beyond the home community and aspirations in further education and work in adulthood, but progress with table manners and introduction to Western foods.
102 Watts & Gallacher. P. 60.
of cultural difference: the curriculum did not build a bridge between Indigenous heritage and Western civic frames.

Teachers in special schools had “a tremendously difficult task … to implement the educational programme”. To be effective, induction courses notwithstanding, they needed, but lacked, directly relevant training and experience and manuals to which to refer on operations and working with Aborigines. Their perspective, as a result, was limited and they grew bewildered and frustrated. The situation was self-defeating, with high teacher-turnover, where retention of personnel was essential for them to be effective, to have the time needed to win “the real trust” of children and parents and to become familiar with their social and cultural backgrounds. The reality of staff turnover is evident from profiles cited: over 50% of the teachers had less than two years’ experience in such schools and fewer than 20% had five years or more. Reference has been made to high teacher : pupil ratios: Watts and Gallacher held that a class should have no more than twenty-five pupils. Further, they viewed officials' systemic commitments as hindering their provision of the exceptional leadership and support needed by new recruits, claiming that adequate “intensive supervision and guidance” of teachers would greatly improve children's progress.103 There were obviously extra-ordinary aspects to the challenges facing teachers and the system.

Attendance, vital to children's progress, was “somewhat spasmodic”, as illustrated in analysis of data from a sample of settlement schools, late 1950s to early 1960s. Only 25% of enrolled children had attendance rates above 70% and those of a third or more were below 50%. Absences were attributed to parents' lack of “real appreciation of the value of education”, tribal ceremonies, bereavement observances and hunting season ventures, some prolonged. During such absences, the children experienced only their own culture, and their “school learning” was eroded with lack of practice as a consequence.104 Forty years later, the issue of Indigenous children's attendance remained serious for most schools, urban, rural and remote, and exceptions were few.105 Again, elements of culture had some adverse influence on schooling.

104 Watts & Gallacher. Pp. 63–64
105 Cf. NTDE, 1999. Learning lessons. Pp. 141–45. Discussion, on p. 143, of declining attendance, with increasing enrolments, 1983–98, from 76% of 10,000 to 68% of 14,000 is telling. In casual discussion at Borroloola, mid-1980s, I told officials visiting from Queensland that we paid attention at regional level to a bush school if/when attendance dipped below 85% The firmly unofficial response was that remote schools in Indigenous communities in northern Queensland with attendances above 50% were rated “good schools”. In the NT, Minyerri School has been exceptional: in 2003, a former head teacher told me that community support was strong, attendance was over 90% of the 99 pupils, and that their problem was that the brand new school, when it opened, was too small for the number of children seeking to enrol.
Facility limitations also hindered school programs, attendance, activities and staffing. Where buildings were inadequate, there could be over-crowding and/or exclusion of some children and/or limited catering for all with staggered programs. With poor ablution facilities and/or availability of water, children's mandatory showering cost time in class. Adequacy of staff accommodation affected the appropriateness of deployment of teachers: appointment was not always made primarily on professional suitability. The facility-related hindrance was obviously primarily logistic.

In discussing inhibitors to children's progress, Watts and Gallacher stressed again the atypical nature of teachers' work in Aboriginal community schools, “a special field fraught with all sorts of difficulties”. They believed the remedies they proposed to address shortcomings would enable the children's “social and personal development and … scholastic accomplishment” to advance, given time. Frustration with Canberra's ignorance of the difficulties involved in educating Aborigines for their assimilation is evident throughout their report.

Watts and Gallacher's recommendations comprised a cohesive assimilation-related package focussed on educational programs, practice and logistics. A school was to be organised so as to have the junior part ungraded, to allow for individual differences, and the upper part streamed, to channel higher achievers towards urban high schools via transitional residential schools and the remainder, the majority, towards local post-primary provision. Drawing attention to a “serious deficiency” in the system, it urged that curriculum specifically for special schools be developed, with “the philosophy of primary education for Aboriginal children” a priority. The advantages of a child's starting schooling in his/her mother tongue were recognised, but logistics precluded a bilingual approach and decreed that English be the language of instruction. Proposed teaching methodology stressed experiential learning with practical activity, blending theory on individual differences and personal development with Indigenous learning styles. Practical experience and reinforcement in English as a foreign or second language teaching/learning

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106 Watts & Gallacher. P. 65.
107 Early in the 1990s, I encountered another difficulty with facilities. A community education centre was short-staffed due to non-availability of staff housing. The accommodation needed had been programmed and funded, but the traditional owners would not permit its construction unless the NTG made equivalent provision for the community.
111 Watts & Gallacher. Pp. 79–81. Powell. Pp. 15, 16. There were still many languages. Watts & Gallacher cited a map, attributed to Tindale (1940), listing “119 tribes or language groups” in the NT; Powell stated mat Norman B. Tindale (1972), had recorded “126 tribes … (with) all or most of their lands in the (NT).”
were important, as was the need for children to develop and “exercise self-reliance, initiative and independence” to reach “an integration of Aboriginal and European cultures through the exercise of choice”. It emphasised that school learning must be “meaningful and therefore functional” for practical application in the reality of life beyond the school. Syllabuses for higher achievers were to converge with the SA primary curriculum, in Grades Three to Six in special schools and Grade Seven in residential transitional schools, preparatory to secondary studies. Special syllabuses for early childhood and the general stream were to be modelled on the American Bureau of Indian Affairs’ “Minimum Essential Goals for Indian Schools”.

Watts and Gallacher conceded that they had conducted little experimentation and research on education for Aborigines. Much of their time in schools had been spent discussing methodology and Aboriginal children with teachers. Some “re-orientation of approach” was found necessary for effectiveness, and the topic was developed at a conference of special school teachers in 1963. Some schools had introduced Cuisenaire in mathematics: it was too new for evaluation, but teacher opinion was reported as “uniformly favourable”. Experimental “project method” teaching was similarly not ready to be evaluated but regarded positively. In a 1963 experiment which also impressed favourably, the twenty-five highest achievers in the middle and upper primary levels of a school were withdrawn from their regular classes and taught as a composite group for six months. Such a trial was instituted at Maningrida in 1964, with a class comprising European children and “brighter Aboriginal children”, their progress to be monitored. The strategy was also to be tried elsewhere. Such initiatives and the broad areas of linguistics, social anthropology and psychology were priorities for research to inform planning and practice in education for Aborigines in the NT. Tertiary institutions' involvement was to be sought.

Watts and Gallacher had reviewed the first decade or so of formal education for Indigenous Territorians under Welfare and recommended future directions. Efforts had been made in the context of assimilation and the recommendations came from within that frame. The original thrust had sought to dilute or eliminate Aborigines' Aboriginality: Watts and Gallacher

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113 Watts & Gallacher. Pp. 165–67. Pattern & Sawicki, 1986. P. 98. Such experimentation, without real evaluation, warrants some scepticism: the Hawthorne Effect, wherein “persons being observed change their behavior because they are being studied”, may apply. Also, bright children of any background and teachers tend to be stimulated by positive change and focussed activity and to respond accordingly. No evaluation of the Maningrida trial was found. I assume it was rated a success, as the arrangement endured, valued, when I was responsible for that area, 1990–94. Regardless of its success, however, it is unlikely that the white parents would have accepted its disbandment, and the parents of Indigenous pupils in the class, now selected on use of English as the first language or English language mastery, were supportive, happy with the opportunities they believed it gave their children.
advocated its respectful recognition, preservation and partial incorporation in the curriculum for special schools, with Giese's emphatic endorsement. The Government accepted the Report, and recommended actions proceeded. The momentum in formal education initially generated by assimilation policy was re-invigorated, with increased fiscal commitment, expanded activity and coverage of the potential clientèle. One outcome was the Welfare Education Section's retention, intact, re-organised and strengthened.  

Work on the Working Party's recommendations began promptly. Gallacher visited the USA and Canada in 1966, to explore education systems' use of formal education programs for social change in indigenous minorities, English as a second language methodology and any potential relevance of North American ideas to the Indigenous NT context. His report supplemented the Watts/Gallacher Report with the benefit of follow-up with contacts he had established in 1963–64. “A Brief Study of Aboriginal Education in the (NT)”, a paper Giese delivered at Monash University in 1967, was effectively a progress report on implementing the Watts/Gallacher recommendations.

With accelerated building programs and increased operational funding, Giese estimated that in 1968 over 90% of the NT's primary-aged Aboriginal children would be enrolled in Welfare, mission and pastoral property schools. There was significant growth in teachers trained for special schools and recruited and seconded from other systems, with installation of staff accommodation to keep pace with increasing enrolments. The target teacher : pupil ratio was 1 : 25, and further work was to be done in developing curriculum and support materials, especially in language, number and social studies. The curriculum unit was to be strengthened and charged to keep syllabus materials and teaching methodology under constant review.

Training of teachers for Indigenous communities was to be consolidated at a single institution, likely the School of Pacific Administration. The course was to be extended to by a year to allow for specialisation, insertion of a full year of training in the NT was mooted and eventual full-scale teacher-training in the NT envisaged. Shortage of pre-school teachers for Aboriginal children remained an issue. One-year residential courses at Berrimah were planned for selected teaching assistants, to train them and to raise their academic levels,

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and post-primary graduates were to be offered two-year training as teaching assistants from 1969. Giese anticipated that Aboriginal matriculants could undertake full teacher-training by 1975, he hoped by then in the NT. He claimed that Aborigines were increasingly aware of the contributions they could make from their cultural heritage to children's schooling. With parents and friends committees established in most locations, he claimed committee members “(were) extending the understanding of communities of the rôle which education (played) in the total programme of social change”, evident in increased interest in their children's school work and engagement in adult classes. Involving older Aborigines in the schools was seen to revitalise the status of and pride in “Aboriginal traditional life” and to encourage other adults to involve themselves.\footnote{Giese. Pp. 24–26.} Willis's perception, at odds with the need discerned by Watts and Gallacher and Giese's portrayal of ensuing adult Aboriginal involvement, was that the assimilation era had in common with all other stages of “Western education for Aborigines”, \emph{inter alia}, “massive concentration on child-based education to the exclusion of adults”.\footnote{Willis. P. 46.} Giese may have exaggerated, but he is unlikely to have fabricated.

Giese believed the specialist support services of the Education Section at the time were inadequate to fulfil schools' and communities' needs. Supervision and inspection were the province of district inspectors; specialist support was provided in adult education and publications, general in-service training and art, music and physical education. Provision of specialist support in language, number, methodology, vocational guidance and counselling, manual training, domestic science, teaching materials and schools broadcasts was planned. Adult literacy in English was a priority, literacy in the vernacular was not.\footnote{Giese. Pp. 28–29.}

The first residential transitional school, Kormilda College, was soon to open at Berrimah. About twenty male and female students, due to complete Grade 7 in 1968, would take up residence in the third term, 1967. As proposed, the program was partly to adjust them to urban life: in addition to their schooling, they would meet their peers in primary schools in Darwin, and opportunities to mix socially and to take part in competitive sports would be made. Twelve Aborigines had enrolled at high school to date: three had proceeded to second year, none had gained an Intermediate Certificate or completed an apprenticeship; five were currently enrolled, two in second year. It was anticipated that there would be 8–10 Aboriginal students in high school in Darwin in 1968 and a further 20–25 in 1969, most entering via Kormilda, with a similar number expected each year thereafter, until about 1975. It was accepted that most were unlikely to reach tertiary entry: of the forty-five or so
likely to be in high schools in 1970, no more than five were expected to matriculate, but that number was expected to increase subsequently. The Government had agreed to finance Aborigines' secondary and tertiary education, but families were to contribute where they could, increasingly as their economic circumstances improved.\textsuperscript{120}

In 1968, some 650 students were expected to enrol in post-primary classes in settlements and missions. They would continue general studies, and, as well, males would have a program “strongly based on manual training” and females a program “strongly based on home management and child care”. Where flair was detected, it was to be developed, with training in technical for males and in office-work for females. Pre-apprentice training was being explored, with apprenticeships for apt post-primary students in mind. Several Bathurst Island post-primary students had won apprenticeships in NSW.\textsuperscript{121}

As their education advanced, young Aborigines were expected to want to put “their special talents and their technical and professional competence to the service and advancement of their own people”. At the time, some worked in “semi-skilled jobs”. On gaining professional qualifications and entering trades, many were expected to return to their communities to jobs hitherto performed by whites. By the late 1970s, Giese foresaw Aborigines employed as patrol officers, nurses, social workers and teachers on settlements and mission stations.\textsuperscript{122}

Education-related research had priority. The “intellectual capacity” of Aborigines, Aboriginal languages, implications of Aboriginal social and cultural make-up for Western academic achievement and teaching methodology were particular foci. Work had begun on “culture fair” aptitude testing and psychological research in Aboriginal child development, using Western-based benchmarks. Linguistic studies concentrated mainly on individual languages \textit{per se}, but a start had been made in applying findings to teaching English as a second language to Aborigines. With liaison established between Welfare educators and researchers and Summer Institute of Linguistics linguists, useful material was anticipated. Little attention had been paid, other than by Watts and Gallacher, to the effects of Aboriginality on schooling outcomes or to teaching methodology. The research required was but a part of the function of the Welfare research unit, demands for whose services by far exceeded its capacity. Giese enthused about partnerships to conduct studies forged with three universities and their potential to address issues in schooling for Aborigines.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{120} Giese. Pp. 29–30.
\textsuperscript{121} Giese. P. 30.
\textsuperscript{123} Giese. Pp. 31–31. Giese conceded that not all tertiary authorities shared his perspective.
Giese's exposition is important. He delivered it from his position as the long-servicing founding Director of Welfare, responsible for Indigenous assimilation, Aboriginal advancement. In his discussion of the implementation of the Watts/Gallacher recommendations, he clearly regarded education as vital to assimilation and supported the directions taken. From the progress he reported, Canberra must have concurred. Incorporation of Indigenous heritage in schooling was thus implicitly endorsed and Aboriginality recognised and accorded status unprecedented since white settlement. There may have been some gloss, given Giese's belief and pride in the work being done, the progress he saw, his loyalty to the Government and his commitment to the NT, but his drawing attention to problems lent credibility to his presentation.

One of Willis's criticisms of education for Aborigines under assimilation, its “failure to involve Aboriginal people in policy formation”, was valid. Watts and Gallacher recommended that parents and friends committees be set up, and Giese confirmed that many had been, but the purpose was tactical, not consultative. Gallacher returned from his 1966 study lauding a resolution from a joint meeting of USA Indian Affairs and Indian leaders on teachers' in-service training, that there was

urgent need at all levels for more joint planning; more thinking together; more willingness to explore and study facts together; and then, on a basis of examined facts, a willingness to plan together and hammer out educational programs that are sound from the technical point of view of the educator, and which from the Indian point of view bring life and reality to his goals.

He claimed that Aboriginal participation had been recognised as important and acted upon with Aborigines' inclusion in recent conferences, but conceded a “need for the Aboriginal point of view to be explored at a much greater depth”. Giese's report indicates that Gallacher's recognition of need for Aboriginal input had yet to impact upon policy and practice, but Cecil Nielson (1983) bore witness to his having disseminated his newly-gleaned insights within the system.

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124 Willis. P. 46.
125 Frank Brennan told me, in 2004, that when he replaced the parents and friends committee at Warrabri School with an all-Aboriginal school council, in 1973, the committee membership had been predominantly white.
Gallacher (1967) listed facets of culture that he saw as hindering Aborigines' formal education. He elaborated (1970), distinguishing “acculturated” Aborigines, who had “moved into and been accepted into Australian society”, from “unacculturated” Aborigines, by far the majority, “scattered through the whole of the (NT) … (who), in the main, … (tended) to stay fairly rigidly within the pattern of life … laid down by their ancestors”. He was concerned with difference between the cultural background of the children of the latter and the Western base of education provided for them (see Table 5.5). He focussed on “new learning uneducated Aborigines (needed) … to function in today's world”, derived from the indigenous North American context. English as a second language, new job skills, health and hygiene practices, social skills for contemporary life, civic, political and family responsibilities, maintenance of order and use of the services of the predominant society were included. Gallacher added number skills and analytical thinking.

### Table 5.5 Cultural Differences Inhibiting Aborigines' Western Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Characteristics</th>
<th>Traditional Aboriginal Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- future-orientation;</td>
<td>- preoccupation with the present and the past as signified with the Dreamtime;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- preoccupation with time and the virtue and necessity of punctuality;</td>
<td>- relative insignificance of small segments of time in their original state;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- preoccupation with saving for the future;</td>
<td>- irrelevance of saving in a food-gathering economy and the custom of sharing with kin rather than hoarding for self;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- competition's strength as a motivating force, emphasising the individual person;</td>
<td>- co-operation's strength in ordered kinship structure, emphasising the group;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- concept of work as an activity occurring within a discrete, rigorously defined, portion of the day;</td>
<td>- concept of work as part of the on-going integrated activity of living;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- learning through questioning and satisfying curiosity, emphasis of progress and favourable disposition towards change – inductive/deductive thinking.</td>
<td>- learning in terms of the past, with reference to approved traditional customs, acceptance of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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WESTERN CHARACTERISTICS.  TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL CHARACTERISTICS.

established pattern – observation, imitation and rote learning.

Gallacher urged inculcation of the “new learnings … (to) enhance Aboriginal self-esteem, self-confidence and pride in … heritage”. Syllabuses were to be devised and implemented to prepare Aboriginal children for the mainstream, and people instilling the “new learnings” required were to take into account the identified hindrances in cultural difference and the perceptions and attributes that the children brought to the process. In his 1967 report, he had stressed that the change sought should not be brought about hastily and that Aborigines' own attributes be embedded in the process: again, extensive research was required and it had to be realised that Aborigines “(were) people first who (had) the right to be involved in all decisions affecting their future”. He was adamant that to move Aborigines into the mainstream, “a concerted, co-operative and enlightened effort” was required from everyone involved in “the advancement of Aboriginals to their rightful place in the Australian community”. His two deliveries focussed on education for social change, but in 1970 he was providing professional leadership for practitioners in his charge, whereas in 1967 he had been providing advice and perspective to officialdom and sounding caution.

After the Watts/Gallacher Report.

Cecil Nielson, an English as a second language specialist and formerly a mission teacher and a Welfare support teacher, judged the Watts/Gallacher Report to have affected the special schools profoundly, notably in curriculum. In addition to the outcomes discussed by Giese, she recalled curriculum as becoming “more organized”, emphasis on teaching English as a second language, determination of “minimum essential goals” for each of the key subject areas, installation of mobile schools in remote localities and assembly of media and library resources. She attributed impetus in curriculum development also to Gallacher's 1966 study. Guidelines, developed in accordance with the new special school structure, 1972–73, although not absolutely prescriptive, provided comprehensive support for teachers.

Nielson focussed on evolution of curriculum as arrangements for public education in the NT changed. She noted that both the urban schools and the special schools moved into “the vanguard of modern educational practice” in Australia, with teachers afforded and

grasping chances to experiment. Flexibility and innovation in the education environment were attributed to a combination of several factors, such as the smallness of the two systems and the collegiality within them, the absence of the complex, monolithic structure of a State system, need for flexibility to cope with distance, varying conditions and cultural diversity, and capacity to innovate. Facility to discuss policy and initiatives at inclusive meetings had been a boon, the last to involve all Welfare and mission teachers occurring in 1967. The high rate of teacher turnover hindered schools' operations and development of relations between communities and schools, but staff mobility and growth, the consequent need for continuous recruitment and the appeal of the outback to prospective recruits resulted in schools' being staffed with teachers who brought and were receptive to new ideas. Administration of public education in the States at the time, in contrast, reflected “unadventurous conservatism”. Welfare Branch and the missions continued to cooperate closely on Aboriginal affairs. During the 1960s, recruiting difficulties led to Protestant mission schools' being moved to Welfare management; the Catholic missions retained their operations.

Nielson may have identified a cause of Aboriginal pupils' low academic achievement, enduring from the 1960s. She believed the materials developed by the Welfare Education Section's curriculum unit for early childhood and the upper primary general stream in the special schools were not effectively implemented. Their use was not mandatory, so teachers operated largely with reference to processes more familiar to them, augmented with local experience. She noted that the “centrally produced guidelines did not impose a repressive standardisation”, but a corollary may be that lack of rigour, cohesion, consistency and accountability in implementing curriculum allowed wide-spread under-achievement. Willis held that limited schooling was provided purposely to ensure that Aborigines “could assimilate only at the lowest level”, a situation exacerbated by their being “‘educated’ in isolation from the society in which they were supposed to be accommodated”. It is difficult, however, to reconcile such cynicism with the sincerity, enthusiasm and commitment of Giese and Gallacher and of practitioners like Nielson.

Indigenous perspectives brought to bear in retrospect nationally, in a later era, by the National Aboriginal Education Committee, were to reflect some substance in common

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135 Nielson. P. 8. The Watts/Grailacher recommendation that triennial conferences of all teachers in special Welfare and mission schools be retained was apparently not heeded beyond 1967.
137 Nielson. P. 10.
139 Willis. P. 46.
with the prospective ideas of Watts and Gallacher. Included were needs for trained Aboriginal teachers, recognition of the exceptional challenges posed both for teachers of Aboriginal children and the children themselves and accommodation of traditional heritage in formal education provisions. Commenting on research conducted by the Committee for a submission to the National Enquiry into Teacher Education, Paul Hughes (1981) stated that significant ideas had been proposed “in three major areas”:

First was the need for greater numbers of Aboriginal people to be trained as teachers. Secondly, there was recognition of the different structure of Aboriginal society in comparison with the wider white Australian society, and thirdly it was held as self-evident that the involvement of Aborigines in all aspects of educational and decision making processes must increase the effectiveness of these for Aborigines.\(^\text{140}\)

The suitability of teachers, to teach Aboriginal children, emerged as an issue. Hughes reported findings that teacher training institutions did not select trainees on their suitability for teaching and that systems did not post graduates to teach Aborigines on their suitability for the task or for the location in which it was to be performed. It was also found that non-Aboriginal teachers for the most part tended not to be suited to teaching Aboriginal children.\(^\text{141}\). The Committee, reasoning that Aboriginal children's formal education learning needs differed from those of white children, advocated training of Aboriginal teachers. The issue was carried further than Watts and Gallacher had proposed, however, in that the Committee wanted differences in Indigenous backgrounds and locations to be taken into account. As Hughes represented the idea,

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\text{… if Aborigines are to be trained as teachers due regard must be paid to what part of Aboriginal society they come from if the needs of our society are to be met. Therefore programs of teacher training need to be developed for people who come from different categories of Aboriginal society and who will return as teachers in (their respective categories).}^{\text{142}}
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At the time, Hughes was thinking particularly of the element of Aboriginal Australia described by the Committee as

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\(^{\text{141}}\) Hughes. Pp. 80, 81.

\(^{\text{142}}\) Hughes. P. 80.
... traditionally oriented communities consisting of people who have the greatest degree of geographic and social separation from the rest of Australian society though usually retaining some degree of economic connection.

He cited Milingimbi, Yirrkala and Yuendumu, in the NT, as examples.143

The Committee, as Hughes represented it, was adamant that Aborigines needed competence in English literacy and numeracy, that such skills were important. However, in Indigenous perspectives, (o)f at least equal importance is the need for Aboriginal society via its children to acquire competency in their own culture, language and heritage. Indeed it is argued strongly that unless competency in one's own cultural identity is achieved it is unlikely that competency will be attained in western skills.144

The thinking of Watts and Gallacher in the NT context, 1963–64, and subsequently of both individually, moved towards accommodation of traditional heritage in formal schooling for Aboriginal children, but they did not progress as far as the Committee did less than two decades later. Nothing was done about it, however, under assimilation, and little was to be achieved in the NT with self-determination.

In the meantime, Education for Indigenous Territorians proceeded, its impetus stimulated by Watts and Gallacher and supplemented later by Gallacher. It remained under Welfare, with Giese Director and Gallacher Assistant Director (Education), until the end of 1972. The expectations of policy and the optimism reflected in Giese's 1967 presentation may not have been fully realised, however, according to the findings from Sommerlad's 1970 study at Kormilda College.

The conception, introduction and early operation of Kormilda exemplifies the vitality of formal education for Aborigines in the latter assimilation years. Kormilda, whose name signalled optimism,145 was the first transitional residential school established, opening in

143 Hughes. P. 79.
144 Hughes. P. 81.
When Sommerlad conducted her study, in 1970, Kormilda was performing dual functions, as a transitional residential school and as a regional post-primary education centre for students whose home schools lacked postprimary facilities. Trainee teaching assistants and office workers also boarded at Kormilda, the former receiving instruction on site and the latter at the Darwin Adult Education Centre. In Sommerlad's record, the achievement of post-primary students ranged from illiteracy to academic levels superior to those of some transitional Grade 7 and high school students. Some Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) tests, designed for white English-speaking students, were given to all Kormilda students early in 1970, results indicating that most were not equipped academically for upper primary curriculum, let alone junior secondary studies. Students' social adjustment was also wide-ranging.

In theory, all upper stream students in Top End special schools could proceed to Kormilda, but head teachers were asked to nominate only those able to cope socially as well as academically. Sommerlad intimated some untoward practice in students' selection for and attendance at Kormilda. She alleged that Western-orientation and fulfilment of projected enrolments were de facto criteria applied by officials and that academic standards in special schools were such that there was limited grasp of Kormilda requirements. There was a view amongst head teachers that kudos accrued in proportion with the number of students from their respective schools attending Kormilda. Some inappropriate selections were inevitable. It was also held that undue pressure was applied to parents to approve children's move to Kormilda and to have them return after vacations against families' wishes. Conversely, Kormilda complained that some head teachers did not encourage students to return after holidays. Sommerlad claimed that parents' involvement was limited to approval of children's enrolment, occasionally through coercion, and a contribution of $15 per term towards pocket money. Aspersions about dubious practices notwithstanding, in 1970, from across the NT, Kormilda had almost ninety post-primary students from seven settlements, five missions, eleven pastoral properties and one town, and nearly eighty transitional and high school students from ten settlements, seven missions, two pastoral properties and one town. It was certainly operational.

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Anglican and Uniting Churches from 1989, was “towards tomorrow”, from the meaning of “kormilda” in a Kakadu area language.

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Sommerlad. Pp. 64–66. In the late 1970s, I discovered that the head teacher of a small school, keen to have a particular student enrol at Kormilda, had helped her with the entry tests. She proved patently unable to cope at Kormilda.

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Sommerlad set out to find if the Kormilda concept “was compatible with the retention of Aboriginal identity” and if it was likely to change students' values, finding in the negative in both cases.\footnote{Sommerlad, 1976. Pp. 79–80.} She also found that all was not as well in special schools as Giese led people to believe. She judged that Kormilda did not fulfil the principles for transitional residential schools stated by Watts and Gallacher. Staff dissatisfaction and high turnover were also evident: she observed that staff turnover may have been no higher than in the special schools, but that at Kormilda its impact upon students was more severe in that it lacked the support available in home communities. Governance and community support for Kormilda were external: operations were overseen by the four-member Kormilda College Committee, comprising an officer from each Welfare Branch section and the principal, with Gallacher the chair and the principal the executive officer; and the Rotary Club's Friends of Kormilda Association involved the Darwin community in the College. Aborigines were not included in policy- and decision-making. One staff member, a trainee recreation officer, was Aboriginal, and house-parents, concerned with discipline, were white.

Sommerlad was critical of College management. She recorded unrest amongst the boarders, a tendency for staff and students to be divided on race as well as on authority, operations riven with inconsistency and uncertainty and measures to address issues not sustained. She found interaction between Kormilda students and their non-Aboriginal peers, in high school classrooms and playgrounds, on sports fields, in churches and on buses, to have been minimal, despite initiatives to promote social engagement. Boarder-staff relations generally, in her opinion, revealed the former submissive and the latter in authority, but there were instances in which individual Kormilda and high school teachers took particular interest in small groups. Concluding her discourse on Kormilda's operation, Sommerlad suggested that whereas traditional values were seen to hinder Aborigines' education and needing to change, they should be recognised as attributes and incorporated in the curriculum in the interests of motivation and consequent improved learning.\footnote{Sommerlad. Pp. 59–84.} In fact, her idea was similar to that proposed in the Watts/Gallacher Report and by Gallacher in 1967.

\footnotetext{149}{Sommerlad, 1976. Pp. 79–80.}
\footnotetext{150}{Sommerlad. Pp. 59–84.}

Watts, B.H., 1982. *Aboriginal Futures: A Review of Research and Developments and Related Policies in the Education of Aborigines: A Summary.* ERDC Report No. 33. Canberra, ACT. Education Research and Development Committee, Commonwealth of Australia. P. 123. Watts noted that the only systematic data on “the characteristics and achievements of students on entry to and exit from” Kormilda were “those provided by Sommerlad in 1970”. The value of that data may be limited: to convey useful information, she needed to have covered the duration of a representative sample of students' attendance at Kormilda; Sommerlad was there in 1970, and her case studies were four students, each interviewed once. She must have made further contact, however, as statistics to 1972 were cited.
It is difficult to reconcile Sommerlad’s appraisal with the ideals, goals and principles, detailed by Watts and Gallacher, supplemented by Gallacher and reiterated by Giese, upon which Welfare education was supposed to have been based. It is especially so in view of the facts that Gallacher had served in the system since 1951, headed it from 1967, had immediate oversight of Kormilda and reported to Giese. Gerry Tschirner (1976) wrote of Gallacher that his 1956 promotion to District Education Officer (Alice Springs) marked the start of “20 years’ assiduous attention to programming, planning and budgetting which resulted in the growth of the Aboriginal Education system from a mere 16 schools with enrolments of 1,600 … to 70 schools with 6,500 pupils at the end of 1973”. Tschirner said the Watts/Gallacher Report “set the direction of Aboriginal education”, instituting the residential colleges and mobile schools, establishing the training course for prospective teachers of Aboriginal children in the NT and “the establishment and development of teacher-training courses for Aboriginal teachers to a stage where there (were) now graduates … admitted as permanent members of the Commonwealth Teaching Service”. Tschirner had an acute appreciation of the history of NT education, was a long-term colleague of Gallacher’s, knew him well and held him in high regard.

Sommerlad's findings at Kormilda, although not corroborated, should not be summarily dismissed, but mere were other discerning perceptions as well. Those voiced by two interested Legislative Council Members are examples. In 1969, Bernie Kilgariff, then a non-official nominated Member from Alice Springs, reported being greatly surprised when he visited Kormilda, finding that people were “doing excellent work”, with “many aboriginal teenagers from throughout the Territory, joining together, obviously quite happy” and the “work they (were) doing well worth seeing”. He was keen for Alice Springs to have such a provision. Member for Elsey, Les MacFarlane, ever-critical of the Government, Welfare in particular, conceded in 1970 that there was “some measure of progress” at Kormilda, saying that it was “the only thing of which (the Aborigines could) be proud” at the time, and castigated Giese for not having extended the initiative to other centres. Kilgariff and MacFarlane, both committed and knowledgable Territorians and independent

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151 Tschirner, Gerry, 1976: “Mr. Jim Gallacher – Fellow of the Australian College of Education”, in Developing Education, Vol.4, No.2, 1976. Pp. 1–2. To my first-hand knowledge, the School of Pacific Administration course for NT teacher trainees, to which Tschirner referred, was introduced in 1960, but it may have been revised in the light of the Watts/Gallacher Report.


of the Government, were well-informed of and sincerely concerned with the well-being of Aborigines. Such views should also be taken into account.

Harold Garner was appointed Principal of the Darwin Adult Education Centre in 1959. The rôle included responsibility for post-school education in the NT, other than in Indigenous communities, where Welfare ran adult classes. The Centre became involved in vocational training for Aboriginal youth from 1966, began pre-training courses for prospective trades assistants and, “at the request of the Welfare Branch, classes for teenage Aborigines were started in motor mechanics, office work, typing for girls and pre-apprenticeship trading”, catering as well for trainees boarding at Kormilda. According to Baiba Berzins and Peter Loveday (1999), most young Aboriginal women did not complete their training, finding it more difficult to adjust to life in Darwin than the young men did. Garner rated the courses for Aborigines “‘quite successful’”, with good retention and performance, the scheme only failing when trainees returned to their communities, where “there was no work for them and they had no support” because administration and employment were run by non-Aborigines. Berzins and Loveday also noted that Gallacher and H. M. Ford found that the trainees had only rarely reached levels required for entry to trade training. The Centre flourished, however, to be subsumed by the Darwin Community College in 1974\(^{154}\), having been the foundation from which the Northern Territory University, renamed the Charles Darwin University in 2003, eventually evolved.

Journalist Douglas Lockwood was credible in his commentary on NT dynamics. His enthusiasm about Aborigines' progress in formal education in the Top End would have been gratifying for Gallacher and Giese:

> It is in the field of education that they have made the greatest advances. … (A)n educated race of Aborigines is now emerging for the first time. … (T)he initial progress has been slow by European standards. But by the standards of the Aborigines it has been sensational. Anyone who saw them as little as thirty years ago and now has the opportunity of observing the succeeding generations cannot fail to be aware of an astonishing advance.\(^{155}\)

He was less euphoric about people of mixed descent, whom he saw as rejected by white society, “stigmatized and controlled”.


\(^{155}\) Lockwood. P. 119.
For the most part they had been educated, and lived in the European community or on the fringes of it … Those who passed arbitrary tests in living standards, behaviour, and education might apply to be free from the provisions of the restrictive laws applying to Aborigines. … Those who did not apply were legally classed as Aborigines. Alcohol was forbidden to them. They could not vote. They lived in a half-way world of their own, belonging neither to the Aboriginal tribes nor the European society.\(^{156}\)

Despite contradicting himself, he appeared optimistic over the prospects of educated traditionally-oriented Aborigines. He held out less hope for the people of mixed descent, believing they lacked distinct identity. As a journalist and long-term Territorian, his ideas came from a unique frame.

**Change After Menzies, and What Might Have Been.**

Upheaval in Canberra in the latter 1960s impacted upon Indigenous affairs. Harold Holt succeeded Menzies as Prime Minister in 1966. After the 1967 Referendum, he created an Office of Aboriginal Affairs, responsible for Indigenous matters (other than in Queensland), and an advisory Council of Aboriginal Affairs, comprising Reserve Bank Governor Dr. H.C. Coombs\(^{157}\), anthropologist W. E. H. Stanner and Ambassador to Laos Barrie Dexter. Coombs termed Holt's disappearance in December 1967 a “tragic setback for the Aboriginal cause”, as his successor, John Gorton, “was frankly not interested and could see no good reason for special privileges for Aborigines or for programmes directed specifically at their needs”.\(^{158}\) Peter Howson, Minister for the Environment, Aborigines and the Arts in the McMahon Coalition, 1971–72, attributed “the tragic state of … Aboriginal Australian society” in the 1990s largely to Gorton's election as Prime Minister ahead of Hasluck. Hasluck “would have ensured that his Aboriginal policies, which had produced so much success, would have continued”. In Howson's view,

Coombs was able to supplant him in power and influence with respect to Aboriginal policy … Hasluckian policies of unforced assimilation, patiently pursued with steady success from 1980 to 1968 (were abandoned) … and policies of Aboriginal separatism, which … Coombs was able to persuade

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\(^{156}\) Lockwood. P. 120.


\(^{158}\) Powell. P. 235.
a succession of governments to adopt from 196S onwards … (were adopted with) tragic consequences.\(^{159}\)

In similar vein, Hasluck (1995) rued deterioration in prospects for Aborigines over the preceding couple of decades. He blamed choice of “wrong measures”, preoccupation with rights at the expense of responsibility and, “in some quarters the idea that all Australians (had) equal rights (having) given way to a view that they (had) unequal rights”. Former Labor Finance Minister, Peter Walsh (1992), agreed, stating that laws intended to favour Aborigines were “the only discriminatory laws … in Australia”, … noting that many anti-assimilationist policies designed to favour Aborigines (seemed) to have opposite effect”.\(^{160}\) William McMahon, succeeding Gorton in 1971, was under pressure “from press, parliamentary Opposition, some of his own followers and, directly, from Aborigines themselves”.\(^{161}\) Policy on Aborigines, with implications for their formal education, was to change dramatically from December 1972, when the Whitlam Labor Government was elected.

Watts (1982) observed that, from WWII to the 1967 Referendum, Aborigines' formal education achievements in Australia had been “generally low”. She attributed that outcome largely to “the poor quality of education provided” and its very limited availability in some areas, particularly in the earlier years. State systems had gradually accepted responsibility for Aborigines' formal education and trained teachers had replaced untrained staff, but only simplified primary curriculum was used, expectations of children were low and adult education was neglected.\(^{162}\) In comparison, initiative, endeavour and progress in the NT in the latter years of assimilation appeared laudable, lending substance to the national prominence Nielson claimed the NT enjoyed with respect to education for Aborigines.

It is possible that the turmoil at the Federal level in the late 1960s had limited impact upon Aboriginal affairs in the NT, education in particular, given the comparatively strong momentum already generated and the commitment, continuity and longevity of service of Giese and Gallacher and many Welfare and mission personnel. The Legislative Council's support for Indigenous well-being would have contributed also, despite, or as a result of, the robust debate on the topic between elected Members, notably Brennan, Ward, MacFarlane and Kentish, and official Member Giese. Union support for Aborigines, especially regarding

\(^{160}\) Partington, 1996. P. 149.
the lot of those engaged in the pastoral industry, also supported “the Aboriginal cause” in the NT.

**Reflections of Some Successful Clients of Formal Education in the Territory.**

When they compiled the accounts of their lives collected in *Aboriginal Women by Degrees* (2000)\(^{163}\), Miriam Stead Raymond, Veronica McClintic, Isabelle Adams, Veronica Arbon, Mary Ann Bin-Sallik and Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann had two things in common. They were Indigenous women who, despite considerable difficulties, experienced success in formal education, begun, with the exception of Bin-Sallik, in the NT under assimilation, and they were ardent enthusiasts about education. Their recollections of school days and subsequently reflect much of the variety of circumstances in which Indigenous Territorians learned and were taught.

Miriam (Mirrakopal) Stead Raymond lost her mother in her infancy. She was relocated by officials at the age of three years, from her mother's family and her father in the Bamboo Creek area, south of Daly River, to the Methodist Overseas Mission on Croker Island, where she lived from 1950 to 1956. She described the purpose of her being placed, with other “so-called ‘coloured’ or ‘half-caste’ children”, at the Mission as being “to get a Christian upbringing in preparation for assimilation into the wider White community”. She recorded positive memories of her life as “a mission kid”, but it was also the first stage of “many years of pain, suffering and separation” that resulted from “the indiscriminate placing of children”. She judged herself, at the age of eight, to be “well versed in the Methodist Christian doctrine and competent at reading and writing in the English language” when she travelled to Quorn, SA, mid-1956, to join the people who, at her father's instigation, were to become her foster parents. The family moved to Adelaide in 1957, where Miriam “enjoyed school” and was successful throughout her primary and secondary education despite the disruptions in her early childhood and “always (being) the only Aboriginal child in the school”. She trained as a teacher (Secondary Art and English), taught in high schools, in special education and as a health worker educator, worked as a lecturer and a counsellor at the University of Adelaide and practised as an artist. At the time of writing she was concentrating on her painting. Her father, Charles Stead, maintained contact with her throughout her years on Croker Island and in SA, eventually living with her and her family in his retirement. She said that although it was his idea that she should have a Western education, he was “disappointed” that she was not fluent in her native language.\(^{164}\)

\(^{163}\) Bin-Sallik, Mary Ann (ed.), 2000. *Aboriginal Women by Degrees: Their stories of the journey towards academic achievement*. St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press.

Veronica McClintic was born in Darwin and her family lived in the former army complex of Sydney Williams huts known as Parap Camp, nowadays the inner city suburb of Stuart Park. At the age of nine years, in the late 1950s, she was sent to the Mission on Croker Island. Unlike Miriam Stead Raymond, she was not a Stolen Generation child as she was transferred there as a result of illness in her family. After two years, she returned to Darwin and continued her schooling. When she left school, mid-1960s, without having done matriculation studies, she trained as a nurse at the old Darwin Hospital. She was the second Aboriginal graduate of the four-year course, describing it as “a most wonderful experience”. She then nursed at the hospital for ten years, until, in 1980, she moved to the Darwin Aboriginal Women's Resource Centre, where she became acutely aware of “the plight of Aboriginal people”. Her experience at the Resource Centre led her to enrol in the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales. On her return to Darwin, in 1987, she completed her articles with the (then) NT Department of Law and opted to become a Crown Prosecutor. She believed she was “probably the first Aboriginal Crown Prosecutor in Australia”. Two years later, she started to gain experience in other areas of law, both in the Department and in the Northern Legal Aid Service, eventually, in 1999, returning to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. It was a priority for her that “Aboriginal people (would) truly achieve equality while still maintaining (their) uniqueness”.

Isabelle Adams was born in Cairns, but her family lived in Darwin, at Parap Camp, during her “formative years”, as did Veronica McClintic's family. She stressed that Parap Camp families “were materially disadvantaged in many ways”, but that they “were rich culturally and socially”:

Ours was a multicultural community with a diverse mix of shared experiences. People came from various walks of life as well as a collection of cultural backgrounds. It was a cohesive little community.

Her intense dislike of “being poor” motivated her early to apply herself diligently at school, with education seen as the path to opportunities for good paid employment. She was “fortunate enough to love school … an enthusiastic learner … clever, quiet and obedient!” She was also competitive. Her secondary schooling qualified her to apply for a tertiary scholarship. She declined to apply for an Aboriginal scholarship, partly to avoid having to go to daunting Sydney and partly because she wanted a scholarship that was “open to everyone, regardless of race, skin colour and culture … (earned) on

“(her) own merits”. She gained a national kindergarten teacher's scholarship and trained at Perth's Meerilinga Teachers' College, graduating in 1963. She returned to Darwin to teach, having an immediate impact as Aboriginal mothers flocked to enrol their children at the kindergarten where she worked.

They expressed how important it was for them to have their children cared for by an Aboriginal person. Given the Aboriginal experience within Australia's education system, it was not surprising ….

In the years immediately preceding her departure for Perth, in 1976, she said she learnt that because (she) was (a) racially and culturally different, (b) a female, (c) a trained kindergarten teacher, and (d) dark-skinned, I needed to be at least three times better than the fair-skinned teachers from Anglo-Celtic backgrounds who were primary and secondary trained to even apply for a promotion, let alone be seriously considered.166

Cyclone Tracy also contributed to her departure, with her family. In Perth, she applied herself to her family and to study at Murdoch University. Eleven years later, she had three degrees (BA, BEd and MEd) and had not sighted another Aboriginal person on campus. In 1996 she was promoted to Superintendent of Education (Early Childhood Education), and subsequently became a district superintendent of schools in metropolitan Perth. She also performed senior rôles in other public agencies and in promoting Indigenous interests and subsequently ventured out of the WA Public Service to establish her own consultancy. When writing her account, her stated goal was be highly influential and to gain recognition, at home and abroad, for her “commitment and contribution to equity, social justice and human rights for Aborigines and other groups who faced discrimination”.167

Veronica Arbon was born in Alice Springs about 1950 and grew up on the Urapunga pastoral property, east of Mataranka on the Roper River. She had little primary schooling: her mother helped her and her siblings with upper primary School of the Air lessons. She doubted whether they benefited much from attending the small school established in the mid-1960s at Urapunga for 20–30 children aged from eight to fifteen years, saying that “(they) shared the same room and often disrupted each other's classes and generally had lots

166 This experience coincided with Beare's management of the new NT Division of the Department of Education and the inception of the Commonwealth Teaching Service, the ethos of which set very high store by university qualifications.
of fun”. When she was sixteen years old, she and two of her sisters were sent by their parents to board with relatives to attend school in Darwin. The following year, they moved to a boarding school in Alice Springs. Of that experience, Veronica recorded,

I had extreme difficulty coping with high school. It was an alien system. I had difficulty understanding the demands it placed upon me academically. At the same time I loved it, because it gave me an opportunity to learn, to read and to write.

One of our major difficulties was the urban cultural environment. It was confusing because certain norms were no longer applicable and caution had to be taken with respect to reacting with to others, as well as our relationships with other people. Culturally, life was very different from what we had known. We missed our parents, brothers and sisters, and we wished we could escape to our small community almost every day for those two years. Back home, we knew everyone. It was safe, and we didn't have to get up every day to walk miles to school with only a cold cut lunch for comfort.

After two very difficult years we found we had survived.

In 1969, the family moved from Urapunga to Darwin, where Veronica held various jobs. She married at the age of twenty, and, finding life difficult in the late 1970s, separated from her husband and moved with her three children “to a small town in Queensland”. Life remained difficult, and she eventually concluded that “(education (was) the solution, a way out of welfare dependency”. She was frustrated in her efforts to engage in post-school education or training until was referred to the Aboriginal Task Force, with which she studied for an Associate Diploma in Community Development at the SA Institute of Technology in the early 1980s. She found her limited literacy and numeracy “compounded (her) difficulties”, but actually only disliked one subject. In it, students were required to make individual presentations to their classes, and have them recorded on video tape.

The difficulties this class presented to many of us stemmed from our cultural background, which did not require an individual to stand in front of a group to present an argument or idea. In fact, in our culture the norm is to add information to information given in the first instance. This is usually undertaken in an environment where one can sit or stand, and not face the group at all. Clearly this environment of learning presented a conflict ….
She completed the Associate Diploma, however, and proceeded to the University of Adelaide where large student numbers, very few other Indigenous students and no Aboriginal support provision presented her with daunting personal and academic challenges. At the university, what racism she experienced tended to be implicit, but she was subject to quite overt racist deeds in the city. As a tutor for Indigenous students during the final year of her Bachelor of Arts, she established a basis from which to proceed into lecturing when she graduated. She subsequently worked in various tertiary settings in SA, primarily in rôles related to Indigenous post-school education and health, also gaining the degree of Master of Arts (Education and Science). She held the position of Director of the Koori Centre at the University of Sydney in NSW when she was notified of her appointment as Associate Professor in the School of Community Studies at the (now) Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education Four years later, in 1999, she was appointed Director of Batchelor. She believed, from her experience, the best advice she could offer her people was “education is the key to our future”. Her rationale was:

We need to live, work and survive in the society of today's Australia. We need to participate in and understand the wider Australian society, its structures and systems. It is the only way we can assist to implement the changes that will ensure a better future for our children.

Mary Ann Bin-Sallik was born in Broome, WA, and her family moved to Darwin, taking up residence at Parap Camp when she was nine years old. In the context of community-devised entertainment, she noted that as the policy of assimilation did not allow them “to speak any of our own Aboriginal languages” they could not sing Aboriginal songs. She had started her education in a Catholic school in Broome and had the rest of her primary schooling at a Sacred Heart school in Darwin. She said she was given no encouragement to achieve academically:

In Darwin during the late 1950s the White children sat for scholarships, all the Aboriginal boys sat for apprenticeships and the Aboriginal girls were expected to go into domestic service.

Neither she nor her parents saw her as destined for domestic service, as was expected of young Aboriginal women under assimilation: her parents wanted her to be a secretary, and accordingly sent her to a boarding school, but she wanted to be a nurse. Despite homesickness, she described her time at Mercedes College in Adelaide as “three wonderful

years”, ended by her remaining in Darwin when her father became ill. She trained as a nurse, “(m)uch to (her) parents' horror”, and whereas she had envisaged training in Adelaide, her mother insisted that she train “at home in Darwin amongst (her) own people”. It proved a good move.

I loved nursing, especially among my own people. Further, as most of the domestics, gardeners and grounds-people were Aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders, I was given a lot of support. There were times when the racism got the better of me and I wanted to leave, but these people gave me all the love and support I needed to stay the distance.

She graduated in 1962. “Like Veronica Arbon, who left town for a peaceful life”, in 1974 she moved interstate with her children, in her case to Adelaide, to proceed with life as a sole parent. Unable to find nursing or other jobs, she started work as the student counsellor with the Aboriginal Task Force at the SA Institute of Technology in 1975, where her contract required her to study part-time for an Associate Diploma in Social Work. On completion of the qualification she opted not to return to the nursing profession, with its ingrained racism, but to remain in “higher education … where … (she) believed … a difference could be made”. Unable to enter a degree course at Adelaide University, because she had not matriculated, she taught at the Institute of Technology, delivering the “confidence-building course” which Veronica Arbon so disliked. In 1980 she was appointed co-ordinator of the Aboriginal Task Force, in which function she remained until mid-1985, when, “on the recommendation of Dr. Roberta Sykes and under the auspices of the Black Women's Action in Education Foundation, she departed for post-graduate studies at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. She commenced a coursework Master of Education degree, but was soon persuaded into doctoral studies from which she graduated in 1989. She enthused about studying Harvard:

It was different from studying at home, where I was caught up with the day-to-day pressures of being Aboriginal, along with the racism it attracts. Because of my anonymity while in the United States, for the first time in my life I felt relatively free from racism and discrimination. I was always respected for who I was and what I represented. However, I did observe the racism towards Native Americans and African Americans, especially the latter, because they were more visible.

Where Veronica McClintic was the second Aboriginal nurse to graduate at Darwin Hospital, Mary Ann Bin-Sallik was the first.
On her return to Australia, in 1989, she gained a senior lectureship in the Aboriginal Studies Teacher Education Centre in the South Australian College of Advanced Education, which was soon to merge with the Institute of Technology to form the University of South Australia. She progressed to Associate Professor, Head of School, in the Aboriginal Studies Teacher Education Centre, which proceeded to become part of the Faculty of Aboriginal and Islander Studies, subsequently the College of Indigenous Education and Research. At the time of writing her account, she was dean of the College, working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, revelling in “watching reconciliation take place before my very eyes and knowing that I am part of it in the best possible way”. Associate Professor Bin-Sallik was later appointed Head of the Faculty of Indigenous Research and Education at the Northern Territory University, now the Charles Darwin University, in Darwin.

Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann was bora approximately 1950, “under a tree” on the Daly River a few miles upstream from present site of the Daly River (Nauiyu) settlement. She learnt her traditional culture from her parents and her people, who “enriched (her) with folklore and bush lore … (and) all the Dreaming stories of how everything came to be”.

My life is filled with beautiful stories. My people could not read and write in the European sense. Ours is an oral tradition. But, as with many other indigenous peoples, we are experts in reading the signs in the land and still record the important events in our artwork.

She relished the spirituality of her heritage, yearning for a time when her people's “deep ceremonial instincts (could) find expression in (their) Christian celebrations”. She felt that only then would Christianity “no longer be foreign but truly (theirs)”. When she was about five years old, when the Catholic Mission was being established at Daly River, she was taken into the care of an uncle and an aunt. Her uncle was a police tracker at Daly River, Adelaide River, Pine Creek and Mataranka. She spent nine years with them, entering “the outside world of learning” in those townships, attending small schools that catered for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children, at the same time receiving her cultural education. Regarding the latter, she said

It was a practical education. I learned by doing and I wanted to do because I could see how important it was for my elders and me. We were in the education process together. Education was naturally motivated. Education was part of life. Education was for living.

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Her aunt died when she was about fourteen years of age, her uncle retired and she returned to her biological mother at Daly River. There she attended the mission school, established to cater for the children of Aboriginal people employed on nearby cattle stations. She was baptised into the Catholic Church at the age of about fifteen years. She continued to study and “helping out” at the school until 1968, when she undertook a course for teaching assistants at Kormilda College. This led to further study at Kormilda in 1971, during which she became interested in art, painting in particular. She became a well-known artist, with *Australian Stations of the Cross* and illustrations in Alan Marshall's *People of the Dreaming* amongst her notable accomplishments. Her meshing her cultural heritage, Christianity and art led to related ventures in Bali, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea. She opted for a career in education, “because (her) people (were) in need of education more than anything else”. She taught white children in Melbourne for two years, recalling that the students came to understand colour differences better as she and they “grew together”. She discussed such matters in her book, *The Nature of Aboriginal Children*, published in 1976, which she wrote “to help White teachers in the Northern Territory to understand Aboriginal children”. Publicity at the time referred to “the laughing and gentle face of Miriam Rose Ungunmerr”: she wondered if people who read those words ever thought of the “the depth of suffering, hurt and struggle (she) had to endure”, having to leave her home and travel to unfamiliar places “in a new world where Aboriginality (was) not accepted by all peoples” in order to develop and use “(her) God-given gifts and talents … to the fullest”. After her Melbourne stint, she returned to the NT, the first traditional Aborigine to become a qualified teacher, and joined the Commonwealth Teaching Service. She taught Aboriginal art, weaving and her language at St John's College, in Darwin, and worked in many schools and communities across the NT as a Department of Education adviser in art, gained a Bachelor of Education degree from Deakin University, in Melbourne, through Batchelor College and was instrumental in having a successful Remote Area Teacher Education program instituted at Daly River. Reflecting on her graduation, she said,

> The skills and knowledge I gained in my early years as I sat, watched and imitated my elders had taken root and grown slowly but surely into my very own 'Tree of Knowledge'. Now, as I stood resplendent in the Deakin University academic cap and gown, I knew that my real splendour originated from my tribe, my people, my Dreaming.¹⁷¹

Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann has been Principal of the St. Francis Xavier Primary School at Daly River since the mid-1990s.

Each of these women is to be admired for her achievement in the relatively alien world of Western education. It has required a combination of raw talent, persistent application and the courage to overcome social and physical isolation, commonly in the face of racism and hostility and with the complications of their own family lives. Assimilation policy and/or activity triggered by the Watts/Gallacher Report impacted in varying degrees upon them. Miriam Stead Raymond was affected most directly by assimilation in that she was forcibly removed from her mother's family and her father, to be relocated to the Methodist Overseas Mission on Croker Island, but that experience did give her an important introduction to Western education. Policy and practice in the NT ceased to signify greatly for her after she was fostered in SA. Veronica McClintic would only have been effected by assimilation through her association with children of mixed descent who had been removed from their families and placed at the Mission on Croker Island, and possibly also through experience of racism during her nursing days. Veronica McClintic, Isabelle Adams and Mary Ann Bin-Sallik had in common dwelling in Parap Camp and their attending school in Darwin, the first two for most of their school days and the third only for her upper primary years. Isabelle Adams did not register being affected by assimilation, her record providing mainly a story of determination and competitiveness in succeeding on her own merits. She would have experienced the transfer of kindergartens from Health to primary schools operated by the Department of Education when the education systems in the NT were amalgamated, an emotive issue at the time. Like Adams, although at a later stage in her life, Veronica Arbon engaged in formal education to overcome difficult circumstances. She did not seem to have benefited significantly from her Urapunga pastoral property school experience. The trials posed by secondary education and the social environment in Alice Springs vindicated much of Watts and Gallacher's rationale for exceptional provisions proposed in secondary transition schools for Aboriginal students from the bush. Being forbidden to use Aboriginal languages was Mary Ann Bin-Sallik's only direct reference to assimilation, and she had in common with Veronica McClintic experience of racism in nursing. She also impresses as having shared Isabelle Adams' determination and competitiveness. Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann appears to have had a fulfilling and happy childhood as a traditionally-oriented Aborigine, not adversely affected by assimilation. The Daly River Mission and Kormilda College helped her commence her post-school formal education career, but her grounding in and appreciation of the culture of her Ngangiwumirr people enabled her to mesh the two, and with Catholicism as well. The careers of all these women provide excellent, tangibly
Territory, models for young Indigenous Territorians of a wide variety of descents and backgrounds. Miriam-Rose's philosophy and accomplishment, in particular, are potentially instructive for the challenge to provide effective formal education for Indigenous Territorians in the 2000s.

Analysis of Policy in the NT Under Assimilation.

Some positive change evolved in the assimilation years. In government, beginnings of consultation on Indigenous affairs emerged, and there were signs of response to, reflecting heed of, unsolicited input. Aborigines' advocates were increasingly vocal, and Aborigines themselves became more prominent in requiring that issues important to them be addressed, growing more assertive and strident, taking initiatives and assuming leadership rôles recognisable as Western in nature. Such activism spread to the NT. Inclusion of Indigenous interests in consultation on policy-development and service-planning, however, although mooted, did not occur to any notable degree.

Information on public policy on Aborigines under assimilation, and on their formal education in the NT, was more abundant and helpful than it had been for the previous era. Activity increased markedly but was still heavily hierarchical. Willingness to consult was evident, in heed paid to anthropologists' input, teachers' involvement in curriculum development, Watts' engagement to help review Welfare education, Watts' and Gallacher's field consultation, and Gallacher's North American study tour. In his feedback on the last, Gallacher posited the idea of involving Indigenous clients in policy and planning. Unsolicited input to the Government grew steadily, galvanising in the late 1960s, probably as much a progression of swelling activism as a product of the 1967 Referendum, the relevant question in which was a consultative measure taken in the light of expressed public concern. A lateral dimension in policy-related activity on Indigenous affairs was evolving in the official frame.

The idea of assimilating Aborigines was not new. It had been crystallising in public policy prior to WWII. Whereas protectionism had been restrictive, with practices oppressive and negative, assimilation policy was intended to be constructive. Such a swing in perspective and philosophy had long been advocated by Elkin, and his influence with governments when the new policy direction was emerging indicates growing official receptivity to lateral input in the area.

When Hasluck articulated assimilation, it had been under official consideration at least since 1937. It would have been deliberated within and between States and the Commonwealth
in the interim. Powell credited the contributions of Elkin and other figures, such as anthropologists Stanner, C.H. and R.M. Berndt, political scientists Rowley and Tatz and supporters Coombs and Judith Wright, with giving advocacy on Indigenous affairs “an intellectual base”. They brought scholarly reasoning and ideas to the debate.

In the NT, there was little activism by Aborigines until the 1960s. In the 1950s, objection to inequity for war veterans of mixed descent under Welfare legislation and anger at Namatjira's jailing were exceptions. From the mid-1960s there were protests, over bauxite-mining on Gove Peninsula, on Aboriginal rights and land rights, manifest in confrontation on Wave Hill Station, and by Charles Perkins as a spokesman on Aboriginal issues. At the time, publicity of incidents involving Aborigines in the NT was part of a national escalation of Indigenous expression of dissent that culminated, for the moment, in the land rights-focussed “Aboriginal Embassy” opposite Parliament House in Canberra in 1972. All such pressure was pertinent to Aborigines in the NT and to the management of their affairs as it sought to sway the Commonwealth. Unsolicited input in the area, after two decades of assimilation, now effected partly by Aborigines, had reached significant proportions and could not be ignored. The idea of soliciting input from Indigenous clients of public services, however, was not yet in the official frame.

When assimilation policy was promulgated, the NT's fledgling legislature was in its fourth year. The Commonwealth could over-rule legislation it proposed, but the Legislative Council ipso facto had authority to make local laws, so it had capability and responsibility to legislate for the policy's implementation in its jurisdiction. Debate on Indigenous affairs throughout the assimilation era was often robust, but parliamentary records bear witness to the sincerity and passion of many Members, official, elected, non-official nominated and from both sides of politics. Relevant legislation formulated in Darwin and endorsed in Canberra included the Welfare Ordinance (1953, to take effect in 1957), the Wards Employment Ordinance (1953, to take effect in 1959), the Native and Historical Objects Preservation Ordinance (1955) and the Social Welfare Ordinance (1964, repealing the Welfare Ordinance). The passage of such ordinances was substantial evidence that debate on Indigenous affairs in the NT leading to legal enactment had been devolved in practice, at least to a degree, to Darwin, even if final sanction remained in Canberra.

172 Powell, P. 234.
In the meantime, the NT was gaining a voice Federally. Representative and legislative gains were modest and slow in coming, but they were nonetheless growing elements in the lateral dimension of policy-development related to the NT, hence in policy on NT Indigenous affairs, including policy on education, despite Canberra's ultimate authority on Aboriginal affairs. The NT was forcing its way into the Commonwealth frame as an active entity.

The Welfare Branch and the missions liaised closely. In Giese's presentations, it was evident, where Indigenous welfare was concerned, that the partnership was strong; MacFarlane commonly lumped government settlements and missions together in his diatribes on provisions for Aborigines. Exchange between Welfare staff and missionaries in endeavours they had in common, formal education in particular and in related activity, was thus another area in which lateral exchange of ideas and information was growing. Notwithstanding establishment of parents and friends committees and Gallacher's report from his North American study, however, consultation with Aborigines on their education was not yet part of the process.

By the latter stages of assimilation, as evident in the foregoing summary, there was more activity and substance to register on the bi-axial policy analysis frame than there had been as protection subsided. The major change during the assimilation period, represented in Figure 4.2, was substantial increase in official effort Solicited lateral input was also heeded. Unsolicited input to the Government was beginning to impact as well, but did not appear yet to have affected policy on education for Aborigines. Whereas effective activity in the previous era had been virtually exclusive to the hierarchy, lateral influences were now increasingly coming to bear and having effect.

Estimates of extent and composition of policy-related activity in formal education for Indigenous Territorians under assimilation are inevitably arbitrary. They are relative, not precise: notionally, activity of optimal extent would approximate the maximum possible, and would register on the bi-axial frame at the outer extreme of the applicable axis, or both. Activity under assimilation may not have approached the optimum in extent, but it was significant in view of its having started virtually as a new venture, with no infrastructure, little corporate history and very limited resources, yet it built in momentum and grew rapidly. It may be rated at about 70% of the activity possible, and, being predominantly hierarchical, will be plotted on the $y$ axis.

Proportionate distribution of activity under assimilation policy is estimated as having been hierarchical activity : lateral activity :: 85 : 15. Under protection, there had barely been
sufficient lateral activity in related policy to rate more than token recognition. Such activity emerged under assimilation, as indicated above: although modest, it was of sufficient extent to register on the $x$ axis, as shown in Figure 5.1, and to place the mean of $y$ and $x$ registrations at the interface between the A and B sectors. The nett result indicates a mix of vertical and horizontal activity for it to register where the “disciplined, efficient and consistent with the government's policy direction but lacking breadth in range of lateral input and public ownership” category and the “reasonable mix, but with activity in (the vertical) plane greater than in the (horizontal one)” merge. Progress towards public credibility implied, in terms of vertical/horizontal equity, was modest, but it showed reduction of exclusivity in public administration in the area of concern.

![Figure 5.1 Assimilation and Formal Education for Aborigines](image)

**FIGURE 5.1 ASSIMILATION AND FORMAL EDUCATION FOR ABORIGINES.**

Whilst officialdom still dominated policy-related activity for Indigenous Territorians, an array of frames now applied. There were three broad frames: that of the Commonwealth, in relevant agencies in Canberra and out-posts in the NT, dominant and committed to paternalistic advancement of Aborigines but under growing public pressure; that of the Legislative Council, in which elected Members gained numerical ascendancy\(^{177}\), also committed and paternalistic with respect to Aborigines, but familiar with their circumstances and sincerely concerned for them, sceptical about official efforts and making their views known in Canberra; and that of the missions, ideologically and pragmatically committed to Aborigines’ advancement through assimilation, but amongst whom Protestant-run operations

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were gradually transferring to Welfare. There were other frames, such as those of individual, often high-profile public-spirited, advocates who brought to bear assorted professional, ideological and intellectual backgrounds and made known their support for Indigenes and their views on related issues, and those of Indigenous activists, both individual persons and organisations, buoyed by the result of the 1967 Referendum, increasingly assertive, confident and adept in bringing their disillusionment and expectations to the notice of the Government and the broader community, but fragmented. The media gave Indigenous issues further coverage, at times sensational, commonly supportive of Indigenes and questioning the wisdom and fairness of the Government on related issues. The Government, with its brand of the mainstream civic culture, remained the major partner with mission bodies heavily dependent on public supplementation of their resources. Critiques from the intelligentsia, journalists' sallies and Indigenous grass-roots demands were increasingly pressing for review of policy, programs and practices across the area and for accountability.

Qualitatively, as evident in Table 5.6, elements of the three “pragmatic issues” identified under protection remained, but changes had occurred. First, the missions had become partners with the Government in the thrust, with consequent ownership and greater commitment; but, as public sector activity increased, that of the missions diminished; Aborigines had no more ownership of policy than before, and although they were effectively forcing themselves towards involvement with increasing protestation, they were limited in the main to compliance with imposed strategies. Second, public and mission authorities' quests to assimilate, including advancing Indigenes in the white Christian mould, persisted in principle, but had become widespread, relatively consistent in attempted application and intended as constructive, if no less paternalistic; Aborigines' sustained exclusion from identifying need and how to address it must still have precluded any positive disposition towards the policy and its implementation, but by the end of the era, many had demonstrably been equipped to acquit themselves well in the mainstream.178 Third, the work of Welfare personnel, more numerous and more active in the field and in liaison with missions than previously, resulted in greater awareness amongst Aborigines of policy and programs, but Indigenous input was yet to be officially sought. Policy-makers and

178 Neill. P. 247. A telling submission by the Indigenous Kardu Numida Town Council at Wadeye (Port Keats, where the Catholic Mission dates from 1935) to the Collins Review stated that constituents aged forty-sixty years had “good literacy skills, fair numeracy skills”, that those aged twenty-five to forty had “poor literacy, poor numeracy”, and that those aged less than twenty-five had “nil literacy, nil numeracy”. The Council's perception suggested that the most effective basic education took place up to about the mid-1970s and that effectiveness then dwindled to negligibility as the century wore on. The perception gels with my impression of older people's superior mastery of English, but, whilst agreeing that standards of achievement deteriorated in the last quarter-century, I do not believe that it dropped to nil at any stage.
service-providers still assumed superiority, and may still have been perceived “intruders, usurpers, bullies and enemies”, but were generally more benevolently inclined than in the previous era.

**TABLE 5.6 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE POLICY IN THE NT UNDER ASSIMILATION.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who participated in the policy process?</th>
<th>Participants grew considerably more numerous than they had been under protection, but remained, in the main, public officials, church leaders, missionaries, teachers and Indigenous children, with occasional consultants and very limited involvement of Indigenous parents.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where did the participation occur?</td>
<td>Policy conception and development occurred mainly in parliaments and public agencies, also in mission head offices, with implementation in schools and workshops run by Welfare and missions in Indigenous communities and in other Welfare-managed institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How were participants involved?</td>
<td>Office-based officials, now much more than mission authorities, determined policy, Welfare and mission teachers implemented it with some rigour, children and trainees were under greater pressure to attend and conform with instructors' expectations, and there was greater expectation of parents to support their children's schooling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent were participants familiar with the process?</td>
<td>Office-based and field officials and mission authorities were clearly aware of what was expected of them, and directed field operatives accordingly, and parents and community members were included in and made aware of the process to the extent that they were required to support their children's participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent were participants aware of the substance of negotiations?</td>
<td>Negotiation remained the province of parliaments and system officials, and mission authorities to a lesser extent, with outcomes relevant to practice relayed to field operatives and, to a degree, to Indigenous adults, to solicit their support. The Watts/Gallacher study raised field operatives' awareness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To what extent was participant input evident in the policy and its implementation? External input, notably from Elkin on assimilation and Watts on formal education for Indigenous Territorians, contributed to policy and its implementation. Churches with missions assisting implementation also had some influence. Welfare and mission field operatives became involved in curriculum development and trialling. The Watts/Gallacher Report reflected input from teachers. There was no indication of Indigenes' influence in the process, other than in providers' perceptions of provisions appropriate for them.

What feedback was provided to participants as the process progressed? Policy-related feedback relevant to classroom practice was given to field operatives through their supervisors and in meetings, especially in follow-up to the Watts/Gallacher Report. It was relayed, as field participants saw fit, to people in the communities.

The aptness of the policy and the process is dubious. Despite Watts and Gallacher's proposals and Gallacher's advice from his North American study, there was no real attempt to ascertain Indigenes' views, aspirations and priorities or the implications, of either their culture or their circumstances, for bases upon which appropriate formal education programs could be designed and delivered. There were cross-cultural dealings and some cross-cultural sensitivity in the studies but the ideas and activity derived from the official culture, a European intellectual-cum-bureaucratic frame. It tried to take account of a frame conceived as Indigenous, with the best of intentions, by sincere sympathetic Europeans, with Hasluck, Elkin, Giese, Gallacher and Watts most to the fore. It therefore evolved as an extension of their own individual frames, or a composite of them, and lacked Indigenous authenticity.

Born of the British colonial frame, the policy to assimilate Indigenous Australians into the mainstream evolved as Australia-focussed. It was introduced, implemented and eventually officially abandoned by conservative administrations. Necessity was a factor, in the need for Australia to guard against embarrassment on the international stage. Publicly, altruism was paramount. Legislative Council Members were scornful of the Commonwealth for its policies and strategies and frustrated with its perceived official intransigence and bureaucratic inertia, but, locally, they were benevolently disposed towards Aborigines. The field personnel, delivering services, actually implementing the policy, were also generally supportive of their clients.
Figure 5.1 reflects advance in the policy process from that portrayed in Figure 4.1. When it is considered that the latter registration reflected the nett result of nearly a century-and-a-half of protectionism, the shift shown in the former, accomplished in just two decades, is significant. If little else, it indicates that the policy process concerning Indigenous Australians could adjust, that a virtually closed process was beginning to be opened by both public sector and community dynamics.

Like protection, assimilation, as seen in Table 5.6, did not recognise the Indigenes as partners in the policy process. They were perceived, largely subconsciously, only as passive recipients of the services the policy generated. Their unsolicited input, however, was having some impact. Attwood and Markus's assembly of documents of Indigenous origins reveals escalating frustration, disillusionment and demand to the point where they were forcing themselves into the process. Charles Perkins (1969), responding to an E. J. Smith who asked why he, a “part-Aboriginal” person, identified as Aboriginal, alluded to some anomalies in assimilation, also conveying the intensity of Aborigines' feeling on the matter:

Aboriginals are not like white people. They love their children, whatever shade. Generally, in the past, the white people never really wanted us. When they did it was for sexual, economic or paternal reasons.

… (M)any thousands of our people were forced to carry passes … if we ever wished to mix in the white community. … We were labelled as fit and proper Aboriginals to associate with white people. I was one of the few Aboriginals in Adelaide who refused to carry a pass or “dog ticket” …. (B)efore I graduated …, I was categorised by law and socially as an Aboriginal. Now that I have graduated I am suddenly transformed by people such as Smith, into a non-Aboriginal.

This conveniently puts me into a situation where I must, according to official assimilation policy, forget my people, my background, my former obligations. I am now “white”. I therefore am not supposed to voice any opinion on the scandalous situation Aboriginal people are in nor am I entitled to speak any longer as a “legal Aboriginal”. All this is because I have received a degree and am in a position to voice an opinion. Or could it be that I, and others like me, could influence the unacceptable social-racial status quo in Australia?

179 Attwood & Markus. Part 3.
... The Aboriginal people in Australia today – full-blood and part blood – do not want the sympathy of white people with an attitude such as Smith's. We have had enough of this in the past.

What we want is good education, respect, pride in our ancestry, more job opportunities and understanding.

It seems people such as Smith carry a guilt complex of past mistreatment, and would want to now stop the truth from being revealed, and hence control Aboriginal advancement.\(^{180}\)

The excerpts from Perkins' reply indicate educated Indigenes' regard for assimilation policy and its implementation. The exchange with Smith occurred in the year he was recruited to the Office of Aboriginal Affairs.\(^{181}\) His criticisms are not questioned. It is evident, however, that he was able to take advantage of the opportunities in education that were available and those to which his achievements gave him access.

**SUMMATIVE STATEMENT**

The public policy process, for assimilation and the formal education of Indigenous Territorians, 1951–72, compared with that under protection, became a hive of activity. The policy to assimilate was well-intended, believed by the policy-makers and service-providers to be in the Indigenes' best interests, giving them opportunity for equity in the mainstream in citizenship and access to goods and services and in quests for livelihood. Their formal education was believed to be the key to their assimilation, and hence to the policy's effective implementation. The process remained relatively exclusive, provider owned and dominated and predominantly hierarchical in its operation. Lateral input to the process increased, albeit less markedly than the extent of activity. The policy and the strategies to implement it were still imposed, and although participation by Indigenous clients in the process was increased, it still amounted to their being primarily objects of the policy and the implementation strategies.

\(^{180}\) Attwood & Markus., Pp. 241–42. Born in the NT in 1936, he attended school in Adelaide, his senior secondary education would have occurred in the 1950s and he attended Sydney University in the 1960s, attracting attention nationally in the 1965 NSW Freedom Ride protest.

\(^{181}\) Hurst, John, in Davison et al. P. 505.
Chapter 6

Indigenous Self-Determination and Self-Government for the Northern Territory.

Education is fundamental in enabling Aboriginal people to exercise their rights and participate fully in Australian society.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy, 1989.2

The December 1972 election of the Australian Labor Party, led by Gough Whitlam, ushered in the era of self-determination for Indigenous Australians. From then until the end of the twentieth century, in both Federal and Northern Territory (NT) contexts, there were to be policy activity and public consultation on and commitment of public moneys to Indigenous well-being of unprecedented proportions, on formal education in particular. In the area of constitutional development, the NT was to gain an elective legislature, to be granted Self-Government, to reject Statehood when it was offered, and hence to remain subordinate to and heavily dependent upon the Commonwealth. Canberra still had ultimate responsibility for Indigenous affairs.

Self-determination for Indigenous Australians, inclusion and consultation were policy features during 1973–2000. The principles underlying self-determination may have paled to some extent in the thrust for reconciliation, which, as a concept, itself became somewhat blurred, and momentum in the public policy direction dwindled. Logistic provisions, Federally and in the NT, promoted Indigenous contribution to and management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs and for communication amongst Indigenous peoples. The networks that evolved made also for consultation between policy-makers, service-providers and the clients. They operated, but the quality and outcomes of the exchanges that occurred were less than optimal.

Policy and policy-related events, Federally and locally, made the era one of considerable change. In 1974, the fully elective NT Legislative Assembly replaced the Legislative Council, the NT was granted Self-Government in 1978 but rejected Statehood at a referendum in 1998.3 Devolution of the public education function to the NT at

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3 Perceptions vary on why statehood was rejected. I believe it was a combination of Indigenes’ preference for Commonwealth authority in their affairs to an increase in the Country Liberal Party
Self-Government and the Commonwealth's retention of ultimate authority in Indigenous affairs, are especially relevant. Relations between the NT Government (NTG) and the Commonwealth that were largely similar to Commonwealth-State relations came into play. The nature of that relationship with respect to education has been described by G. Davis, J. Wanna, J. Warhurst and P Weller (1988) as follows:

> Though education belongs to the States, much of the money for schools, colleges and universities is provided by Canberra. This gives the federal government a reason to be involved in education policy. It creates potential for inter-governmental fighting and can prevent effective accountability. For if each politician can blame another at a different level of government, then who is to be held responsible for any service inadequacies?\(^4\)

Debate on public health and tertiary education in Australia, 2003–04, exemplified the politics to which Davis et al alluded at State and Territory governments' interfaces with the Commonwealth.

Similar complexity and convolution applied in the NT as Self-Government loomed, and subsequently in education as in other areas. Management of Indigenous affairs, formal education for Indigenous Territorians in particular, became a buck-passing area. It grew increasingly so in the 1980s with development of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) and its implementation from 1990. In the meantime, the NTG devised its own policies. The foundation of NT education was laid in the pursuit of excellence with community involvement and devolution of functions to school councils and education communities, and included particular attention to Indigenous Territorians. Formal education for Indigenous Territorians, 1973–2000, featured massive change, consultation, curriculum activity and commitment of fiscal resources, all juxtaposed with declining standards of academic achievement. The 1990s saw particular attention paid to outcomes from policy, services and associated resource commitments.

Government's power, a negative reaction amongst non-Indigenes to Chief Minister Shane Stone's management of the campaign and fear about the NT's fiscal viability as a State Alistair Heatley (1998) did not commit himself beyond stating, “(w)hether the result signified a complete rejection of the statehood prospect or … reflected disenchantment about the way Stone had conducted the process was …. uncertain”. (The Territory Party: The Northern Territory Country Liberal Party 1974–98. Darwin, NT, Northern Territory University Press. P. 117.)


Reference to the bi-axial framework helps to explain the evolution of administrative arrangements for the NT from 1973 to the turn of the twenty-first century. Hierarchical colonial Australian administration waned in the early 1970s, and “state-type” functions were devolved at Self-Government, and a second, Darwin-based, official hierarchy was thereby inserted. Post-World War Two (WWII), the two successive NT legislatures increasingly demanded and promoted lateral activity in administration, a trend which was augmented by the elements of egalitarianism and public consultation that entered the civic culture from the mid-1960s, escalating during the social reformist Federal Labor Government's incumbency, 1972–75. Towards the end of the century, Federal and NT Governments became more conservative, more hierarchical in management, but Territorians typically registered objection to any semblance of official heavy-handedness, just as NT legislatures consistently made any displeasure with the Commonwealth clearly known and felt.\(^5\)

The politics and administration of Indigenous affairs grew in intricacy as governments increasingly recognised and accepted responsibility and tried to meet Aborigines' and Torres Strait Islanders' needs. NT administrations provided public services for Indigenous Territorians as for others, but, as in the States, the Commonwealth remained ultimate responsibility in that area, supplementing NTG endeavours with specific-purpose programs, administering some itself and devolving others. Darwin was accountable to Canberra in provisions made locally for Indigenous Territorians.

In terms of the bi-axial model, there were now two over-lapping batteries of hierarchical and lateral activity, operating independently but interacting also with each other as well as with the clientèle they shared. Some duplication of thrusts, mutual undermining of effort (regardless of incumbency in office), incompatible activities and contradiction in communication were therefore inevitable, generating confusion and frustration for people involved, not least the clients. In the policy process, the clients tend to be assumed to be static, passive consumers, their own dynamics overlooked. In reality, activity in any community is bi-dimensional, as in a bureaucracy but less structured: its regulation, no matter how informal, whether in local government or from elders' traditional authority, is hierarchical, and social and entrepreneurial interactions tend to be lateral. Ideally, in delivering public services, providers concern themselves with clientèle and clientèle dynamics at least as much as with policy and service, implicit in which is a provider's

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5 Memories of the 1959 movie, “The Mouse That Roared”, are revived. The NT legislatures and populace were remarkably adept and successful in conveying displeasure to Canberra, despite their modest experience, means and numbers and heavy dependence.
priority focus on the client group. In such a perspective, service provision in an Indigenous community in the NT can be bizarre: it is likely to comprise the community and its dynamics overlaid with a heavy but mostly fragmented fabric of overlapping NT and Commonwealth policies, services and personnel, mostly imposed.

The counter-productivity implicit in the broader scenario of overlapping NT-Commonwealth policies, operations and relations was reflected in formal education services for Indigenous Territorians. It was exacerbated by inconsistency between NTG agencies and elements within the NT education system, each with its own two-dimensional dynamics.\(^6\)

Some contemporary NT data give perspective to developments in formal education for Indigenous Territorians in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Physically, the NT occupies 17.5% of Australia's total land area; climatically, it ranges from the tropical Top End to the arid Centre; its international merchandise trade in 2000–01 gives an idea of its relative economic attainment, after a half-century's sustained growth and development, when its imports totalled 0.57% of national imports and its exports 3.6% of national exports; and, in 2001, with just under 1.1% of the nation's population, of all jurisdictions it had the highest proportion of Indigenous residents, the smallest population and the lowest population density.\(^7\) Alistair Heatley (1990) observed that the NT's comparatively large Indigenous population was

\begin{quote}
    a significant determinant of various Commonwealth policies in recent history
    and a vital ingredient in shaping the character of self-government and
    intergovernmental relations in the post-1978 period.\(^8\)
\end{quote}

Viewed objectively, the NT was a substantial physical portion of the nation, economically and demographically signifying little, but, with about 12.5% of the country's Indigenous population\(^9\), a considerable proportion traditionally-oriented, it had Canberra's attention. Two other factors attracted Commonwealth interest: the implications for national security of

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\(^6\) My observations over 30+ years in the NT, 26 in the NT education system in management rôles, with system-wide perspective, and some national and international involvement on behalf of the NT, support this judgement.


the proximity of the largely uninhabited coastline to Indonesia and South-East Asia, coupled with sparse non-urban settlement and rugged terrain; and potential for economic venture and international trade, especially with the facility now afforded by the Alice Springs-Darwin rail link. Commonwealth commitment to the NT has therefore been of greater magnitude than its population and economic contribution alone might otherwise have attracted.

Indigenous demographic dynamics in the NT are important for perspective on the provision of formal education. When the Whitlam Government was elected, the NT population was growing, approaching 90,000. Table 6.1 shows that post-war population growth carried through to the early 1970s, sustaining strong increase, 1966–71, slowed in 1971–76 by Cyclone Tracy but recovering over the next decade, with Darwin's reconstruction and Self-Government taking hold, and subsequently consolidating, more than doubling over thirty years. The increase was for the most part non-Indigenous, but the Indigenous component continued to grow apace. The difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous trends was that the growth of the former was sustained, so that as the latter plateaued, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders returned proportionately to over 25% of the total.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>%growth</th>
<th>Indigenous No.</th>
<th>%of total</th>
<th>Non-Indigenous No.</th>
<th>%of total</th>
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<td>57550</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
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10 When the population numbered over 200,000, the NT gained a second House of Representatives seat. Midway through the 2001–2006 intercensal period, however, the population was estimated to have dropped below 200,000 and one Representative seat was in jeopardy.


N.B. Statistics are indicative only: the ABS acknowledged under-enumeration of Indigenes at Census counts. Minor discrepancies were evident in some published data.

Compared with national trends, there were heavy concentrations in urban centres and sparse population in rural and remote areas, Territorians were youthful, mobility intra-NT and interstate was high, cultural diversity was wide and the public sector was large. Social trends showed that, proportionate to non-Indigenes, NT Indigenes had a larger youth element, numbers tapering off over the age of twenty-five years, and lower participation in education. The majority dwelt in outlying communities. Specific disadvantage featured disparities in education outcomes, work-force participation and unemployment, housing, health and mortality. Some gaps were closing, but “outcomes of contemporary society for Indigenous Territorians (tended) to be different from and less favourable than (those) for (others)”.

The last three decades of the twentieth century were exciting, if turbulent. Some upheavals were generated externally, beyond Territory influence, such as changes in Federal governments, with policy and resource implications for Darwin. Despite evolving autonomy, at the turn of the twenty-first century the NT was legislatively subordinate to and fiscally dependent upon the Commonwealth. NTG management of nascent independence, however, determined the dynamics of domestic public services. The NTG was energetic, but had only Legislative Council experience in jurisdictional administration and, initially, limited opposition in government On one issue it was determined: the elected representatives, not the bureaucrats, would govern. Wrangling with Canberra continued undiminished.

In public education, there was extensive change, occasionally frenetic. Transitions were made, from dual systems to an amalgamated one, from management by Canberra to management by Darwin, from centralism to local self-management, from autonomy to professional accountability, from school-based curriculum development to its central direction and, for teachers, from assorted employment arrangements to successive single teaching services and into the NT Public Service. In the 1990s, executive contracts were introduced, their accessibility progressing down the NT Department of Education (NTDE) ranks to middle-management in administration and field operations, increasingly politicising

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the system. Innovation was lauded in the earlier stages, increased resources flowed and, in particular, technical and further education (TAFE) expanded. Some resource curtailment followed, requiring consolidation from the mid-1980s. In the later stages, successive reviews and system restructures ultimately seemed to do little to raise either outcomes or efficiency but caused some collateral damage, notably diminished systemic vitality and confidence amongst field personnel and loss of corporate knowledge. Concurrently, consultation took root in the civic culture and burgeoned throughout the public education sector.

Formal education for Indigenous Territorians was affected by such developments. Others also impacted, notably the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and the AEP. Related but extraneous issues for Indigenous peoples, such as susceptibility to disease, substance abuse and growing dysfunction amongst youth and in families and communities, were destructive of humanity and adverse for education; others, including prolonged land claim actions, mining, sacred site contention, increasing mobility, official imposition and expectations of self-management, were distractive. Relatively high levels of incarceration also persisted. New policy directions were taken, but generally yielded little tangible benefit or consolidation.

In this period, numerous formal schooling and training initiatives calculated to improve outcomes for Aborigines were taken. Accounts of organisation, initiatives taken and allocation of funding under the auspices of the AEP, for instance, were publicised in issues of *Aboriginal Education News* by the NTDE’s AEP Support Unit in the 1990s. There are also *resumés* of “Aboriginal education” activity and resourcing in the *Annual Reports* of the NTDE and the NT Board of Studies, and the multi-disciplinary inter-agency Aboriginal Hearing Program published comprehensive reports on its endeavours. The focus of the study, however, is upon policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians, and individual projects will be referred to primarily to exemplify policy-related activity.

From the 1970s, official policy on Indigenous Australians became less clear-cut than it had previously been. The Commonwealth retained control, on the constitutional basis determined by the 1967 Referendum. When Prime Minister William McMahon instituted abandonment of assimilation, he proposed that Aborigines be encouraged and assisted to “preserve and develop” their cultural heritage, to choose for themselves how they related to mainstream Australia and gradually to take charge of their affairs. In the NT, his declaration had little immediate impact: either local officials and operatives remained committed to assimilation as it had evolved, or no substantial replacement was declared. Whitlam Labor extended McMahon's new direction to self-determination. Indigenous culture was to be recognised
as integral to Australian society, equity and equitable opportunity for Indigenes were to be realised and they were to “(decide) the pace and nature of their future development within … Australian society”. For all the idealism in the rhetoric of the time, the policy was really little less paternalistic in its conception than assimilation had been.

Under Fraser Coalition Governments, 1975–83, self-determination was modified to “self-management”. The focus moved to Indigenous peoples' managing their own affairs, from having them managed on their behalf: there was a conceptual change, from the idea of Indigenous self-government to one of individual communities' administering their own affairs in a local government model. Under Hawke Labor administrations, 1983–91, self-determination was reasserted. In 1987, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gerry Hand directed the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs to investigate “the effectiveness of existing support services within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities”. The Standing Committee (1990) clarified the policy, stating that both self-determination and self-management were required, to increase Indigenous control of decision-making and priority-setting in their communities and to effect negotiation with authorities on policies and programs. Its report stressed need to improve Indigenes' efficiency and effectiveness in managing their organisations and communities.

When Labor came to office in 1972, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs was upgraded to a department. In 1980, the Coalition added the Aboriginal Development Commission, to promote “a self-sustaining, commercially-independent Aboriginal economic base”. The Commissioners were all Aboriginal, as was the first Director, Charles Perkins. Initially it enjoyed credibility and pride amongst Indigenous peoples, but its enterprise development rôle became compromised to a degree by some unsound business ventures, accountability difficulties and its assumption of quasi – welfare functions. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Development Commission were eventually replaced with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in 1990, essentially to undertake the functions both had performed. Aboriginal Affairs (1988) had reasoned that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, as proposed, “with Aboriginal people in charge”, would enable

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17 Powell. P. 235.
“divergence between the cultural and developmental aspects of self-determination” to be overcome. The Standing Committee recommended that “Commonwealth, State, Territory and local governments view the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission as the coordinating agency for working with Aboriginal people”, observing that “(with) increased involvement by Aboriginal people in the planning and delivery of policies and programs a more planned coordinated approach should be an achievable outcome”. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Standing Committee obviously both held that decisionmaking and management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-related policy and programs should have substantial Aboriginal involvement. In terms of the bi-axial framework, considerable lateral policy-related activity was expected.

Hawke Labor introduced the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in 1991. Over ten years, it was to address Indigenous-non-indigenous relations in Australia with the goal of uniting the population such that everyone would respect the land, value Indigenous heritages and enjoy justice and equity. At the turn of the century, it was difficult to discern the policy direction for Indigenous Australians. In 1995, Liberal leader John Howard, in Opposition, had voiced urgent need to address their situation, registering alarm at the resources invested in the area and the paucity of returns. He committed a Coalition government to “(improve) standards and opportunities in health, employment, education and housing”, policy wherein it was everyone's “solemn moral obligation … to achieve lasting improvements for our Aboriginal people and maximum tolerance and justice for all our citizens”. He added,

(t)he actions we take must be within the framework of one undivided Australian nation with a common respect for the body of law, to which all are equally accountable and from which all are entitled to receive an equal share of justice.

The principles conveyed are reminiscent of those embodied in McEwen's statements, almost sixty years earlier, as the policy to assimilate came to the fore. Howard seemed to expect that as Indigenous Australians' “continuing deprivation and underprivelege” were addressed, they would blend equitably into the national entity he envisaged. That he should stress equity before the law in addressing Indigenous disadvantage may have been a tacit ruling-out of exceptional status for them.

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As Peter Read (2001) saw the situation in 1997, with the Howard Coalition in office, the most extreme conservative position was a return to assimilation, whereby Aboriginals would remain entirely without special privilege within the Commonwealth. The most extreme indigenous position ... looked towards an almost-independent Aboriginal state. More moderate Aboriginal leaders ... insisted on the conceptual separateness of Aborigines within the nation, including the right to control their own community, national organisations, and land base.23

The Coalition Government, in Read's view, seemed to be reverting to its position under Menzies; the radical Indigenous one wanted separatism and self-government, and a moderate one sought self-management.24 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Minister John Herron belonged to the Outer Ministry, so when Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs were added to Philip Ruddock's Immigration and Multicultural responsibilities, late 2000, policy on Indigenous Australia was effectively elevated to Federal Cabinet Howard stated that Ruddock would “(implement) practical reconciliation in a sensitive and sensible manner”.25 Other than “practical reconciliation”, to which Howard referred consistently, the Federal Government's actual direction on Indigenous affairs was not clear.

For the 2001 Federal election, Labor's position was relatively definitive. It declared belief in Indigenous Australians' entitlement to both the human rights enjoyed by others and their unique rights “as a group, as descendants of the original owners of this continent”. They were to have equity in access and contribution to “the economic and social advantages available to all other Australians as citizens of a first world nation”, to “exercise their right to self-determination”, to “exercise and enjoy their unique cultures” and to “share with other Australians the real, practical benefit of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians”.26 Recognition of occupancy prior to white settlement, distinct status, self-determination and reconciliation clearly remained on Labor's agenda.27

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24 There were upheavals in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, 2003–04, with alleged misdemeanours of senior elected officers and removal of its resource-allocation function, thereby reducing its rôle to advisory only and leading to its disbandment. As well, ministerial responsibility for Indigenous affairs was transferred to Amanda Vanstone.
27 Reference to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders “as a group” appears to overlook the fragmented nature of the Indigenous population implicitly embodied in “their unique cultures”, and one wonders
In contrast, no specific reference was made to Indigenous Australians by Howard in launching the Government's election campaign in October 2001. Such an omission would not have been accidental. It was no doubt reasoned that all the human service programs and initiatives to which attention was drawn were conceived for and available to all Australians and that there was therefore no reason for Indigenes to receive special mention. An effect was to signal that, if returned, the Coalition did not intend to single out Indigenous Australians for exceptional treatment.

The Northern Territory and the Commonwealth.

1973–2000 saw substantial growth in the NT's autonomy, but Federal politics and Canberra dynamics still signified in public policy and services in the NT. The Country Liberal Party dominated in the NT, with a halcyon period until successive Labor governments reduced the largesse flowing from Federal coffers, and little was restored by the Howard Coalition as it managed Australia into the new millennium. The Country Liberal Party's prolonged incumbency in the NT contrasted with the changes Federally, defying swings to Labor in other jurisdictions until Clare Martin led Labor to electoral victory in 2001.

Prior to December 1972, Rex Patterson, Opposition spokesman on northern affairs, criticised the Coalition's management of the NT. He harped on its meagre concessions to the Legislative Council's demands for constitutional development and retention of control in Canberra-based bureaucracy, committing a Labor government to reform and ultimately self-government. On Labor's election, Keppel Enderby became Minister for Territories and NT Administration was replaced with a Darwin-based Department of the Northern Territory, thereby satisfying a long-voiced local demand. The disinclination of Canberra-based ex-NT Administration officials to transfer to Darwin was seen to vindicate critics' contention that officials in Canberra “knew little and cared less about the Territory”. Ironically, of the relevant functions hitherto performed by the NT Administration's Welfare Branch in Darwin, Aboriginal welfare was relocated to Aboriginal Affairs, Aboriginal health to the Department of Health and Aboriginal education to the Department of Education, thereby moving their management from a single administration in Darwin to three Canberra-based bureaucracies. Enderby tried to counter the Legislative Council's condemnation of the re-arrangement with assurance that at Self-Government the functions would return to Darwin. Enderby was whether “this continent” was intended to include Tasmania and the other inhabited islands within the international boundary. Evident flaws such as these may call into question the care with which the platform was formulated.

29 The Departments of the NT and the ACT replaced the Department of Interior.
replaced by Patterson in October 1973, but the new arrangements remained and any cohesion and holism from Welfare's provisions for Indigenous Territorians was lost and subsequent fragmentation was assured. Mitsuru Shimpo (1978), for one, judged Aborigines to have been disadvantaged in the process, confused by a multiplicity of sources of services where stability and certainty was needed. He proposed return to services for Aborigines from a single agency until their self-sufficiency in the mainstream was achieved.

The political dynamics, Federally as well as locally, impacted upon schooling and training for Indigenous Territorians. Developments under Whitlam Labor, with Indigenous self-determination, included promotion of innovation in education, catalysed with the inception of the Commonwealth Teaching Service and the Schools Commission. They were followed by the specifically focussed AEP under Hawke Labor. In the NT, the Welfare and out-posted South Australian (SA) education systems were amalgamated, autonomy of individual school communities and school-based curriculum development were advocated in decentralised administration, and public consultation was employed in formal education policy development when the function was transferred to Darwin at Self-Government. NT administration of public education came to feature self-managing schools and centralisation of curriculum direction and development, with research, evaluation, certification and accountability gaining currency. The 1990s featured a Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee study of schooling in remote Aboriginal schools, reviews of the NTDE and a review of Indigenous education led by former Senator Bob Collins. Measures proposed by Watts and Gallacher, although waning, continued to be implemented at least until Self-Government. Overall, however, despite all the activity and the commitment of resources to enhance formal education for Indigenous Territorians, the period yielded little in the way of appropriate or desirable outcomes.

Prior to Self-Government, Canberra oversaw public policy in the NT. Federal policy on Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders was paramount until 1978 and remained superior thereafter. The NT, self-governing but still dependent, continued to receive Commonwealth funding with recurrent and specific-purpose moneys for regular services and supplementary programs for Indigenous Territorians, accounting accordingly. The Country Liberal Party, allied to the Coalition parties but independent of them, held office in the NT from 1974 until 2001.

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32 I do not believe that self-determination, in its literal sense, is an option in Australia; it can only possibly exist for an isolated self-sufficient homogeneous mono-cultural society/people.
The NTG was criticised heavily for its policy and management in Indigenous affairs. Dispute raged between the Country Liberal Party and Labor in the Legislative Assembly and in the community and there were conflicts with Indigenous bodies locally and interstate and tensions with Canberra, regardless of incumbency. Some adverse attention was attracted from international organisations.

Major lines of attack have been the alleged use by the CLP of “the race card” in Territory elections, the CLP government's contribution to the continuing socioeconomic deprivation of Aborigines, its inadequate provision of state-type services to Aborigines, its resistance to Aboriginal self-determination and its treatment of Aboriginal land issues.

It was noted that, other than in relation to “the race card”, the criticisms really differed little from those directed at State governments, especially conservative ones.\(^{33}\)

The criticism of the Country Liberal Party's treatment of Indigenous Territorians was at odds with its stated positions. Heatley (1998) found “the party's objectives … defensible and, in their way, sensitive and progressive”. Its policy did not embrace self-determination, but it embodied rights to lifestyle choices and essential services, there was in-principle commitment to preservation of Indigenous history and culture and support for their participation in the NT mainstream and management of programs to overcome disadvantage and gain self-sufficiency. As Canberra's control of Indigenous affairs increased, from the 1970s, in Heatley's view, the Country Liberals Party's objectives were, “at least at face value”, reasonably complementary. He also found that debate “on … Aboriginal matters” within the Party lent no substance to accusations that it “(harboured) corporate racist sentiments”.\(^{34}\)

Discriminatory practices of which the NTG was accused ranged widely. They included “deliberate under-resourcing” of services for Aborigines, redirection of Commonwealth funding from addressing Indigenous disadvantage\(^{35}\), diminution of Indigenous interests and prevention of their “effective participation”. It was also alleged to have instituted arrangements that impeded self-management, used “mainstream, paternalistic, assimilationist and confrontationalist approaches”\(^{36}\) and “(perpetuated) … a dependency culture”. The


\(^{34}\) Heatley, 1998. P. 112.

\(^{35}\) Involved NT Department of Education (NTDE) personnel were angered by NT Treasury's deducting “administrative costs” from moneys specifically allocated for AEP initiatives.

\(^{36}\) E.g., allegedly, in the arrangements made for community government.
The Country Liberal Party rejected such charges, citing its record of effort and decrying critics’ disregard for the “socioeconomic and cultural difficulties” that hindered service-delivery to Indigenous clients. Management of land matters also attracted criticism, exacerbating tensions between the NTG, the Indigenous clientele and its advocates. Homeland community development and excision of living areas from pastoral properties were supported in policy and practice by the NTG, but posed particular challenges for service provision. As Heatley (1998) asserted, Indigenous affairs in the NT were “significant in partisan dispute” and would continue to be so in the foreseeable future.

**Government and Education in the Northern Territory from 1973.**

Amendment of the *Northern Territory (Administration) Act* in 1976 enabled transfer of executive responsibility from the Commonwealth to the NT. A schedule for the transfer of functions from Canberra to Darwin was agreed, and, from the 1977 Legislative Assembly election, its operation evolved further towards responsible government. The Country Liberal Party, having won twelve seats, retained its majority, but Labor had won six and formed an Opposition. The education portfolio was allocated to J.M. Robertson (Gillen), shadowed by R.L. (Bob) Collins (Arnhem). Robertson and Collins bore their education responsibilities through the establishment of the NT education system. Robertson served as Minister to late 1982 and Collins as Shadow Minister until he retired from the Legislative Assembly, mid-1986.

Changes in NT education from 1973 were extensive. The most significant for formal education for Indigenes were amalgamation of the urban and Welfare school systems, the inception of the Commonwealth Teaching Service to employ teachers and school-based curriculum development. They were profound and disruptive measures, predominantly administrative but laden with liberal philosophic overtones. They did not represent educational redirection *per se*, and for the most part schools continued to function as before, if with less direction. Urban schools continued as they had under SA supervision but with greater autonomy and democratic practice, and those in Indigenous communities continued as they had evolved in implementing Watts/ Gallacher measures, but also with

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41 Cameron. Pp. 74–75.
more autonomy and democratic practice. With two exceptions, little was seen in public education of Whitlam's 1973 pledge to bring “enlightened administration” to the NT and to make it “a showcase”\(^{42}\).

One exception was the 1973 introduction of bilingual education for Indigenous children, at Whitlam's behest to honour a pre-election undertaking. It overturned a decision made by Watts and Gallacher but did not address the obstacles they had foreseen. The other exception, a Fraser Coalition Government initiative, was a measure to consult on education policy-development in the NT: in 1977 the Further Education Council, comprising Executive Member for Education, Marshall Perron, and Director of the NT Division of the Department of Education, James Eedle, consulted on post-school education and training needs and prospects across the NT, reporting to Minister for Education John Carrick. The following year, the Education Advisory Group was established, to advise on legislation for the NT's administration of education on its transfer to Darwin. Post-Self-Government, the Advisory Group was replaced by statutory bodies, the Education Advisory Council and the Technical and Further Education Advisory Council. They were charged to advise, respectively, on public provision of school and post-school education services.\(^{43}\)

The Letts Executive's negotiation of constitutional advance with the Commonwealth, 1976–77, was fraught with tension, frustrating and disillusioning the NT participants. Difficulties were exacerbated by “extremely strained” relations arising from the Majority Party's displeasure over the Commonwealth's NT Aboriginal land rights legislation and perception of exclusion of NT interests from the process. Other issues were the "Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act", which enabled incorporation and regulation of Aboriginal organisations, and Canberra's retention and exercise of authority on uranium, funding for the NT and financial processes. On land rights, Aboriginal bodies and uranium mining, the Commonwealth was perceived as acting on “state-type” matters more appropriately devolved to the NT. Finance endured as the “traditional staple of dispute”.\(^{44}\)

After extensive negotiation, Cabinet decided, in July 1977, on a schedule for the transfer of functions. Those transferred on 1 January 1978 included Attorney-General functions and the Apprenticeship Board. The second transfer, on 1 July 1978 with creation of the NT

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Government, was the major one. Education and health services were excluded, apparently due to resistance by their respective executives, and scheduled for transfer on 1 July 1979.\textsuperscript{45}

Agreement on most financial arrangements, eventually stated in a Memorandum of Understanding between the NT and the Commonwealth, was reached in 1978. The NT's “‘special disabilities and particular circumstances’” had been itemised for the negotiation with Commonwealth ministers:

- the dispersal, transience and the composition of the population; the problems of distance and isolation; the extremes of climate; the lack of basic infrastructure; the provision of certain above-average services and its effect on forward commitment of resources; the denial of revenue from mineral resources; and the urgent need to provide services to remote Aboriginal communities.

The NT's negotiators argued that the conditions were “unique to the Territory and (rendered) fallacious any direct conclusions drawn from financial comparisons, with the States, on a per capita basis”. They urged that funding should “compensate … adequately” for the prevailing factors, that where services compared more than favourably with provisions in the States, “they should be maintained”, and where they were sub-standard, “they should be brought up to standard in a reasonable period”.\textsuperscript{46} Commonwealth resourcing of the NT at Self-Government and in the next few years suggests that the NT negotiators conveyed the exceptional conditions and needs well.

In the transitional 1978–79 fiscal year, arrangements to fund operations were generally similar to those already in place, to maintain services at existing standards. The NT was to raise “a reasonable proportion” of the revenue required and there would be no Grants Commission assessment of revenue-generation capacity or expenditure. In 1979–80, a “state-type model” of funding was to be introduced, to obtain thereafter. Recurrent funding was to have four elements: the principal one, “general revenue assistance”, to vary from year to year with national personal income tax revenue and the NT's population; specific-purpose grants “for education, health, agriculture, Aboriginal advancement, roads, local government and welfare”; “an additional assistance grant”, fixed for the first three years and then to diminish; and “special assistance” based on Grants Commission advice. Capital funding was to have three strands, “general purpose assistance, specific purpose

\textsuperscript{46} Heatley, 1990. P. 94.
assistance and semi-government borrowings”. Some aspects, most to prove contentious, including essential services in Aboriginal communities, were not resolved until June, and others followed later.47 The NT negotiators were frustrated at their failure to “secure legislative protection” for the Memorandum of Understanding that was compiled. As it eventuated, most arrangements for the transfer of functions were agreed, but the fiscal ones lacked precise figures, so the NT entered Self-Government largely on trust.48

The Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act (1978) granted Self-Government. The Majority Party, returned in 1977, was led by P.A.E. Everingham and an embryo Cabinet had been established. With Self-Government on 1 July 1978, several “state-type powers” were still missing. Education and health were due to transfer in 1979. The Supreme Court and “residual services” for Aboriginal communities were sought but had not been negotiated, and control over Aboriginal land rights, uranium mining and major national parks was also desired but were not to be devolved.49 Each area in which “control” was sought would remain contentious.

Heatley credited the relatively smooth transition to Self-Government and the success it generally enjoyed during its early years largely to the Commonwealth. Its “budgetary liberality” was significant, and public perception of success with Self-Government was manifest in the Everingham Government's re-election in 1980. By then, the NT Department of Health had come into being, from 1 January 1979, and the NTDE followed on 1 July. Whereas the former had proven a relatively “harmonious process”, however, the latter was “much more complex and contentious”. Heatley attributed the difficulty to the Department of Education's very recent inception, in 1973, explaining executive resistance to change. The Commonwealth Department of Health, in contrast, had had four decades of operational experience in the NT.50

Upheaval in NT public education in the 1970s had political and administrative dimensions. Amalgamation of the systems and inception of the Commonwealth Teaching Service in 1973 were major and disruptive moves, expanding post-school training had potential for economic development, implementation of Watts/Gallacher recommendations for Indigenous Territorians was still in train and the new bilingual education program was intended to discriminate positively. The NT Teachers' Federation and the Council of Government Schools Organisations, perceived as the parents' body, also came into being and exerted

47 E.g., superannuation provisions for public servants were not finalised until the mid-1980s.
48 Heatley, 1990. Pp. 96–98. As Heatley observed, legislation is readily amended or repealed.
political influence. Each development was still settling down to some degree at Self-Government.

The Department of Education, established in 1973 with a Federal policy function and as a service provider, was a McMahon Coalition initiative culminating under Labor.\textsuperscript{51} Urban schools in the NT, hitherto following SA curriculum and supervised from Adelaide, and Welfare Education operations in Indigenous communities were combined to form the NT Division of the Department of Education.\textsuperscript{52} Hedley Beare was appointed its first Director, accountable to Canberra. Gallacher became Assistant Director, Special Projects, G. A. Hodgson was appointed Assistant Director, Field Operations (Schools), and I. Whelan, Assistant Director, Curriculum and Research.\textsuperscript{53} Formal education provisions in Indigenous communities ceased to be distinguished officially from those in urban centres: the single all-embracing NT education system, mooted over a decade earlier, had been realised. Distinction persisted in practice, however, with schools labelled either “Aboriginal or urban”.\textsuperscript{54}

The 1973 inception of the Commonwealth Teaching Service was another Coalition initiative implemented by Labor.\textsuperscript{55} The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) had been engaged to design a service to employ teachers for schools in Australia’s Territories. The Neal-Radford Report\textsuperscript{56} resulted and was adopted. As well as proposing the Commonwealth Teaching Service, it advocated decentralisation of “decision-making, with community and teacher participation and ‘greater integration between (education) and community life’ in education management … fundamental”. Beare embraced the whole package for the NT. The schemes may have been conceived primarily with suburban Australian ACT school communities in mind, but they applied to Indigenous communities in the NT as to any other setting. The transition was challenging, unsettling especially for some former Welfare personnel: they were obliged to move instantly from relative rigour, security and support in a small, discrete, focussed system to an over-arching one and to the Commonwealth Teaching Service. The new system and the Service both extolled teachers'
professionalism, individual schools' autonomy, parents' rights, teacher/parent partnerships in education-related decision-making and egalitarianism generally, with peer assessment replacing inspection. Some were daunted.\textsuperscript{57}

Beare also advocated school-based curriculum development. He thereby tacitly freed all schools from SA curriculum and Indigenous community schools from curriculum and support materials developed for their use. School staffs and individual teachers were implicitly licensed to “do their own thing”. In provisions for Aborigines, Watts/ Gallacher directions still applied but could not be enforced. Shimpo was blunt in judging Beare's directions and their impact in the Indigenous context:

The deliberate emphasis on discontinuity of major education policies in 1973, meant that the then accumulated efforts and materials were simply disregarded. Certainly, the new policies, including self-management, opened new horizons for the future of Aborigines, but the policy changes also caused unnecessary confusion among (them). I would say the abolition of prescribed curricula is one of the sources of … confusion.

He advocated “rigid prescribed curriculum” for English literacy and numeracy in Aboriginal schools.\textsuperscript{58}

In Beare's conception, the system was to operate functionally, not hierarchically, with “horizontal liaison”. Personnel in the three professional Branches were to be “in constant dynamic interaction (with schools) over educational matters”.\textsuperscript{59} For former Welfare personnel, especially those in senior field rôles,\textsuperscript{60} the changes effectively dismantled an entity in which they had invested much and of which they were proud. Some younger teachers were exhilarated, but morale generally declined, field staff feeling unsupported, their work not appreciated and their situations not understood by management in the new system, despite the presence of “old hands”.

The Commonwealth Schools Commission, led by Ken McKinnon, was introduced in 1973, to realise Labor's pledge to raise Commonwealth funding for education. It was to end debate on state aid by supplementing schools, private as well as public, in accordance

\textsuperscript{57} Cameron. P. 54.  
\textsuperscript{58} Shimpo. Pp. 164–65.  
\textsuperscript{59} Nielson. P. 11.  
\textsuperscript{60} Former Welfare Education Inspectors, in most instances, were redesignated Principal Education Advisers and given regional administration functions in relation to both urban and bush schools, advisory only, but expected to act with authority when contention arose.
with their needs. It sought to provide ordered and stable support based on each school's resources, to raise all to a common resource standard, with additional support where disadvantage was identified. New schools' establishment was also to be supported. All but the wealthiest schools were to be supplemented, and public finance for the private sector was introduced. The Coalition Government, elected in 1975, retained the equity-focussed elements of Commission supplementation.

The Schools Commission wanted all schools to have “the free initiative, variation and responsiveness” of private schools, and advocated “participation, inclusiveness and devolution” for social well-being. Putting the principle into practice, it funded schools to promote their adjustment to their communities, tangibly devolving fiscal responsibility to the local level with involvement in decision-making and access to resources. The outcomes sought included equity in opportunity to acquire skills, such as those of “self-management and individual responsibility” for competent citizenship. An idea of equity, “the right to individual competence … as the means to personal empowerment”, to be achieved through access to education, crystallised in the official frame. The Commission appeared as keen to manipulate education for social reform as it was to reform educational provisions and outcomes.

Shirley Randall (1980) reviewed the Schools Commission's functions. In addressing disadvantage, particular matters it took into account included

the needs of disadvantaged schools and of those students in all schools who are disadvantaged in their pursuit of educational success for reasons connected with their social, economic, ethnic, geographic, cultural or lingual background.

The specific purpose schemes through which the Commission sought to have such disadvantage addressed were the Disadvantaged Schools, the Special Education, the Migrant

62 Marginson. Pp. 209–11. Marginson found that discrimination increasingly favoured private schools, including the wealthiest, such that under Fraser “funding for private schools (became) the fastest single area of growth in the whole … budget”.
63 In 1982, John Steinle, then SA Director-General of Education, acknowledged the Schools Commission's generation of documents addressing significant issues in education critically and objectively, following up with action, and observed that it had consequently “emerged as a very powerful force in influencing the policies of both state and federal governments”. (“The Systems and Administration in Policy Making”, in R. F. Broadbent [ed], *Education Policy Making in Australia*. Carlton, Victoria: The Australian College of Education. P. 13.)
and Multicultural Education and the Special Projects Programs. Its general purpose Programs, General Recurrent Grants and Capital Grants, were to provide funding for all school-age children, including the disadvantaged.65

ACER research (1995) found the level of disadvantage affecting education in the NT, compared with the States, exceptional. On applicable formulae, over 80 % of students qualified for Disadvantaged Schools funding, the scenario exacerbated by the facts that over 40 % were “geographically isolated”, with access disadvantage, and over 33·3 % were Aboriginal, most qualifying for support from the English as a Second Language element of the relevant Program as well as other sources.66 Nongovernment schools had access to the Commission's schemes and resources from the outset, but public schools did not until they were administered by the NTG.

Policy on Indigenous Territorians' Formal Education.

Self-Government for the NT and devolution of the education function, mid-1979, gave the NTG responsibility for policy and services and opportunity to meet the education-related needs of Territorians and the NT economy. Early steps included development of a common curriculum for schools, to reduce the adverse effects of mobility around the NT and interstate, and establishment of the NT Teaching Service, justified as enabling recruitment of teachers best suited to NT schools. In reality, in common with other functions, the measures taken were largely to ensure that the NTG could control public education. A comprehensive statement of policy for education in the NT, its first, was a priority.67

The policy statement, NORTHERN TERRITORY SCHOOLS – Direction for the Eighties, was promulgated in 1983. Perron, Robertson's successor as Minister for Education, hailed it as “the culmination of an extensive consultative venture”. He stressed the NTG's receptivity to public input, stating that over a two-year period of “planning and trial” some original ideas had survived intact, some had been modified and others had been discarded.68 It had been an innovative process. On passage of the Education Act (1979), a draft Green Paper proposing a policy framework for NT education had been compiled and

circulated. Comments were invited from “a wide variety of community and professional interest groups”, responses contributed to compilation of the “Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education in the Northern Territory”. It was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in 1981, and further comment was sought. Eighty submissions resulted, a public forum was conducted in Darwin, and a committee representative of education and community interests drafted a policy statement based on the Green Paper and the responses. It was a protracted exercise, but commitment to public consultation and heed of input were manifest.

Principles underlying the NTG's policy on education were clear in the statement's title, Direction for the Eighties. It was to be used “primarily by the clients of the education system, parents, students and the wider community”, and for reference by system officials and in schools, directing specific policies, planning, curriculum development and implementation, allocation of resources, “and most importantly … what goes on in classrooms”. Essentially, it announced that the NTG was in charge and that the teaching/learning process was its priority in education. It also told the public the service it should expect and the provider the service it was to deliver.

The NTG was committed to access for all Territorians to education services with the same coverage as those in other jurisdictions and of the same quality. Relevant demographic and geographic characteristics that distinguished the NT from the rest of the nation were acknowledged. Its “developing country” features, including “illiteracy among a significant proportion of the population”, meant that “education had a more crucial developmental role to play”. Relatively rapid population growth, mobility and ethnic diversity posed particular challenges. English was not the mother tongue of significant numbers of students (e.g. some 17 % in urban centres), so Teaching English as a Second Language featured prominently.

Over half the schools were in predominantly Aboriginal communities. Many were remote small schools, and, due to “extreme isolation and the outstation movement”, it was estimated that 1 100 Aboriginal children were not enrolled anywhere. Isolation was rated a major disadvantage, limiting opportunity for Aboriginal children “to acquire non-Aboriginal social skills … necessary for success in urban life” and for their teachers' professional support and development. The very limited opportunities for employment in such locations were to be offset with “local employment-creating” programs, with Aboriginal communities encouraged

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70 I responded individually and was aware of others involved, members of responding bodies, members of the committee and Darwin-based NTDE personnel supporting the process.
to tender for and perform local jobs. Accordingly, secondary education was to prepare students for employment locally, as well as for further study and employment in the larger centres. Existing post-school education and transition-to-work courses were to obviate disadvantage occasioned by “conditions and situations” prevailing in the NT.72

During the policy's development, the NTG planned, and in some instances executed, several measures, amending the legislation as necessary, with “active encouragement … of community involvement in educational planning and administration”. The measures included curriculum and certification, post-school education, “Aboriginal Education”, education support centres, funding for NTG schools, installing facilities and public involvement.73 The system planned strategies to enhance Indigenous students' opportunities in formal education. It devised those to be taken in the primary and secondary contexts in consultation with Feppi74, the NT's Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), whose rôle was to advise the Minister on policy on education for Indigenous Territorians. Bilingual education was expanded to twelve Aboriginal languages, with promising outcomes indicated in accrediting them. Teaching English as a Second Language materials were developed for use in primary schools, and “School of the Bush” materials, akin to correspondence schooling, were being prepared as a foundation for teaching children at homeland centres.75 Teacher training provisions, instituted at Batchelor College and the Darwin Community College, led to an Associate Diploma in Teaching (Aboriginal schools) at Batchelor and its conversion to a diploma at the Community College, the latter with “an enclave system with counsellors and tutors to give necessary educational and social support”.76 The NT now also had access to the full range of the Schools Commission's Programs to address priority needs.77

Assumptions underlying the objectives and goals determined for NT schools applied to everyone. The dimensions of identity, communication, participation, tolerance, equity and conservation of heritage were implicitly deemed particularly pertinent to Aborigines, as were the principles of “educational opportunities for all Territorians” and meeting “special needs

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74 “Feppi” was often taken to be an acronym, its derivation not queried. It is an Indigenous term meaning “rock or foundation”, first mistakenly thought to be of Murrinhpatha origin, (NTDE, 1984. “Information Statement No. 6: Education for Aborigines: Strategies for Improving the Academic Performance of Aboriginal Students in Primary and Secondary Education”. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG. P. 1.); its actual source, the Nganmarriyanga tongue, was acknowledged later (e.g. NTDE, 1999. *Learning Lessons*. P. 169.).
75 The term “outstation” tended to be synonymous with “homeland centre”, and hence interchangeable in use, generally signifying a small, tribally homogeneous, community established by a group moving from a larger settlement, or settlements, to live in its traditional country.
77 NTDE. *Direction for the Eighties*. P. 10.
arising from isolation and language barriers” in the “developmental role” education was intended to play.\textsuperscript{78} The NTG identified twelve “Areas of Priority Concern” in education, eleven of which were as applicable to Aborigines as they were to all others, and the other focussed specifically on “Students of Aboriginal Descent”. Improvement of attendance, a particular concern, was to involve school and community councils. The broad objective read,

While recognising the differing backgrounds and needs of Aboriginal students, school programs shall create the conditions necessary for students to significantly improve their academic performance so that they may be able to take advantage of training courses leading to skilled occupations and to higher educational qualifications.\textsuperscript{79}

Schools' accountability to parents, to their communities and to the NT community was deemed important to Aborigines, and the NTG was determined to increase the influence of parents and community in schools' programs and local education policy. Uniformity in curriculum within the NT, its compatibility with other systems, and especial focus on language and communication were also thought to signify.\textsuperscript{80}

“Improving the Academic Performance of Aboriginal Students at Primary and Secondary (Levels)” specified strategies to realise the goal. Welfare had instituted provisions for Aborigines, but programs were to be scrutinised to ensure effective use of resources, adjusting to meet “new and developing needs” as they emerged. To that end, with Feppi's participation, the statement directed that “appropriate curriculum materials” be developed, with support services, and Aboriginal teacher-training was emphasised. To meet demand for “skilled local” workers in communities,

(t)he Government, schools, and communities (were obliged to) take steps to:

- implement the compulsory education provisions of the \textit{Education Act},
- identify and support those students with greater potential at an early stage of schooling and thereafter.\textsuperscript{81}

In order to limit the adverse impact of transience on Aboriginal students' education,

\textsuperscript{79} NTDE. \textit{Direction for the Eighties}. Pp. 22–23.
\textsuperscript{80} NTDE. \textit{Direction for the Eighties}. Pp. 17–18, 25, 26–27.
\textsuperscript{81} NTDE. \textit{Direction for the Eighties}. Pp. 54–55.
(t)he Government (intended) to give priority to the development of a single set of curricula selected or prepared from the recommended curricula of all schools together with suitable recommended teaching methods and activities for use in schools and in the professional support and development of beginning teachers, “both Aboriginal and European”. “(S)tructured teaching and learning approaches” were required.\(^8^2\) It was also stressed that teachers in Aboriginal schools were primarily responsible to “ensure competence in basic skills”, “(teaching) children effectively” and “(training) and (team-teaching) with Aboriginal staff as part of a formal on-going in-service program”. In that context,

(a) policy of employing fewer but appropriately trained European teachers (was to be) progressively adopted, with Aboriginal Education being regarded as their specialist field.

A transition period was envisaged, as qualified Aborigines, appropriately supported, replaced Europeans and increasingly accepted responsible rôles. In the meantime, non-Aborigines were to be trained in Teaching English as a Second Language, skilled in teaching numeracy and to give priority to educating parents about schooling. They were to familiarise themselves with “with relevant aspects of Aboriginal culture, including language and … learning styles”.\(^8^3\) The NTG intended that Aborigines would take charge of their own formal education and that, in the process, non-Aborigines would ensure the competent performance of Aboriginal teachers and monitor students' English literacy and numeracy.

The NTG registered with alarm that young Aborigines commonly left school without having acquired functional literacy and numeracy. Reviewing schools' provisions with Feppi, the NTDE considered both bilingual and English as a Second Language approaches, intensive development of literacy and numeracy skills and how to give “motivated students” opportunities to make up for schooling missed. Concern about poor academic outcomes from post-primary programs was expressed. The deficiency was to be addressed, in consultation with Feppi, through

- (upgrading) the quality of post-primary education in all Aboriginal communities;
- (establishing) trial secondary programs in some larger centres;

\(^8^2\) NTDE. Direction for the Eighties. P.55.
• (upgrading) the entry standards and the level of and quality of programs provided at Yirara and Kormilda Colleges.

The NTG recognised a need to retain post-primary provisions at residential schools for secondary-aged students whose communities had no such programs, in addition to promoting regular secondary education for students from bush communities.\textsuperscript{84} Direction for the Eighties addressed the schooling needs of Aboriginal children in the contexts of other objectives as well. It was conceded that it would take some time for curriculum uniformity in schools and its compatibility with other systems to be realised in Aboriginal schools. Languages other than English were to include Aboriginal languages, core and recommended curricula in English/Language and Mathematics had been introduced in Aboriginal schools in 1982, the remaining key core areas were to follow over 1983–84 and vocational courses were to be accessible for secondary-aged students in bush communities. In urban schools, Teaching English as a Second Language for migrant children was to be extended to Aboriginal children whose first language was not English.\textsuperscript{85}

That needs of students in Aboriginal schools were not being met was acknowledged. A balance of experienced and qualified staff comparable with that in urban schools was sought, with some incentives for teachers to work in bush schools and to improve their retention, and regionalisation of administration and improvement of services to schools were expected to promote stability. One goal was to

\[(i)\text{increase the number of Aboriginal teachers qualified with either a Diploma of Teaching or an Associate Diploma in Teaching (Aboriginal Schools) to 100 by 1990.}\]

The NTG wanted the Territory to become “(self-sufficient) in pre-service teacher training” in the main teaching areas in the same time.\textsuperscript{86} The momentum growing at Batchelor and the Community College made these goals realistic.

The Education Act required the Minister to “establish and maintain education services in the Territory”.\textsuperscript{87} Accordingly, the NTDE resourced the regular operations of its schools and systemic support services, in the main on formulae-based allocation of funds and personnel. The NTG, with the Commonwealth, made some supplementary provisions. “School fees”

\textsuperscript{84}NTDE. Direction for the Eighties. Pp. 56–57.  
\textsuperscript{86}NTDE. Direction for the Eighties. Pp. 70–72.  
\textsuperscript{87}NTG, 1985. Northern Territory of Australian Education Act. Darwin, NT. NTG. P. 3: Part II, 6 (2). The legislation had been amended steadily from its initial passage.
were not enforceable, but parents were urged to contribute towards schools' provision of “educational ‘extras’”. The Advisory Council was asked to investigate schools' resourcing, to identify essential and non-essential provisions. The NTG would fund mission schools on the same basis as its own as they were located in communities not served by the public system.88

The Act defined the positions of the NTG and parents in children's education.

The Minister may take all measures which, in his opinion, are necessary or desirable

a. to assist parents of children … in fulfilling their responsibility to educate their children according to the individual needs and abilities of those children;

b. to make education services, provided by him, available to all (Territorians); and

c. to assist all people of the Territory with their own education.89

Direction for the Eighties elaborated parents' responsibilities. Tacitly, it urged them to abandon the attitude that they could “leave it to the experts” and to involve themselves through membership of school councils. Specific responsibilities for “all parents” included support for their children's learning, regular attendance, participation in activities and maintenance of discipline, disclosing information potentially relevant to children's school performance and contributing through parent bodies, school councils in particular.90 In essence, the Minister was obliged to make appropriate education services available and accessible, and parents were responsible to have their children educated and to support schools' efforts. Parents thus had a significant share of the responsibility for outcomes achieved.

Unsatisfactory achievement by Aboriginal children had long been attributed to poor attendance, a parental responsibility. Two decades later, little, if any, improvement was evident. Parents of poor attenders were legally guilty of failure to ensure their children's sustained and regular attendance, and hence of neglecting their education. It would have been simplistic to try to address the issue with the law, and likely to achieve only negative results, including hostility between providers and clients; rather, reasons for poor attendance

89 NTG Education Act. P. 3: Part II, 6(1).
needed examination.\footnote{If it were found that the children did not go to school because the services provided were inappropriate or not readily accessible, either actually or as perceived, the NTG would have been guilty of failure to fulfil its responsibility under the Act. That would not have absolved parents of their obligations for their children’s schooling, but would explain their tacitly condoning non-attendance. Children’s lack of motivation to attend warranted exploration. Dysfunction in communities and families was certainly a factor. Unsatisfactory levels of attendance prevailed virtually throughout the NT, in urban, rural and remote settings, but dysfunction, although wide-spread, was not universal (nor was it restricted to Aborigines).} The policy did not address the reality of poor attendance. The system may have been well-advised to explore practice and experience with indigenous minorities in other countries colonised from Europe, potentially to inform approaches and practices with Indigenous Territorians.\footnote{Practice and experience in a sample of such countries will be considered in the next chapter.}

The NT’s development of policy on schooling, both generally and in relation to its Indigenous constituents, was remarkable. The hierarchical activity intended in implementation of the policy, in giving direction and requiring accountability, implied regulation and discipline hitherto unseen in public education in the NT. The lateral activity involved in public consultation and negotiation, however, also unprecedented, was comprehensive, thorough, genuine and tangibly effective, and was to become integral to the NTDE’s performance of its \textit{rôle}. Theoretically and in practice, in initial policy-formulation and subsequently, activity in the vertical and horizontal planes was thus able to be equitably balanced.

As the policy was developing, initiatives to engage community involvement were progressing. The \textit{Education Act} had established the Education Advisory Council. Its membership comprised representation of the Teachers Federation, the Council of Government Schools Organisations, the migrant community, Feppi, trade unions, employer organisations, post-school institutions, non-government providers, students, the NT Public Service and the community beyond Darwin. It was required to report annually to the Legislative Assembly.\footnote{NTG. \textit{Education Act}. Pp. 14–16: Part III, Division 1, 11–14.}

The \textit{Act} also created the Technical and Further Education Advisory Council. Its functions, in the post-school sector, were similar to those of the Education Advisory Council in the schools context, but “training of Aboriginals for employment” was specified. Membership was also representative, if more targeted, including the Council of each post-school institution, employer organisations and trade unions, and the Director of the Darwin Institute of Technology was a member \textit{ex officio}. Notably, no schools sector, staff organisation or \textit{clientèle} representation was included; oddly, given the priority accorded training for
Aborigines, Feppi was also excluded. Reporting requirements were the same as those for the Education Advisory Council.\(^{94}\)

Management of curriculum, assessment and research epitomised public consultation and community involvement. The NT Board of Studies was established under the *Act*, replacing the interim Curriculum Advisory Committee. It was responsible to the Minister, largely advisory, but differed from the two advisory councils in that it also had discrete powers: as well as advising the Secretary on curriculum-related matters for pre-school and the compulsory schooling range and arrangements for senior secondary studies, it was authorised to accredit senior secondary courses, to assess and certify across the secondary range, to establish, co-ordinate and oversee subject area committees, to liaise with relevant bodies and to publicise itself. Membership comprised the divisional head of curriculum, research and assessment, several secretarial nominees and representation from professional staff organisations, post-school institution Councils, Feppi and the Council of Government Schools Organisations.\(^{95}\) The Board membership, and that of each of its subordinate committees, was similar to those of the advisory councils in seeking balanced representation of official, expert professional, relevant interest, community and field staff. It was also to report to the Legislative Assembly annually.

The Board of Studies depended for its effectiveness upon the efficiency of layers of committees under its auspices and the quality of their input. The committees fed the Board curriculum-related advice, “(reflecting) the distilled wisdom of professional and community views”. As the system evolved, recommendations were filtered through standing committees vetting accreditation, assessment and certification, preschool-to-Year 10 curriculum, primary assessment and Year 10 assessment matters, and an Aboriginal Education Standing Committee was introduced in 1991. The Board appointed the standing committees, with at least two Board members on each and other members selected for their expertise and/ or positions held with relevant interests. Each standing committee was chaired by a Board member, had about six other members and was supported by an executive officer.\(^{96}\) Non-NTDE personnel with relevant expertise and/or who could speak for directly related interests could be members, but most tended to be NTDE specialists in the particular fields.

The groundwork, in consulting, researching and collating material, deliberating and formulating recommendations, was carried out by subject area committees and advisory

\(^{95}\) NTG. *Education Act*. Pp. 7–14: Part IIA, 10A-T.
committees. There were twelve subject area committees, one for each curriculum discipline area (e.g. The Arts, Business Education, English, Science) and three advisory committees, respectively for the wider-ranging Early Childhood Education, Gifted Children's Program and Special Education. The committees prepared materials that appropriate standing committees then considered prior to their submission for Board scrutiny. Membership of each committee was to maximise representation of all levels of schooling, locations across the NT and non-government as well as public institutions, with “gender inclusivity and Aboriginal and multicultural perspectives, and interests of professional associations, parent organizations, employer groups and employee organizations”.97 The operation of the committees proved most effective in promoting communication, partnership, mutual awareness and appreciation between system-focussed personnel, teachers, community and parent representatives and people from other fields of activity. Increased understanding of curriculum, which the process promoted as well, was also valuable.98

Sub-subject area committees were at the base of the structure. Each subject area committee could create sub-subject area committees to perform tasks in individual aspects of its discipline (e.g. Languages Subject Area Committee's Indonesian and Greek Sub-Subject Area Committees, The Arts Subject Area Committee's Music and Art Sub-Subject Area Committees). They were smaller, specifically-focussed and less structured than the other committees, with members co-opted for their expertise or ability to make “special contributions” to prepare specialised materials for their respective subject area committees.99 External membership was neither required nor excluded (e.g. an auto-electrician could have been co-opted to an Automotive Studies Sub-Subject Area Committee of the Technical Studies Subject Area Committee).

Figure 6.1 illustrates the Board of Studies structure and operation. At the apex, the Minister was ultimately accountable and the chief executive officer was charged with leading and managing policy implementation in accordance with the NTG's intentions, under the Minister's direction. The hierarchy broadened below the Secretary, dividing into two distinct parallel but inter-related operational structures: the one represented on the right of the diagram, the Board, embodied curriculum-related decision-making, direction-setting and developmental work; that represented on the left implemented decisions, provided specialist and logistic support and conducted research for the Board's operations and consolidated its

98 At any point, subject area committee members totalled about 150, all, other than the executive officers, appointed for three-year terms.
developmental work; and there were formal links at the ministerial and senior executive levels. Both were hierarchical in structure and activity. High levels of client, community, external expertise and systemic and non-systemic staff involvement, however, in the Board's operation, in the Board itself and in its network of committees, ensured substantial lateral, consultative, activity. In the areas in which the Board had executive authority, it generated vertical, hierarchical, activity of its own.

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100 Figure 6.1 is similar to diagrammatic representation of the Board in “Board of Studies 1991 Annual Report”, P. 7, with some minor modifications, primarily to highlight community and client participation in the process. Senior secondary studies courses in the NT were linked to the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.
FIGURE 6.1 ARRANGEMENTS FOR CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY EDUCATION SYSTEM
The Board structure and operation exemplified the vertical and horizontal dimensions of activity in a public agency, able to be represented on the bi-axial framework. It is likely that the its combined hierarchical and consultative activity would have been plotted in the C sector of the bi-axial graph, indicating even balance. Further, input sought in the process included public perspectives and expectations, practitioners' knowledge, the ideas of participants, clients included, both with non-education backgrounds and with experience of other systems. The system catered for appropriate involvement of appropriate interests in the consultative process.

Aboriginal inclusion was prominent. Feppi representation on the Board was legally required, the Aboriginal Education Standing Committee was introduced, at least half of its membership Indigenous, and provision for “Aboriginal perspective” was required in the membership of each subject area and advisory committee. Consultative involvement of the Indigenous clientèle in determining the substance of children's school education, monitoring the effectiveness of its delivery and examining associated issues was therefore catered for and embedded in the process. The quality and impact of that involvement, however, could not be assured by administrative measures alone, their deriving from a Western-based civic culture.

School councils offered Indigenous parents and communities direct influence in their children's school education. Councils in education communities had long been urged in Commonwealth-administered Territories, from the Neale-Radford Report. By the mid-1980s, they were enshrined in NT policy, legally sanctioned, authorised “to assume quite extensive powers and responsibilities” and eligible for incorporation, but not mandatory. They were envisaged as devices to ensure community participation in education at the local level, partnerships between teachers and parents, with parent representation eventually predominant. Each was to generate “educational programs which best (met) the needs of the local community” and to ensure that “the school (serviced) the community to the greatest possible extent”. It was charged with providing advice to the local school head and to the education system through the Secretary. It was conceived by the NTG primarily, however, for education-focussed community-influenced decision-making locally.

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101 In 1973, Geoff Hodgson established the first school council at the (then) Casuarina High School and Frank Brennan established the first all-Aboriginal school council at Warrabri School. I established the next school council at Tennant Creek Area School in 1974. For incorporation, school councils then had to comply with relevant provisions of the Incorporated Bodies Act.


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Indigenous education communities were less inclined to establish school councils than were the predominantly non-Indigenous ones. Reasons for the pattern varied: in bush settings, Indigenous communities were accustomed to government-provision of services with clients' involvement as recipients only, they were hesitant to accept the commitment and responsibility entailed and/or the idea had not been explained clearly. As well, some non-Indigenous head teachers lacked confidence in their communities' capacity to discharge such an undertaking and/or resisted relinquishing any authority. Conversely, in urban settings, parents and community interests, including activists and aspiring politicians, were commonly keen to influence their schools' offerings and operations, primarily to support their own children, but also, variously, to monitor their schools' operations and improve their services, exercise their values, advance their own interests or out of interest and commitment to the local community. Hence, in the 1980s, school councils were more common and more active in the urban centres than in Indigenous communities.

During the 1990s, the frequency of school and community education centre councils in Indigenous communities increased, largely due to promulgation of two new policy declarations. First, there was the NTDE's Towards the 90s (1988), which built on Direction for the Eighties: school councils were not required, but community contribution to mandatory “school improvement plans” and proposed devolution of functions, with finance for their performance, coupled with the existing quinquennial “school appraisal”, made it necessary for each school community to have an appropriately constituted body in order to participate. The Commonwealth's AEP (1989) followed: the first of its “four main purposes” was to involve Indigenes in education-related decision-making. Inter alia, it required formal facility to enable “Aboriginal parents and community members (to participate) in decisions regarding the planning, delivery and evaluation of … education services for their children”. The NTG was committed to the AEP, so there were pressing reasons to have school councils. Indigenous communities were thus virtually obliged to establish school councils, but they required encouragement and support to do so. Differing models evolved and varying degrees of effectiveness were realised.

Feppi featured in the contexts of policy-development, the Education Advisory Council and the Board of Studies. The Commonwealth and Indigenous Territorians had persuaded the

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105 I was involved in promoting school councils until 1994. My Master of Arts thesis (1996), pp. 147–80, recorded two case studies of the implementation of the NTDE's policy of Indigenous community schools' self-management through functions devolved to school councils.
NTG, in 1978, to establish an AECG such as those in the States and the ACT. Feppi was to advise on policy, programs and issues in education for the Indigenous *clientèle*. It comprised fifteen Aboriginal persons, one each from geographic areas which approximated particular “language and tribal (group)” areas. Each member was to act as the local contact and conduit “for Aboriginal opinion on education policy and programs”, to inform Feppi and to feed back to the communities. The NTDE acknowledged Feppi as a partner in policy on education for Indigenous Territorians, declared in *Direction for the Eighties* and elaborated in “Information Statement No. 6” (1984), with “a shared approach” stressed. The aims were based on Watts/Gallacher directions and “in substantial accord with” those of the National Aboriginal Education Committee.106

Feppi identified its immediate priorities and developed a “12-Point Plan” (1986) which the Minister endorsed. Proposed aims and strategies were mostly consistent with the NTG's stated policy. They had been refined through deliberations, with members' input and views and information gleaned from visits to communities and discussions with the Minister, then Daryl Manzie, and NTDE personnel. In promoting the Plan to community councils and opinion-leaders, Feppi chair Bill Baird was optimistic that its implementation by the NTDE over the next three years would be beneficial for children's schooling and adults' training. He stressed,

> (w)e as parents have a commitment to do our part by making sure our children go to school every day, so as to benefit from the new proposals that Feppi has put together.

His covering letter reflected Feppi's acceptance of responsibility for education for Aborigines and expectation that Aborigines generally would respond similarly.107

The NT education system consolidated and evolved. As oversights and emergent needs were detected, initiatives taken and impacts sustained from extraneous developments, legislation was amended, policy was up-dated and the actions required were duly notified.108 The entity initially established, however, although evolving steadily, with some substantial adjustments, remained relatively intact until the turn of the century, with the exception that most of its TAFE activity disappeared with the inception of the NT Employment

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108 E.g. from its initial passage to December 1985, sections of the *Education Act* were amended in over 120 instances, embodied in eleven discrete pieces of legislation.
and Training Authority in the mid-1990s. The consultative provisions and requirement of community involvement, as manifest in the Advisory Councils, the Board of Studies and school councils, were retained through all changes. Provision for Indigenous participation in the processes was also retained, although there were some changes, and Feppi was not destined to survive.

TAFE Superintendent Keith Thiele and I, then Regional Superintendent (Barkly), were directed, in 1986, to plan integration of post-Year 7 programs in Aboriginal communities for 1988–90. We addressed lack of linkage between post-primary and adult education programs, proposing integration geared to employment preparation and personal fulfilment, supported by purpose-designed curriculum and taking account of local priorities, resources, opportunities and traditional Indigenous activities and skills. Fulfilment of Feppi’s second and third aims, “maximisation of post-Year-7 education opportunities in communities” and “provision of employment/training for Aborigines”, was thereby attempted. The task included service-revision preparatory to Commonwealth-funded construction of new facilities for post-primary and adult education operations in fourteen of the larger communities.\footnote{NTDE. “Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities”. Sections 2.1-2.2, 4.1-4.3, Chapter 7, 15.2, Appendix 1.}

Planning and implementation were to be managed jointly by the Schools and TAFE Divisions. Thiele and I solicited views on integrating the programs and how this might be accomplished.\footnote{Our initial consultation ranged from within the system, in the Schools, TAFE and Curriculum and Assessment Divisions, Corporate Services, at the residential colleges and the NT Secondary Correspondence School, to the Commissioner of the Teaching Service, the Chair of Feppi, Batchelor College (including Gallacher, Chair of the College Council, and ten third year students), the Department of Community Development, the Commonwealth Departments of Education and Aboriginal Affairs and Directors of the University Planning Authority and the Darwin Institute of Technology. We also gained input from Schools Division, Aboriginal Education and Training Advisory Committee and Teachers Federation meetings.} In our report, we stressed the importance, for the initiative's success, of consulting and communicating throughout implementation. With other senior NTDE personnel, we visited the communities where the initiative was to be trialled in 1988, for preliminary discussion with school and community government staff and community members and to ascertain local resources, including Indigenous technology and traditional practices. Further such discussions were to be held in each other community in the year preceding its inclusion in the project\footnote{NTDE. “Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities”. Sections 3.1-3.3, Sub-Section 5.1.1, Appendix 5.}

The community education concept crystallised. We pointed to Feppi’s Plan and the wide-ranging inequities that existed in reality: community education was to “meet the social
as well as the vocational needs of (young Aboriginal) adults”. It was to embrace general education and training provisions for adolescent and adult students, to include elements for their “personal development or enrichment and the creative use of leisure time”, and to allow flexibility in enrolment and participation (not in attendance!). English literacy, numeracy and communication skills were to be basic to the curriculum and offerings were to be geared to meeting current and future needs of each individual community, supporting its residents’ development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and aspirations in tune with local social and economic priorities.  

The Cameron/Thiele Report, “Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities: A Planning Proposal” (1986), was submitted to the Schools and TAFE Divisions. It introduced the community education concept and proposed “modest preliminary trialling” in 1987, full trialling in eight communities in 1988 and completion of introduction by the end of 1990. Discussion of the findings from the study conducted, with data as appropriate, was presented, with recommendations. A structure, to involve Feppi throughout, to oversight and evaluate implementation locally and at system level was proposed, with Eedle, Gallacher and Baird to form a discrete review panel. We paid particular attention to curriculum, staffing, governance and budgetary matters and urged on-going evaluation from the outset.

Community education centres would offer community education. Courses, service delivery and accreditation would enable students to take different “pathways of progress”: those taking the post-primary option would enter a three-year program leading to a TAFE Certificate; selected secondary-aged students could pursue courses leading to the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate in the distance mode with the Secondary Correspondence School, an alternative to attending a residential transitional school; and TAFE courses, provided primarily under the auspices of the soon-to-open NT Open College of TAFE, would lead, variously, “to trade-training qualifications, tertiary entry, vocational preparation and other self-enrichment”, and would include the “modules of integrated training scheme” being developed for remote area training. In effect, community education would refine and regulate arrangements for secondary-aged and young adult students and trainees set

112 NTDE. “Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities”. Chapter 8.
113 NTDE. “Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities”. Chapters 5, 7–16.
114 NTDE. “Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities”. Chapters 8–9, sections 12.5, 16.2. We drafted the report with the initiative very much a joint Schools-TAFE one. Thiele later advised me, unofficially, that TAFE had amended the report to some extent, maintaining the proposal intact but assuming responsibility for and control of it and giving its implementation to the Open College, to open in 1987. Ironically, in 1990, I was transferred to the position of Superintendent, Darwin Aboriginal Schools, with responsibility for policy on education for Indigenous Territorians, including community education centres. Co-operation, between Schools and TAFE Divisions at system level, in regions and locally, generally ensued.
in train by Watts and Gallacher, but consultation, monitoring and evaluation were now priorities.

Community education was initially taken to refer to formal education for secondary-aged and young adult students in Indigenous communities. It came to embrace all schooling and training provisions in a community. In 1991, a statement declared that community education centres' raison d'être was to respond to education-related “priorities and expectations” in Aboriginal communities. It elaborated:

A CEC offers a comprehensive range of educational programs and services in a community, comprising pre-school, primary (and) further education (TAFE-accredited Certificate Courses and Adult Education programs), secondary courses via the distance mode, and support for courses such as those offered by Batchelor College.

It was envisaged that community education centres could

enhance community life by providing a point of co-ordination for all education, training and community support agencies, such as health, welfare and social development.

The link CECs provide between (schooling), training and community development is critical to effective service.\(^{115}\)

It was to deliver relevance, effectiveness, consistency and continuity in formal education in the context of community advancement. Local needs and aspirations were to be addressed, with students' achievements formally recognised.

In the languages area, *Direction for the Eighties* added impetus to teaching English as a second language and languages other than English. English as a second language-based “School of the Bush” materials were being developed at primary level and bilingual education programs had been established in twelve bush schools.\(^{116}\) It was acknowledged

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\(^{115}\) Cameron, C. A., & Courts, N. J., 1990. “Community Education Centres (CECs)”. Alice Springs, NT. NTDE, NTG. Some TAFE personnel continued conceptually to confine community education and community education centres to schooling and training after Yr. 7, as portrayed in “Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities”, ‘Schemata for Community Education’, with a principal responsible for education in a community from preschool to post-school training and reporting to both Schools and Open College officials.

\(^{116}\) NTDE. *Direction for the Eighties*. Pp. 8–9, 22–23.
that many NT children lacked fluent English-speaking models at home; their acquiring English as a second language to gain equity in access to education programs was a high priority, but it was also important for them to master their mother tongues. As well, learning non-mother-tongue languages other than English was promoted, although not required.\textsuperscript{117} English/Language was listed as the first of the Board of Studies’ “The Eight Key Areas of the Curriculum” and the rationale bore out the commitment to offer languages other than English.\textsuperscript{118} The NTDE and Feppi jointly reviewed primary school structures and organisation to accommodate both bilingual and English as a second language approaches for Aboriginal students, and “an intensive program in basic literacy and numeracy (was) planned” to enable “motivated students” to realise their potential. An anomaly in restriction of Commonwealth supplementation of English as a second language provision to non-English-speaking migrant children in urban schools was recognised and it was extended “to include urban Aboriginal children whose first language (was) other than English”.\textsuperscript{119} English as a second language for Aboriginal children in urban schools developed, and the AEP enabled extensive new work in the 1990s, with curriculum specialists collaborating with school-based Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff.\textsuperscript{120} 

\textit{Northern Territory Policy on Languages Other Than English} (1988) recognised Indigenous languages in the broader societal and educational contexts. Minister for Education Tom Harris observed that prosperity in cosmopolitan NT depended on “its harmonious internal and international relationships”. For perspective, he highlighted the rights “of all Territorians to … proficiency in English … appropriate to their needs” and “of Aboriginal and ethnic groups to maintain their languages and cultures”, stating that it was important for “all students to develop practical skills in at least one language other than English”. He stressed a need for all Territorians to develop appreciation of cultures other than their own.\textsuperscript{121} 

In the context of “cultural heritage and identity” in the Languages Other than English policy, Indigenous languages were seen to need urgent attention. As there were some Indigenous cultures and languages on the brink of extinction, it was necessary “not simply to assist in the maintenance of a cultural and linguistic heritage but to aid in preventing its extinction”.

\textsuperscript{117} NTDE. \textit{Direction for the Eighties}. Pp. 17–18.
\textsuperscript{118} NTDE. \textit{Direction for the Eighties}. P. 34.
\textsuperscript{119} NTDE. \textit{Direction for the Eighties}. Pp. 56–58.
\textsuperscript{120} See AEP projects as reported is NTDE, 1992, \textit{AEP News Issue no. 1}, and 1993–98, \textit{Aboriginal Education Issues 2–10}.
\textsuperscript{121} NTDE, 1988. \textit{Northern Territory Policy on Languages Other Than English}. Darwin, NT. NTG. P. v. The term, “Languages Other Than English”, brought together in policy all non-English languages, hitherto grouped into “Community Languages” and “Foreign Languages”, and, in case the point had been missed, it was stressed that Languages Other Than English “(included) Aboriginal languages, which (had) special significance in the NT”. P. 1.
It was also argued that inclusion of a language other than English in a school's curriculum, especially as exemplified in establishing bilingual programs, recognised that “the language and culture (were) important and worthwhile”. The altruism in the policy's embracing cultural and linguistic maintenance may have been laudable, but its proposing to do so contradicted the fundamental bilingual education principles, use of the vernacular to help pupils to master English, with language recovery a community responsibility.

The principles underlying the Languages Other than English policy accorded with the NTG's policy and had Education Advisory Council endorsement. An institution's inclusion of a Language Other than English in its curriculum was a local prerogative, taking into consideration the resources available, the importance of the language locally, regionally or globally and the number of permanent residents using it. The Curriculum and Assessment Branch's Equal Opportunities Section was to monitor the policy's implementation, with relevant data collected and collated in another Section and the Languages Other Than English Subject Area Committee retaining its developmental rôle. In 1985, Arrente, with sixty-five students at Alice Springs High School, was the only Aboriginal language taught in a school.

Most post-Self-Government education-related policy statements emphasised the public consultation involved in the policy-development process. The Languages Other than English one did not do so. It claimed authority from NTG and Schools Commission policy, and the recommendations of A National Language Policy (1984), a Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts report. The statement was compiled by the Languages Other Than English Subject Area Committee, however, as required by the Board of Studies, and the policy's implementation required community involvement. There were in fact therefore vertical and horizontal elements in the dynamics of the process.

1987–88, devolution of functions to the school community level was a major policy thrust, with implications for school councils and community involvement. Tied to devolution for local self-management were quests for excellence in educational outcomes achieved by

123 The Principal Education Adviser (Bilingual Education), Stephen Harris, explained these principles to me, late 1970s-early 1980s, when I sought his advice. The “Revised Aims of Bilingual Education”, as stated in Information Statement No. 6: Education for Aborigines. pp. 21–22, and reiterated in the Handbook for Aboriginal Bilingual Education in the Northern Territory (1989), pp. 7–9, did not gainsay Dr. Harris's advice.
124 NTDE. Northern Territory Policy on Languages Other Than English. P. 5. “Indonesian, Malay, Japanese, Mandarin, Italian, Greek and traditional Aboriginal languages” had “priority”.
125 NTDE. Northern Territory Policy on Languages Other Than English. Pp. 7–8, p. 12, pp. 18–20. In the bilingual programs, the vernacular was used, not taught per se.
students and accountability in the management of funding allocated. In the first edition of *Towards the 90s* (1987), Minister Manzie explained that the “quite revolutionary changes … proposed” in the NT were in keeping with

moves (elsewhere) toward greater control at the local level, demands from … the community for greater accountability and effectiveness in the spending of the tax dollar on education, and community expectations that schools should strive for excellence and … for better overall performance by students against recognised standards.

*Towards the 90s* (1987) was a set of discussion papers on the initiatives proposed, to which constructive response from schools and the community was invited.\(^{127}\)

*Direction for the Eighties* and the elaborative “Information Statements” were recognised as “the definitive documents”. Proposals outlined in *Towards the 90s* (1987) were specific initiatives deriving from the established “broad framework”.\(^{128}\)

There were no specific reference to provisions for Aborigines, but it was repeatedly stressed that “all Territorians” were the target group.\(^{129}\)

In *Towards the 90s* (1988), Harris acknowledged response to the first edition. Devolving functions to school councils for local self-management was still a priority, but penalties proposed for tardy compliance were moderated to “(allowing) flexibility in an optional system”. External assessment and comparability with other systems also remained priorities. Need for “greater discipline (in) the school system” was linked to a Commonwealth move to have youth retained in or return to the classroom “without (having made) adequate

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\(^{128}\) The response sought from the discussion papers may be seen to have been pre-empted by the (then) recently released “Government Education Plan” (1987), a strategic plan for implementing NTG policy on education, 1987–91, bringing into question the NTG’s commitment to consultation. The Plan listed 32 objectives, allocated responsibility for them and detailed how they were to be achieved. 5 were concerned directly with raising standards of educational achievement, in some instances with accountability, and 6 were directly concerned with devolving functions, in most instances with accountability. [NTDE, 1987: ‘Objectives for the Implementation of Northern Territory Government Policy for Education 1987–1981’ and ‘Strategic Plan (1987–1991): Project Officers’, in “Strategic Plan (1987–91)for Implementation of NT Government Education Policy”. Darwin, NT. NTG. Also handwritten notes from a meeting on the circulation of *Towards the 90s* (1987).] Sceptics should have noted, however, that the Education Advisory Council, at its September 1987 meeting, was to amend *Towards the 90s* in the light of responses received. (NTDE, 1987, *Towards the 90s*. P. 5.)

provision for the practical courses and facilities (required)” or to address potential for disruption. Commitment to “partnership between the Government, parents and teachers” and the community was reiterated.130

Towards the 90s (1988) focussed on an emerging framework for education in the NT, based on Direction for the Eighties, the “Information statements” and “Feppi's 12 Point Plan”. It stated that compatibility between the NT and SA education systems had been achieved, and committed to compatibility with other systems and between schools within the NT. “(C)ritical” systemic matters not to be devolved were policy, curriculum and assessment, staffing and other resource allocation, demographically-based planning, fiscal control and Commonwealth funding and liaison. Further input on the “framework”, refined in the light of responses to Towards the 90s (1987), was embodied in a revised draft submitted to Harris and circulated to principals, the Council of Government Schools Organisations and the Teachers Federation. Further responses were anticipated, to be acted upon where there was “broad agreement”.131

Towards the 90s (1988) outlined parts of the framework that were to proceed. They were “school improvement plans”, “staff development”, “excellence”, “master teachers”, “curriculum and advisory services”, “flexibility in devolution” and “industry links with schools”. A school improvement plan was to be developed by the local education community, formalised through the school council and, when endorsed by the NTDE, would be a service delivery and resourcing compact embodying performance evaluation.132 Staff development focussed upon “meeting local needs” in accordance with priorities identified at the education community level, in the region and Territory-wide, with decision-making and funding devolved other than for system initiatives.133 The NTDE was to raise standards with system-wide assessment for all pupils in English literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 7 without the fiscal incentives initially proposed for achievement; there were to be monitoring and external assessment in Year 10, with feedback to be heeded by schools.134 The “quality of teaching and learning in all (NTG) schools” was to be improved, inter alia, with revision of the existing Master Teacher scheme wherein teachers of excellence would provide professional leadership in schools in addition to their performing regular teaching duties.135 Curriculum and curriculum support would remain systemic, in the interests

131 NTDE, 1988. Towards the 90s. P.I.
of improved standards and equity in educational opportunity, with moderation extending to curriculum development across the core subject areas and throughout the schooling continuum, enhanced by information technology. School councils would have increased fiscal control, affording their communities more influence on schools' operations. More flexibility than initially planned, in “opportunity” rather than compulsion, was introduced to establish school councils and their being able to opt in and out of aspects of devolution as they saw fit, with “advanced stages” such as staffing to be piloted. The rôle of the principal as advisor to the school council was made clear, the concomitant function of executive officer was not mentioned, and council involvement in senior staff selection was mooted. School-industry links were to increase, especially at the senior secondary level, with business and industry representatives on councils and research on employers' and post-school educators' expectations of school leavers. Local community involvement gained in authority and responsibility. In terms of the biaxial model, potential for lateral activity increased, but so did that for vertical activity, in particular in curriculum, assessment and professional and fiscal accountability.

The Commonwealth, a signatory to pertinent international covenants, was mindful of its human rights obligations when it introduced the AEP in 1989. It was to be implemented with Federal funding over four triennia, 1990–2002. Various reports on education for Aborigines had been compiled from consultation with Aborigines and providers. An AEP Task Force, led by Paul Hughes, was established in 1988 to collate “the main findings” of the reports “with a view to developing a comprehensive long-term approach to Aboriginal education policy” in the Federal context. The Task Force found Aboriginal people, educationally, “the most… disadvantaged group in Australia” and proposed development of a national policy to redress the inequity.

141 They included one by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (1985), specific ones by the National Aboriginal Education Committee, covering funding priorities (1984), philosophy, aims and policy guidelines (1985) and policy on tertiary education (1986) and teacher education (1986), others on provisions in individual jurisdictions and listing Aborigines' needs, and the Miller Report on employment and training programs (1985).
142 Department of Employment, Education and Training. AEP: Joint Policy Statement. Pp. 6–7. Throughout the AEP documentation, “the term Aboriginal … (was) taken to include Torres Strait Islanders”.

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Acting on the Task Force's report, the Commonwealth passed the *Aboriginal Education (Supplementary Assistance) Act* (1989). The Minister for Employment, Education and Training instigated the AEP's development, in 1989, as a joint venture between all States and Territories and the Commonwealth. An Aboriginal Reference Group, chaired by Lynette Crocker and made up of the chairs of all State and Territory AECGS, a Torres Strait Islands representative and an Aboriginal member of the Australian Teachers Federation, was to ensure Indigenous input to the policy process. The Task Force developed the policy in consultation involving “several hundred Aboriginal people” as community representatives in workshops in all jurisdictions and discussion between senior personnel in Commonwealth, State and Territory public education agencies and non-government providers and in some institutions. The principal conclusions reached by the Hughes Task Force were endorsed.

It singled out the principles of

- achieving equality in educational opportunity and improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal people;
- gaining full acceptance of, and respect for Aboriginal culture and identity, including measures to combat racism and to extend the teaching of Aboriginal studies;
- maintaining and developing Aboriginal languages and further developing bi-lingual and bi-cultural programs;
- sensitising teachers and educational decision-makers to the need to adapt curriculum and teaching methods to the varying circumstances of Aboriginal students; and, in particular
- involving Aboriginal people in decisions regarding policies and programs for Aboriginal education;

as particularly important. Ultimately, the policy sought was one

> which, in harmony with employment development policies, would enable Aboriginal people to pursue their own goals in community development, cultural maintenance, self-management and economic independence.143

Again, formal education was deemed fundamental to Indigenous well-being and advancement, but the AEP stood out for its having been developed with extensive lateral activity and for the significant participation of representatives of the clients, both in consultation and in formulating the policy. Need for such a policy, initiation of the process, adoption of the policy, its funding and its administration, however, came from within official frames. First, there was the Commonwealth's frame, then those of the States and Territories,

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143 Department of Employment, Education and Training. *AEP: Joint Policy Statement*. P 8
collectively and subsequently individually, in partnership with the Commonwealth and with the clients, each through its AECG.

The priorities identified were translated into the AEP's “four main purposes”:

1. to ensure Aboriginal involvement in educational decision making;
2. to provide equality of access for Aboriginal people to education services;
3. to raise the rates of Aboriginal participation in education to those for all Australians;
4. to achieve equitable and appropriate educational outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Twenty-one “long-term goals” through which the “main purposes” were to be fulfilled were specified (see Appendix D), with emphasis on Aborigines' attaining equity with other Australians. Aboriginal involvement in education-related decision making from local to system levels, equity in access and participation for children of pre-school and compulsory schooling age, increased retention to the senior secondary level and increased participation in and provisions for post-school services were “immediate priorities”. Each public system, “in consultation with Aboriginal people and education providers”, was to develop a strategic plan to implement the AEP, within the parameters of which triennial operational plans were to be developed; they would double as bases for negotiating supplementary funding “for Aboriginal education purposes” with Canberra. An operational plan was to cover Aboriginal involvement, including employment in professional and para-professional rôles in education, staff development, including “sensitisation of non-Indigenous personnel”, facilities and their accessibility, support for students, curriculum development, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and priorities within the jurisdiction. The schema in Figure 6.2 depicts AEP implementation as it was initially conceived.

FIGURE 6.2 IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY

The Commonwealth committed $226m for the first triennium, in its Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program. The funding was to be allocated annually on calendar years,

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145 Adapted from Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1989, AEP: Implementation. P. 4, Figure 1.
as negotiated by the States and Territories individually. The Strategic Initiatives Program contribution to States' and Territories' implementation of the AEP would supplement both the funding that the Commonwealth already provided under other schemes (e.g. ABSTUDY) and each jurisdiction's recurrent funding of education for its Indigenous clientèle.Providers' accountability in implementing the AEP was also emphasised, with requirement to report annually against their operational objectives in terms of outcomes achieved and moneys spent. The annual reports thereby provided bases for further negotiation between the providers and the Commonwealth, through its Department of Employment, Education and Training, and enabled national progress to be tracked. Figure 6.3 illustrates the initial conception of the overall AEP process.

![Diagram](https://example.com/diagram.png)

**FIGURE 6.3 ARRANGEMENTS TO MONITOR, EVALUATE AND REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY (1989).**

*The Northern Territory Strategic Plan* for the 1990–92 triennium was completed in May 1990. It had been an extensive consultative task, involving the NTDE in consultation

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146 Department of Employment, Education and Training. *AEP: Implementation*. P. 7–8. The sum for the triennium was given as $226 million, but the sums quoted as committed for each individual year totalled $266 million.

147 I recall NTDE Secretary Spring stating that with Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program funding available, no more NT moneys would be spent on education for Aborigines. Recurrent funding continued from NT coffers, however, most from recurrent Commonwealth grants, and the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program funded AEP projects.


149 Adapted from Department of Employment, Education and Training, *AEP: Implementation*. P. 12, Figure 2, and *AEP: Joint Policy Statement*, P. 19, 4.3. Although complex, the diagram is reminiscent of David Easton's (mid-1950s) idea of a policy process in terms of “inputs” combining with “withinputs” to generate “outputs”, including “feedback” as on-going “inputs”.

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with Feppi, non-government providers (Catholic Education, the Institute of Aboriginal Development, Kormilda College, St. John's College and Nungalinya College), the Northern Territory University and the Department of Employment, Education and Training. Secretary of the NTDE Geoff Spring conceded that it had been “a sensitive and sometimes contentious exercise” but that it had proven “a fine example of collaboration by the many education interest groups in the (NT)”, a view echoed by the Federal Minister John Dawkins. The Strategic Plan was presented as “an agreed framework” with which to address “a comprehensive range” of issues in education for Aborigines in urban and outlying locations.\(^{150}\)

“The Current Aboriginal Education Situation” provided background in The Strategic Plan. It detailed an impressive list of initiatives taken and services provided since the transfer of responsibility for education services to the NTG. Indigenous participation rates, however, were acknowledged as starkly below those for “all Australians” at all levels, with retention diminishing from the age of twelve years and markedly so from fourteen years-of-age (coinciding with entry to junior secondary/post-primary education and adolescence), and Aborigines’ academic outcomes were similarly seriously below those realised by others. The “Current Situation” segment concluded with priorities for The Strategic Plan identified by NT Aborigines:

- first and foremost, the involvement of Aboriginal people in education decision making
- upgrading the provision of education for adults
- increasing access to and participation in secondary-education
- increasing access to and participation in pre-school and primary education
- Aboriginal people want to study for and achieve awards of quality and credibility

They were consistent with the four “main purposes” of the AEP, but the fifth implied the further qualification that successful completion of courses needed to be practically useful, potentially for further study or training, employment or career advancement.\(^{151}\)

The NT’s The Strategic Plan “Objectives and Strategies” dealt with the AEP’s twenty-one goals, ordered in accordance with the four purposes. For each goal, the Plan summarised the current situation and specified the objective to be achieved and the strategies to be employed. For example, Goal 1 was concerned with provisions for Aborigines’ involvement

in education-related decision-making: the principal relevant current development was promotion of school councils, now with parents making up two-thirds of the membership, and action groups\textsuperscript{152} in some schools in Aboriginal communities were also acknowledged; the long-term objectives were to have a school council in every education community, with Aboriginal membership commensurate with the level of Aboriginal enrolment, and the immediate priority was to ensure there were arrangements to involve Aboriginal parents and community members where Aboriginal children were enrolled; and the strategies to be employed were based in expansion of “the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer network” to promote development of school councils, consultation with Aboriginal parents in selection of teachers and, in the urban context, attainment of appropriate levels of Aboriginal representation on school councils.\textsuperscript{153} It was envisaged that Liaison Officers, \textit{inter alia}, would assist with implementing another Strategic Initiatives Program element, the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Program.\textsuperscript{154} In terms of the bi-axial model, extensive lateral activity was available for Aborigines to decide directions of their children’s schools. The ideas manifest in school councils and constituent representation, endorsed by Feppi in negotiating \textit{The Strategic Plan}, however, came from the Western frame within which the AEP was activated.

Goal 6 dealt with broader contexts. It sought “arrangements for the provision of independent advice from Aboriginal communities regarding educational decisions at regional, state, territory, and national levels”. In the NT, Feppi was an established entity that advised the Minister. Agreed objectives were that arrangements must ensure the independence of “advice to the Minister from Aboriginal people and communities regarding educational decision-making processes” and that those arrangements’ independence of government agencies be evident to Aborigines; to these ends, the Minister would review Feppi to enhance its Indigenous representation and the independence of its advisory rôle, it would be allocated an operational budget and would remain involved in AEP strategic planning and monitoring. Federally, the National Aboriginal Employment, Education and Training Committee, advisory to the Minister, was to replace the National Aboriginal Education Committee, and Canberra supported AECG chairs' meeting to advise on AEP progress.\textsuperscript{155} Again, extensive lateral activity was assured, but it was Western-based.

\textsuperscript{152} An “action group” in an Aboriginal community was an education-focussed body comprising the school’s Aboriginal staff. It provided advice to school administration, non-Indigenous staff and the community. It was recognised as a local consultative body but had no official status.


Canberra endorsed the NTG *The Northern Territory Operational Plan* for 1990–92, developed jointly by NTDE and NT-based Employment, Education and Training officers. It reiterated the strategies with which the AEP goals were to be addressed, introduced the initiatives to be taken, and listed the finance committed annually to them, conditions of the agreement, arrangements for monitoring and financial management, and details of projects to be undertaken. Most of the projects, sixteen in Schedule A (see Appendix E), were conceived to implement the agreed strategies and to operate over the triennium, with funding from Strategic Initiatives Program: for example, Initiative 1, “Community Liaison Officers”, to address Goal 1, but also to contribute towards Goals 2, 10 and 11, was to increase the Aboriginal employment in the NTDE and Aboriginal children's enrolment and attendance at school, and the sum of $1,337,820 per year was allocated;\(^{156}\) the restructure of Feppi, towards realisation of Goal 6, did not require Strategic Initiatives funding and the Commonwealth was to supplement the NTDE's allocation to Feppi's budget, but the activity was not listed as an AEP initiative;\(^{157}\) and Initiatives 6 and 7, “Increased Community Educations Centres”, with $955,300 pa, and “Developing JSSC in CECs”, with $147,500 pa, were to pick up and increase the momentum generated by the Cameron/Thiele Report, primarily to address Goal 8, “to improve local access to secondary education and TAFE programs in remote Aboriginal communities”.\(^{158}\) The projects cited were initiatives that had already been taken, but the community liaison officers and community education centres ones were enhanced with AEP resources, and Feppi needed to be rationalised in the light of AEP directions.

There were other initiatives in *The Operational Plan* (see Appendix E). The Schedule B ones were “one-off” commitments for facilities in 1990, distinct from the Schedule A Initiative 5, “Primary school facilities …”, an on-going developmental program. Schedule C comprised another three items: they addressed AEP Goal 2, for professional development of Aboriginal employees, specifically training, under mentor schemes, for prospective bush school principals\(^{159}\) and administrative personnel, and a tutor training scheme for homeland centre assistant teachers. They were to be funded, 1990–91, from the Training for Aboriginals Program\(^{160}\), and training for homeland centre assistant teachers was to continue

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\(^{157}\) NTDE. *The Northern Territory Operational Plan, 1990–92 Triennium*. Ps. 2, 6, pp. 15–16.


\(^{159}\) The scheme for on-the-job training and induction of Aboriginal school/CEC principals in Aboriginal communities had its genesis at Yirrkala in 1989, with the first principal-in-training Mandawuy Yunupingu, then soon to be recognised nationally with his band, Yothu Yindi

in 1992, funded at the same level from the Strategic Initiatives Program. Several “Supplementary Projects” were added for 1991 and 1992. Again, some items, notably the NT Teaching Service Mentor Scheme to prepare Aboriginal teachers for leadership rôles, were initiatives previously taken using recurrent resources, justifiably enhanced as AEP projects with Strategic Initiatives funding.

Implementation of the AEP in the NT commenced in 1990. It was supposed to coincide with the school year, but difficulty was experienced. Initiative 1, the community liaison officers, is an example: of the twenty positions programmed for the triennium, by mid-September 1990 only two had been filled, one of which, in Alice Springs, had been in place since before the AEP's conception, ten more were appointed by the end of 1990 and in 1992 there were twenty-one. At first, little could be done in any Strategic Initiatives-funded project: the Commonwealth could allocate no funding until Dawkins had endorsed the NT's Operational Plan, which he did in July 1990. Some projects had commenced in May, using NTDE recurrent funds, to be recovered when Strategic Initiatives funding became available, but by the time NT Treasury received it and it was transferred to the NTDE, mid-September, under-expenditure was close to $3m. Variation of the Operational Plan was therefore required, to bring forward projects scheduled for later in the triennium and thereby maximise commitment of the 1990 allocation by the end of the calendar year. That needed prior approval by Harris, the NT Cabinet and Dawkins. Such complexity was ever the bane of field staffs lives; it disillusioned the clients as well.

The teething problems experienced in instituting the AEP were not restricted to the Commonwealth-NTG, NTDE-Department of Employment, Education and Training and NTDE-NT Treasury interfaces. Evident oversights in negotiating and compiling the Operational Plan also produced problems. For example, Initiative 8, Early Childhood

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163 The AEP's inception coincided with my transfer to Superintendent, Darwin Aboriginal Schools, responsible for policy on education for Aborigines.
166 NTDE, 1994. National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education Policy: The Northern Territory Strategic Plan Report 1990–1992. Darwin, NT. NTG. P. 12. The community liaison officer rôle was pioneered by Richard Downs, who liaised between Yirara College, Alice Springs High School and the home communities of Yirara-based students enrolled, or potentially to be enrolled, at Alice High. His job had a different title, which could explain the Strategic Plan Report's attributing the concept to the AEP's inception.
167 AEP Management Unit, 1990. Memorandum from Director, AEP Management Unit, to Secretary, NTDE, “Variation to the Department of Education Operational Plan”, dated 13 September 1990, and attachments. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG.
Course Training – Batchelor College, was scheduled to commence in 1991, with “professional and para-professional Aboriginal childhood education courses” having been developed in 1990, but no budgetary provision was made for course development.\footnote{NTDE, 1991. \textit{The Northern Territory Operational Plan}. P. 31.} In September 1990, Batchelor College submitted, evidently in vain, that the training sought could commence in 1991 if $100 000 were allocated immediately to “fast track” development of the course.\footnote{AEP Management Unit, 1990: “Progress Report. Aboriginal Education Projects. September 1990”. P. 14.} \textit{AEP News Issue No. 1} (1992) recorded outcomes of the first triennium of the AEP in the NT: the segment on the early childhood training course reported involvement of fifty Aborigines from twenty-two communities in its development and its planned introduction with an intake of twenty students in 1993.\footnote{NTDE, 1992. “AEP News”, Issue No. 1 P. 16.} As required, the NTDE reported (1994) to the NT Minister, now Fred Finch, and in turn to the Federal Minister, now Simon Crean, on progress in 1990–92 in the NT towards each of the AEP Goals: regarding Goal 10, it detailed Aboriginal children's pre-school enrolment rates, marginally increased but below half those for other pre-schoolers, and attendance rates, marginally decreased and well below those for others, but made no reference to Initiative 8, the one project in the \textit{Operational Plan} dedicated to the Goal.\footnote{NTDE, 1994. \textit{The Northern Territory Strategic Plan Report 1990–1992}. Ps. iii, xiii, xx, pp. 62–64. A secondary task for community liaison officers had been to raise Aboriginal children's pre-school participation level to about 60% by the end of 1992. 1989–1992, it rose from 36% to 39%; that for non-Aboriginal pre-schoolers rose from 81% to 82% over the same period.} The early childhood training course was eventually implemented in the next triennium.

Provision to monitor activity and measure the policy's impact was required.\footnote{AEP Management Unit, 1990. Memorandum from Director, AEP Management Unit, to Secretary, NTDE, “Implementation of AEP Monitoring Arrangements”, dated 14 September 1990, and attachment. Darwin, NT. NTDE.NTG. NTDE, 1991. \textit{The Northern Territory Operational Plan}. P. 21.} A NT AEP Monitoring Group, comprising NTDE, Department of Employment, Education and Training and Feppi representation, was established, and in 1991 it appointed a Working Party, similarly representative and charged with strategic planning for the 1993–95 triennium. A Document of Consultation was compiled to inform education institutions and Indigenous Territorians of the need for long-term planning, inviting input to assist in developing a plan for 1993–95. Feppi members visited Indigenous communities throughout the NT and met with groups in urban centres to explain and discuss the Document of Consultation: almost three-quarters of the fifty-seven submissions received came from centres that Feppi had visited. Most were instigated by people involved in delivering education services to Aborigines, members of school, college and tertiary institution councils and staff in education institutions. The input was analysed, a draft plan for the next triennium was
compiled and distributed for response, in the context of which Feppi members conducted twenty-three meetings of Aboriginal people from seventy-six communities. The draft plan was amended with the benefit of thirty-two responses received, and given to Feppi for final consideration. The Strategic Plan for the Northern Territory 1993–1995 Triennium (1993) was then finalised and endorsed, successively, by the Monitoring Group, Finch, and Federal Minister Kim Beazley. Not only was the practice of consultation sustained and extended, but Feppi, all of whose members were Indigenous, was playing a key role in consulting with the Indigenous clientèle. If responses in the process are indicative, Indigenous Territorians must have found Feppi members' approaches appropriate, acceptable and productive.

The new Strategic Plan was simpler in presentation than the previous one and the first Operational Plan had been, and, in response to requests to the Working Party, provided more relevant information. It was divided into nine strategic areas, each with five segments: area identification and explanation of what it entailed; the “current situation”, including relevant statistics and achievements in the first triennium; “strategic issues”, the key matters to be addressed; “strategic directions”, the strategies with which to do so; and “operational plan options”, the measures that could be taken in implementing the strategies, with reference to relevant AEP Purposes and Goals. The operational plan for the second triennium was then developed from “operational plan options”, with twenty-three initiatives (see Appendix F) to be implemented, 1993–95.

Most 1993–95 initiatives were applicable across the NT, in Indigenous communities and in urban settings. Half of them were geared particularly to addressing needs in “remote” communities: five contained “remote” in their labels; seven were implicitly conceived for Indigenous communities, although Initiative 5 proved valuable also in urban settings; three were specifically focussed, respectively, on secondary and senior secondary education institutions in urban settings, on secondary institutions in Darwin and on Centralian College; and, apart from Initiative 23, concerned with monitoring, evaluating and reporting, the

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175 AEP Support Unit, 1993. “Aboriginal Education News” Issue No.2. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG. Introduction by the NT Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program Monitoring Group N.B. The publication was originally “AEP News”; the NT AEP Monitoring Group had been renamed the NT Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program Monitoring Group, and the AEP, previously administered by the AEP Management Unit, was now administered by the AEP Support Unit.
176 The term “remote” is loosely applied to communities, often seeming to be used as a euphemism for “Aboriginal” rather than to denote relative location (e.g. Amoonguna), notwithstanding the fact that some Aboriginal communities are literally very remote (e.g. Walungurru).
remainder were as applicable in outlying communities as they were in urban centres. Initiatives 2 and 5, to do respectively with supporting Aboriginal languages and engaging Aboriginal Education Workers, were included on the strength of Feppi’s representation of Aboriginal communities’ expressed desire to have individual access to the AEP to assist them to address local priorities.\textsuperscript{177}

The operation of the NT Aboriginal Hearing Program, to which reference was made in Chapter 2, is instructive. It had its origins in the work of itinerant Advisory Teachers of the Deaf, from the early 1970s, providing specialist support for teachers in catering for the needs, disabilities and consequent educational disadvantage of children with hearing loss sustained from \textit{otitis media}, endemic in Indigenous communities throughout the NT. In 1987, the NTDE and Territory Health Services established an inter-sectoral committee to address the issue, aiming to “reduce the incidence of \textit{otitis media}, prevent long term educational and social disadvantage and minimise the educational disadvantage suffered by Aboriginal children with chronic ear disease and conductive hearing loss”. In 1990, the NT Aboriginal Hearing Program Co-ordinating Committee became fully Indigenous; with incorporation, it became a non-government organisation working with the NTG in implementing the Hearing Program. Introducing the 1998 annual report, the Co-ordinating Committee chairman and its executive officer (the Program Co-ordinator) declared,

\begin{quote}
(i)ntersectoral co-operation between the NTAHPCC, THS and NTDE is an excellent example of how Government and non Government organizations can successfully address a common health and education issue, with the outcome of improving a quality of life for Aboriginal infants and children.\textsuperscript{178}
\end{quote}

The Hearing Program was unique in several respects. From early 1990, with funding anticipated from the AEP and NTG commitment, it was formed as a joint NTDE and NT Department of Health service, a genuine inter-agency venture; it was multi-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary in its operation, with the key operatives, the coordinator and, 1990–92, four NTDE education officers, from teaching backgrounds principally in the Indigenous context, collaborating closely, but not always easily, with Department of Health allied health professionals, medical practitioners, nurses and health workers, notably in clinics in communities; personnel from Australian Hearing Services, the Menzies School of Health

\textsuperscript{177} AEP Support Unit, 1993. “Aboriginal Education News” Issue No.2.
Research, the Department of Employment, Education and Training, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and private providers were also involved; as well, they worked with NTDE Student Services, Curriculum and Assessment, schools-based and regional operational personnel; the co-ordinator and the education officers worked extensively with parents and other community members, consulting and informing on related matters and, as with education and health personnel, conducting workshops to develop understandings, skills and practices in ear health.\(^{179}\) Within the parameters of NTDE, NT Health and AEP requirements, policy was determined, priorities were identified and operations were monitored by the Co-ordinating Committee.

The Hearing Program team's thrust was holistic and multi-faceted. The co-ordinator and the education officers helped and trained teachers, parents and children to appreciate good ear health and promoted appropriate practices, helped school staff with methodology to employ with children with conductive hearing loss, developed support materials and advised on classroom acoustics. Operationally, they engaged the knowledge and skills of health operatives with their own in strategies that were concurrently education-focussed and preventative and curative in the health context.\(^{180}\)

The Hearing Program was maintained as an AEP initiative throughout the 1990s. It had several strengths: consistent and sustained direction; being understood and well-regarded in schools and communities, urban as well as bush; the tangibility of the work done and the benefits generated; the extent of Indigenous involvement and ownership, locally and overall: the holistic approach with focus on educational outcomes; its inclusion of early intervention; and thorough planning, exemplified in annual review of its Strategic Plan.\(^{181}\) Other attributes were continuity in personnel, their communication skills, professionalism, perseverance and pride in the Program.

The work of the team earned recognition in other systems, especially in SA and WA, and overseas, in South-East Asia and New Zealand. Such recognition continued to build to the point where, in 1998, “a dramatic increase” in requests from interstate for Hearing Program resources was reported. On invitation, the team made presentations to the Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia at its Alice Springs meeting, the WA Institute for the Deaf in Perth and at the World Health Organisation-sponsored International


\(^{180}\) In oversight of the Hearing Program, 1990–91 and 1997–99, there was a need, in its earlier days, for its primary focus upon effective teaching and learning to be reiterated constantly to education officers readily side-tracked by paramedical aspects of the service.

Otological Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, earning strong endorsement of its work. *Inter alia*, “strong links” were developed with the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for the Prevention of Hearing Impairment, Deafness and Hearing International and other such bodies.\(^{182}\)

Elements of the Hearing Program's success are embodied throughout its *Annual Report 1998* (see Appendix G). The inter-agency and multi-disciplinary nature of the Program, its sustained and consistent implementation, operatives' comprehensive consultative practices and self-criticism, Indigenous involvement, participation and ownership, engagement of local service providers, familiarity with and confidence in the services, and the significant rôle of the Co-ordinating Committee were oft-repeated. That the team and individual members were in demand to work in communities and urban schools and to contribute to others' activities lends substance to claims of the Program's perceived effectiveness. It must also indicate appropriate services for Aboriginal people and their appropriate development and delivery.

In 1996, the Commonwealth extended the second triennium of the AEP by a year, so the third triennium ran 1997–99. The Federal Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs had determined eight priority areas (see Appendix H), not inconsistent with the original purposes and goals but embodying greater emphasis of evaluation, including measurement of achievement. The NT's *Operational Plan, 1997–99* was developed from responses to a survey, based partly on the Ministerial Council's priority areas, and from consultation by Feppi. There was a high rate of response.\(^{183}\) Priorities identified (see Appendix I) were headed by Indigenous involvement in decision-making, Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers, improved attendance, retention and educational outcomes for Indigenous students, and related professional development for teachers. A new priority emerged, “(i)mproved research, monitoring, accountability and availability of student and program outcomes”, fitting with the Commonwealth's evaluation priority.\(^{184}\) The initiatives taken under the *Operational Plan* negotiated for 1993–95 and extended to 1996 were adjusted for 1997–99, in accordance with the revised priority areas and the priorities identified in the NT. Some of the 1993–95 initiatives did not appear in the new *Operational Plan*, as they were now to be implemented by other providers. For example, Batchelor College was to be funded directly to conduct early childhood education, remote area teacher


\(^{183}\) Of the 394 surveys returned, 211 were from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sources.

\(^{184}\) AEP Support Unit, 1997. *Aboriginal Education News Issue No. 9*. Darwin, NT. NTDE,
education and Aboriginal health worker training, as was NT Correctional Services for Aboriginal Offender Advancement.\textsuperscript{185}

Initiatives for 1997–99 were more outcomes-focused than earlier ones had been, requiring greater accountability. In each priority area, the outcomes sought were identified, strategies, programs and activities were outlined, targets were specified and, in most cases, 1996 base-line data, against which to assess performance, were provided.\textsuperscript{186} For example, in Indigenous participation in education-related decisionmaking, the outcome sought was to increase Indigenous awareness of issues in education for “enhanced participation and local community and system level decisionmaking”. Relevant background was provided, and two initiatives were introduced: one was for the Board of Studies Aboriginal Education Standing Committee to have an Indigenous Executive Officer to support its Indigenous members and Indigenous members of other advisory bodies; the other was to engage an Indigenous teacher to provide training for Indigenous committee and board members. The targets were to raise Indigenous membership of boards and committees to a level commensurate with Indigenous enrolments, to have representation throughout the system's advisory and decision-making arrangements and, over the triennium, to raise it, \textit{vis-à-vis} non-Indigenous representation, by 5% annually. The 1996 base-line data (see Appendix J) showed strong Indigenous representation at education community level, with 44% membership of school councils, but only modest representation systemically other than on bodies with specific Indigenous foci.\textsuperscript{187}

The first year of the 1997–99 Operational Plan was monitored and outcomes reported against the 1996 base-line data. Highlights included increases in Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness committees, Indigenous members of school councils and Indigenous students enrolled in schools of the air, Board of Studies secondary bridging courses, pre-schools, primary schools and in senior secondary and vocational education and training courses. Multilevel Assessment Program results showed reduction in gaps between achievement by Indigenous students and by non-Indigenous students. Enrolments in homeland learning centres were stabilising. Concerns identified included decreases in Indigenous enrolments in junior secondary education and in Indigenous students earning the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate, attendance at non-urban schools lower than in urban schools and participation rates in the 3–4 and 12–17 years age brackets lower than those

\textsuperscript{186} AEP Support Unit, 1997. \textit{Aboriginal Education News Issue No. 9}. P. 1.
\textsuperscript{187} AEP Support Unit, 1997. \textit{Aboriginal Education News Issue No. 9}. Pp. 4–6. No data were provided on Indigenous representation on urban school councils \textit{vis-à-vis} non-urban ones.
for non-Indigenous students. Need to identify all Indigenous staff employed in the NTDE was noted, for “proper reporting on employment and professional development”. With reference to participation in education-related decision-making: eight new Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness committees were established, bringing the number of schools with such bodies to 96% of the total eligible; Indigenous membership of school councils increased by seventy-four, but, vis-à-vis non-Indigenous membership, dropped marginally, apparently due to the establishment of school councils in new suburbs; and Indigenous membership of official NTDE boards and committees remained stable.\footnote{AEP Support Unit, 1998. \textit{Aboriginal Education News Issue No. 10}. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG. Ps. 2, 4.} Outcomes-reporting tended to be statistics-focussed, or, in curriculum development and implementation, based on tangible progress,\footnote{AEP Support Unit, 1998 \textit{Aboriginal Education News Issue No. 10}. Pp. 3–24.} validly so. Qualitative evaluation, such as perceived impacts of Indigenous representation on official bodies, would also have been helpful.

As the macro-policies founded in \textit{Direction for the Eighties} (1983), \textit{Towards the 90s} (1988) and the \textit{AEP} (1989) were implemented and developed in the 1990s, some micro-policies were developed. They included the \textit{Northern Territory Board of Studies Common Curriculum Statement} (199?, undated), \textit{Northern Territory Board of Studies Common Assessment Statement} (1992), \textit{Revised Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children in Northern Territory Schools} (1993), \textit{Partners in Education Parent Policy} (1994), \textit{Special Education Policy: Provision for Students with Disabilities in Northern Territory Schools} (1994), \textit{Revised Special Education Policy: Provision for Students with Disabilities and Impairments in Northern Territory Schools} (1996) and \textit{Common Assessment and Reporting Statement: Pre-School to Senior Secondary} (1998). They embraced Indigenous Territorians’ needs, and paid specific attention to them in varying degrees, but their application was universal. As they were produced by and under the scrutiny of consultative mechanisms, hierarchical and lateral dimensions to their development were assured.

The \textit{Common Curriculum Statement} detailed study requirements and options for the compulsory years of schooling. The \textit{Common Assessment Statement} complemented it, presenting the purpose, principles and methods of assessment of student-performance in Board-Approved Curriculum and the approaches taken. The intended audience was comprehensive, including school council members, parents, employers and the students themselves. \textit{Inter alia}, it was to support schools in their assessment of and reporting on students’ learning outcomes in terms of the curriculum objectives and to promote
consistency in such practices across the NT. The purposes of assessment and reporting, the Board explained, ranged from feedback to students, parents, teachers and the local community to aggregation for individual certification and to accountability at the local and systemic levels. Underlying principles applicable to Indigenous students and communities included use of assessment procedures which were “inclusive of class, culture, disability, geographical location, gender and race without hindering the basic aim of discrimination only on the basis of achievement” and which “(supported and enhanced) relationships between teacher and student, among students, and between the school and its constituencies”, and reporting “regularly in terms that (were) easily understood” by its disparate audiences and “meaningful” to them. Each school was to have “a formal, documented assessment policy” that was consistent with Board requirements and policy, with copies for all staff members and available to parents and members of school councils and the community. The idea was sound, and consistent with policy of community involvement with responsibility, but its practicality for more than a few Indigenes in any community may have been dubious. Those interested would have needed relatively sophisticated English literacy skills or people able to explain the process and the data provided. It was a constructive measure nonetheless, and it would have been discriminatory to be less inclusive.

Policy on educational provision for NT children identified as gifted and/or talented was revised by the Gifted Children's Advisory Committee. The rationale for the policy, as revised, cited relevant goals of the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia (1989), the first of which was

190 NT Board of Studies, (undated). Northern Territory Board of Studies Common Curriculum Statement. Darwin, NT, NTDE, NTG.
NT Board of Studies, 1992. Northern Territory Board of Studies Common Assessment Statement. Darwin, NT, NTDE, NTG. P. 1. During a visit to a remote Indigenous community school, 1993–94, I found in the staff room informative feedback to the school community on its students' performance in the Primary Assessment Program. Referring to it at a staff meeting, I complimented all concerned on their students' achievement at above average for non-urban NT schools in all but one aspect, where it was marginally below the average. It was evident that none present was aware of the report, or understood it, or was interested in it.
192 NT Board of Studies, 1992. Common Assessment Statement. Pp. 7–8. It would be interesting to know the extent to which schools generally, and especially those in outlying locations, complied fully with Board expectation and/or the extent to which it was enforced. I was not a regional superintendent after mid-1994, and so have no first-hand knowledge on the matter.
193 A qualification should be noted, that the NTDE's Annual Report 1992 credited the Exceptional Children Unit with having revised the policy. NTDE, 1993. Northern Territory Department of Education Annual Report 1 January to 31 December 1992. Darwin, NT. NTG. P. 49. The Board would not have endorsed the revised policy, however, as it did, without its having been submitted by the Advisory Committee and vetted by other relevant committees.
to provide an excellent education for all young people, being one which develops their talents and capacities to full potential, and is relevant to the social, cultural and economic needs of the nation.

Where it was concerned with excellence and relevance, the others were more focussed on academic and personal fulfilment and equity in opportunity in formal education. The multiculturalty of the NT, particularly its Indigenous component, was recognised in the context of inclusion, a major underpinning concept, and hence its relevance to “students from all cultural backgrounds”.\textsuperscript{194} “Gifted students (came) from all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds”, and it was stressed that appropriate information bases for identification of giftedness needed to be used and specified in school policy and planning, with parents involved in devising provisions to be made.\textsuperscript{195} That “Aboriginal students, girls, isolated students and students from non-English-speaking backgrounds” had been under-represented in such programs was acknowledged and was to be addressed with local identification.\textsuperscript{196} The Gifted Children's Advisory Committee was to monitor the policy, obtaining input from various bodies, including Feppi, the NT University and Catholic Education,\textsuperscript{197} the latter two of which, \textit{inter alia}, were themselves substantial providers of education for the Indigenous \textit{clientèle}.

In his introduction to the \textit{Partners in Education Parent Policy}, Finch highlighted its consultative development. Feppi and Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness committees were amongst the bodies that contributed, and “(a)ll school communities” had had the opportunity to do so.\textsuperscript{198} The rationale listed beliefs that underpinned the policy: that “(e)ducation (began) in the home and (continued) throughout life in the home, the school and the community”, that parents' knowledge of their children was unique, and that they had the right to be involved in their children's learning and informed about it and to contribute to related decisionmaking. It was stressed that partnerships between parents and schools enhanced students' learning outcomes and that when parents' and teachers' “talents, interests and skills” were combined, they “(enriched) the lives and education of students”. Schools were expected to encourage “parent participation and involvement”, with each school community developing policy and practice suited to local circumstances. Attention was drawn to opportunities for parental participation in school councils, statutory bodies,

\textsuperscript{195} NT Board of Studies. Revised Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children. P. 2.
\textsuperscript{196} NT Board of Studies. Revised Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children. P. 6.
\textsuperscript{197} NT Board of Studies. Revised Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children. P. 7.
\textsuperscript{198} Aboriginal children featured in at least three of the five photographs in the policy statement.
curriculum-related committees and staff selection panels. Voluntary contribution by parents in schools was also urged and their support at home for their children's education was recognised. 199 Guidelines for developing local parent policies were provided, the “roles and responsibilities” of parents, school councils, teachers and support staff, principals and the NTDE were summarised, and “good practice” suggestions were made. 200 That the policy pertained to all Territorians, including Aborigines, was stressed throughout. Partners in Education thus mirrored Direction for the Eighties in its development: it was initiated by the hierarchy, there was lateral engagement in its development and confirmation and its implementation promoted lateral activity.

The Special Education Policy (1994), developed and introduced under the auspices of the Board of Studies by the Special Education Advisory Committee, stated that

(t)he Northern Territory Government, in active partnership with parents, the community and other service providers, is committed to providing educational services for all children with special needs.

It was compiled in consistency with the NTG's Disability Services Policy and embraced “national and international trends and developments”. Goals cited from the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia as relevant were those used in the gifted and talented policy revision, with the qualification that special-needs students could need “additional resources” to support realisation of the ideals. 201 Inclusion of all students was emphasised, with emphasis that students with special needs were covered by the policy regardless of whether they lived “in urban or remote areas” and that those “(living) in isolated areas had the right of access to the full range of educational services”. 202 It was stressed that “(a)ll students and their parents/caregivers/advocates” were entitled to be involved in decision-making on provisions made and were encouraged to do so. 203 The policy was to be monitored, similar to the arrangement for the revised gifted and talented policy, by the Special Education Advisory Committee in consultation with relevant bodies, including Feppi, the NT University and Catholic Education. 204

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200 NTDE. Partners in Education Parent Policy. Pp. 4–17. That it applied to Indigenous Territorians was explicit in their representation in ten of the fifteen photographs with which the document was illustrated, at least four of which were of mixed composition in urban schools. With minor involvement supporting the policy's development, I witnessed the process's exemplification of the consultative and participatory practices advocated.
202 NT Board of Studies. Special Education Policy. Ps. 3, 5.
203 NT Board of Studies. Special Education Policy. P. 2.
204 NT Board of Studies. Special Education Policy. P. 6.
The special education policy was revised to accord with contemporary trends and new Federal and NT legislation. The Revised Special Education Policy (1996) integrated the concept of inclusion into negotiation of related planning and provision for students with disabilities and impairments\(^\text{205}\); the companion document, Guidelines for Implementation of the Revised Special Education Policy, emphasised the illegality of disability-based discrimination, embodied in the Federal Disability Discrimination Act and the NT Anti-Discrimination Act, and the principle of “equality of opportunity” that was fundamental to the revised policy\(^\text{206}\). The guidelines stressed the partnership between the school and the home in catering for special-needs children's education:

> It is the responsibility of schools to advise parents/caregivers that they have the right to continual consultation and input up to and including the final decision with regard to the educational placement of their children and in ongoing educational programs.

The provision of services and resources, students' rights and parents'/caregivers' and service providers' rights and responsibilities and, in particular, students' right to have access to inclusive curriculum, were also detailed. The Board of Studies was responsible to ensure that all of its Curriculum Committees were “fully aware of the educational needs of students with disabilities and impairments”\(^\text{207}\).

The Common Assessment and Reporting Statement detailed the Board's “position on the assessment and reporting of student achievement at all levels of schooling” for the benefit of the system, schools, students, parents, school councils and the community. Arrangements reflected developments at the national level, notably in agreed standards and frameworks for reporting, including Curriculum Profiles for Australian Schools, Key Competencies and the Australian Qualifications Framework. The statement was devised to give direction to schools for their individual policies and practices without inhibiting “supplementary practices appropriate” for their situations, and was philosophically founded in an educational-cum-socio-economic perspective that ranged from individual students to the national interest (see Appendix K). Responsibilities locally involved policy and practice in accordance with the Common Assessment and Reporting Statement, with “authentic” assessment of students to


inform the students themselves, their parents, the community and the Board and to provide data to monitor students' progress and programs' effectiveness and to review curriculum offerings. A school council had the tasks of developing school-based assessment and reporting policy and practice and promoting them to the community, and could apply the data they generated in decision-making.\textsuperscript{208} The assessment and reporting framework was conceptually sound, necessary for accountability and legality, but it was demanding for large, sophisticated urban school communities and daunting in the bush, especially for small schools in which it was heeded.

Statements issued by the Board of Studies typically provided little, if any, information on how, by whom and with what input they had been developed. The Board, however, claimed that a high level of consultation prevailed throughout, using the “extensive consultative network” (see Appendix L) with which it ensured that new policy statements and curriculum documentation were developed with relevant interests and others who wished to participate. It claimed that the network was undoubtedly the most effective in Australia for this area of work and the prevailing harmony in curriculum, assessment and certification reflects just how good it is.

Given the stringent and cohesive operations through which Board approval was earned, it was probably no idle boast.

The process through which the Board granted Special Category Curriculum status to Foundation Studies and General Studies, effective 1995–99, is illustrative. During the first AEP triennium, as an element of Project A6, “Increased Community Education Centres”, four TAFE-accredited certificate courses, Foundation Studies, General Studies, Vocational Studies and Initial Secondary Studies, were developed for use with secondary-aged and adult students in community education centres and implemented. They were bridging courses to carry secondary-aged Indigenous students from basic literacy and numeracy to junior secondary and pre-vocational levels, and moderation at the school level added rigour to the process.\textsuperscript{209} In the second triennium, the project, Initiative 6, focused on related professional development for school staff, assistance with trialling in classrooms, implementing and extending the resources, with planning, operation and participation to


involve Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff together. Trainee curriculum positions for Indigenous staff were introduced. Intended outcomes were “enhanced teacher effectiveness” and “improved student academic (achievements)”. The first two of courses were prepared for submission to the Board for formal approval, in accordance with its commitments, detailed in its Mission Statement (1983). The team working on the courses functioned in a way as a sub-subject area committee: it was obliged to work to at least the English, Mathematics, Science and Social Education subject area committees and to satisfy their requirements; the courses would then have been submitted to the Aboriginal Education, Common Curriculum and Common Assessment Standing Committees for their scrutiny; only when their respective requirements were satisfied could they proceed to the Board for its perusal and, ultimately, approval. Obviously, the process was rigorous, in view of the education, other professional, community, commercial, industrial and political agendas active in each of the layers and the hierarchy of exacting scrutinies they comprised. There was thus extensive and demanding activity in vertical and horizontal dimensions, with Board approval for courses hard won and giving them credibility. The development of special curriculum for educationally disadvantaged Indigenous students of secondary school-age was demonstrably especially rigorous.

With the policy, curriculum, curriculum support and operational provisions outlined above, and numerous others, in place for the formal education of Indigenous Territorians, the challenge was to have them produce improved outcomes. Successive official studies conducted during the implementation of the AEP, albeit not specifically focussed upon it, in fact found much to criticise, little evidence of increasing achievement and some indication of declining standards. Reports from relevant studies will be considered in the eighth chapter.

Analysis of Policy in the NT under Self-Determination.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that public education policy activity in the NT increased markedly in the period from the early 1970s to the 1990s. Much of that activity had general implications for Indigenous Territorians' formal education, and

211 NT Board of Studies, 1993. Mission Statement. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG.
212 The Aboriginal Education Standing Committee had been established recently, primarily to provide the Board with “an Aboriginal perspective on all curriculum, assessment and certification matters” and also to function as a “reference group for specific programs, as an initiator for special provisions for Aboriginal students and as an authoritative expert body” in curriculum areas with Indigenous foci. (NT Board of Studies, 1995. Annual Report, Northern Territory Board of Studies. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG. Pp. 10–11.)
endeavour specifically directed at their needs grew substantially. Even more remarkable were the escalation of lateral activity vis-à-vis hierarchical activity in the policy process and its inclusion of the Indigenous clientèle. The Commonwealth played significant parts throughout, initially as the principal force and provider, with the Legislative Council a feisty subordinate legislature, and then, from Self-Government, as a major partner with the NTG in public administration.

Changes in government in the NT over the three decades were occasioned by successive Federal administrations, replacement of the Legislative Council with the Legislative Assembly and the Country Liberal Party's dominance in self-governing NT. They impacted especially upon the Indigenous peoples, significantly in the rôle that formal education was expected to play in advancing their well-being and the provisions accordingly made. From 1973, there was self-determination, with bilingual education programs introduced immediately; then came Self-Government for the NT; major developments in education-related policy in the NT followed; next the AEP appeared on the Federal scene, with significant implications for the NT; and further developments ensued in the NT. From 1973 to Self-Government, other than the bilingual innovation, production and implementation of English as a second language-based materials, promotion of English as a second language methodology and establishment of Feppi, education policy-related activity for the Indigenous clientèle did not advance significantly. In contrast, with devolution of the education function to Darwin and subsequently, activity galvanised, so analysis will focus on the period from the late 1970s to the 1990s.

The main relevant NT-specific policy thrusts of the period were development and implementation of Direction for the Eighties, Towards the 90s, the curriculum and assessment structure and the individual statements with which they were elaborated. As well, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy was developed, promulgated and tailored for its implementation in the NT. Quantitative analysis of each is warranted, as they are important policies developed with complex arrangements involving many people. However, since approximately comparable energy, commitment, processes and public participation applied in each instance, and in associated activity between the main events, their assessments may be expected to yield similar ratings. They will therefore be registered together on the bi-axial frame.

Development of Direction for the Eighties involved sustained and extensive research and processing by the NTDE and consultation with stake-holders in the NT and with other public education agencies over a period of three years or so. The extent of the activity
on the part of the NTDE may therefore be rated near to optimal, @ 90% or more, and hierarchical activity would register at least 9/10 along the vertical y axis of the frame. In contrast with the policy activity considered in the preceding two chapters, the hierarchical extent was matched laterally, in both the NTDE's near-exhaustive efforts to engage public participation and the contributions of external organisations and individual persons. Lateral activity may therefore also be rated near to optimal and recorded accordingly at least 9/10 along the horizontal x axis.

Negotiation of the AEP and its implementation in the NT started in the late 1980s and continued for the next ten years and more. Nationally, the early consultative work which led to the policy's formulation may have outweighed the hierarchical endeavour. In the NT, the high proportion of the Indigenous clientèle, and consequently the potentially significant level of supplementary resourcing to flow from Canberra ensured that the NTDE did its utmost from the outset to maximise its share of the Federal commitment. Hierarchical activity related to the policy, within the NTDE, and, on Canberra's behalf, in the Darwin office of the Department of Employment, Education and Training, therefore again approached the optimum. Negotiation with the Department of Employment, Education and Training and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in the NT and with Indigenous Territorians, largely but not exclusively through Feppi, and their responses, especially with Feppi able to exercise considerable influence in the process and to generate interest, support and contribution amongst its constituents, meant that lateral activity was also near optimal. Although activity, with contention, tended to be most in evidence when new Plans were being negotiated, once instituted, the AEP initiatives ran, were monitored, evaluated and reported with increasing focus on accountability, and deadlines had to be met at all levels. Activity involved in the AEP may therefore, similar to that with Direction for the Eighties, be rated @ 90% or more of the extent possible and registered at least at 9/10 on both axes of the frame.

When Towards the 90s was negotiated, 1987–88, with follow-up, administrative and consultative processes similar to those that had evolved in developing Direction for the Eighties were employed. There were differences: whereas the NT Minister and the Legislative Assembly had been prominent in the earlier exercise, in this instance, although politically motivated, it was primarily administrative; and where there had been prominent focus on Indigenous Territorians in the development and substance of Direction for the Eighties, Towards the 90s applied to Indigenous education communities no less than to others but they were not singled out for exceptional attention. The draft papers were distributed in an initial publication and the policy statement was finalised from responses...
received and further consultation. The development and implementation of *Towards the 90s* had a lower profile than had been the case with the principal policy statement, but it was contentious and ensured high levels of endeavour and negotiation, with public input having some measures proposed toned down considerably. Hierarchical and lateral policy-related activity may be rated, as a consequence, as matching each other and approaching optimal, and may be registered on the frame accordingly.

The Board of Studies was a product of *Direction for the Eighties*. Its establishment, its structure, the composition and inter-relationships of its components, its operation as a whole, as discussed, and illustrated in Figure 6.1, and the individual specific policies developed under its auspices, epitomised the bi-axial dimensions of policy-related activity. The other major policy events and associated dynamics involved extensive activity in both hierarchical and lateral dimensions, with the NTDE initiating most in the latter, whereas membership of the Board of Studies and its network of committees were embedded, mandating lateral activity in curriculum and assessment. It is an important distinction: curriculum and assessment, which influences heavily what is taught in schools, legitimises courses of instruction, determines target standards, devises instruments to measure attainment and monitors achievement of outcomes, is the vital policy area in an education system. As a consequence of the Board's structure, policy and operational bases and composition, its activity most closely approached the optimum in hierarchical and lateral dimensions, and may be registered accordingly.

Figure 6.4 shows the significant policy-related activity with implications for formal education for Indigenous Territorians from the late 1970s to the 1990s. The individual events and associated activity are rated as approaching optimal, “@90 or more” of the possible extents, in both hierarchical and lateral dimensions; all ratings are approximations, so they are unlikely to be precisely the same, as \( y \) and \( x \) ratings and as the means they generate. Composite rating, @ 90–100\% of the extent possible, is appropriate on both axes and the mean. The nett result is that composite hierarchical, vertical, activity is registered at the extreme 0.1 of the \( y \) axis, composite lateral, horizontal, activity is registered at the extreme 0.1 of the \( x \) axis, and the composite mean they generate is registered similarly and centrally in the C sector.

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213 i.e. policy area as distinct from operational area
The composite mean for policy activity in Indigenous Territorians' formal education reflects approximately matching levels of endeavour, participation and contribution in the policy process's hierarchical and lateral dimensions. Significantly, it reflects achievement of government-managed but widely consultative public policy processes in the policy directions considered. In the context of representative democracy, conditions should therefore be optimal for development of appropriate and good policy, effective policy implementation and achievement of the outcomes sought at the levels sought. That conditions should be optimal for a productive process does not guarantee its quality and effectiveness, however, and it has been established that realisation of outcomes from formal education services at the turn of the twenty-first century, after three decades in which self-determination was to be realised with formal education, were distinctly unsatisfactory. The qualitative analysis instrument will now be applied in an endeavour to identify the problem (see Table 6.2).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TABLE 6.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLICY IN THE NT UNDER SELF-DETERMINATION.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who participated in the policy process?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants continued to grow considerably more numerous than they had previously been; Indigenous communities, individual parents and community members and organisations, with Feppi to the fore, became active contributors in the policy process, with public officials, missionaries, teachers, advocates and occasional consultants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where did the participation occur?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy conception still occurred mainly in parliaments and public agencies, but its development now involved practitioners and the public, including Indigenes, both directly and through their representatives, in schools and communities, regional centres and public agency offices, with implementation in institutions run by the NTDE and missions in Indigenous communities and in other NTDE and non-government institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How were participants involved?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians and NTDE officials consulted and negotiated policy with mission authorities, practitioners and the public, including Indigenous Territorians, through representative bodies and individual representations, NTDE and mission teachers were expected to implement it with increasing rigour, pressure on children and trainees to attend and respond to instructors' expectations was sustained, as was expectation of parents to support their children's schooling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent were participants familiar with the process?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office-based and operational officials and mission authorities were more acutely aware of what was expected of them, field operatives and the public, including Indigenous parents, community members and representatives, became familiar with the process through active involvement and/or observation, and efforts to encourage communities and parents to fulfil their responsibilities with respect to their children's schooling were sustained.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To what extent were participants aware of the substance of negotiations?

Negotiation had become the joint province predominantly of providers and clients, the former now with significant numbers of Indigenous employees and the latter including Indigenous Territorians, preparation for negotiation occurred, with circulation of materials and advice, and policy statements and other outcomes from negotiations relevant to policy and practice were distributed to field operatives, school councils and communities, including Indigenous communities and community councils, and other contributors. Feppli enabled oral/aural communication.

To what extent was participant input evident in the policy and its implementation?

External input, from missions and the public, including Indigenous communities, parents and their representatives, increasingly contributed to policy and its implementation. NTDE and mission field operatives continued to be involved in curriculum development and trialling, increasingly as Board os Studies operations developed and projects under the AEP were undertaken. AEP policy and projects with which it was implemented strongly reflected Indigenes' influence in the process, in prioritisation and the substance of initiatives taken.

What feedback was provided to participants as the Feppli became a conduit for feedback to communities and Indigenous Territorians generally, from the Minister and the system, with information that Feppli wished to convey itself as well, and for feedback from the communities to the system. The NTDE also distributed feedback in print throughout the NT.

The responses to the focussed questions posed in the instrument have identified no glaring oversights or fall-downs. In fact, between them, the quantitative and qualitative analyses appear to present a public education system with processes and provisions geared to inclusion of and active participation by its Indigenous clients from early childhood education to post-school pursuits and productive engagement in the system to middle-management level. For those who achieved and retained such employment, or other such livelihood, the system was obviously effective. Generally unsatisfactoiy outcomes
from formal education services, however, demonstrated that the system was not working effectively for its Indigenous clientele.

SUMMATIVE STATEMENT.

Late in the twentieth century, the Commonwealth's public policy processes for Indigenous self-determination, from 1973, and the NTG's public policy processes for education, including provisions to cater for Indigenous Territorians, since Self-Government, became complex. They were especially so in comparison with the Commonwealth's previous processes for assimilation and formal education for Indigenous Territorians. The Country Liberal Party was determined that in self-governing NT the elected representatives, not bureaucrats, would determine public policy and direct public services. The politicians were also committed to public participation in policy processes. They were sensitive to the unique needs of their Indigenous constituents, the challenges posed in trying to meet them and their status as citizens of the NT, with the responsibilities implied. They were no less committed than the Commonwealth and the Legislative Council had been to fulfilling what they believed to be the Indigenes’ best interests, giving them opportunity for equity in the mainstream in citizenship and access to goods and services and quests for livelihood.

Indigenous Territorians' formal education was still believed to be the key to their well-being, and hence to the overall NT policy's effective implementation for them. Changes in the process were that it was considerably more inclusive of the public, including the Indigenous component, there was considerable increase in education-related policy activity in the NT, and the hierarchical and lateral dimensions of that activity were relatively balanced. A similar situation obtained with the advent of the AEP, although processes became more convoluted with Commonwealth involvement, Feppi's power as one of the three principal partners in politically volatile negotiation and significant participation by the Indigenous clientele. The Indigenes were no longer merely objects of the policy and the strategies. With priorities, policies and initiatives negotiated, decision-making and fiscal management devolved to the education community level, engagement of Indigenes as employees in the system and in related advisory and deliberative bodies and recognition of the Indigenous representative body as a partner in the process, opportunity for development of appropriate policy and its effective implementation to optimise outcomes appeared ideal. Optimal outcomes, however, were for the most part far from realised.

Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are not the only indigenous minority, or remnants of peoples, whose country has been colonised and subsequently came to be dominated by the new settlers. Their fate at the hands of the English, at colonisation and subsequently,
is likely to resemble that of the indigenes of the North American continent to a degree, and there may be some similarity with developments, for instance, from Spanish conquests in South America. It may, as a consequence, be helpful to canvass experience abroad, if possible from the points of view of the descendents of both the new settlers and of the colonised.
Chapter 7

Formal Education for some Other Indigenous Minorities.

As noted in Chapter 1, failure of policy on formal education for indigenous minorities in countries colonised by European powers, and whose new settlers subsequently became the mainstream, is not unique to Indigenous Territorians and Australians. In 2003, Chair of the United Nations (UN) Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Ole Henrik Magga, a Norwegian Sami, provided a comprehensive perspective on challenges facing indigenes the world over:

We live in a world that is increasingly multicultural and the traditional understanding of the content of the curricula and ways of teaching … does not work any more. The world is more uncertain than ever before …. Secondly, indigenous peoples and minorities are largely neglected in most countries in the designing of curricula and in the organization of teaching. In fact, in many countries almost nothing of the basic principles about multilingual and multicultural education established by UNESCO in mis field, are (sic) implemented. And thirdly, there is always the question of resources. We are poorest among the poor. Even in developed countries indigenous communities are not able to offer their children adequate education – and especially not an education meeting the aspirations of our peoples themselves.

He cited Article 15 of the (then) draft UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples as reflecting best indigenous peoples' educational aspirations:

Indigenous children have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State. All indigenous peoples also have this right and the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

Indigenous children living outside their communities have the right to be provided access to education in their own culture and language.

Magga was adamant that indigenous cultures and knowledge should be included in the curricula in “all levels of education for indigenous children and youth”, asserting that
“(t)here (was) no quality in an education where all (was) based” on cultures other than their own. He advocated preserving, developing and sharing indigenous knowledge for “the benefit of all mankind”. He explained,

(f)or indigenous peoples, it is the knowledge of the interconnectedness of all that was, that is and that will be, the vast mosaic of life and spirit and land/water forms, of which (we?) are an intricate part. It is the knowledge of all this that is known as Traditional Knowledge.

He stressed, however, that indigenous peoples did not want to be limited to their own knowledge only. Rather, they sought “to combine the best of (their) own traditions with the best of the western and European traditions” for true quality.1 The principles Magga espoused in the global perspective obviously pertained directly to education, in the fullest sense of the term, for Indigenous Territorians.

**A View on Cultural Difference in Administering Industry.**

Twenty years earlier, Geert Hofstede, then Director of the Arnhem, Netherlands, Institute for Research and Intercultural Cooperation, had provided another relevant global perspective. He was a white commercial executive born and bred in a former colonial power. In his paper, “The Cultural Relativity of Organizational Practices and Theories” (1983), he summarised the findings of research he had conducted, 1967–78, on differences between different peoples' work-related values in fifty countries. He reached the broad conclusion that the differences were such as to render ethnocentric theories of management, “those based on the value system of one particular country”, untenable in industry.2 He found, at the national level, that such endeavours as “‘management’ and ‘organization’” were “culturally dependent” to a degree not hitherto appreciated by practitioners and theorists. He reasoned that management and organisation were culturally dependent

because managing and organizing do not consist of moving tangible objects, but of manipulating symbols which have meaning to the people who are managed or organized. Because the meaning which we associate with symbols is heavily affected by what we have learned in our family, in

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our school, in our work environment, and in our society, management and organization are penetrated with culture from the beginning to the end.

He held that practising managers and organisers, and similarly theorists, unrealistically and mistakenly assumed the universal applicability of their own value systems: they worked from their own frames without heeding the cultural backgrounds of the people whom they were managing or organising. He believed both practitioners and theorists needed to develop an understanding of how the culture in which (they) grew up and which is dear to (them) and affects (their) thinking differently from other peoples' thinking, and what this means for the transfer of management practices and theories. What this can also lead to is a better ability to manage intercultural negotiations and multicultural organizations … which are essential for the common survival of us all.³

Hofstede's field was administration of industry. Culture's permeation of such activity and the need to recognise and heed differences in different peoples' culture-derived thinking that emerged from his management-focussed research were, per se, applicable to any cross-cultural human-intensive activity. Formal education in a relatively homogeneous Western society is Western culture-based, gestures such as bilingual education programs notwithstanding. By implication, effective provision for indigenous minorities in predominantly Western nations is a prime field in which cultural difference, inter alia difference between frames, needs to be taken into account⁴ Whilst their occupational fields and their individual contexts differed, Hofstede and Magga, both with global perspectives, were agreed on need to recognise and accommodate cultural difference and to obviate ethnocentricity.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Magga's observation, that even in “developed” countries, indigenous minorities were educationally deprived, is borne out by research projects in North America. In the early 1990s, for example, in the United States of America (USA), the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force found that about a third of indigenous American students dropped out of school, and three studies found the drop-out rate in secondary schools to be attributable variously

³ Hofstede. P. 89.
to students' perceptions of teachers' apathy and antipathy towards them, education programs' perceived irrelevance to students' lives, their boredom with schooling and its exacerbation by lack of the academic language skills needed to learn. Other studies in the USA focussed on why some minority groups were relatively successful in formal education and others were not. A division was perceived, “between dominated minorities who (resisted) ‘colonial’ education and voluntary minorities that (viewed) education as a path to economic success”, with implication that the former tended to fail and the latter to succeed; another issue was cultural difference “between home and school”. For teachers to be successful with American Indians, they needed “to overcome their students' resistance to education” and to possess skill in “intercultural communication”. To reverse the situation, four measures were proposed, “cultural and linguistic incorporation, community involvement, experiential and interactive teaching methods and testing programs that (emphasized) student advocacy”. Teachers whose practice promoted “Indian self-determination … learning as much as they (could) about the tribe they (worked) for and (attempting) to become culturally sensitive, respecting tribal customs and beliefs”, were lauded; those who remained assimilationist in their approach, bent on “(converting) Indians to thinking the only way to happiness (was) the ‘White Way’”, were decried. Complementary needs, to eliminate “damaging stereotypes about Indians” in literature, and to make “culturally authentic stories” available to be read by students from minority backgrounds, were noted. Disadvantage was evidently widespread amongst the indigenous peoples of the USA. Concern about it and endeavours to address related issues in education, in the 1990s, were also evident.

Generalising from the Alaskan context, Ray Bamhardt (1987) reflected on Western ethnocentricity in formal education for indigenous minorities. He regarded public education as prone to “heightened … political sensitivity and vulnerability in non-Western minority communities”, with the local school “an alien institution which (wielded) considerable influence over the lives of people in the community, but (was) controlled by forces outside the community”. He pursued direction for schools, discussing situations wherein indigenous communities had gained “political control” over their schools yet persisted with conventional provisions which “(transmitted) urban white culture”; “professional control” was also required, in his view, to have schools “transmit … traditional … values and

7 Reyhner.

As a group, Native American students are not afforded educational opportunities equal to other American students. They routinely face deteriorating school facilities, underpaid teachers, weak curricula, discriminatory treatment and outdated learning tools. In addition, the cultural histories and practices of Native students are rarely incorporated in the learning environment. As a result, achievement gaps persist with Native American students scoring lower than any other racial/ethnic group in basic levels of reading, math, and history. Native American students are also less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to drop out in earlier grades.9

The circumstances “routinely (faced)” by Native American students were not as severe in Indigenous community schools in the NT, but the other inequities and resultant inequitable outcomes were. The idea, embedded in government and the dominant culture, that formal Western-derived education was the key to Native Americans' well-being, the evident failure of the public policy conceived for their formal education and their consequent disadvantage are familiar.

Barnhardt and Kawagley recognised a cultural dimension in the causes of educational disadvantage for indigenous peoples who were minorities in national populations. Effectively, they found in local education provisions shortcomings that Hofstede had identified in management in national and multi-national industry. They discussed the notion of “the intersection of diverse world views and knowledge systems”: it was developed from perceived need for the “traditional knowledge systems and ways of knowing … embedded in the Native communities” to be integrated with the teaching of “the western/scientific view of the world” to indigenous children, “to enrich the school curriculum and enliven the learning experiences of the students”. It was argued that schools should impart to indigenous children

both indigenous and western knowledge and engage both indigenous and western learning styles in the teaching/learning process. They reasoned,

Native people may need to understand western society, but not at the expense of what they already know and the way they have come to know it. Non-Native people, too, need to recognize the co-existence of multiple worldviews and knowledge systems, and find ways to understand and relate to the world in its multiple dimensions and varied perspectives.10

The Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, instituted gradually from 1995–96 under the auspices of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, applied the idea of intersecting indigenous and western knowledge systems and learning in Alaska's five indigenous regions. Barnhardt and Kawagley (2004) reported on the Rural Initiative after its first two years' operation. They summarised education for Native Americans in rural Alaska as having moved from discrete indigenous knowledge and formal education systems early in the twentieth century to “a one-way flow of communication and interaction” of formal education overlaying indigenous knowledge, mid-century, and to a limited “two-way transaction” between the systems towards the late 1900s. Native communities in Alaska “(continued) to experience significant social, cultural and educational problems”, registering low on national indicator scales. The Rural Initiative was to “(foster)... interconnectivity and complementarity” between two functionally interdependent but largely disconnected complex systems – the indigenous knowledge systems rooted in the Native cultures that inhabit rural Alaska, and the formal education systems that have been imported to serve the educational needs of rural Native communities.

“(A) more comprehensive holistic system” was to evolve, integrating the existing systems without impinging upon the integrity of either.11 Barnhardt and Kawagley noted increased levels of student achievement, retention and attendance, increased frequency of students' opting for science, mathematics and engineering and generally greater interest and involvement in education in participating schools in rural Native communities in Alaska.12 The concept was evidently succeeding.13

13 It is also possible that “the Hawthorn effect”, of people initially reacting positively to the stimulation of change, came into play early in the implementation of the Rural Initiative.
The Rural Initiative and the associated research of Barnhardt and Kawagley focussed on educational provisions specifically for Alaskan Native peoples in rural settings. Wider-ranging contemporary studies in the USA by David A. Gruenewald (2003) in Washington DC and Kris D. Gutierrez and Barbara Rogoff (2003) in California were concerned with education for ethnic minorities, including Native Americans, in urban settings as well as rural ones. Gruenewald proposed synthesis of the educational discourses of “critical pedagogy” and “place-based education” into “a critical pedagogy of place”, with twin objectives of “decolonization” and “reinhabitation”. Not unlike Barnhardt and Kawagley, he held that

the place-specific nexus between environment, culture, and education …, is linked to cultural and ecological politics … (and) is informed by an ethic of eco-justice and other socio-ecological traditions that interrogates the intersections between cultures and ecosystems.

Education providers’ task was to relate education provisions to the local environment in all of its human and physical dimensions, as the Rural Initiative sought to do.

Gutiérrez and Rogoff examined ethnic minority students’ “ways of learning”. They studied “the schooling experiences of … historically … underserved … poor and working-class students in U.S. public schools – predominantly … of color, many … English-language learners”. The researchers eschewed “deficit-model thinking”, preferring “differences … (in) cultural learning styles” as the focus, with study of the way people normally acted “(f)rom a cultural-historical perspective”. The cultural-historic approach required understanding of the subjects' histories and the associated impact of experience of engagement in community activity, as well as ethnicity, and identification of “regularities” in the ways people in individual community entities participated in cultural practices and otherwise organised, acted and interacted. Involvement “repertoires”, or proclivities, could then be ascertained.

16 Gruenewald. P. 3.
Such study could inform the policy process for formal education in the NT, especially in teachers' methodology with adults and juveniles and with males and females, their engagement with students' parents and their communities and for program design and evaluation.

**CANADA.**

In 2002, the Minister for Canadian Heritage announced establishment of an Aboriginal Languages and Cultural Centre, acknowledging “Aboriginal languages, stories and heritage … (as) the foundation of Canada's diversity”. Nearly half of the estimated “50 to 70 Aboriginal languages” were judged to be “(nearing) extinction or endangered” and only three, including Inuktitut, the language of the Nunavut Inuits, were judged “viable”. With inception of the Languages and Cultural Centre, the Canadian Government committed itself “to preserve, revitalize and promote Aboriginal languages and cultures”.20  

The Policy and Research Directorate in the Department of Canadian Heritage's Aboriginal Affairs Branch was dedicated to “Aboriginal cultures, languages and identity, and the unique place of Aboriginal societies within Canada”.21 A Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures was established to advise on the Centre's priorities and operations, to submit its recommendations in 2004. In the meantime, its staff was to be predominantly indigenous, its promotion of languages and cultures was to “safeguard them for future generations”, including addressing the issue of loss of language and culture and “(supporting) a broad nationwide approach to community-based language and culture preservation activities and related cultural programming”.22 The Government appeared particularly conscious of a high proportion of “residential school claims” by indigenous litigants alleging loss of culture and language.23

Premier Paul Okalik (2002) reported that the Government of the recently created (1999) territory of Nunavut was committed to integrating “Inuit culture and values” into its official

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It should be noted that the bilingualism featured in Canadian materials refers to the official national languages, English and French, not to one of them and an indigenous language.


The Nunavut Department of Education catered for over 8 000 students in forty-one schools in predominantly indigenous communities. It comprised three regions: two, Kitikmeot and Kivallic, specified commitment to “promotion of the Inuktitut language and Inuit culture” in their schools and the third, Qikiqtani, was committed to cultural relevance, “(using) knowledge, values and skills of the community as the foundation of the program”; Kitikmeot and Kivallic specified “local control of education”; all three espoused commitment to “student centred education” and integration, or inclusion, of students with special needs; and Kivallic and Qikiqtani emphasised practical activity in children's learning. On the students' cultural background, the Kitikmeot statement was the most definitive, regarding indigenous language and culture and formal education:

The communities have deep roots in cultural practices and awareness. The Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun languages and cultural practices exist side by side with English, southern educational standards, and very well equipped and designed schools.25

The Nunavut Government and its Department of Education were thus already committed to integrate indigenous language and culture in practice in the public sector and school education when the Minister for Canadian Heritage made her language-and culture-related statements when opening the Languages and Cultural Centre.

The Nunavut initiatives are of some relevance to policy on Indigenous Territorians. Nunavut '99: Changing the Map of Canada (1999) is a collection of articles by Nunavut writers, compiled and distributed to celebrate “the creation of the Nunavut territory”, effectively its being granted self-government. They recorded appreciation of “the struggle to achieve a land claim agreement and territory, the workings of the new Nunavut government, the soul of the Inuit culture, and the challenges ahead for Nunavummiut”. In his article, “Looking Back …a journey of sorrow, joy and adventure …”, John Amagoalik reflected on the changes that had occurred during his lifetime. “(C)hildren being taken from their families for their assimilation into another culture” and “(l)iving under conditions of colonialism” had become things of the past, and Inuit self-image had declined and then recovered:


There was a time when many of my generation did not have pride in our Inuit identity and were not sure if they wanted to be Canadian citizens. Today, there is a resurgence of Inuit pride and we have become loyal Canadians. Even though our people have encountered racial discrimination in the past, we want reconciliation and we want all to feel welcome in our homeland. Our patience and our willingness to share continue to be cornerstones of our society.

It had taken about thirty years to gain the self-governing territory of Nunavut. The Nunavummiut, evidently largely from their own initiative, had progressed quite significantly towards a form of self-determination.

A *Nunavut '99* article written by *inuk*, Alexina Kublu, and *qallunaaq*, Mick Mallon, teachers of Inuktitut, “Our Language, Our Selves”, stressed that self-help was essential to save and maintain the language. They asserted that neither linguists and Inuit teachers, practising “salvage linguistics”, nor institutions could “revive a dying language” alone. “Commitment in the home”, primarily from parents and also from the people generally, with “pride in the language, and a determination to use it”, were the essential ingredients. They stressed that “(p)arents, with the help of schools and government, (would) be key to making Inuktitut a living, working language in the generations ahead”, identifying two problems to be overcome in the process: that when parents became aware that use of the language was disappearing, “it (was) already too late”; and that English was “the language of power, and of glitter”, with parents using it with their children “to link … (them) with the source of power”. Although work in Inuktitut curriculum had commenced in the 1970s and training of Inuit teachers teaching in Inuktitut had been introduced in the 1980s, improvement was required: specifically, “fully developed curriculum for high schools (was) lacking”, teachers required skills in teaching Inuktitut as a second language, funding was required to develop “Inuktitut second-language curriculum and materials” and “first-language literacy training and second language training” were needed at the adult level. Inuktitut was to join English and French as an official Nunavut language and to become “the working language of government”.

Obstacles were anticipated, especially with “many younger Inuit… (who were) more comfortable working in English” and continuing reliance, in the foreseeable future, upon “skilled southerners … (to fill) certain specialized positions”. Kublu and Mallon pointed also

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27 “Inuk” and “qallunaaq” are Inuktitut terms denoting, respectively, “person” and “white person”.

to the “mixed results at best” achieved over more than thirty years of French instruction in
the Canadian government, but were optimistic about Inuktitut's future. More work was
undertaken, from 2000, in curriculum and resources, “Nunavut-based … (and) community-
and student-focused”, notably including the secondary range.

The priorities and problems raised by Kublu and Mallon were practical ones for education
providers and Inuit communities. A point relevant to the NT situation, conveyed in “Our
Language, Our Selves”, is the vital importance of indigenous self-help and commitment in
language recovery, use and maintenance. They are, at least by implication, also essential to
any form and degree of self-determination.

SCANDINAVIA.

Difficulty in providing formal education for indigenous minorities was not limited to
lands relatively recently settled from imperial Britain. The Sami, or Lapps, of northern
Scandinavia, live in Sapmi, Lappland, which traverses Norway, Sweden and Finland and
extends into north-western Russia They do not comprise an ethnic group; rather they
have in common cultural heritage and Finno-Ugric language. From a glance at a map
of the area, it appears logical to create a discrete self-governing Sami state, similar to
the Nunavut territorial arrangement in Canada. Logistic considerations pose difficulties,
however. In 2004, one estimate of the Sami population was that it totalled approximately
48 000, comprising 25 000 in Norway, 17 000 in Sweden, 4 000 in Finland and 2 000
on Russia's Kola Peninsula There are nine Sami languages or dialects: according to one
source, North Sami was spoken by approximately 30 000 and each of the others were
estimated to be spoken by fewer than 500; and, depending on where they live, they may
also speak Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish or Russian. From the seventeenth century, the

Mallon made a linguistically-based observation of interest in the context of frames and ideas in policy
analysis, that research had found “that many fluently bilingual people (shifted) their personalities [or…
their cultures?] as they (shifted) language”.
Curriculum and Resource Development”, Education Nunavut and Curriculum and Resource Planning
Education Nunavut and The Curriculum and Resource Team, 2001. “Strategic Plan Project: March,
2001 Activities Update”, Education Nunavut and Curriculum and Resource Planning Project. Ottawa,
30 Sami, Sami, Saami, and Lapp are common alternative names/spellings.
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sami.
32 Estimates found, of the Sami population, ranged from 48 000 to 85 000, even up to 100 000, with
some acknowledging substantial assimilation into the mainstream and assimilated persons living in
cities. There was consistency, however, in their proportionate distribution. There was consistency also
Norwegian and Swedish kingdoms endeavoured to assimilate the Sámi through conversion to Christianity and forbidding use of their native languages, and when the borders between the Nordic states were established, they were forced to adapt to the dominant culture of the territory in which they lived. There is also the reality, that a self-governing Sámi territory would require a negotiated consensus between the sovereign states and the Sámi peoples. A Swedish document (2000?) asserted that speakers of some Sámi languages “(were) unable to understand” speakers of some others, which would pose another difficulty for a self-sufficient Sámi territory.

A Nordic Sámi Council was established in 1956, jointly by Sámi of Finland, Norway and Sweden. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the Sámi appeared generally fragmented, but the Council entity had endured, making for some pan-Sámi communication. A 1998 Earth Charter conference involved the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, representing Inuits from Greenland, Canada, Alaska and Russia, and the Sámi Council, “(representing) Sámi people from Sweden, Norway, Finland and … the Kola Peninsula in Russia”. The Sámi Council was thereby recognised in the context of issues for the world's indigenous peoples. There was a single Sámi flag.

By the late 1900s, Scandinavian Sámi had been granted and had elected their own parliaments. In each case, the Sámi assembly was mandated to act “as a governmental authority” on Sámi affairs, subordinate to the national parliament. No such provision was made for Sámi in Russia. The Sámi Parliament in Norway first convened in 1989, to undertake responsibility “for the political development of the Sámi people's future”, with funding allocated for the purpose. It had been legislated in the Sámi Act (1987), which specified “how the government of Norway (was supposed) to support the Sámi

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38 Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2004. “Sami”.

people to secure and develop their own language, culture and society”. The executive of the Parliament was elected by members of the Sámi Parliament, the Sámediggi.\textsuperscript{38} The government had acknowledged “special responsibility” for Norwegian Sámis, but responsibility for Sámi culture rested with the Sámis. The Sámediggi provided a means to effect an interface between them and the Norwegian government.\textsuperscript{39} The first Sámi Parliament in Sweden was elected in 1993.\textsuperscript{40} A “majority board” of six agreed by a majority of the members formed the executive, with the chair appointed by the Swedish government with advice from the Sámi Parliament. The Swedish Sámi Parliament’s tasks were similar to those of its Norwegian counterpart, with sources of funding including the state. The Sámi Parliament in Finland came into being in 1996, and the executive it chose was led by a full-time president. Its functions were similar to those of its counterparts in Norway and Sweden, and it similarly received some funding from the state.\textsuperscript{41}

By the end of the century, Scandinavian Sámi were thus recognised by the national governments within whose jurisdictions they lived as minority inhabitants. They had their own legislatures, legal and political entities, and they had thereby been afforded opportunity to determine their futures to a degree. Several universities offered Sámi language and culture studies. Such concessions had not been easily won, however, which in turn posed challenges, amongst both their own constituents and others. There also remained some uncertainty about rights to land and natural resources.\textsuperscript{42}

Sámi language and culture were officially recognised by the Scandinavian national governments for formal education purposes. A Swedish Sámi parliamentarian in the Swedish Delegation to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2003) reported that for the years of compulsory education, Sámi children in Sweden could attend either Sámi schools or regular ones. Those following Sámi curriculum were required to provide formal education that was “equal to public education”, meeting national goals for elementary and secondary schools, and also “(to ensure) that every Sámi (had) a good understanding of the Sámi cultural inheritance and that he/she (could) speak, read and write Sámish”. A new Sámi

\textsuperscript{38}“The Sámi Parliament”. Arendal, Norway. Tyholmen Videregåande Skole.

Elin Helander (“The Sami of Norway”, 1992) made the point that “everyday use of the Sami language” determined a person’s classification as a Sami and his/her right to vole in, or nominate as a candidate for, the Norwegian Sami Parliament. \url{http://www.tyholmen.vgs.no/eleverbeid/minoriteter/the_sami_parliament.htm}.


\textsuperscript{40}Samhällshistoria, 2002. “Important years in Sami history”. \url{http://www.itv.se/boreale/history.htm}.


curriculum was to be introduced that year, for use in Sámi schools and to be integrated into elementary schools. Finance to develop and produce Sámi curriculum materials was inadequate, a problem common to Sámi education across Scandinavia. For consistency in materials and to share competence, it was recognised that all education-focussed Sámi bodies needed to co-operate with each other, but lack of funding made it difficult to realise the ideal. Other difficulties, familiar from perusal of the Nunavut experience, included needs to revitalise Sámi languages and for all Sámi children to learn their history, culture and language, and shortages of appropriately prepared and experienced teachers and teaching materials. There was also the need for self-help, with “schools alone … (unable to) keep the language alive in a meaningful way”.

The Norwegian Sámi Parliament made for “co-ordinated and principled Sámi policy …, ‘(ensuring) favourable conditions to enable the Sámi people of Norway to maintain its language, culture and social life’”. Most Sámi in Norway were held to be “integrated with the rest of society”, with more living in Oslo than in their traditional homelands. Early in the twenty-first century, the Norwegian “Sámi minority (officially had) its own primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools, text books written in the Sámi language, and its own Sámi college in Karasjok” and many Sámi “immigrants (were taught) their mother tongue”. The Council of Europe's Education for Democratic Citizenship was told (2003), Sámi as first, second or foreign language is offered to all Sámi pupils and others throughout the curriculum. Since Sámi culture and social life are part of the common heritage that all pupils in the Norwegian compulsory school system should learn about, Sámi culture, language, history and social life comprise part of the common content of the different subjects.


intended to build a sense of security in relation to the pupils' own culture and to develop Sámi language and identity, as well as equipping Sámi pupils to take an active part in the community and enabling them to acquire education at all levels.

The Sámi College was responsible to train Sámi teachers, and Sámi language and Sámi studies were responsibilities for the University of Tromsø.\(^48\) The principle of “(d)ifferentiation, adapting education to suit the needs, aptitudes and abilities of all pupils”, was universal in Norway and the basis of its inclusive system. Such an approach was realistic, due to the relatively small size of schools, with 76% of all primary and secondary schools having fewer than 300 students enrolled, and 36% fewer than 100. On the levels of formal education attained, the Norwegian population was rated 6\(^{th}\) amongst the OECD countries.\(^49\)

Finland, similar to Norway and Sweden, was officially committed to equity in opportunities in public education for all residents. The National Board of Education (2002) made its commitment to its Sámi minority:

> The Sámi … have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. The Sámi language may be a language of instruction in basic, general upper secondary and vocational education, and it can be taught as the mother tongue and as a foreign language. In the four municipalities of the Sámi area, Sámi-speaking pupils must be provided with basic education primarily in the Sámi language, if their guardians so wish.\(^50\)

It has been suggested (2000), however, that in practice the Finnish government may not have progressed as far as those in Norway and Sweden had in promoting a degree of self-determination through devolving some responsibility for Sámi affairs to the Sámi Parliament\(^51\) The Finnish Sámi Parliament (1997) stated that conditions for Sámi had

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\(^{48}\) Mikkelsen, 2003.  
\(^{50}\) “The Sami in Finland”, 2000. Virtual Finland  
“improved considerably … in recent years”, but noted that as the government proceeded “to secure a special position and rights for the Sámi population”, instances of anti-Sámi activity by majority population members were increasing and not constrained. The legislation was considered insufficiently definitive in directing commitment of resources in public education to teaching Sámi language and culture and in devolving administration of schools to Sámi, rather than to municipalities, and it was claimed that “the school (cut) the children off from their cultural background and its values”. The Sámi Parliament considered that legislative arrangements made in 1995 “considerably (improved) the possibilities of Sámi people to develop their own language and their own culture on the basis of cultural autonomy” but that the reform’s implementation was hindered by “a lack of resources and vocal anti-Sámi activities”, the latter evidently condoned at the municipal level. Lack of legal action in relation to “activities directed against the Sámi” was attributed in part to public prosecutors' not deeming it necessary to prosecute under the Finnish Penal Code and in part to failure of the Penal Code to satisfy the relevant requirements of the *Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*.52

Municipalities in the Sámi Homeland have done their best to organise both Sámi classes and instruction given in Sámi, although the number of participants has been small.

In perspective, in 1997 the language of instruction for 556 100 students in 3 978 schools was Finnish, 34 200 in 334 schools were taught in Swedish, and 2 100 in 7 schools were taught in “other” languages, including Sámi. Lack of appropriate materials and qualified secondary teachers for Sámi was recognised as “the greatest problem”. Translation of secondary and vocational curriculum guidelines into Sámi was progressing, however, and the government “actively (encouraged)” production of Sámi-language support materials, making some budgetary provision for the purpose. Universities had quotas for prospective Swedish- and Sámi-speaking students to ensure access for those minorities, two universities in Northern Finland had quotas for Sámi-speaking teacher-trainees and a plan for training Sámi-speaking secondary teachers was being developed. Only 0.03% of all pupils failed to complete the mandatory education requirements in the 1996–97 school year, through dropping out or attaining the age at which attendance ceased to be compulsory without having mastered basic skills. To obviate marginalisation in the community, the system


instituted a preventative strategy, for 1998–2002, to address the needs of students “at risk of exclusion”. The composition of the cohort of children who did not achieve minimum required outcomes was not stated, nor were target groups identified, but Sámi would have been included.53

Students in Finland studying in Sámi were reported to have increased significantly, from 1999, when the state started to allocate to the municipalities funding specifically tied to the purpose. As a consequence, all Sámi Homeland schools, other than one upper secondary school, and several mainstream schools taught Sámi, covering the three languages/dialects spoken in Finland. Three universities now offered studies in Sámi language and culture. Under new legislation, Sámi could be both a language of instruction and a subject in comprehensive, upper secondary and vocational schools, and the schools were obliged to prepare a discrete curriculum for delivery to students studying in Sámi. As Sámi instruction was still relatively new, much had to be done, “creating the legislative and economic prerequisites of such schooling, educating the first generation of teachers, and preparing Sámi textbooks – often the first ones – for the different subjects”. Teachers required “(familiarity) with multicultural pedagogics and with the Nordic Sámi community”. There were also prejudices regarding Sámi language to overcome. Sámi education in Sweden and Norway provided good resource bases. By 2002, progress in education for Sámi in Finland was such that bilingualism, in Sámi and the dominant Finnish, was highly prized, a phenomenon recognised by the Sámi Parliament.54 Reform in formal education for Sámi in Finland was thus beginning to yield tangible positive outcomes.

It is evident that some consistency in formal education for Sámi across Scandinavia had evolved by the turn of the twenty-first century, but their status differed from state to state. Inconsistencies were outlined in a *resumé* (2000) of their circumstances:

> In all countries Sámi’s *(sic)* have full citizenship, on the other hand the Sámi are not fully recognized as an indigenous group by all governments. (They avoid) the international legislation for indigenous peoples and agreements such as the ILO or Rio declarations, by referring to the Sámi's as a *minority*. …


The Norwegian government recognize the Sámi's as an ethnic minority and as a separate people at the same time. Norway is therefore the only nation with an indigenous Sámi population who follows the UN declaration of indigenous people, and the human rights declaration. … (I)n the 1960s… the Sámi's right to preserve their own culture was officially acknowledged. Since then the Sámi language has been taught in the schools and several Sámi institutions (have) been created. …

Sweden does recognize the Sámi as an ethnic minority but (has) not signed the UN declaration for the indigenous peoples rights. A separate education organization exists and one museum … functions as a research facility. …

The Sámi of Finland have no rights to land, waters and traditional sources of livelihood according to Finnish law. … (T)he rights of the Sámi as an indigenous people (do not conform) with international human rights agreements – to use an understatement. At the same time Finland's government and its cultural institutions (are) supporting the Sámi culture better than most countries ….

Notwithstanding such differences in official stances on Sámi from state to state, early in the twenty-first century, public policy on their formal education did not differ significantly from that for the mainstream across Scandinavia. Where it varied, it was positively discriminatory: the indigenous languages/dialects and culture were recognised and related legislation required their incorporation in school curriculum, including children being taught in Sámi. The relatively small numbers and the multiplicity of native languages/dialects rendered each arrangement for Sámi logistically feasible and desirable. The Norwegian approach was particularly attractive, in the mainstream context as well as in its provisions for Sámi

PERU.

Peru had been a Spanish possession for almost three centuries when it gained independence in 1826. Today, Spanish is the language most commonly spoken and Quechua and Aymara are acknowledged as indigenous Peruvian tongues. Broadly speaking, there are two indigenous scenarios in Peru, in the Andes and in the Amazon River region. In 1999, indigenes made up 36% of Peru's multi-ethnic population; they were outnumbered only by “mestizos”, mixed-race people, who comprised 49% of the total; and the balance was of European, African and Asian descent. Despite their substantial numbers,
indigenous Peruvians were distinctly marginalised, socially, economically and culturally: the 1993 Constitution, promoted by President Alberto Fujimori, effectively repealed the inalienable status of lands belonging to indigenous communities, established under the 1930 Constitution, rendering them vulnerable to multinational exploitation. The vast majority of indigenous Peruvians, 8.7 million Quechas and Aymaras in the Andes, focussed on “economic and social integration with the white and mestizo world”. The remainder, some 300 000 indigenes of 65 ethnicities in 1 200 locations in Peruvian Amazon, despite economic and educational levels lower than those of their Andean counterparts, had recently experienced “greater political and cultural development”: it was attributed to “the spread of ecological ideas” and consequent environmental policies requiring interests seeking access to natural resources to negotiate with local indigenous organisations. As a result, there was an assertion of indigenous cultures in the Amazon communities, in contrast with “a widespread tendency of ‘de-culturalisation’” amongst Quechas and Aymaras in their quest for Western assimilation. In Lima, discrimination was lessening, but prevailed in particular in workplaces, public arenas and schools, determined mainly by colour, and favouring “‘whites and light-coloured mestizos’”.55

There were contrasts in formal education for indigenous Peruvians, between Andes and Amazon regions, in the 1990s. Legislation promoted “‘the study and knowledge of native languages’”, guaranteed “‘the right of the (indigenous) communities … to receive education in (their own languages)’” (1979) and required “‘intercultural bilingual education’” in accordance with regional traits, “‘(to preserve) the diverse cultural and (linguistic heritages) of the country’” (1993). A formal education study conducted in the predominantly Quechuan province of Tayacaja (late 1990s?) found practice to be inconsistent with the legislation: no teachers were trained in “bilingual and intercultural education”; Castilian was the language of instruction, despite indigenous teachers' being bilingual; programs taught had been devised for Peru generally and allowed no local adaptation; “use of Quechua was prohibited”; and “local cultural expressions” tended to be ridiculed and denigrated, especially by the “(monolingual)… educative agents … from Hispanic cities”. The researcher, Nestor Godofredo Taipe Campos, asserted that circumstances in Tayacaja were typical of those prevailing elsewhere in the Peruvian Andes.56

In Peruvian Amazon, “western-style education” had largely destroyed indigenous knowledge. In the 1990s, however, “trained indigenous teachers (were) restoring confidence in traditional values”. Lucy Trapnell (2003) recalled formal education there in the 1970s: parents expected schooling to give their children better “conditions of life”, valuing little their own knowledge and language and expecting “white people's knowledge” to enable acquisition of “white people's goods”. With growing dependence on a market economy, they moved from subsistence farming to market production and over-worked their land, income from crops fell, prices of goods increased, children became malnourished and peoples' lives deteriorated. It was evident that Western education was not fulfilling expectations. Children learnt little from being taught “from a western worldview” and the indigenous culture was disregarded, “even vilified”. Young people left school virtually illiterate and innumerate, growing up feeling negative about their heritage and themselves.\(^{57}\) They were casualties of abiding Spanish-based ethnocentricity.

Peruvian Amazon indigenous organisations, established “to defend their peoples' collective rights” in the 1980s, challenged provision of formal education “based entirely upon the concepts of an urban colonial society”. In 1988, an indigenous confederation instituted the Intercultural Bilingual Education Teacher Training Programme\(^{58}\) to promote “an alternative method of teaching, based on the country's cultural and linguistic diversity, which (recognised) indigenous peoples' rights”. The Programme had three key tasks: to improve indigenous children's opportunities for secondary, tertiary and technical education, thus to realise the UN's ideas of using education to eliminate poverty and marginalisation and to help indigenous peoples “take control of their lives” and influence development in the Amazon; to engender “awareness of, and respect for, indigenous language and culture”; and to promote environmental education. Trainees for the courses in “bilingual and inter-cultural teaching skills” were selected by their communities. On graduation, they were equipped to integrate Amazonian peoples' indigenous knowledge and values with those derived from Europe, and to develop oracy and literacy in both their own languages and Spanish. In 2002, the Madrid-based Secretary of State for International Co-operation and for Latin America awarded the Programme the Twelfth Bartolome de las Casa Prize in recognition of “its important contribution to the revaluation of the cultures of the indigenous peoples of the

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\(^{58}\) The Program was referred to as the FORMABIAP, derived from Formation de Máesters Bilingues de la Amazonia Peruana.
Peruvian Amazon”. Trapnell claimed, fifteen years after the Programme's inception, that “a new generation (was) emerging – individuals who (were) better able to protect and manage their ancestral lands” and who could again “(find) pride in their cultural heritage and identity”.

Earlier provision of Western education for indigenous Peruvians in the Amazon area may have paralleled that in the Andes, but measures taken to redress the situation in the former and evident early achievement were in stark contrast.

EMERGENT PATTERNS.

Much consistency was evident in the patterns that emerged from the foregoing study of the provision of formal education for indigenous minorities overseas. In all instances, they bore out Hofstede's contention, in commercial administration, that ethnocentric approaches were not viable. Policy-makers, providers and clientèle experienced problems attributable to ethnocentricity, manifest in education systems and the substance and delivery of their services. Those problems were similar in all contexts, despite historic, ethnic, cultural, social, political and geographic differences. Where they were recognised and regarded seriously and in need of remediation, the problems were being addressed in practice, other than amongst the Quechua and Aymara in Peru. Although in no instance was there any claim that the problems had been fully remedied, nor that a universal panacea had been found, some positive outcomes from measures taken were reported.

Many of the problems evident or perceived in formal education for the indigenous minority peoples canvassed in this chapter were similar to those identified in the context of Indigenes in the NT. They included inequity in educational opportunities, lack of indigenous cultural compatibility in curriculum, teaching methodology and institutional governance, shortage of teachers suited and adequately trained to work with indigenous students, their families and their communities, significantly lower achievement in schooling and training than that of their non-indigenous counterparts, including those of other non-English-speaking backgrounds, and general erratic attendance, low retention and apathy with respect to formal education. Also common to indigenous minorities were disadvantaged circumstances, such as social dislocation, sub-standard housing, poor health, low educational attainment, low self-image, poverty, substance abuse, unemployment, welfare dependence, loss of traditional culture and lack of aspiration, all of which impacted adversely upon participation and

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60 For the purposes of this study, Sami are accepted as the indigenous inhabitants of the Scandinavian north, although some of them may not enjoy such recognition in legislation.
achievement in formal education. With Hofstede's insight, the disadvantage of Indigenous peoples in Australia appears symptomatic of white Australian ethnocentricity. Where the issues were addressed with some success in overseas settings, however, the initiatives taken are consequently likely to be able to inform policy, services and service delivery for Indigenous Territorians.

In each of the overseas contexts considered, the cultures and languages of the indigenous peoples were officially recognised. In all instances, other than in the Peruvian Andes, that recognition was translated into the embodiment of indigenous language and culture in formal education curricula and institutional operations, with substantial local control and autonomy devolved to or assumed by the communities.

It was not a matter of replacing the existing mainstream-focused educational provisions with traditional indigenous offerings, however: the indigenous peoples were conscious that they needed to be able to co-exist effectively with the dominant populations, to have access to their goods, to utilise and participate in their services and to contribute to governments. Rather, curricula and operations in existing institutions were modified and services and materials were developed to incorporate indigenous languages and desired/necessary features of the indigenous cultures. Reasoning, reflected in the Canadian First Nations context, included conviction that “cultural and value differences … (were) likely to affect the teaching-learning processes as education (was) the process by which individuals (learnt) the culture of a society and (became) its members”. In Nunavut and the Scandinavian countries, the adjustments made to accommodate indigenous language and culture were effected to the tertiary education level. Some difficulties were conceded, but the developments generally appeared to be generating, or regenerating, enthusiasm, optimism and pride in indigenous heritages, improved participation and outcomes were claimed, and assumption of ownership and responsibility was evident.

Incorporation of indigenous language and culture in formal education in overseas settings thus appeared to be yielding positive results. In the instances considered, evident revitalisation of the involved indigenous peoples alone appeared to justify such initiatives’ having been taken. It does not necessarily follow that the success experienced, or perceived, in those ventures could be replicated with similar endeavour amongst Australian Indigenes. Some would be bound to argue that, in an anthropological sense, Indigenous Australians are too different from indigenous peoples abroad for the approach to be applicable to

61 “First Nations Perspectives”. P. 3.
them. It may also be held that their linguistic and cultural diversity and the small numbers comprising most language groups pose logistic problems. In the first place, as noted in Chapter 4, *Homo sapiens* is a single species, having sprung from a common source, and the differences that evolved between peoples, in the course of migration through and to habitable parts of the planet as they accommodated themselves to the environments encountered, were relatively small and, in evolutionary terms, recent It is therefore unlikely that endeavours that recognise, promote and capitalise upon indigenous language and culture, appropriately managed, could fail in any human context.

Besides, differences evolved elsewhere: they are evident between the Inuit of the far north of the north American continent, the American Indians of “the lower States”\(^62\) of the USA, the Sami of northern Scandinavia and the indigenous peoples of Peru, just as they are amongst Australia’s Indigenous peoples. Second, the logistics argument, notwithstanding the pragmatic realism it embodies, should be confounded by the sustained implementation of the Intercultural Bilingual Education Teacher Training Programme and its impact, as reported, with indigenous peoples in the Peruvian Amazon. Incorporation of Indigenous languages and cultures in the curriculum, governance and operation of formal education institutions, where they are relevant, in Australia must therefore at the least not be inapplicable.

Formal education in the NT and its Indigenous clients could benefit from heed of experience abroad. The vitality and integrity in indigeneity evidently resulting from the official recognition of indigenous cultures and languages and their incorporation in formal education hold promise. The flexibility exercised in accommodating them in public education systems would be instructive. The enthusiasm evident amongst indigenes in such developments *per se* alone justifies serious consideration of the idea.\(^63\) The potential of such experience to benefit formal education for Indigenous Territorians and how it may do so will be discussed in Chapter 10.

\(^{62}\) On several occasions during a recent visit, I heard Alaskans refer to the States of the USA south of the Canadian border as “the lower States”.

\(^{63}\) It was interesting to note, in the materials studied, that despite various international conferences on indigenous affairs and public education and involving indigenous delegates, with successful ventures and achievements highlighted, there appeared to be little or no reference to others’ experience and practices when initiatives were undertaken at home, other than occasionally in theoretical justification.
Chapter 8
Reviews and Reports of the 1990s.

The Northern Territory has been concerned about the low levels of achievement in Aboriginal schools and the many factors influencing student outcomes.

NT Public Accounts Committee, 1996.¹

The single greatest challenge for the Northern Territory Department of Education is to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students in partnership with Indigenous people and other agencies and jurisdictions.


In the Northern Territory (NT), as routine operations and implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) proceeded, formal education for Indigenous Territorians received attention from various bearings. The reports generated generally yielded disquiet and little encouragement for either the public provider, the NT Department of Education (NTDE), or its Indigenous clients. During 1989–90, Tom Harris, NT Minister for Education, 1983–86 and 1988–90, reviewed provisions for traditionally-oriented Aborigines, recorded in his *Talking is not enough* (1990). At the time, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody was completing its hearings 1987–91. In its deliberations, underlying issues, “social, cultural and legal factors” with implications for educational provisions, emerged as pertinent to the incidence of Aborigines' incarceration and deaths in custody. In 1993, a national review of education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, essentially against the AEP's goals, was commissioned, the Reference Group which oversaw its conduct reporting with modest optimism in 1995.

Overlapping with the national review, the NT Public Accounts Committee scrutinised provision of formal education in bush communities, 1994–96. Initially, foci were to be predominantly in financial administration, on the allocation process, consultation with Indigenous Territorians, administrative efficiency, fiscal accountability and evaluation of


initiatives; as investigation proceeded, other factors with significant implications for the effectiveness of formal education were given precedence. *Inter alia*, seriously declining standards were detected. Towards the end of the decade, under new Northern Territory Government (NTG) policy direction, a review of the public sector included a brief “in-depth” review of the NTDE focussed on its essential business, teaching and learning in schools. Significant relevant outcomes were establishment, in 1999, of an Aboriginal Education Branch to redirect formal education for Indigenous Territorians and a review of that field. Former NT Senator Bob Collins was engaged to conduct the review and to devise a five-year plan, the initial stage of a longer-term thrust to reverse current adverse trends in educational outcomes for Indigenous Territorians. The Collins Review report, *Learning lessons* (1999), reported findings similar to those of the Public Accounts Committee and set directions to redress failure in the immediate future.

**Tom Harris: Talking is not enough.**

Harris observed that since advances made immediately after Self-Government, the NTDE's Primary Assessment Program showed that the progress of Aboriginal children in bush schools had “halted at levels well below their urban counterparts”, despite substantially increased support from the NTG and the Commonwealth. He reviewed schooling for traditionally-oriented Aborigines with personal consultation in their communities, documented, with discussion and recommendations, in *Talking is not enough* (1990). Consistent with policy promulgated in *Towards the 90s* (1988), he advocated formal individual community-based planning, taking account both of cultural factors and of “Goals for Schooling in Australia” (1989), controlled locally and negotiated with specialist assistance from the NTDE. He envisaged that a finalised plan, effectively a resource agreement with the NTDE, would specify goals such as levels of attendance, parent and community participation and students' achievement He advocated Aboriginalisation of staff in bush school schools, taking account of community priorities, restructure of Feppi to provide “ground-up” policy advice relayed from school councils, and practical attention to the nexus between social and health issues and education. Related issues included potential segregation on racial grounds and dependency on unemployment benefits. Proliferation of homeland centres at the time posed particular challenges for service delivery.

Perceived discrimination in favour of non-Indigenes in the provision of housing for public sector employees in Indigenous communities was identified as contentious.³

Harris posited measures to address the issues. He proposed enrolment of children in preschool from the age of three years with their mothers' involvement, restructure of early childhood years in primary schools, with introduction of an adult education element to encourage and support parents' active participation in their children's learning, and flexibility in the school day and calendar to adjust to each community's situation. Student attendance and community responsibility were to be addressed in community education plans. He was anxious that students should not progress to secondary education until they were academically ready. At the junior secondary level, he envisaged studies in the distance mode and vocational education in community education centres as well as “direct teaching”, to be specified in the local plan. He wanted Yirara College to maintain its current services, and development of facilities providing “a supportive residential environment (to enable participation) in Secondary Education” in major centres, anticipating a need to increase boarding places. Community education centres were to offer vocational education and training in communities, with multi-skilling and modular training to enhance employment prospects, and the Katherine Rural College, the Centre for Appropriate Technology\textsuperscript{4}, the Territory Training Centre and the NT Open College of TAFE were to offer “a more comprehensive range of short courses” to prepare young people for employment locally. He believed that community participation in design, construction and maintenance of facilities, with practical involvement of community education centres, could contribute much towards training and employment.

Harris reiterated Batchelor College's proposed development, as tabled in the Legislative Assembly in 1988. He recommended that the College give priority to enhancing “teaching of and in Aboriginal languages”, particularly those used in bilingual programs. For graduates' qualifications to be recognised as equivalent to similar ones awarded elsewhere, entry with Year 10 numeracy and English literacy competence, external course accreditation and an element of external assessment of students in their year of graduation were proposed, as was post-graduation continuing education. Rigour was also recommended for the Centre for Aboriginal and Islander Studies at the Northern Territory University, in developing, evaluating, accrediting and registering courses. The University was urged to establish a Centre for Aboriginal Language Research, to provide distance tertiary education services to Indigenes and others in remote communities. Provision specifically related to teaching

\textsuperscript{4} The Centre for Appropriate Technology, which devises and manufactures equipment suited to conditions in Indigenous communities in Central Australia, was established in the mid-1970s as a campus of the Alice Springs Community College. It gained international recognition.
in remote Aboriginal communities, to enable graduates to read for higher degrees, was also proposed.\(^5\)

Concluding his *resumé*, Harris referred briefly to matters of less direct relevance to the focus of his review. He recommended that the particular “educational needs and difficulties” of Aboriginal children in urban settings be given priority, recognising that the problems they faced differed from those of their counterparts in the bush.\(^6\) He wanted the findings of his review to be integrated in AEP strategic and operational planning from 1991. The NTG, the Commonwealth and individual communities were strongly urged to act in close collaboration, with the Commonwealth to consider local education plans when allocating resources. He also encouraged extension of provisions in Aboriginal communities with contemporary information technology.\(^7\)

Harris's discussion and recommendations were wide-ranging. He acknowledged, however, that implementation of his recommendations could only “go some way towards” improving education service delivery. He asserted

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\text{… until the complicated cultural, social, health and attitudinal problems … experienced in many Aboriginal communities today are resolved, success will be limited. … The process of addressing that situation (of “a ‘culture in distress’”) must start with the communities themselves.}
\]

\[
\text{Government can provide the resources and expertise to assist with the necessary change but, without a real commitment on the part of Aboriginal people, their children will continue to be disadvantaged in comparison to other Australian children.}\(^8\)
\]

Clearly, Harris saw need for local ownership, control, acceptance of responsibility and practical commitment with respect to the complex issues that tended to be endemic in Indigenous communities across the NT, particularly in the provision of formal education. Many of the thrusts of his recommendations, often reminiscent of Watts and Gallacher and the more recent Cameron/Thiele Report, can be seen in AEP initiatives subsequently taken. The perspective, over a decade later, does not appear to have changed. The statement that

\(^{5}\) Harris, Tom. Pp. 37–44. Harris is so identified to distinguish him from Dr. Stephen Harris.
\(^{6}\) Independently, in 1990, I proposed study of education-related circumstances of Aboriginal children in Darwin, and was told by Senior Executive officers that such research should not proceed as it would arouse expectations that the NTG could not afford to meet.
\(^{7}\) Harris, Tom. Pp. 44–45.
\(^{8}\) Harris, Tom. P. 6.
“(t)he process of addressing that situation must start with the communities themselves”, a truism, remains valid, despite the “blame the victim” element that it may be perceived to imply.

The community education “cradle to grave” concept, implemented in the larger communities from 1988, was largely dismantled from 1992, as was the Open College. Most of the NTDE's post-school employment and training responsibility and activity transferred to the NT Employment and Training Authority, established late in 1991. The Authority was “independent and primarily industry-driven”, operating principally through competence-based training contracts negotiated with clients and performed by trainers that it registered and engaged.9 It focussed principally on the needs of industry in Darwin and the other urban centres. Aboriginal communities had access to its services, and some took advantage of them, commonly through contracts negotiated by community councils and resource centres, with some positive outcomes. A consequence, however, was that adult education as a systemic service, as it had evolved from the 1960s, was phased down to individual local initiatives [e.g. the Maningrida JET (Jobs, Employment and Training) Centre].10

Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, established by the Commonwealth in 1987, completed its investigations and reported in 1991. The Commission conducted detailed research into the deaths themselves individually and comprehensive consultation through formal hearings and meetings in a wide range of settings across Australia. Underlying issues pertinent to the incidence of Aborigines' incarceration and their dying in custody were found to have implications for formal education provisions.11 Education was believed able to foster “empowerment and self-determination” through which the number of Aborigines in custody might be reduced, their disadvantage eliminated and


10 At a meeting with Professor Don Watts, on his appointment as Director of the Employment and Training Authority, approximately 1993–94, (then) Principal Education Officer (Community Education Centres Unit), John Rattigan, and I tried in vain to persuade him to retain and develop adult education in Community Education Centres. Rattigan, formerly an adult educator and recently principal of Maningrida CEC, most able, perceptive and sincere throughout his service, observed afterwards that a critical implication of the direction in which Watts was taking the Authority was that adult education for Aborigines in numeracy and English literacy, commonly in demand and well-attended, would disappear.

11 On behalf of the NTDE, and supported by Justice Trevor Riley QC, I appeared before the Commission at its hearing on “underlying issues” in Darwin in 1990. The main focus was on the community education concept and provisions made in post-primary and adult education.
reconciliation advanced. Commissioner Elliott Johnston QC (1991) judged the AEP, supported by its implementation process, “to be a good policy”, providing opportunity both for Aborigines to “control” educational provisions and for those provisions to redress disadvantage.

In the implementation of the AEP, the Commission regarded pre-schooling, schooling, and related training and employment integral to redressing the issues of disadvantage underlying the incidence of Aborigines' incarceration and deaths in custody. The AEP's success overall was judged to depend upon its effectiveness at the pre-school level, with active involvement of “the parents or those responsible”. The Commission believed that curriculum, teaching and administration throughout formal schooling could reflect Australia's “Aboriginal history and Aboriginal viewpoints on social, cultural and historical matters”. Locally, programs should incorporate such viewpoints, with Aboriginal people engaged in their design and implementation. Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (AECGs) were to negotiate with providers the inclusion of studies “to inform students on social issues such as the legal system, … civil liberties, drug and alcohol use and sex education” as communities and organisations saw fit. The Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Program was endorsed, provided Aborigines were “guaranteed adequate consultation, negotiation and support” in its implementation. Governments and AECGs were urged to heed Batchelor College's approaches to training Aboriginal teachers and other operatives for work in remote communities. As in school curriculum, teachers' professional development was to embody Aboriginal history and Aboriginal viewpoints, with Aborigines involved in its delivery.

It was recommended that AECGs consider how communities and teachers, locally, might negotiate the rôle of teachers. Similarly governments and AECGs, and unions as appropriate, were to consider how teachers, children and parents might negotiate guidelines for teaching Aboriginal students and teachers' engagement and conditions. The Aboriginal Education Worker concept, “ensuring Aboriginal participation in the education system”, was supported, deserving appropriate status and pay; recognition was required, however, of potential conflict between community expectations and those of the provider, the Workers' employer, and of a Worker's accountability to his/ her community as well as to the employer. Governments were to support adult education institutions that were controlled by Aborigines and institutions that offered courses approved by Indigenous; students were to be entitled to allowances

13 Johnston. P. 27.
in parity with those applicable for comparable technical and further education (TAFE) courses, and flexibility was required in time allowed to complete requirements in view of their relative educational disadvantage. It was stressed that in AEP implementation, Aborigines' participation in decision-making in “planning, delivery and evaluation” should remain paramount and that aims to strengthen “Aboriginal identity, decisionmaking and self-determination” and to attain equity in education be heeded. Such participation and self-sufficiency were considered mutually dependent for success.14

Principles similar to those embodied in the recommendations on pre-school-to-adult education obtained with those made on training for Aborigines' increased “economic opportunity”. The Commission advocated schemes for training in a wide range of skills, enterprises for engagement in the economy and arrangements for Aborigines and their organisations' participation in decision-making and management. There was to be flexibility in operations and requirements, with the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training working in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, and Aborigines actively participating in all activity, including related research.15 Housing and community infrastructure were thought to hold particular potential for training, employment and economic activity.16 The thrusts proposed were logical, but their initiation by governments, with funding from public moneys, meant that they would derive from the official frame, perpetuate paternalism and risk exacerbating dependence.

Johnston was realistic, to a degree, in the pre-requisites he specified for Aborigines to gain control over their lives and communities.

The first and most crucial is the desire and capacity of Aboriginal people to put an end to their disadvantaged situation and to take control of their own lives. There is no other way. Only the Aboriginal people can … assure their own future … no easy tiling. …

The second pre-requisite is assistance from the broad society and this basically means assistance from governments with the support of the electorate, or at least without its opposition. …

The third pre-requisite … is having in place an established … procedure whereby the broader society can supply the assistance referred to and the

Aboriginal society can receive it whilst at the same time maintaining its independent status and without a welfare-dependent position being developed between the two groups.\textsuperscript{17}

He was idealistic, however, in contemporary Australia, to have expected public funding for Indigenous well-being and advancement to be so managed as to promote and reinforce Indigenes' independence and to obviate welfare-dependence. The society's civic culture supports positive discrimination for the disadvantaged, but it requires stringent accountability in commitment of public moneys and expects return from investment, common features of government agencies' frames. The Royal Commission's findings and recommendations nonetheless impacted strongly upon policy on Indigenous affairs. Although consequent initiatives did not yield any universal \textit{panacea}s, the Report continued to be heeded at least for the next decade.

**National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.**

In 1993, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Robert Tickner, introduced a national review of education for Indigenous Australians. Oversight of education for Indigenous Australians was moved from Aboriginal Affairs to the Department of Employment, Education and Training, and Minister Kim Beazley (junior) appointed a Reference Group, chaired by Mandawuy Yunupingu, to oversee the review. The terms of reference effectively directed review against the goals of the AEP. The Reference Group reported first to Beazley's successor, Simon Crean, and subsequently jointly to Crean and Ross Free, the latter having been allocated the new portfolio of Schools, Vocational Education and Training. The \textit{Final Report} was tabled in 1995.\textsuperscript{18}

The review started with national advertisements inviting submissions and a discussion paper was distributed widely early in 1994. About 180 submissions were received from groups and individual respondents. Public consultation followed, in over thirty locations and involving

\textsuperscript{17} Johnston. Pp. 16–20.


“many hundreds of people”, with meetings chaired by Indigenous members of the Reference Group, and there were private discussions with senior personnel of “peak organizations and major providers of education”.

The Group's reports presented comprehensive information, including extensive statistical data, and the final one dealt with the mass of written and oral input received. It summarised the Review as having examined what had happened and what had and had not been successful, recommending modifications and new measures to improve formal education for Indigenous Australians.

Evidence included NT perspective, views, expectations and data, and comparisons with other jurisdictions could be made. In its reporting the Reference Group appears generally to have been scrupulous in eschewing identification of locations or systems where exemplary or unsatisfactory practice may have been detected and attracted judgement. Much of the discussion and all of the recommendations, however, were pertinent to the NT, as to other jurisdictions.

The principal themes to emerge in the Review were equity and reconciliation. The main equity issues certainly applied to the NT: there had been substantial growth in Indigenous involvement in decisionmaking and service-delivery, but outcomes from the education for Indigenes, vis-à-vis non-Indigenes, had remained inequitable. Accordingly, strategies to address inequitable and inappropriate outcomes were a priority in the recommendations. That the Review's reporting was heeded was reflected, inter alia, in emphasis of outcomes in the NT's 1997–99 AEP planning.

Federally, there was another development in the AEP, between the Reference Group's reporting to Crean and Free and strategic and operational planning for 1997–99 in the NT. Late in 1995, the Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs Taskforce for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, established a year earlier and chaired by Paul Hughes, submitted A National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples developed from collation of the (then) current AEP implementation strategic and operational plans and the recommendations of the Yunupingu Review reports (1994–95). In his covering letter to the Ministerial Council, Hughes stated that the proposed National Strategy manifest input

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19 Meetings in the NT were held in Alice Springs, Yuendumu, Papunya, Harts Range, (Catherine and Darwin.
21 Exceptions included endorsement of provisions made in the post-school area, including Batchelor College's “Certificate to Diploma courses” and Remote Area Teacher Education program (Final Report, P. 51).
from “several hundred more interested and involved people across the country who now all (had) ownership of the document”, a consequence of Taskforce members' consulting with their systems and networks and the reference groups established in their respective jurisdictions. He listed the Taskforce's broad recommendations (see Appendix H). The AEP was reformed, becoming the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Program. Development and adoption of the National Strategy accounts in part for the one-year extension of the 1993–95 triennium. The Howard Coalition's winning Federal office in March 1996 also contributed. Emphasis upon accountability increased, and consultation and active Indigenous participation were to be sustained.

In its “Collaborative Action Plan”, the Taskforce summarised the key actions to be taken and detailed what was to be done. The Plan was hierarchically organised, specifying for each priority area the outcomes to be sought, the strategies to be employed in each of the educational sectors and the performance measures against which they were to be evaluated.24 The eight priority areas in the NT’s operational plan for 1997–99, with the original AEP goals re-ordered, increased emphasis upon provisions for post-school education and training, outcomes-specific reporting, reporting to Indigenous Australians and responsibility at the jurisdictional level.25

The performance measures for all National Strategy recommendations specified the targets to be realised. The format was the same for each priority area, but, obviously, the goals and recommendations differed, as did the numbers of outcomes and strategies in each sector. The performance measures for the priority areas also varied in number, and the time ranged variously from 1996 only, in two instances, to 1996–2002, also in two instances, and in one case the target was just attainment in 2002.26 In the NT, documentation of the “Operational Plan 1997–99” and “Outcomes Report-1997”27, whilst complying with the requirements listed in the Taskforce's proposal, was consistent with the recommendation to the Ministerial Council that reporting should enable maximisation of reporting to the

24 E.g., in the NTs planning under Priority 1, involvement in decision-making, the AEP goals (1,3,5,6) and the National Strategy recommendations to be addressed (3,6,8) were identified, and the priority area was discussed. There followed, successively, the outcomes and strategies for the early childhood education (1.1-8.e, 1.1.1-8.1e), schooling (1.1-8.S, 1.1.1-8.1.s), vocational education and training (1.1-4.V, 1.1.1-8.1v) and higher education (1.1-2.h, 1.1.1-2.1.h) sectors.
Indigenous public. The intention was to be as inclusive of the Indigenous clientèle as possible with its public information.

**NT Public Accounts Committee: The Provision of School Education Services for Remote Aboriginal Communities.**

Mid-1996, the NT Public Accounts Committee tabled its *Report on the Provision of School Education Services for Remote Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory, Report Number 27* in the Legislative Assembly. In 1994, Minister for Education Fred Finch had referred Commonwealth and NT funding for NTG schools to the Public Accounts Committee, for “inquiry and report” focussed on the allocation process, consultation with Aborigines, administrative efficiency, fiscal accountability and evaluation of initiatives. Relevant public agencies, community councils, incorporated bodies and schools in Aboriginal communities were notified, expressions of interest and written submissions were invited and received, and hearings were held in Darwin, Alice Springs and several Indigenous communities. Chairman Rick Setter stressed the NTG's concern about poor achievement in Aboriginal schools and the factors impeding educational outcomes. He stated that the Committee soon recognised that several issues, notably implications of health and housing for education and Australia's relatively low level of funding for schooling by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) standards, “had greater bearing on the subject” than those specified by Finch and that they were therefore given precedence. It was conceded that the provision of services had shortcomings, but, according to Setter, Committee members agreed that

> the gap between levels of literacy and numeracy achieved in urban and remote schools will not be closed until Aboriginal communities really want the gap closed and provide their children with the support and guidance required to achieve that end.\(^\text{28}\)

Once again, commitment of Aboriginal parents and communities to their children in their formal education was identified as critical.

In the course of its inquiry, the Committee established conclusively that average English literacy and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal children in bush schools did not equip them either for functional effectiveness in the broad society or for “a management role within

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the community”. Parents appeared largely unaware of their children's under-achievement and expected them to become effective as contributors in the community (requiring Year 7 achievement) and in leadership roles (requiring Year 10 achievement) as well as in traditional cultural observances. Overcrowding in houses was a serious problem, generating health and social problems, malnourishment and sleep deprivation, all inimical to educational achievement, and exacerbated by consequent poor attendance and punctuality. Time devoted to cultural activities was also a recognised hindrance. At the same time, parents and communities had high expectations of their schools to provide effective programs, whether all-Western in content or geared to life in the community. Noting parents' legal responsibility regarding their children's education, the Committee considered that communities required “continued assistance in developing a schooling culture and an acceptance of their role in the education process”. It concluded that resourcing needed to be increased substantially to improve Aboriginal community schooling outcomes, most urgently in the areas of housing, support for English as a second language, support for Indigenous staff and recurrent funding of school education.29

The Committee adopted several principles for managing the information gathered. They included the NTG's legal obligation in education for children of compulsory school age and “horizontal fiscal equalisation” by the NT, as by the Commonwealth, to ensure adequate funding for disadvantaged groups. A scaffolding strategy was advocated for the NTG's obligatory development of functional English literacy and numeracy in Aboriginal children. It was felt necessary to develop “a schooling culture” in communities, with flexibility to respond to both NTG and community requirements and “Aboriginalisation” in decision-making. Staffing and curriculum content, professional support and development for Indigenous staff and resourcing of schools were “to cater for the special physical and mental needs of children adversely affected by endemic health and social problems”.30 The Committee focussed on provisions in bush communities, its assessments were valid and its approach to recommending measures to be taken was appropriate. It often seemed to imply, however, that similar problems requiring attention did not exist in urban centres.

Finch's initial Terms of Reference, which apparently sought to have Commonwealth funding for Aboriginal community schools channelled directly through the NTDE, rather than via Treasury, were then addressed. It was noted that evaluation of initiatives taken under the Commonwealth's National Equity for Schools programs and the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program, commonly one-year projects, dealt with logistic

data. Assessment of changes in educational outcomes, realistically possible only with longer-term programs, did not occur.\textsuperscript{31} The \textit{Report} concluded with consideration of some contemporary trends in education, specifically the gradual emergence of a national approach and the potential of information technology to support education in remote communities. The Committee believed that the existing national goals in education needed to be “even more clearly defined”, especially with respect to outcomes in schools in Aboriginal communities.\textsuperscript{32}

The two Labor Committee members lodged a minority report. They held that “the gravity” of the failure of education for Aborigines was understated and that the approach proposed to address the issues was “parsimonious”. Much of their thrust was party-political, attacking the Government on its performance over eighteen years’ responsibility for education and distinguishing themselves from the Country Liberal Party members of the Committee. Their main points, that the serious under achievement in Aboriginal community schools revealed in the inquiry had to be addressed rather than examined further and that programs supported by local communities and enjoying their commitment held “the only hope for the future” and should be maintained, were valid nonetheless.\textsuperscript{33} They referred implicitly to potential threat in the \textit{Report}\textsuperscript{34} to bilingual education, Primary Assessment Program results from which had been found to be slightly poorer than those of other bush schools, but which was valued by the communities whose institutions had bilingual programs.\textsuperscript{35}

\textbf{1998 Review of Education in the Northern Territory.}

Towards the end of the 1990s, NT Chief Minister Dennis Bourke devised new policy for the NTG, \textit{Foundations for the Future}. The shake-up of the public sector with which its

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{31} The Aboriginal Hearing Program was an exception. The Committee noted it briefly, as an “effective … Program … jointly run by health and education throughout remote schools and communities” (\textit{Report Number 27}, p. 28). Its continuity throughout the 1990s and its emphasis on ear health for improved educational outcomes would have enabled the Hearing Program to monitor learning change, but the outcomes recorded were mainly logistic (e.g. in Indigenous Education Policy Support Unit, 1998, \textit{Aboriginal Hearing Program: An Evaluation of IEP Initiative #3}, and NT Aboriginal Hearing Program Co-ordinating Committee, with the NTDE and Territory Health Services, 1999, \textit{N. T. Aboriginal Hearing Program Annual Report 1998}), as Canberra required (Aboriginal Hearing Program, 2000. ‘Performance Indicators’, “NT Aboriginal Hearing Program Plan: 2001”. P.I.).
\item \textsuperscript{35} During evaluation of three bilingual programs in 1992, I found that Indigenous opinion-leaders in the communities concerned certainly valued them, but it was for their contribution to language and cultural preservation, not for their \textit{raison d’être}, to support primary schooling.
\end{itemize}
implementation began was labelled “Planning for Growth”. In that context, late in 1998, a quick high-profile “in-depth” review of the NTDE was instituted, to focus on its “core business, … improving results for students in classrooms”. The 1998 Education Review was conducted by a mobile Task Group, led by newly appointed Education Secretary Wal Czernezkyj. Over six weeks, it consulted with field and system operatives, other stakeholders such as the Council of Government Schools Organisations, Catholic Education and industry, and with Indigenous personnel and school council delegates. Written submissions were also received. Czernezkyj declared that feedback on the process was “overwhelmingly positive”.

Immediately consequent to the Review, the NT Cabinet agreed to “(refocus) resources towards Territory classrooms” to optimise support for “front-line educators” in their rôles. In formulating its recommendations, the Task Group specified six principles to guide future directions for schools and the “support structures” of the NTDE, viz.:

1. The core business of education in the Northern Territory is to deliver high quality and relevant student learning.
2. Schools provide a safe, non-threatening environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.
3. All possible education resources should be directed to schools.
4. All education infrastructure and allied departmental services are in place to support schools.
5. The structure and culture of the education system in the Northern Territory facilitates and values the education of children and the work of teachers.
6. Parents are essential partners in education.

Czernezkyj claimed “a remarkable degree of consistency… (in) the major issues impacting on classroom learning and school operations” elicited by the Task Group. He recorded identification of “a constant theme” of schools and teachers “(wanting) clearer leadership

36 The Task Group comprised the chair, Czernezkyj, Gary Henry, Deputy Under-Treasurer, Kath Phelan, a consultant and formerly, successively, a high school teacher, principal and senior NTDE official, and Don Zoellner, Principal of Alice Springs High School.
37 NTDE, 1998. *Education Review makes Schools ... Our Focus*. Darwin, NT. NTG. Pp. 1–2. I grew sceptical about the 1998 Education Review. The number of participants in any meeting was limited. As Director (Student Services), I negotiated with Czernezkyj two meetings to give the Task Force input from the heads of all twelve disciplines in a complex, sensitive and highly specialised special education field. At the first meeting, it was evident that Task Group members had their foregone conclusions and were not interested in the information presented, and one became ill-tempered when presented with facts that contradicted his ideas. Then, no Task Group members attended the second meeting, which I had confirmed with Czernezkyj. When I sought to reschedule it, I was told there was no time for further consultation.
and direction” and “more public and obvious support for (their) valuable work”. Accordingly, the NTDE’s priorities and direction were to refocus on “schools, support for teachers and better outcomes for students”. The main outcomes, endorsed by the NTG, were restructure for central functions of the NTDE and some operations “to provide clearer direction, better co-ordinated services and to respond more effectively to schools in terms of student and teacher support”. It was calculated that the measures would “free up” about $20m, to be retained and reallocated to address “outstanding needs … (and) emerging priorities”.

Cabinet approved a set of “Major Initiatives – School Focussed” to be implemented over 1999–2001 (see Appendix M). Many were attributed directly to contributions made during the Review. Most were universally relevant, but some were conceived specifically with Indigenous students, parents and communities in mind, viz.:

- Guarantee bush schools a minimum staffing level for the entire school year.
- Rationalise school curriculum priorities and simplify documentation to assist teachers, particularly those in small and remote schools.
- Refocus policy and program delivery in Aboriginal Education within one area of the new Departmental structure … (to) ensure a more consistent and structured approach to improved literacy and numeracy for Aboriginal students.
- Progressively withdraw the Bilingual Education program, allowing schools to share in the savings and better resource English language programs.

In December, 1998, Education Minister Peter Adamson issued a media release on the potentially sensitive issue of phasing out bilingual education in favour of an intensive drive to raise English literacy achievement in Aboriginal communities. He stressed that the impetus had come from communities' repeated expression of concern to the Task Group “about the operation of the Bilingual Education Program and the need for improved outcomes by students in the English language”. He asserted that consultation with the Aboriginal Economic Development Advisory Committee had further verified the concern. Overall, he believed, the Task Group had been given a “strong message” that communities demanded good English as a second language programs as the basis of their children's

39 NTDE, 1998. Schools … Our Focus. Pp. 2–3. “Flattening the structure” gained currency as a catchcry in the executive ranks of the NTDE. As the system's revamp proceeded, frustration, disillusionment and cynicism grew. On one memorable occasion, at a meeting of Palmerston principals with the Minister, the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary (Schools), a well-regarded principal innocently asked if the “1” had been left out of “flattening” (and he survived!).

Reaction from communities where bilingual education was established was vigorous, however, and the NTDE ultimately relented and allowed functioning bilingual programs to continue.

Early in 1999, Schools Our Focus … Shaping Territory Education and supporting statements elaborated redirection of public education in the NT. “Vision for Schools in the NT” cited the “Vision” in the collaboratively developed The Department's Plan 1997–99, that the NTDE would “be recognised as an education service provider exceeding client expectation”. It was to be realised through schools’

• preparing children for life-long learning;
• developing literacy and numeracy in all students to at least national benchmarked levels;
• focussing on the nature of learning in the context of an information-oriented world,… moving from data-gathering to synthesising for information to building knowledge and finally to developing wisdom;
• (being) populated with teachers who see themselves as professional educators and life-long learners who are adept at teaching through instruction, student experience and the range of all available technologies;
• working in partnership with community and business.

Change in the culture of the system and its structure, the stated underlying principles of which are listed in Table 8.1, was required to achieve such ideals. The NTDE was to be accountable for its performance, in accordance with the principles that guided the Task Group's recommendations, the “Vision for Schools in the NT”, the school-focussed initiatives for 1999–2001 and the systemic redirection in the “Key Result Areas” (adapted from “Critical Success Factors” in the The Department's Plan 1997–99) Those principles were:

• That NT students achieve the best possible learning outcomes.
• That access, equity and participation in the educational process is available for all Territorians.
• That we are able to meet needs and aspirations of our clients.
• That we manage and co-ordinate resources efficiently and effectively.

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43 NTDE, 1999. Schools … Our Focus: Shaping Territory Education.
46 NTDE, 1999. Schools … Our Foots: Shaping Territory Education.
TABLE 8.1 STRUCTURE AND CULTURE of the Department of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
<td>Devolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-layer management</td>
<td>Flattened structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on control model</td>
<td>Based on responsibility and trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compartmentalised and competitive</td>
<td>Co-operative with shared vision and values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confused communication</td>
<td>Open, simple and clear communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple and conflicting priorities</td>
<td>Integrated and clear articulated priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centred on head office</td>
<td>Centred on schools and children’s learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge is retained with individuals and within units</td>
<td>Knowledge is shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office positions seen as the pinnacle of education career</td>
<td>The principalship seen as the pinnacle of education career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on risk avoidance</td>
<td>Based on risk management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers feel alienated from the Department</td>
<td>Teachers feel valued and respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School councils primarily</td>
<td>School councils primarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focussed on physical facilities and resources</td>
<td>focussed on the ethos and educational program of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development mainly</td>
<td>Professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offered on a centralised model</td>
<td>devolved and focussed on school-based model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

44 NTDE, 1999. Schools ... Our Focus: Shaping Territory Education. (Slighty modified)

The whole redirection had implications for the provision of services for Indigenous Territorians, although specific reference to them was only made occasionally.

Hitherto, operational superintendents had been responsible to oversee systemic service-provision for Indigenous Territorians, as for others, in their respective regions. Immediate support provisions for schools had come from regional NTDE offices. Professional support had also been provided from curriculum advisory units in the Schools Policy and Operations North and Operations South Divisions and from the Board of Studies Division, with logistic support provided by the Corporate Services Division. Distinction between provisions for all students and those dedicated to Indigenous students had been, in the main, limited to the fact that the latter were supplementary, mostly funded through the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program. Exceptions, in system administration, were the Schools Policy
Establishment, early in 1999, of an Aboriginal Education Branch in the new Schools Services Division was an immediate *Schools ... Our Focus* outcome. The Branch's functions comprised liaison with and support for Feppi's successor, the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory, management of English as a second language and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs, development of policy on education for Aborigines, training and support for Aboriginal staff and liaison with the Chief Minister's Office of Aboriginal Development and Aboriginal organisations. The Aboriginal Development Unit was relocated to the staff training and support area of the Aboriginal Education Branch.

Of the materials elaborating *Schools ... Our Focus: Shaping Territory Education* (1999), “Fact Sheet Nine” was devoted to ‘(Consolidating) Aboriginal program delivery’. It dealt with the Aboriginal Education Branch's establishment to redirect education for Indigenous Territorians. The move to consolidate support services in the area was justified as response to representations from Aboriginal communities that “consistently” stated that they wanted “their children to learn English, … to study the same curriculum as that offered to other Territorians … (and) to finish high school in their communities”, and the fact that, despite efforts made, their achievement remained distinctly lower than that of non-Aboriginal children. It was argued that “(a) consolidated Aboriginal Education Branch” would make for

- clear, consistent policy and directions in Aboriginal education for the (NTDE);
- consistent communication and easier access to the (NTDE) for people with an interest in Aboriginal education [e.g. the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory will have one point of contact in relating to the (NTDE)];
- consistent implementation and evaluation of initiatives in Aboriginal education;
- more transparency and accountability about the (NTDE's) programs in Aboriginal education;
- the opportunity to ensure Aboriginal education resources are co-ordinated and utilised effectively.

Significantly, the Branch was to have an Indigenous Director before long.

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48 NTDE, 1999. “NT Department of Education Services to Schools” chart, in *Schools ... Our Focus: Shaping Territory Education*.
49 NTDE, 1999. “Fact Sheet Nine”, *Schools ... Our Focus: Shaping Territory Education*. 

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Policy, operations and support for service delivery in formal education for Indigenous Territorians had been largely fragmented, ironically, in the Commonwealth's blending of NT education provisions in 1973. The inception of the Aboriginal Education Branch brought together policy, management of focussed programs and specialist support for formal education for Indigenous Territorians. Operationally, overall, service delivery was now supervised by three general managers of schools, who replaced the nine regional superintendents, and the small bush schools were grouped under five group school principals. Related curriculum remained in the curriculum and assessment area, renamed the Curriculum Services Branch and relocated to School Services Division. The fragmentation of formal education provisions for Indigenous Territorians was thus redressed to a degree. Management of those provisions was distinctly revamped, at the least conceptually if not in operational practice, by the 1998 Review. The impact of consolidation and common direction of “Aboriginal education”, from 1999, on the design, delivery and outcomes of education services for Indigenous Territorians must be the subject of another study.

The Collins Review and Learning Lessons

“Fact Sheet Nine” also introduced a review of education for Indigenous Territorians, for which the Aboriginal Education Branch provided a policy and resource base. Former NT Senator Bob Collins was engaged to conduct the review, February-June 1999, and to develop a plan to “set key directions in Aboriginal education for the next five years”, the first stage of a twenty-year enterprise. The tabling in Darwin of Learning lessons (1999), the Collins Review report, was the most momentous development in formal education for Indigenes in the NT since the Watts-Gallacher Report was tabled in Canberra thirty-five years earlier.

Collins, as consultant, and his team, under Project Manager Tess Lea and including Indigenous personnel, were to ascertain Indigenous Territorians' education-related perceptions and aspirations. Broad priorities were English literacy and numeracy, “the key issues” influencing their schooling outcomes and appropriate actions to be taken to improve them (see Appendix N). A working party, with some Indigenous members, was created to assemble background information. Data and ideas were gathered from NTDE records and personnel and through wide-ranging consultation. The last involved formal interviews, meetings and focus group sessions, written submissions, case studies in forty-four schools, including thirteen with bilingual programs, in a representative range of circumstances and

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50 NTDE, 1999. “Fact Sheet Nine”. When Czerneckyj told me that Collins was to conduct the review, he appeared to claim credit for the coup; other sources suggested that the appointment was “a political pay-off” by the NTG; there was no disputing the appropriateness of his engagement, however.

settings of education delivery across the NT. There were also public meetings in Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs and numerous informal and \textit{ad hoc} discussions. Previous reports were noted, principally the Public Accounts Committee's \textit{Report Number 27}, as were current related studies and other activities.\textsuperscript{52} The ten “key issues” identified (see \textit{Appendix N}) included parents' desire for improvement in their children's education, the children's low and declining educational achievement and poor attendance.

\textit{Learning lessons} provided discussion of the issues, detected “good practice” was highlighted and 151 recommendations on “supportable actions” to address the issues were made (see \textit{Appendix N} for focal areas). A framework was developed (see \textit{Appendix O}) to conceptualise why educational outcomes for Indigenous students were poor, specifying “direct” factors, the overt, most tangible, manifestations of underlying, “proximate”, causes and the broader environmental, “distal”, influences. The framework helped analysis of identified issues. The team gave priority to recommendations making for Indigenous Territorians' involvement in and ownership of their children's education.\textsuperscript{53} A primary thrust was “to restore” to Indigenous communities management of and authority over their youth's “education for life”, working in partnership with providers to “improve attendance, teaching and outcomes in all (NT) schools”.\textsuperscript{54} Citing current data, the Review found stark gaps in participation in schooling, academic achievement and graduation to tertiary entry, other than “through specific Indigenous enabling programs”. It also found gaps between urban and non-urban schools, non-Indigenous and Indigenous students and Indigenous students in urban schools and Indigenous students in non-urban schools.\textsuperscript{55}

The Primary Assessment Program for assessment of educational outcomes had been enhanced and redesignated. In \textit{Learning lessons}, it was observed that for the new Multilevel Assessment Program to be valid as “a macro-statistical tool” to assess outcomes for Indigenous students, some tests and/or test items could need modification to take account of Indigenous educational disadvantage. The Multilevel Assessment Program was supported, however, to monitor and provide feedback on students', schools', regions' and the system's

\textsuperscript{52} NTDE. \textit{Learning lessons}. Pp. 21–27. The comprehensive range and thoroughness of the study notwithstanding, there was scant coverage of provisions for special-needs Indigenous children. It was discussed briefly in the report, with perfunctory recommendations directed at a planned review of Student Services. (\textit{Learning lessons}. Pp. 115–16,178–90.) The Collins Review gained little input from Student Services and sought none. Had it done so, much expert professional insight and detailed data could have been provided, from specialists' knowledge in their fields and of challenges in service delivery, detailed records, two related research projects then nearing completion and a related task being performed in the national context.

\textsuperscript{53} NTDE. \textit{Learning lessons}. P. 1.

\textsuperscript{54} NTDE. \textit{Learning lessons}. P. 19.

\textsuperscript{55} NTDE. \textit{Learning lessons}. Pp. 33–46.
progress. Newly introduced outcomes profiling was felt to have potential for reporting to parents on how their children were achieving at their age levels in terms of national standards. With reference to system management, it was noted that schools, other than those with bilingual programs, were not systematically appraised, despite the introduction of school action plans and annual reporting by principals, and there was some doubt about the real value of the triennial re-accreditation of bilingual programs. The need for the system to acknowledge and disclose the reality of generally poor educational achievement was rated essential for the issues to be addressed, just as the onus was clearly upon parents to support and encourage their children in their schooling.

Contemporary information technology and telecommunications were thought able to support delivery of formal education in outlying locations. It was likely to require “greater levels of investment in infrastructure and organisational development” than for urban centres, however, and scarce local availability of technical support and expertise in school staffs and “harsh environmental conditions” in the bush posed additional challenge for effective provision to be made and for it to operate efficiently. It was perceived that relatively high fiscal commitment was required for technology in bush schools in the short term, in order ultimately to improve learning outcomes and efficiency in resource allocation.

The Review team established precise figures on overall expenditure on NT education. It could identify only approximate commitment to schooling for Indigenous students, however, and then only with reference to units implementing programs. The sums given under “Indigenous education” in Table 8.2 should therefore be recognised as informed estimates at best, but “total expenditure” data may be taken as actual.

**TABLE 8.2 NORTHERN TERRITORY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EXPENDITURE 1998/99.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE.</th>
<th>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</th>
<th>INDIGENOUS EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NT-funded expenditure:</td>
<td>$274.2 million;</td>
<td>$109.1 million (39.8%).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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60 NTDE. *Learning lessons*. P. 53. Cf. the recommendations on NTDE budget management of the 1996 Review of Central and Regional Offices. E.g. Recommendation 3.9, “that a comprehensive data warehouse be established, integrating operational areas, personnel and budgets information, maintained up-to-date and accessible to managers in central and operational areas to enable monitoring, review and timely response to Government”. (Review Team, 1996. “Review of Efficiency of Central and Regional Offices”, October 1996 draft. Darwin, NT. NTDE.NTG. P. 36. I was a member of the 3-person Review Team.)
SOURCE. TOTAL EXPENDITURE. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION.

Commonwealth program expenditure: $42.3 million; $23.0 million.

General Recurrent Grant: $13.6 million; $5.2 million.

Commonwealth-funded expenditure: $55.9 million; $28.2 million (28.2%).

Total Combined Expenditure: $330.1 million; $1373 million (41.6%).

The data in Table 8.2, although limited to the 1998/99 fiscal year and not definitive, serves to illustrate three features of resource commitment to formal education for Indigenous Territorians. First, there is the pattern of commitment from NT and Commonwealth coffers that had evolved from the inception of the AEP; second, there is the magnitude of the fiscal commitment made; and third, there is approximate proportional commitment, at a little over 40% of the total expenditure on Indigenous Territorians, with Indigenous students comprising close to 35% of the NT school population. A salient fact is that, whilst finance alone would not have resolved the issues and increased commitment was required, at the least in the short term, proportionate commitment of resources to schooling for Indigenous youth was already slightly higher than that for non-Indigenous youth. Such an observation, however, would need to take into account the relatively high cost of delivering services in non-urban settings. A pertinent point made in Learning Lessons was that despite the annual commitment of public moneys, as exemplified in Table 8.2, plus $90 million committed from Strategic Initiatives Program since the inception of the AEP, “the NTDE (could) only demonstrate marginal achievement in some outcomes for Indigenous students” in NT schools. It was also noted that the NTDE had availed itself of less than 4% of the $5m. or more for which it was eligible under the Strategic Results Project, another element of the Strategic Initiatives Program. It was observed specifically that the NTDE had not grasped an opportunity to develop and implement “a tracking system for mobile students”, such as that instituted in WA with Strategic Results funding, with which to address the hindrance of transience to effective learning. In view of need for increased funding for schooling for Indigenous children, in both urban and bush locations, it was essential to maximise, and to optimise efficiency with, available resources and to generate savings for redirection.


64 NTDE. Learning lessons. P. 61.
The challenges posed by logistics to service delivery in the NT were acknowledged. The NTDE faced problems similar to those of Territory Health Services and Police in establishing and maintaining facilities and infrastructure in relatively small population centres “in remote and climatically hostile environments”. The Review noted the importance of attending to minor repairs, which, unlike most of the issues considered, were readily remedied. Good facility maintenance was recognised as significant for staff morale and the ambience of a school. Constructive involvement of school communities in planning development of facilities and infrastructure was rated essential. The NTG’s stance, that local recruits were not entitled to public sector employee housing, was recognised as a cause of unrest in bush communities and therefore in need of amendment. Selection of personnel for schools with Indigenous students was also an area urgently needing attention, both for appropriate appointments and for retention of appointees. Incentives, rather than compensations, were mooted as needed to enable a system of “rigorous selection tied to performance agreements”, with some local control, to apply to both non-Indigenous and Indigenous appointments. Appropriate professional support and development, especially for principals, and a strategy for “Indigenous staffing” were proposed.

The Review team advocated development and implementation of a scheme to increase the Indigenous staff, teachers and others, employed in schools. It was envisaged that such a measure would combat both the high rate of turnover of “imported teaching staff” and resultant poor student attendance: it would involve Indigenous members of the community in control over and delivery of “their own education services”, but it required vigour, focus and determination. Aboriginal assistant teachers were recognised as commonly the longest-serving members of school staff in outlying communities, vital for continuity, to familiarise new staff with the school and the community and in “mediating the cultural distance between the non-Indigenous teachers and the local students”. Indigenous Education Workers and Resource Officers and other Indigenous liaison personnel were also recognised for the rôles they played in supporting Indigenous students, facilitating Student Support and Parent Awareness committees and promoting communication between parents and school staff. Structured intensive in-service professional development for Indigenous staff, including upgrading qualifications, was considered important.

Early exposure of all Indigenous children to literacy and numeracy, in the vernacular if appropriate, and to Standard Australian English oracy was rated a necessity. In

primary education, “full attendance” throughout the school year, vital to English language mastery, was to be enforced with communities through conditions in agreements, negotiated individually with the system, whereby poor attendance could jeopardise any above-standard resourcing. For secondary education, the Review proposed that community education centres be redesignated area schools, that boarding capacity in secondary institutions be increased and that a wider range of options be made available for students for whom mainstream offerings were inappropriate. In that context, the team stated,

(m)any Indigenous students in bush communities often live in the most difficult circumstances, speak an Indigenous Australian language and are immersed in traditional Indigenous culture. To then acquire the utterly foreign language and cultural understandings of Western society and succeed in mastering both, poses a greater challenge than faces any other student in Australia. The extraordinary and heartening thing is that there have always been Indigenous people who could do it, and there still are.⁶⁸

Despite the negative findings of the Review, the team saw promise in persisting with secondary education for Indigenous Territorians, more or less in its existing form. The coverage of post-compulsory provisions was similarly optimistic.⁶⁹

The communities that contributed to the Review emphasised that improvement in English oracy and literacy was “a key aspiration for Indigenous parents, students and community members”. Concurrently, there was widespread perception that standards of English literacy and numeracy achievement had declined, effectively since the 1960s-70s, and were currently impeding tertiary educational opportunities and economic development for Indigenes. The inception of the Review coincided with the NTG’s announcement that funding for bilingual education was to be phased out⁷⁰, triggering strong reaction which convinced the team of the programs' value. The Review found that in reality there were “widespread informal bilingual practices” in schools, warranting recognition, support, research and management of “unofficial” uses of the vernacular for positive outcomes. It concluded that the term, “bilingual education”, connoting “the most effective pedagogy for teaching Indigenous children”, had become anachronistic, that “two-way learning” was more apt and would

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⁶⁸ NTDE. Learning lessons. P. 107. The wording of the excerpt is likely to be Collins's own. The assertion was valid, pointing to another study to inform further planning. It would involve people who have succeeded, to identify and analyse the ingredients of their success. For Indigenous involvement, control, self-sufficiency and cultural sensitivity, such a study should be conducted by an Indigenous scholar or scholars, or by the subjects themselves.


⁷⁰ NTDE, 1999. “Fact Sheet Ten”.

remove an emergent vernacular-versus-English trend without eroding the value accorded Indigenous language and culture. Critical factors were that competent teaching, as well as appropriate philosophy and concepts, was required for effective program delivery, that adequate resourcing was required and that Standard Australian English oracy and literacy and numeracy development were mandatory, with valid English as a second/foreign language-based Multilevel Assessment Program tests to promote, monitor and support them. The Board of Studies policy that all students in NT schools should be able to engage in Australian Indigenous Studies, including languages, to develop “understanding (of) and respect for Indigenous traditional and contemporary heritage and cultures”, was endorsed.\textsuperscript{71}

The Review found need for discipline, direction and cohesion in curriculum and teaching for Indigenous students. A distinction, implicitly highlighting cultural difference, was made, that whereas mainstream school teachers could “assume a cohort of literacy-oriented children and a background of school-oriented parents” and normally achieve results regardless of the assorted pedagogies exercised, the same did not hold true with Indigenous students. “(W)ell-defined and longitudinally tested pathways for the development of oracy, literacy and numeracy competence for Indigenous students” were needed. Broadly, “systemic reform” was required. It involved, in part, development of prescriptive syllabi and useful compatible teaching/learning resources and devotion of time saved with their use to improving the learning environment, understanding and harnessing “the cross-cultural dynamics of the classroom” and constructive individual attention for students and their families. The truism, that teachers were obliged to ensure “that meeting students' learning needs … (predominated) over all other considerations”, was invoked.\textsuperscript{72} That it was considered necessary to make such a point implicitly impugned the professional integrity of some practitioners, signalling need to improve measures to ensure accountability.

Children's attendance at school was identified, yet again, as a critical factor by all concerned. They attributed poor achievement primarily to poor attendance. Data from 1983–98 showed enrolments to have increased by 40% and attendance to have declined, from over 76% to 68%. Despite wide-spread recognition of the problem, its evident acceptance, implicit in there being no evident systemic attempt to address it, could serve only to exacerbate it. Development of a “comprehensive attendance strategy” was proposed, with satisfactory attendance to be incorporated as “a critical element” in agreements between communities and the NTDE. The high and increasing mobility of the Indigenous population, with its implications for children’s schooling, was a reality, to be addressed with a student...
tracking system, ready transfer of information and inter-school collaboration on programs.

Health issues, impaired hearing in particular, and substance abuse also limited students' achievement, further “impeding attendance, participation and ability to learn”; they were to be addressed through intervention in infant health and related issues, to be incorporated in school planning and negotiated agreements between agencies locally, with relevant training and support for school staff and attention to facilities.  

Much was obviously expected of local education planning and resource agreements with the NTDE.

Deficiencies in systemic reporting, recording and maintaining data, evidently “longstanding”, were encountered, inter alia hindering the Review. Areas of particular concern to the Collins Review team included Multilevel Assessment testing, school attendance, rates of participation, identification of Indigenous staff and staff turnover. The directions proposed were in the interests of availability of and access to essential information and its use to monitor participation, program implementation, academic progress and deployment of resources, to engage with communities and other agencies and for accountability.

It was a matter of administrative reform to improve the aptness of policy and the efficiency and effectiveness of services, support for their delivery and their adjustment in response to feedback as it was garnered and analysed.

In conclusion, the Review team advocated formalised partnerships, between the NTDE and Indigenous peak bodies in the Territory-wide perspective, and locally, between the NTDE and each individual education community. It was considered critical that “a communication gulf between the system and its schools and their Indigenous clients be overcome. That Student Support and Parent Awareness committees and school councils enabled such communication was acknowledged, with increasing Indigenous membership of and participation in such bodies, but there was little to indicate the effectiveness of such involvement. Linkages between schools and Indigenous homes and communities, with active parental support for children's schooling both at home and at school, were recognised as


74 Review Team, 1996. “Review of Efficiency of Central and Regional Offices”, October 1996 draft. The Efficiency Review Report recommended that “the IT Services Plan be aligned with tile Department's Plan” (p. 9), “that the IT Services and C&AD's Curriculum, Equal Opportunities, Evaluation, Research, Assessment and Certification areas … work much more closely in order to provide more efficient and effective service” (p. 12) and “that the (human resource management) be aligned to the NTDE Plan”, in particular for the purpose of establishing a human resource information system (pp. 26–27).

75 NTDE Learning lessons. Pp. 155–62. The 1996 Review of Central and Regional Offices recommended that a central policy unit be established, to incorporate a comprehensive education-focussed data-base that was maintained up-to-date and readily accessible to systemic, regional and school-based operatives for statistical, operational and policy-related information. [Memorandum, “Review of Efficiency of Central &Regional Offices”, Superintendent (Review), to Secretary, through Deputy Secretary (Corporate Services), dated 11 December, 1996. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG. ]
vital to educational achievement. Such parental participation in the process was seriously lacking. A change in the culture of all schools, to embrace formal education for Indigenous clients as their core business, was considered essential.\(^{76}\)

Despite provisions made for Indigenous contribution to system decision-making, the Review team heard doubt voiced on whether “real indigenous input” resulted. Feppi was originally established to advise the Minister. It was renamed the NT AECG in the early 1990s as the term, “feppi”, being Nganmarriyangan, was not representative of NT Indigenous peoples. The AECG was then replaced, in 1996, by the Indigenous Education Council of the NT. The team heard concerns about the appointment of members to the Council, the appointment and tenure of its secretariat staff and some aspects of its management, reminiscent of criticism the Public Accounts Committee had registered. It was thought vital that such a body be broadly representative of NT Indigenous education interests and able to function as a direct conduit to the Minister. The Council's immediate restructure was therefore necessary.\(^{77}\)

The Indigenous Education Council was envisaged as a peak body concerned with policy on education for Indigenous Territorians, providing advice to the Minister and education agencies and overseeing a proposed Self-Managing Schools Program. Revamped, the Council was to be a formally constituted and resourced over-arching partnership, comprising representation from the NTDE, the NT tertiary education sector, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission and the NT land councils. An immediate responsibility was oversight and support of “pilot regional/community-based educational partnerships”, to be developed as models for emulation, eventually across the NT. The Council and its secretariat were to establish close co-operative working relationships with other agencies, in particular the NT Territory Health Services and the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs and non-government providers, particularly Catholic Education. Local joint ventures, between education and health operations, to address common issues, were to be encouraged. The proposed Self-Managing Schools initiative was conceived to give a community, or a “linguistically and culturally affiliated” cluster, opportunity to control education services, designed to meet local needs, their delivery and the resources available, with flexibility, responsibility, authority and accountability as stated in negotiated agreements. Formalised partnerships, between schools and other agencies, enterprises and initiatives, were advocated.\(^{78}\) Apart from the autonomy the proposal afforded schools and communities, it was innovative in that the initiative was to be taken under the auspices


\(^{78}\) NTDE. *Learning lessons*. Pp. 171–76.

I have paid particular attention to the Collins Review and *Learning Lessons* for three reasons. First, they were thorough, comprehensive and contemporary, commissioned to address the major issue of Indigenous students' unsatisfactory achievement in formal education in the NT, and did so on a more comprehensive scale than any previous such venture. Second, the report, with its discussion of the principal findings of the review and the raft of recommended actions to effect redress, provided a platform and directions for formal educational provision for Indigenous Territorians, immediately, 2000–2004, and in the longer term, to 2019. Third, in the context of the bi-axial model and associated criteria, the exercise epitomised the ideals of policy development, at the least as it is conceived within my Western frame. The first two reasons are self-evident, but the third requires some elaboration.

Quantitative analysis of the conduct of the 1999 “independent review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory” is represented in Figure 8.1. On the bi-axial model, the activity was balanced in the C sector. There was a great deal of lateral activity, approaching the optimum: extensive sustained consultation and other research involved the consultant, the Review team and the working party; and a large number of interest groups and individual interested persons broadly representative of the NT public with interest in education, in education for Indigenous Territorians especially, contributed. Activity in the hierarchy was just as significant, also approaching the optimum, despite its lower public profile. The venture was initiated and instituted within the official frame, at Ministerial, Cabinet and Secretary levels, whence came the Review's terms of reference, Collins' engagement, the authority with which the task was to be performed and the funding needed. The Aboriginal Education Branch, soon renamed the Indigenous Education Branch, the Review team and the working party were established as discrete entities within the bureaucracy. They accessed and analysed the substantial existing repositories of information, recorded and reported in the system's processes, their shortcomings notwithstanding, and accumulated in the corporate memories of its personnel. There are also the facts that Collins reported to the Secretary of the Council and monitored by that body, rather than being administered traditionally, in a bureaucratic framework. The proposed arrangements, notably the formally negotiated agreements, resulted from deliberations with substantial Indigenous involvement. They were no doubt necessary, but appeared very much a product of the public administrative frame.
of the NTDE, *Learning lessons* was submitted to the NTDE and was the NTDE's property, and hence that of the NTG.

![Graph](image)

**FIGURE 8.1 THE 1999 REVIEW OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.**

Qualitatively, as evident from the application of the check-list of questions (see Table 8.3), the Review was exceptional in its involvement of Indigenous persons. There were both extensive Indigenous contribution in the consultative process and, through the Indigenous membership of the Review team and the working party, high levels of Indigenous participation in conducting the consultation, researching, analysing the findings and formulating the recommendations. The extent to which Indigenes managed the Review, under Collins' leadership and the influence of others, and the autonomy of the exercise, despite the constraints of operating from within the public education bureaucracy, meant that it was largely, and visibly, a matter of Indigenous operatives consulting Indigenous
constituents and interests. There were also Collins’ guidance and stimulus, and his unique knowledge, experience and perspective.

| TABLE 8.3 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE 1999 REVIEW OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY. |
| Who participated in the policy process? | Contributors, in interviews, fora and meetings and through written and audio/visual submissions, were listed in 13 pages of non-exhaustive appendices to *Learning lessons*. A high proportion was Indigenous, as was the case in membership of the Review team, the working party and their support in the Indigenous Education Branch. Contributors included NTDE and Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs officials, officials and operatives of other government and nongovernment agencies, notably health-focussed ones, the Board of Studies Aboriginal Education Standing Committee, Indigenous organisations, with the Indigenous Education Council of the NT to the fore, churches, unions, linguistic interests, field operatives, tertiary education personnel. Indigenous community groups, individual parents and community members, politicians, consultants and advocates. The chair of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and some other relevant contacts in Canberra and interstate were also consulted. |
| Where did the participation occur? | The initiative was taken in NT officialdom. The Review was conducted in Indigenous communities and schools, regional centres, public and non-government agencies and tertiary institutions. Consultation ranged from formal meetings in official settings to casual conversations in the bush. Deliberations on input and research took place in the NTDE and other locations where relevant data was stored. |
| How were participants involved? | The Review team obtained input from a comprehensive range of sources through public and direct invitations to submit, consultation |
with representative bodies, focus group sessions and individual and group presentations, both those arranged by the team and some initiated by contributors. The team, the working party and Indigenous Education Branch personnel processed, analysed and documented the attitudes, ideas and data obtained, *inter alia* identifying matters to be pursued further and how to do so, including follow-up discussion with some contributors.

To what extent were participants familiar with the process?

Experience in consultation on public policy in a wide range of areas related to Indigenous affairs since the 1970s ensured that most of the people involved were well aware of the process. Those conducting and supporting the Review, public sector and non-government organization personnel, Indigenous organisations and unions would all have been fully aware of their *rôles* and responsibilities. Field operatives and the public, including Indigenous parents, community members and representatives, would have been reasonably familiar with the process from active involvement and/or observation in previous such exercises and from Review publicity.

To what extent were participants aware of the substance of negotiations?

In the context of the Review, “negotiation” may be taken to connote soliciting, receiving and discussing reasoned input and processing it. It was the joint province of providers, clients, related agencies, interest groups and interested individual persons. The providers were significant employers of Indigenous personnel, Indigenous Territorians were the clients and related agencies and interest groups and individual persons were likely to include significant Indigenous representation. Briefing of the Review team, the working party and Indigenous Education Branch personnel, public information and letters to schools and “relevant government, non-government and industry bodies”, in the context of invitations to submit, provided comprehensive coverage of appointed, potential and prospective participants in
the process. Indigenous communities, community councils and other local contributors were made aware through the process.

To what extent was participant input evident in the policy and its implementation?

The attitudes, ideas and data assembled in the course of the Review, including in particular information from Indigenous communities, parents and their representatives and Indigenous interests and bodies, were analysed and collated to form the substance of *Learning lessons*. The criticisms of service provision and its effectiveness, as presented in the report, leavened with instances of identified “good practice”, reflected views expressed over at least the preceding two decades, but not often publicly aired, by community members, practitioners, officials and critics. *Learning lessons* was candid and balanced in its representation and discussion of the realities of formal education for Indigenous Territorians as they had been conveyed to and elicited by the Review team.

What feedback was provided to participants as the process progressed?

*Learning lessons*, reporting the Review to the Secretary of the NTDE, and through him to the Minister and the Legislative Assembly, was published as a public document and distributed to education communities and related agencies and interests throughout the NT. It was therefore readily or potentially accessible to all participants who were literate in English. As well, the Indigenous Education Council was now the conduit for feedback to communities and Indigenous Territorians generally, from the Minister and the system, and, in reverse, from the communities to the Minister and the system. Implementation of the recommendations made in the report, to which the Burke Country Liberal and the Martin Labor Governments in the NT successively committed themselves, provided tangible evidence of the Review’s status.

Collins, a European, was well-known for his knowledge of, sensitivity to and empathy with the circumstances and cultural mores of Indigenous Territorians, especially in the Top
End. He had also the attributes of trust, credibility and public popularity, enjoyed amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous Territorians alike and on both sides of politics, and first-hand knowledge of government and politics in the NT and Federally. They stemmed at least partly from his powers of perception on issues, his clear and frank articulation of them and the fact that he eschewed paternalism and had high expectations of Indigenes. He believed that Indigenous Territorians were able to be responsible for and to manage their own destinies, and that, for the survival of their entities, they had no option but to do so. They needed public support in the process, however. With the Indigenous Education Branch established in the NTDE, the Review conducted, Learning lessons, which reported the Review's findings, endorsed with commitment to implement its recommendations and the Indigenous Education Council revamped, the future of education for Indigenous Territorians had a substantial foundation.

Following Learning lessons, the Indigenous Education Branch compiled Indigenous education strategic plan 2000–2004: educating our future generation together. When it was launched, there had been a change of government, with the Country Liberal Party toppled from office in 2001 by the Clare Martin-led Australian Labor Party. In an ensuing public sector restructure, the NTDE was subsumed as an element of the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training. Minister Syd Stirling declared that “Indigenous Education (was) a core business responsibility” of Employment, Education and Training, that the new NTG “(had) resolved to make implementation of the ‘Learning Lessons’ (sic) recommendations its prime focus in relation to Indigenous education” and that “(i)mproving Indigenous education outcomes (was) a top priority”, with responsibility to be “shared by all sections of the Department and all schools”. The Indigenous Education Program was to ensure that all Indigenous students achieve the level of skill, knowledge and understanding necessary for participating in society and undertaking tertiary and vocational education; and that parents, students and the entire community (place) high value on education.

Its realisation would be signalled with attainment of three outcomes, viz.:

79 I first met Collins in 1977, and subsequently had nodding acquaintance with him, observed his activity in NT and Federal politics, read his contributions to Legislative Assembly debates, as recorded in the Parliamentary Records, and attended presentations he made on the Review.

80 NT Department of Employment, Education and Training, 2001?. Indigenous education strategic plan 2000–2004: educating our future generation together. Darwin, NT. NTG. P. 1. The document is undated. The majority of the work would have been conducted in 2000, but it must have been launched in 2001, as Labor had at the time recently taken office.
Outcome 1. Indigenous students' attendance and participation in schooling are maximised.
Outcome 2. Indigenous students' educational outcomes meet recognised literacy and numeracy benchmarks and community expectations.
Outcome 3. Effective systems to manage the Indigenous Education Program have been developed.

Six “key elements”, @ two per outcome, would indicate their realisation, viz.:

A. Students go to school regularly.
B. Students are fit and able to learn.
C. Students have good schooling.
D. Students are tracked and their educational outcomes are measured.
E. The Indigenous Education Program is managed with full accountability.
F. Indigenous families, communities and government share responsibility for education outcomes.81

Each of the key elements was elaborated and “key performance statements” were listed.82

The strategic plan was clear and concise, addressing priority issues identified in the Review and declared in Learning lessons, it was obviously philosophically and practically in tune with Learning lessons and none of the outcomes, the key elements or the check-listed performances was unrealistic. On paper, it was a sound plan and potentially useful for each of the audiences for which it was devised. Significantly, it made no mention of incorporation of the Indigenous heritage in the curriculum, and appeared primarily conceived to realise locally controlled mainstream schooling.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the Collins Review and steps taken to implement its recommendations had given Indigenous Territorians a sound foundation for the formal education of their youth. The Indigenous Education Branch was in place to maintain and develop related policy and to provide specialist support; Learning lessons was an authoritative reference for planning and programming; the Indigenous education strategic plan 2000–2004 gave direction for the first stage of the Indigenous Education Program and lent it momentum; and the Indigenous Education Council was in place to monitor policy and its implementation and to consult and make representation as necessary. Whether the

expectations and optimism generated in developing that foundation are fulfilled must be
the subject of another study.  

SUMMATIVE STATEMENT.

Studies of formal education for Indigenous Territorians, conducted in the last decade
of the twentieth century, and the reports compiled from them, culminated in the 1999
Consultation, especially with Indigenes and also with related agencies and interests, had
become fundamental to such research and was prominent in each of the ventures examined.
Indigenous Territorians' involvement in the process, such that consultation was conducted
in manner that they apparently found acceptable and which enabled their substantive input,
was an important advance, building on processes that had evolved in the development and
implementation of the AEP, as in the studies from which the AEP had itself been developed.
Lateral activity gained a high profile; hierarchical activity was less in the public eye,
but was nonetheless extensive, directing, resourcing and generally supporting the process;
balance between horizontal and vertical activity was typically achieved and maintained.
Such balance and substantive inclusion of Indigenous Territorians throughout the process
augured well for positive outcomes. Need for Aborigines' ownership of and responsibility
for formal education locally and for Indigenous communities' partnerships with government
in its delivery were consistent themes.

The studies report little, however, in gains realised. Implementation of the positively
discriminatory AEP, its initiatives tailored to its purposes and goals and to identified
education-related needs of Indigenous Territorians, had involved considerable specific
purpose funding from the Commonwealth, sustained collective endeavour with Indigenous
participation, and emphasis on accountability in fiscal expenditure and achievement of
outcomes. It had evidently had little tangible constructive impact. At the turn of the
provided direction and a blueprint for addressing the myriad issues that the Collins Review
had brought to light However, given history, the outlook was not promising: other than
increased dysfunction in communities, no new unaddressed problems had been identified,
and, with the exception of some pilot initiatives proposed, no panaçaeas had been produced.
Rather, improved outcomes were to be achieved by sustained application with greater rigour

83 Such a study should be conducted by an independent Indigenous researcher, or Indigenous
researchers, possibly under the auspices of the Indigenous Education Council, to assess the
developments and outcomes with an Indigenous perspective.
and responsibility on the part of all parties. As Collins said himself, “It's not rocket science!”.
Chapter 9

Some Ideas in Retrospect.

In the 1960s a wave arose on the calm surface of affluent Australian society, a wave small at first, rapidly growing larger, of demand for change in favour of black Australians, fanned by the winds of growing knowledge and concern on the part of white Australians, but essentially driven by the growing assertiveness of the Aborigines themselves.

Alan Powell, *Far Country*, 1982.¹

My grandfather taught me that the river is the river and the sea is the sea. Each has its own complex patterns, origins and stories, and even though they come together, they will always exist in their own right. Non-indigenous Australians cannot be expected to learn or understand the lessons of my grandfather, but simply to respect that they are central to my identity. This acceptance of diversity is another important element of reconciliation.

Patrick Dodson, “Reconciliation Misunderstood”, 1996.²

So the pendulum swung in the latter half of the twentieth century, from swelling optimism in the 1960s, through growing disillusionment with Indigenous self-determination, to confusion and frustration as the quest for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia began to founder. Some telling views from disparate but informed and genuinely concerned sources will now be considered, to round out the perspective of that period.

The directions set in the Northern Territory (NT) by Betty Watts and Jim Gallacher in 1964 were unapologetically patronising, shaping formal education to assimilate Aboriginal Territorians into the mainstream in what was believed in the official frame to be their best interests. Watts and Gallacher's ideas stemmed from policy direction, for people of mixed, partly Aboriginal, descent, enunciated by Interior Minister John McEwan in the late 1930s, and its official reactivation and extension to apply to all Aborigines under Territories Minister Paul Hasluck from 1951. It was implemented in the NT through

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Director Harry Giese's management of the NT Administration Welfare Branch from the mid-1950s. Education for Aborigines in the NT, as directed by the Watts/Gallacher Report, was proceeding until the resultant advance in students' achievement was interrupted by the radical changes of the 1970s.

**Ideas of Some Former Welfare Operatives.**

The Watts/Gallacher Report was never formally rescinded, as Gallacher often remarked. In fact, it was commonly cited in policy-related documentation through to *Learning lessons* (1999). The principles and directions embodied in the Report earned the enduring, but by no means uncritical, support of people who implemented them. Many continued in professional leadership and administrative management roles as the NT public education system evolved to the end of the twentieth century.

Graham Benjamin was one such person. He worked in the NT, 1957 to the mid-1990s, in roles from teacher to inspector in the Welfare Branch Education Section to 1972, and subsequently in principal education adviser, superintendent and director positions. He recalls the period when Welfare administered formal education for Aborigines as a time when common sense prevailed in that field. Welfare teachers, he believed most appropriately, developed “sustainable relationships” with their students and their communities, the teaching/learning process was “sustainable” in their hands, and their being trained in migrant education English as a second language was a boon: in his view, these attributes were lost in amalgamation of the two systems under the Department of Education and introduction of the Commonwealth Teaching Service. Welfare resourced bush schools quite well, but there was a paucity of resources for field staff, and Giese's efforts on their behalf, whilst recognised, bore little fruit. Benjamin perceived personnel in Canberra and Darwin supply sources as failing to appreciate either the needs of operatives in the bush or the value of maintaining the facilities in which they worked and lived. Welfare Education issued a handbook for school operations, but he believed that they also needed a curriculum such as those directing programs and teaching in New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland public schools. Where there was continuity in teaching, however, he judged academic attainment to have been “reasonable”. Academic records was an area of issue for him, with little information on students' achievements recorded and retained, and pupil record cards lacking the benchmarks needed to convey useful information to teachers, parents and the children themselves.

When the two sets of public education services in the NT were amalgamated, it was Hedley Beare's idea, as the founding Director of the Department of Education's NT Division, that the new system's management should be advisory to schools, not directive. It gave
heads of schools free rein, including commitment of their budgets, and accountability was lacking. Commonwealth Teaching Service field operatives were effectively free to act as they chose, including doing “little or wrong”, and discontinuity in momentum and practices in communities and schools was thereby allowed, and ensued. “Motives in education”, understanding of which Benjamin held to be vital for teachers in schools in Aboriginal communities, were no longer clearly explained to staff new to the NT. Such developments were contradictory to belief, under Welfare, that it was important that the service be accountable, including parents' being provided with meaningful feedback on their children's achievement and given back-up support and encouragement. Government support for community initiatives, the Aboriginal staffing formula and differential funding for capital developments disappeared, in the amalgamation of services and again with Self-Government. From 1973, according to Benjamin, management of communities and the advent of a cash economy, with award wages and pensions, were asynchronous. The cash economy, in particular, led to Aboriginal “drinking rights”, making for dysfunction from excessive consumption of alcohol, gambling, disruption of families and change in family dynamics, all exacerbated by the mobility afforded by motor vehicles. Benjamin had respected Giese, with his “uplifting” effect on staff, high expectations of and strong support for Welfare personnel and his skill, generally, in turning Canberra's ideas to the NT's advantage. He regarded Jim Robertson, the NT's first Minister for Education when the function was devolved to the NT Government (NTG) in 1979, as having been too young and ill-prepared for that rôle.

Earl Watter worked in the NT, 1960–85, also in rôles from teacher to inspector in Welfare Education, and was seconded to Canberra in 1973 to advise the Minister for Education, Kim Beazley (senior), on education for Aborigines in the NT. He recalled rigour in schools in Aboriginal communities in the 1960s, whereby children achieved academically “at a grade level” approximately 12–18 months later than their white counterparts in urban schools. He considered teachers' being trained in English as a second language, Australian School of Pacific Administration graduates especially, a particular strength, as Benjamin did. He remembered the relationship between Welfare and mission operations and operatives in education as valuable, with the missions subsidised on the basis of resource agreements; their joint conferences were particularly fruitful. He attributed decline in standards from

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3 Graham Benjamin and Earl Watter recounted various bizarre actions that Beare let pass. In one instance, the head teacher of a small bush school committed his school's budget for a year to the purchase of many footballs. In another, an interstate bush school excursion proceeded without official approval, and hence legal cover, parental endorsement had not been obtained and the vehicular transport was inadequate. The fact that Beare condoned, or at least tended not to demur over, such practices exacerbated their concern and frustration, then as principal education advisers, without enforceable authority but expected to assume responsibility in crises.

4 Graham Benjamin assisted me with my research in discussion, 31 March 2004, at Kuna Park, Qld.
1973 onwards, initially at least, variously to principals education advisers' being powerless to enforce rigour in program development and implementation, including use of English as a second language methodology, to self-determination, under whose mantle “left-leaning” Department of Aboriginal Affairs patrol officers were known to tell children and their parents that attendance at school was not obligatory, and to the largely inapposite ethos of the Commonwealth Teaching Service. Beare's administrative short-comings also contributed, and were exacerbated by Gallacher's failure to counsel against measures affecting Aborigines adversely. Apart from the amalgamation of the education systems, self-determination, the Commonwealth Teaching Service and Beare's administration, Aboriginal “drinking rights”, to which Benjamin referred, also constituted a serious hindrance to the children's education.

Watter observed that H.C. Coombs, from the late 1960s, had had substantial influence in Indigenous affairs. It led to an upsurge in attention paid to Indigenous affairs by Canberra under the Whitlam Labor Government, attracting the “left-leaning” patrol officers. He saw particular irony in bilingual education's introduction in NT Aboriginal community schools: notwithstanding the principles of choice and “in their own time” supposedly embodied in self-determination, as Labor conceived it, Whitlam, to fulfil a campaign commitment, was adamant that bilingual programs were to be established without delay, implicitly whether wanted or not. Watter said Watts confirmed Whitlam's determination at the time. Benjamin was similarly cynical about bilingual education's precipitate introduction. Both he and Watter were also scornful about homeland centre, or outstation, education, as a “con”, never really becoming a viable and accountable alternative schooling provision. As an example, Watter cited the Finke River Mission school at Hermannsburg: it was closed when most of the community moved to officially supported outstations, and itinerant visiting teachers based at Hermannsburg provided programming and training support for Aboriginal assistant teachers as they tried to implement programs in so-called outstation schools. The arrangement

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5 Apparently Gallacher was over-awed by Beare's intellect. Watter attributed Gallacher's failure to stand up to Beare on measures he knew from his own experience to be inappropriate for Aborigines, their schools and their communities to low self-esteem when faced with Beare's superior academic accomplishment and his sycophantic adherents.

6 Watter assisted me with my research in discussion, 30 March 2004, near Laidley, Qld. As a Welfare teacher and Education Section official, he had advocated and practised assessment of academic achievement with Australian Council for Educational Research standardised tests in spelling, word recognition and reading comprehension. The NT Teachers Federation had objected in principle, on the grounds of cultural difference. Watter recalled Beazley as “sincere” and his successor, Fraser Coalition Minister for Education John Carrick, as “interesting and interested” in relation to education for Aborigines.

7 Cf. Peter Howson's comments, cited in Chapter 5, p. 188.

8 Watter mentioned the current NT Administrator, Ted Egan, as an example, but did not suggest that he was one who attempted to subvert children's attendance at school.
ultimately led Aranda elder Gus Williams to request “a proper school” at Hermannsburg. N'taria School resulted from that reversal.

When James Eedle succeeded Beare, system administration improved In Watter's summation, however, by that stage schooling in Aboriginal communities had been seriously damaged: most recent teacher recruits to the NT ranks of the Commonwealth Teaching Service were university-educated, not teacher-trained; they did not give results high priority, “the nexus between teaching and learning … (had been) lost”; and the hierarchy of the NT Division of the Department of Education, from Director to regional principal education advisers, although retaining “line authority” and responsibility to support schools, did not have authority to give and enforce professional direction to teachers. There also existed a chink in the system's accountability, in that schools were not required to maintain cumulative school registers and records of academic achievement. Watter, in common with Benjamin, regarded Robertson's “immaturity” as the first NT Minister for Education as having been no asset to public education, especially for Aborigines. Watter dismissed school councils as distinctly “undemocratic”, a valid observation on practice in some instances although at odds with the spirit of the concept.

Cecil Nielson began teaching at the Methodist Mission school at Milingimbi in Arnhemland in 1965. In 1971, she was appointed to the Welfare Branch Education Section's curriculum team, established in 1970, as an English as a second language specialist, and continued to serve in the curriculum area, under its successive arrangements and labels, until about 2002, from Senior Education Adviser (English/ English as a Second Language) in the NT Division of the Department of Education to Principal Education Officer (English as a Second Language) in the NTDE. The mission schools worked closely with Welfare Education in the 1960s, so, when she moved to the NT, they were in the throes of implementing the recommendations made in the Watts/Gallacher Report. She recalled implications for curriculum and school organisation: in particular, it was an era of innovation (e.g. three years of ungraded infants, individualised programs, the sorts of initiatives favoured by Watts). The triennial meetings of mission and Welfare teachers, of two weeks' duration, to which Watter referred, were valued. She enthused about the thorough treatment given to “all

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9 One is also reminded of Eedle's (1976) observation in an address to the Chamber of Commerce in Darwin, in which he likened his position in relation to the Commonwealth Teaching Service to “the opposite of the harlot … (whereas) the harlot was supposed to have power without responsibility … I seem to have responsibility without power”. (Eedle, James, 1976. Selected Papers 1975–6. Darwin, N.T.. Northern Territory Division, Department of Education. P. 43.)
aspects of teaching”, with heavy emphasis upon English as a second language, in the context of implementing the Watts/Gallacher recommendations.\(^{10}\)

In the 1960s, available printed English language materials were limited. There were the Canberra-produced *Bush Books* and the United Kingdom-oriented *Happy Venture* series. Nielson said that in order to be able to use *Happy Venture* materials, teachers were obliged to teach concepts unfamiliar to the children (e.g. boiling a hen's egg and eating it from an egg-cup, travelling by train and bus, English creatures and features of the English landscape) prior to their occurrence in a reader so that the print material would be intelligible when the pupils came to read it. Her recollection impressed, in the juvenile context, as being, in principle, the sort of elucidation on the *Balanda* world that Richard Trudgeon, more than thirty years later, regarded as necessary but generally lacking in communities to enable formal schooling to be valued, supported and effective. The original *Oral English Language* books, for use with Aboriginal children in early childhood education in the NT, were developed by the first curriculum inspector, Gloria Tate, and were welcomed as a valuable resource.

Tate's successor, Don Williams, headed the curriculum team when Nielson joined its ranks. Notwithstanding Watts and Gallacher's logistically-based rejection of inclusion of Aboriginal languages in the school curriculum, Williams favoured the idea, and Nielson recalled discussion of the issue within the team, 1971–72. Teacher Mavis Ough was running a trial Aboriginal language program at Angurugu, on Groote Eylandt, at the time. At Williams' direction, Nielson conducted a study of Aboriginal languages in use in communities, and compiled a bilingual education curriculum. She had barely completed it when the Whitlam Government was elected and announced the immediate introduction of bilingual education. Beazley (senior) later observed, according to Nielson, that it was “a sort of a social experiment”.\(^{11}\)

In October, 1973, Welfare Education was transferred, for administrative purposes, to the new Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Its central operation, in Darwin, was located on the second and third floors of the (then) new T&G Building. It was thus situated adjacent to but separate from South Australia's out-posted management hierarchy and administrative support for NT urban, “community”, schools, which occupied the two storeys above.\(^{12}\)

\(^{10}\) Cecil Nielson assisted me with my research in discussion, 23 April 2004, at Millner, NT.

\(^{11}\) Alistair Heatley's occasional assertion, that the Commonwealth treated the NT as a laboratory for the conduct of social experiments, springs to mind.

\(^{12}\) Nielson said the finishing touches were being put to the T&G Building when she and her Welfare curriculum colleagues moved in. When I arrived in the NT, the Fifth (top) Floor of the T&G
Professional and administrative support staff for mainstream schools and teachers working in them, as Nielson recalled, tended to scorn their Welfare Education counterparts as inferior, giving rise to perceptions, tensions and dissension which did not disappear when the services amalgamated soon thereafter. With the amalgamation, the former Welfare curriculum specialists became the senior curriculum officers in their respective disciplines across formal education throughout the NT, in Nielson's case in English and English as a second language. Their responsibilities and activities became so extensive that Gallacher was moved to observe ruefully that the “good work” done by the Aboriginal Curriculum Team in 1971–72 was “being dissipated” as a consequence.

With Bill McGrath the Principal Education Adviser (Bilingual Education), the bilingual curriculum unit evolved as a discrete entity, including linguistics, outstation education and English as a second language. Some difficulties arose from the separation of bilingual and non-bilingual schools, and from bilingual curriculum staff “doing separate but similar things” vis-à-vis the functions of other Curriculum and Research Branch personnel. Also, Beare's advocacy of school-based curriculum development brought into question the new system's need for a curriculum branch.

In the meantime, further complications arose from Assistant Director (Schools) Geoff Hodgson's “(insertion) of Schools Branch consultants”, generally secondary subject specialists, alongside senior Curriculum and Research operatives, interpreted as an effort to compensate for former Welfare curriculum specialists' perceived lack of mainstream education experience, knowledge and understanding. Nielson recalled Eedle's expression of concern at a meeting of Catholic school principals, that there was “a state of anarchy” in public education in the NT. She conveyed some of the hurt felt by ex-Welfare curriculum specialists who were earnestly performing their duties. The relevant part of the text of his presentation, as he reflected, mid-1976, on his first year or so as Director, read:

My initial impression was that I had inherited a system with a great deal of good will and a great deal of commitment on the part of individuals, but lacking a central purpose, lacking a common agreement on aims and objectives and methods of reaching them. I came to believe that my first task here is to put some cohesion back into … Northern Territory education

Building housed the senior executive of the new NT Division of the Department of Education. It did so subsequently, for the NTDE and then the public education element of the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training. The edifice successively became the Westpac Building and, more recently, the ANZ Building. Most of the system's central administration remained there until its relocation to the Mitchell Centre in 2003.
and create a system where I cannot in all honesty believe that a system has existed in the recent past.13

Sincere and loyal former Welfare Education personnel, many long-serving, may be forgiven for perceiving a rebuke in the comments, made to another group, by the recently-arrived Englishman, with his British Commonwealth background. Eedle's frustration with his lot at the time is similarly understandable. He appears, however, to have been commenting more upon Beare's leadership in Darwin, the Department of Education's administration from Canberra and the NT divisional amalgam than on the original discrete services' respective directions and operations.

Frank Brennan worked in the NT, 1968–99, serving in rôles from teacher to principal in Welfare Education and as principal, principal education adviser and superintendent in the NTDE. He believed that Aboriginal children in bush schools were really able to realise their academic potential until about 1975. He asserted that all policies were “well-meant”, with “none all right or all wrong”, and that “the positives outweighed the negatives” overall. Assimilation and integration, in his belief, had been justified by the achievements made with the principles they embodied. He rejected application of the term “stolen generations” to Indigenous persons who, as children, had been removed by authorities from their families for any of the reasons given, observing that the measure “may have been misguided, but it saved lives”. He felt that “stolen generations” was more applicable to the young people who were affected by Whitlam Labor initiatives in their being deprived of English literacy and numeracy and exposed, by “rights”, to substance abuse. He believed that educators' and policymakers' failure to take advantage of the opportunity they had to “take intelligent children (and) educate them (in preparation) for decision-making” was largely responsible for Indigenous “disintegration” in the NT in subsequent years.14

Although functions in the Welfare Branch were compartmentalised, personnel all “answered to the same boss, Harry Giese”, whom Brennan regarded as having been excessively paternalistic towards Aborigines. He relished the camaraderie between new recruits and experienced personnel that he found on his arrival in the NT. He said young Aborigines’ literacy in English was emphasised as paramount, that it was preferable for them to be literate also in their own languages as well as having a general education, but that it

14 Frank Brennan assisted me with my research in discussion, 1 April 2004, at Buderim, Qld.. He should not be confused with Fr. Frank Brennan, the prominent lawyer, Aboriginal land rights advocate and Jesuit priest, but he shares Fr. Brennan's passion in the Indigenous affairs area.
was “common policy to educate Aboriginal children, in time, to integrate into Australian society”. The major challenge in settlements, in his opinion, was to work with kinship groups and clans: the “white clan” ruled but was divided, teachers assumed that children's education would resolve all problems, and the administrative arm of the Welfare Branch was cynical about educating Aborigines. General settlement operations recognised that members of different clans and with different backgrounds had different attitudes to and ability to survive in work. Some were “totally traditional”, there were different levels of educational attainment and Aborigines were not pressed by any time-line to conform. Paternalism produced problems, and there were barriers to social justice for Aborigines. Children were encouraged to attend school, partly in the logical, if naïve, assumption that, in successive generations, educated parents' offspring would, ipso facto, be better educated than others.

According to Brennan, Aboriginal parents learned to accept the policy, recognising that the white mainstream “(was there) to stay”. After the 1967 Referendum, with the move to integrate, Welfare staff, regardless of their field of work, accepted it as their responsibility to enable Aborigines to live as other Australians did. Housing associations were introduced, and there was expectation that families would progress through a hierarchy of forms of accommodation provided until they “graduated”, individually, to their own three-bedroom dwellings. Accordingly, there was “always some sort of adult education” geared to home management and maintenance, consistent with Watts and Gallacher's proposal. The integration process was interrupted when Whitlam Labor was elected in December 1972. The idea of self-determination “at the pace of the people”, according to Brennan, was overtaken by various developments “with disastrous consequences”. He mentioned the NT Trades and Labor Council's quest for equal wages for Aborigines as notable, resulting, inter alia, in increase in cash-in-hand in communities and in replacement of regular and casual Indigenous employees in the pastoral industry with non-Aboriginal contract labour engaged from interstate.

Brennan took pride in having established an all-Indigenous school council in 1973, when he was school principal at the settlement of Warrabri (now Ali Kerenge) and the recognition it was given in the Commonwealth Teaching Service's work value study report in 1974. The school council replaced a white-dominated parents and friends association, and its decisions were binding on the school staff. It was exceptional in the authority vested in it in relation to the school. Its inception was considered a pioneering initiative.

The Federations (sic) submitted that schools operating in such a way had dimensions of complexity, difficulty and delicacy added to their tasks since
they were in fact acting as spearheads of Government policy in Aboriginal Affairs.\textsuperscript{15}

Difficulties arose from some of the council's decisions in relation to the school's operation, but, Brennan asserted, in each instance the council was ultimately found to have acted wisely. His introduction of the school council and the authority vested in it illustrated a point he stressed, that a vital dimension of any policy is in the field in which it is implemented, wherein there must be room for local exercise of discretion.

Like Watter, Brennan attributed loss of “the concept of teaching” in bush schools to the developments of the early-to-mid-1970s. He blamed the amalgamation of the two education services in the NT, Beare's “weakness” as an administrator, and the emasculated rôle of the principal education advisers, vis-à-vis that of the Welfare inspectors whom they had replaced. He also believed confusion generated by bilingual and outstation education initiatives and by the Commonwealth Teaching Service, its peer assessment system in particular, to have been seriously detrimental. He declared “lack of policy and leadership” in formal education for Aborigines “the major reason for the decline in schools” from 1975 onwards. He added “open education”, an innovative trend in vogue in public education in the 1970s, to the more familiar causes of “the steady downhill slide” in Indigenous Territorians' formal education. He concluded that, in perspective, there had been “good results” as well as “bad results” from most policy and strategic and operational moves.

The views of people such as Benjamin, Watter, Nielson and Brennan, although not necessarily definitive and conclusive, are germane to the conclusion of this study. They came to the NT, Benjamin, Watter and Brennan with experience of teaching in rural areas in Queensland, and they were employed as teachers in Aboriginal communities when it was public policy to assimilate Aborigines. Each was individualistic, and they came from quite different backgrounds, but all four had in common a passion about their early work and responsibility, in which there was then some certainty for all concerned. They also shared first-hand experience of the impacts in the NT, successively and cumulatively, of policy and practice based on Watts and Gallacher's findings, the 1967 Referendum, transition of policy from assimilation/integration to self-determination, amalgamation of the two NT education services, inception of the Commonwealth Teaching Service, Self-Government for the NT, devolution of the public education function from Canberra to Darwin and promotion of local self-management in education communities. Benjamin, Nielson and Brennan also

experienced implementation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) in the NT.

As field practitioners, and later, as front-line operational and functional managers, Benjamin, Watter, Nielson and Brennan were well-equipped and -situated to judge on the impacts of changes in policy and practice. Some cynics may dismiss their views as those of people of the past, grieving for a lost time when politics and socioeconomics for Indigenous Territorians were less complex, the communities in which they worked possessed vitality and their work was valued and had tangibly positive effects. On changes and trends, however, their assessments were consistent they agreed with each other, with Gallacher, and with Indigenous Territorians' own judgement, that educational achievement amongst Aborigines declined from the early-or mid-1970s. Their individual assessments also generally tended to be borne out objectively by such official data as was recorded under Welfare administration, and more recently by data collected, reports compiled and commentators' observations. Each had criticisms of policy and practice under Welfare, but they all obviously valued the rigour that prevailed and the promise and certainty that formal education then held for Aborigines. They were unanimous that the changes of the early 1970s triggered the deterioration of standards in education for Indigenous Territorians, and, given their respective experience and longevity of sustained service, their assessments deserve serious consideration.

Ideas of some Contemporary Critics.

Rosemary Neill (2002), Cathryn McConaghy (2000) and Richard Trudgen (2000) are contemporary critics of service provision, including formal education, for Indigenous Territorians. Neill referred to the topic in her journalist's treatise on “debilitating social problems afflicting indigenous communities”, compiled to expose distortion she perceived in the national debate on Indigenous affairs across Australia as it had developed from the inception of the policy of self-determination; McConaghy, drawing on her experience as a NTDE adult educator in Arnhemland and a lecturer at Batchelor College in the 1980s, considered it necessary that education for Indigenous Australians relinquish what she regarded as its abiding adherence to “culturalist” colonial tenets and move on to

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16 I have known Benjamin, Watter, Nielson and Brennan since I arrived in the NT as a member of the Commonwealth Teaching Service in 1974, as I did Gallacher until his death in the late 1980s. As the years progressed, their views on the subject changed only in that they became more deeply perturbed about what was happening, or not happening, in education for Indigenous Territorians.
“postculturalism”, eclipsing some of “the intractable problems” of the current régime;\(^\text{18}\) and Trudgen, former community development worker and currently consultant to the Darwin-based Aboriginal Resource and Development Services, sought to understand the causes of the “diseases of development” in Arnhemland, principal amongst which, in his assessment, was Yolŋu's “loss of control”, leading to their “demoralised state” and deteriorating circumstances. \(^\text{19}\) \textit{Inter alia}, Trudgen slated Western education providers for failing their clients and exacerbating their disadvantage. His critique was informed by his first-hand experience of working with Yolŋu in Arnhemland communities and the cross-cultural understandings he developed, 1973–83, and his consultant function since 1991.\(^\text{19}\) Although limited in its coverage to Yolŋu in Arnhemland, it had wide relevance, was reasoned in its criticism and proposed a way forward.

Neill believed that, with self-determination, “semantics … (and) loyalty to prescribed ideals” had come to outweigh in importance achievement of policy outcomes and “making … the ideals … work”.\(^\text{20}\) She recognised advances, notably accomplishment in tertiary education, signalling “evolution of a small but distinct … (indigenous) middle class”, in the performing and fine arts and in sport.\(^\text{21}\) She described formal schooling for Indigenous Territorians, referring to the Public Accounts Committee Report No. 27 and the Collins Review, as “little short of a disaster”, attributable to

(a) complex matrix of reasons – including government neglect, socially dysfunctional communities, undertrained teachers and a dogmatic idea of how bilingual programs should be taught.\(^\text{22}\)

Noting that across Australia, “(a)ttendance, retention, literacy and numeracy rates among indigenous students (remained) … often scandalously … below national averages”, she observed that to some degree “Australian schools (had) had more success ‘Aboriginalising’ their curriculums than in educating Aboriginal children”.\(^\text{23}\) In the NT, she cited Collins'
stating that the problems had been known to the NTDE but masked, that education for Indigenous Territorians “had never been a core activity” and that the situation, acknowledged as unsatisfactory, was claimed to have been improving when it was in fact deteriorating. The issue of poor attendance, the primary cause of poor outcomes, was seen to be treated with indifference by the system, attributable in part to “the pseudo-progressive view that monitoring attendance was an insidious leftover from … assimilation”, with creative recording in some schools. Such observations suggested, amongst NTDE operatives, ignorance of or disregard for the legal status of enrolment and attendance records and their significance in planning, including budget management.

Neill also picked up, *inter alia*, on a segment in *Learning lessons* that indicated lack of real concern in the NTDE for Indigenous children's results. She acknowledged that such indifference was not unique to the NT but widespread, citing R.G. Schwab’s (1999) finding that, despite substantial public promotion, effort and resources devoted to “indigenous literacy and numeracy”, little attention appeared to be paid to outcomes and that rigorous evaluation of such programs was minimal. She noted that Schwab had found, in “new research”, factors, additional to those identified by Collins, which affected Indigenous school attendance and retention adversely:

- early school leaving being the social norm; pessimism and a lack of encouragement about indigenous students' ability to remain at school; and an assumption that education did not lead to jobs.

They all led to expectation of widespread failure in formal education in Indigenous communities. The Collins Review, in comparison, was described, correctly, as being just as frank about the systemic shortcomings of indigenous education in the Territory, … respectful of indigenous peoples’ bicultural aspirations for their own children, but (refusing) to curtsy to bureaucrats, politicians or political correctness, … (and his) research … (conducted) with a rare and robust disregard for partisanship or dogma.

*Learning lessons* was credited particularly with “moving forward the debate on indigenous education”, emphasising the necessity that children acquire the English literacy and

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24 Neill. P. 245–47. School roll-books may be subpoenaed as evidence in court cases. I recall a bush school's roll-books' being used in a case seeking compensation for an Aboriginal child's loss of schooling opportunity and achievement as a result of injuries sustained in a car accident.
numeracy skills they needed to be able to make choices about their lives.\(^\text{25}\) Beyond endorsing the identification of issues and the priorities and directions highlighted in *Learning lessons*, however, Neill proposed no solutions.

McConaghy, with greater familiarity with the NT and drawing on feminist discourse, proposed deculturalisation and decolonialisation of policy with a move to “post-colonialism” in relation to education for Indigenous Australians.\(^\text{26}\) She effectively thereby advocated, *inter alia*, that enduring vestiges of the “Western-Indigenous” binary feature of frames, seen as typical of “colonial” régimes from the early days of white settlement to late in the twentieth century, be eschewed and the policy freed of the constraints of the contemporary official frame. In her reasoning, my idea of the civic culture’s being incompatible with the Indigenous culture and circumstances, in the context of formal education, would be an example of a “new racism … founded upon a notion of the supposed incompatibility of cultural traditions”, an influence that would perpetuate re-working of “colonial social formations”. Towards the end of the century, she detected instances of “colonial re-production” in education for Indigenes being disrupted and bases established for post-culturalism.\(^\text{27}\)

McConaghy posed herself the question, “(W)hat should constitute the legitimating conditions of contemporary Indigenous education?”.\(^\text{28}\) She reasoned that

> Indigenous education is … a set of activities and discursive orders that need to be considered in terms of … their links with broader social movements and global formations, … with broader processes of Australian colonialism and globalisation.

It belonged in “the realm of postcolonial studies in education”.\(^\text{29}\) She reached no clear-cut conclusion, but finished with an elaboration of the issue as she perceived it:

> (W)hat will Indigenous education be like outside the discourses of ‘race’, difference, enlightenment and progress? What issues will a postcultural,

\(^{25}\) Neill, 2002. Pp. 248–49. Neill was rueful that “even before (Collins’) report had been printed, the debate was hijacked by the then Country Liberal Party Government’s decision to cut funding for indigenous bilingual education”. In fact, that decision had already been taken, at least in principle, to implement that and other recommendations from the 1998 Education Review, before Collins was engaged to review education for Indigenous Territorians.


\(^{28}\) McConaghy. P. 254.

\(^{29}\) McConaghy. P. 269.
postcolonial Indigenous education consider outside the limitations of objectivist binaries, cultural racisms, patriarchy, regimes of othering, liberal contradictions and the ambivalent play of acceptance and rejection, recognition and disavowal, inclusion and exclusion? What will emerge out of the productive potential of the nexus of identity politics and ideology politics, particularly in relation to considerations of black and white women and men in the field? What will Indigenous education look like outside of anthropological notions of ‘culture’? What other forms of social analysis and pedagogy could take place outside notions of Indigenous cultures and Aboriginality as ‘already read’? Importantly, what will constitute the new legitimating conditions for securing epistemic authority and disciplinary capacity outside the assumptions of early colonialism and scientific culturalism?\(^{30}\)

Without doubt the multiple dimensions of “Indigenous education”, anthropological, sociological, ethnological, ideological and political, in McConaghy's analysis do actually feature. The fact that formal education for Indigenous Australians, in the NT in particular, remains a serious issue alone justifies taking each and all into account in trying to effect redress. In the academic frame from which she has approached the matter, however, pedagogy, although referred to throughout, was placed at risk of losing its primacy in the maelstrom of human sciences and the competing, often contradictory, theories and concepts that she portrayed. She highlighted the multiplicity, complexity and inter-relationship of the factors involved, but no resolution or constructive process emerged. Pedagogy is distinctly the fundamental element and the primary focus in devising a solution, and an appropriately enlightened but practical pedagogical frame is required for the task. A comprehensive perspective is required, however, to accommodate all dimensions.

Trudgen was more down-to-earth, more specifically focussed, and blunt in conveying his assessment of the situation in Arnhemland. He had worked closely with Yolŋu in their communities for eleven years, departed for eight years, and returned in the early 1990s to be horrified at the deterioration of their circumstances. In his summation, “Yolŋu had lost control of their own lives … (in a) process (which had) started at the turn of the twentieth century and (was) now reaching its disastrous climax”.\(^{31}\) He saw the decline reflected in formal education:

\(^{30}\) McConaghy. P. 270.
\(^{31}\) Trudgen. Pp. 5–7. Trudgen's and McConaghy's stints in Arnhemland communities overlapped, 1982–83, but neither seems to have acknowledged the other.
In the 1960s and ’70s many Yolŋu went through to higher education and on into full-time employment. Now young people arrive at school leaving age with no chance of entering any form of full-time employment Many will not even get a driver's licence because their literacy levels are so poor. School attendance is low, as though the people see no sense in education. Blame is heaped on them for their non-participation and their supposed academic failure.32

He posed the questions of why Yolŋu did not learn and why motivation to attend school had dwindled. In contrast, traditional Yolŋu education, where it was practised, in his view was thriving, despite non-Indigenous hindrances, whilst “the dominant culture schooling system … (was) failing”. He lauded traditional Yolŋu schooling as imparting “ancient knowledge” efficiently: attendance was excellent and instruction was “‘Yolŋu-friendly’, using the people's language, communication mores, educational methodologies and ways of constructing knowledge … (with) well-refined ‘scaffolding’” practices. He rued that “Western-educated Yolŋu teachers” tended to lose the “culturally appropriate teaching methodologies” in the teacher-training courses they undertook, wherein they trained in “a dominant culture” frame to which “the principles of good cross-cultural/cross-language education” were commonly unknown. He described Yolŋu communities as “awash with dominant culture-trained teachers and trainers” applying “typical Western methodologies … for a mono-culture/mono-language setting” and producing virtually no learning. As a consequence of “(constant bombardment) with seemingly unintelligible information”, Yolŋu felt “harassed and frustrated”, failing where Balanda succeeded and “blaming themselves and seeing themselves as ‘inferior’ and ‘unintelligent’, even as less human”. He observed that Balanda would have experienced similar difficulties and feelings if they had been subjected to “a traditional Yolŋu educational structure”.33

Fantasies about Yolŋu's resuming a traditional life-style in isolation notwithstanding, the reality was that Balanda were and would remain in ascendency in Arnhemland, as elsewhere in the NT and Australia. The prevailing Balanda influences and behaviour were therefore inescapable, with “contemporary knowledge … (needed to enable Yolŋu) to compete and regain some control over their lands and lives”. For survival, Yolŋu had to learn about the Western world as well as their own environment. Trudgen posited a theory, that “dominant

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32 Trudgen. P. 122.
culture education per se” did not threaten “Yolŋu ways” but “dominant culture education that (was) ineffective” did do so.\textsuperscript{34}

In Trudgen's view, ineffective Balanda education had no intellectual significance for its non-Western recipients and crippled them intellectually. He pointed to failings he perceived in formal education and the impacts sustained by its Indigenous clients in Arnhemland, juvenile and adult, including educators: use of English terminology and introduction of Western concepts without ensuring students' understanding made them feel “inferior and unintelligent”; dismissal of Indigenous “intellectual language” as archaic and irrelevant, undermining it and hence eroding the intellectual capacity for education (in its broadest sense), made them “discount their elders and traditional knowledge”; failure to convey the bases of aspects of Western society, such as European-introduced ailments and their cures, or fiscal policy and practice, created confusion and led to loss of “the ‘cause and effect’ relationship in their thinking about how the world (operated)”; loss of such thinking deepened confusion, loosened grasp of reality and led to “(belief) that dominant culture knowledge (was) of a superior, mystical quality and unattainable”; failure to relate or adapt formal educational provision and make it comprehensible in the Yolŋu perspective tended to substantiate perception of contemporary life in the outside world as driven by mystical forces, requiring sustenance from rituals, and led to perception “that ritual, rather man productive action” prevailed in the Balanda world; and the impacts of the West, such as replacement of traditional economic knowledge and practices with an economy upon which they became dependent but did not understand and about which they were not taught, eroded any desire to learn either traditional Yolŋu knowledge or contemporary Balanda knowledge.\textsuperscript{35} The scenario portrayed by Trudgen was one of dependence, purposelessness and confusion amongst Yolŋu, fertile ground for substance abuse and consistent with the growing dysfunction that Collins lamented.

Trudgen pondered whether “knowledge and thinking” had come to “an end for Yolŋu”. He believed it was so for many, as a result of confusion attributable to “long years of conflict, war, … non-recognition of their lands and resources … (and disregard for their) languages and traditional knowledge”. A combination of Balanda teachers’ ignorance of Yolŋu's view of the world and cultural heritage, alien communication practices and incomprehensible “‘secret’ English” prevented effective learning from the dominant culture. Such barriers were exacerbated by the NTDE’s persistence with “its mainstream educational processes as the only educational reality”. The situation had to be reversed, with appropriately trained

\textsuperscript{34} Trudgen. Pp. 123–24.
\textsuperscript{35} Trudgen. Pp. 124–32.
dominant culture teachers and trainers who were also expert communicators and worked together with Yolŋu, “prepared first to listen to Yolŋu (and) learn their language” and then able to proceed, “through dialogue” with Yolŋu, to “fill in the knowledge gaps” and thereby redress their confusion and vulnerability. He cited South American educator Paulo Friere, from his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972),

> Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education.

… noting that the necessary “effective cross-cultural/cross-language education” would require training of a specialised nature for Balanda. Until such an approach were adopted, in his view, “ineffective education” would perpetuate human waste and effectively consign Yolŋu to intellectual limbo.\(^{36}\)

Trudgen's purpose in considering the factors that had caused the crisis addressed in *Why warriors lie down and die* was to identify them and to formulate strategies appropriate for recovery. The priority was for Yolŋu to regain control of their lives, achievement of which required attitudinal change on the part of authorities to enable development of apposite policies and programs. He believed the crisis was primarily attributable to loss of control of lives and environment, and the ills suffered were symptomatic of that deprivation. He declared that “(t)he cardinal principle (was) to motivate and equip the people to take control of their own lives and their contemporary environment”, tapping their human resources in the process. In proposing response to the challenge, he identified five priority tasks to be undertaken to develop “a more Yolŋu-friendy environment”, *viz*:

- take the people's language seriously;
- train dominant culture personnel;
- approach education and training in a different way;
- replace existing programs with programs that truly empower the people;
- deal with some basic legal issues.\(^{37}\)

He proceeded to outline measures that he believed would “make a difference”.

Trudgen believed, in relation to formal education, that Balanda appreciated neither the near extinction of the Yolŋu way of life nor the prevailing confusion and, as a consequence,
persisted in “(pushing) mainstream activities”, hoping for some effect. He argued that Yolŋu needed to have their “conceptual universe” adjusted and attuned to “the contemporary world” before they could benefit from conventional educational programs. Most schooling and training programs were dominant culture mainstream-based in content and accreditation, and therefore could not accommodate “the real learning needs of Yolŋu”. Instead, for learning to occur, courses needed to be built on Yolŋu’s knowledge base and to be delivered in their “intellectual language”. The NT’s public education system, he held, did not understand “cross-cultural/cross-language learning problems”, with the result that much finance and “the efforts of many good educators” were wasted and consequent Yolŋu casualties grew.38

Formal education in all settings generally focussed on skill development. Concept development, however, was a prior requirement for Yolŋu: such skills as reading and writing in English were of little value without knowledge of their practical use in the contemporary world. Trudgen argued that the priority was to concentrate on developing “their conceptual universe” in order for acquisition of the skills offered through formal education to make sense and be desired. He reasoned that when Yolŋu understood the Balanda world and culture, they would demand skill-based education, just as other peoples whose lands had been settled from abroad did.39

Trudgen specified “(d)iscovery education” as appropriate. Again citing Freire, he emphasised that educational activity must embody the clients’ view of the world, or risk irrelevance. He proposed dialogue-based problem-solving to enable Yolŋu to determine educational substance and allow them to “own” the new knowledge thereby acquired rather than having it “fed to them indiscriminately”. It was a matter of gaining “concept-based education” through examining problems that were meaningful and important to them. He envisaged that Yolŋu would identify issues, the educator would research them, developing appreciation of the related concerns and confusion, listing pertinent Yolŋu Matha terms and expressions for use in deliberations and assembling resources to assist in validating and illustrating educational content and then institute its dialogue-based delivery, possibly enriched with involvement of expert resource persons. The last could require the educator to function also as an English – Yolŋu Matha interpreter. Thus, apart from acquiring meaningful knowledge, Yolŋu were calculated to be “responsible controllers of their own environment” in relation to each particular issue.40 Trudgen exemplified the process with his experience as an educator at

Ramingining, facilitating elders, families and young people in addressing the problem of petrol-sniffing in the early 1980s, with virtually no expense. The outcome was that the problem was solved by the community, both immediately and in the longer term. Having relevant Yolŋu cultural experiences embedded in the process, he believed, was fundamental to its success.\(^{41}\)

The issues raised in *Why warriors lie down and die*, both those related to formal education and others discussed, were complex. Trudgen maintained that in reality they were essentially “to do with how people (felt)”, their *joie de vivre* and purpose in life. He held that the changes he proposed required no increase in fiscal outlay and that eventually costs for services would reduce as

new programs empower Yolŋu, allowing them to create interventions that work around ‘Yolŋu-friendly’ environments where they are able to resume mastery over their own living environment.

He rated Yolŋu’s “empowerment” the primary necessity, with “Yolŋu-friendly' environments” a prerequisite, but held that ultimate responsibility for such development rested in “the dominant culture”, with its policy-makers in particular.\(^{42}\) So, despite advocacy of “Yolŋu-friendly” environments and approaches and Yolŋu responsibility, he considered the onus to be upon governments to initiate measures.

Neill, McConaghy and Trudgen provided quite disparate perspectives, each from her/ his own occupational and personal frame. They had in common concern about the situations of Indigenous Australians, with varying degrees of focus on and knowledge of situations in the NT. Neill detailed the plight of Indigenous Australians and highlighted the need for measures to be taken to address the multiple issues involved; McConaghy took a theoretical-cum-ideological approach to the challenge posed by education for Indigenous Australians, drawing attention to numerous dimensions needing attention in its resolution and advocating a radical shift in the official frame; and Trudgen was practical in his analysis of the issues impinging upon Yolŋu in Arnhemland and proposed practical approaches with which to address them, radical but largely common-sense in relation to schooling and training. With reference to implementing the *Learning lessons* recommendations, Neill's account could interest Collins and others overseeing the process and the people carrying out the work involved. McConaghy provided a checklist of dimensions for them to take into

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\(^{41}\) Trudgen. Pp. 239–45.

\(^{42}\) Trudgen. P. 251.
consideration and a challenge to depart from conventions. Trudgen, in contrast, highlighted realities and proposed strategies that should stimulate lateral thinking.

Three significant issues, quite dissimilar but inter-related, pose problems. The need for specialised training is not questioned, and there is merit in “discovery education” in service delivery at all levels. The priority Learning lessons gave English literacy and numeracy in the schooling context, however, would render concurrent development of the “conceptual universe”, as proposed by Trudgen, difficult, probably limiting it to an initiative in adult education. In the policy-making, program-design and resource-allocation context, adjustment of the firmly established official frame for provision of education services would be required for the ideas of McConaghy and Trudgen to be heeded. As well, for all that accountability for use of public moneys, an essential element of the civic culture, may frustrate advocates of constructive innovation, it is a reality that cannot be disregarded. It will be interesting to observe, in directions taken from Learning lessons, how such issues are resolved and whether Trudgen's relevant and potentially useful ideas are adopted to any extent.43

SUMMATIVE STATEMENT.

Between them, Benjamin, Watter, Nielson and Brennan as practitioners and leaders in the NT, initially teachers in Aboriginal communities, experienced much of the assimilation and self-determination eras, including the transition from the first to the second During their service, they witnessed burgeoning complexity and uncertainty for Aborigines and, in particular, the impacts sustained in their schooling, including decline in standards of achievement from the 1970s. None suggested that Welfare's management of formal education for Indigenes was ideal, but they all conveyed that, under the circumstances then prevailing, it was distinctly more appropriate than were provisions subsequently made, changing circumstances notwithstanding.

The frames of Neill, McConaghy and Trudgen were even more varied, but they had concern about Indigenous Australians in common with each other and with Benjamin, Watter, Nielson and Brennan. Of the critics, however, and amongst all the other sources consulted, only Trudgen constructively offered a way forward. Essentially, he proposed Yolŋu-ising


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the services and their delivery. Significantly, however, by implication, he advocated official, rather than local, initiative, and hence control.
Chapter 10
The Study and Prospect.

(T)he right to education is fundamental to social justice. It is fundamental to the full enjoyment of many other human rights and to the exercise of social responsibilities including respect for human rights. … Human rights give rise to government obligations. Governments have obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights.

Chris Sidoti, 2001.¹

While shortcomings in the provision of school education services (in remote NT communities) are acknowledged, the Committee also agrees that the gap between levels of literacy and numeracy achieved in urban and remote schools will not be closed until Aboriginal communities really want the gap closed and provide their children with the support and guidance to achieve that end.

NT Public Accounts Committee, 1996.²

Key recommendations arising out of this review provide for the involvement and ownership by Indigenous people of educational services for their children.

NTDE, Learning lessons,1999.³

Between them, these excerpts encapsulate the critical issues in formal education for Indigenous Territorians at the turn of the twenty-first century, at the least as they have crystallised for me in the course of this study. In the context of social justice, formal education was theirs by fundamental right: two governments, the Northern Territory

Government (NTG) and the Commonwealth Government, shared responsibility for its provision; for it to be effective, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders needed to be involved, with ownership, and to be active and responsible in its delivery; and it followed that it had to be a priority for them, one to which they made and sustained practical commitment. The Northern Territory (NT) Public Accounts Committee (1996) concluded that Indigenous Territorians did not accord it that level of priority or give it that degree of commitment in non-urban communities. This study has reached the broad conclusion that poor outcomes were due for the most part to conception of policy, prioritisation and service delivery in the Western civic frame and difference between the civic culture of the providers and the cultures and circumstances, locally, of the clients. In fact, the public provider's conviction of need for high prioritization of and commitment to formal education and the low prioritisation and commitment it was evidently accorded overall by the clients in practice appears, per se, a significant manifestation of such cultural difference. Considering the need to eschew ethnocentricity in cross-cultural contexts, identified by Geert Hofstede (1983) and Henrik Magga (2003), it is not surprising: the policy and the service evolved from industrial Britain and developed to meet needs in the Western-oriented Australian mainstream. It was duly applied to Indigenous Australians to effect their assimilation into that mainstream. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the principles underlying such provision for Indigenous Territorians has not changed greatly.

This, the final chapter, will begin with a resumé of the evolution of pertinent policy. A summary of the study as it has proceeded will follow. It will include some trends detected, as they influenced several unplanned measures taken, notably consideration of frames and ideas, qualitative analysis and research on potentially relevant practice overseas. Information derived from the analyses will then be summarised with consolidation of the “summative statements” developed in relation to each. The analysis instruments will be reviewed, with consideration of their validity and the value of the data they yielded. Findings from research on experiences abroad will next be reviewed and related to the situations of Indigenous Territorians. Cultural difference, frames and ideas in the provision of formal education for Indigenous Territorians and findings from the study will then be reviewed in the context of directions undertaken from the Collins Review. The chapter will conclude with my own ideas on appropriate principles and directions for future progress.

Unfortunately no panaçaeas to resolve the issues prevailing in formal education for Indigenous Territorians can be unveiled, nor can a route to their realising outcomes in equity with non-Indigenes be paved. If they were readily available, they would have been identified already and harnessed. The issues are not new, but they are manifold, too wide-ranging and
complex for ready resolution, and require unity of purpose, commitment and perseverance of all involved parties for redress to be effected.

**Summary of the Evolution of the Policy.**

In the latter half of the twentieth century, public policy on Indigenous affairs officially underwent two changes, from protection to assimilation and from assimilation to self-determination, arguably several more in practice. It is simplistic to locate policy change at moves from era to era, however, as more subtle but nonetheless important evolutionary developments, both on-going and in redirection, were taking place throughout. In the early 1950s, long-reigning *laissez faire* protection was replaced with dynamic and directed but soon-to-be discredited assimilation. The drive to assimilate was relatively short-lived, but had enduring impacts which persisted to late in the century, even being reinforced to a degree in the late 1990s. The 1967 Referendum spelt the official end of assimilation, and the policy direction adjusted to integration, embodying some self-actualisation which was carried further when Whitlam's social reformist Labor juggernaut introduced impact- and emotion-laden self-determination from early 1973. Fraser Coalition Governments modified self-determination to self-management, but self-determination was re-activated in the Hawke- and Keating-led Labor administrations and continued to be Labor's policy for Indigenous Australians into the twenty-first century. During the 1990s, whilst self-determination remained a Labor ideal, it appeared overshadowed somewhat by the Commonwealth's quest for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians; notably, it did not resurge significantly in Indigenous community demand in response to Howard-led Coalition Governments' lowering the profile of reconciliation to “practical reconciliation”. At the turn of the twenty-first century, it was not clear precisely what public policy on Indigenous Australians was, either Federally or in the NT, with the qualification that practical reconciliation may have been reverting towards assimilation or integration.

From 1911 to the early 1970s, policy on formal education for Aborigines in Australia and the NT reflected successive overarching Commonwealth policies on Aboriginal affairs. In the NT, it continued to be so until Self-Government and devolution of the education function from Canberra to Darwin in 1979 and to a large extent thereafter. Education was a key element of the policy to assimilate in the 1950s–60s and remained so in the NT, albeit less officially, until well after the 1967 Referendum. The innovations of the Whitlam era put paid to the cohesion and consistency of service and service delivery for Indigenous Territorians as policy moved in the 1970s to an “education for all” mind-set. In the 1980s, that universal approach persisted in the NT, with some special considerations and concessions.
made for Aborigines. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the conception and introduction of the four-triennia Commonwealth-funded National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP), a positively discriminatory policy under which systems' provisions for Indigenous Australians were supplemented specifically to address key aspects of their educational disadvantage. In the NT, the AEP ran concurrently with the NT Department of Education's (NTDE) devolution of functions to school councils for school communities' local self-management of education, with some overlap.

Records and anecdotal information consistently pointed to declining standards of Indigenes' academic achievement from the 1970s onwards. The reality of the decline was irrefutable, occurring steadily from the mid-1970s, dating, ironically, from when massive changes to advance Aboriginal affairs were being effected. The changes were born of recognition of Aborigines' rights, their cultural heritage and their entitlement to equitable opportunity to participate in Australian society, and so to realise outcomes equitable with those for non-Aborigines. There were successive increases in funding committed to that end, in formal education in particular. As time progressed, in the NT, initiatives became increasingly innovative and active involvement of Indigenes grew, from modest Western-oriented consultation to comprehensive consultation and collaboration conducted largely by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders themselves, carrying out their own analyses, collating their findings and converting them to policy, practice and identification of desired outcomes. Relevance of services and their delivery, with monitoring of participation and outcomes and feedback provided for stake-holders, were integrated into policy processes. At the turn of the century, with Indigenous professionals established as principals of schools in Indigenous communities, some Indigenous operatives were moving into systemic middle-management rôles. The latter provided policy advice and professional and administrative support and direction in the delivery of education services that were now largely purpose-designed to give Indigenous students access to mainstream education. Their declining achievement, however, was not arrested.

Alarm bells were jangling. At the end of the century, the decline in achievement persisted, when policies, priorities, initiatives, approaches, delivery methodology and performance indicators were conceived and devised, or strongly influenced, both federally and in the NT, by Indigenous personnel, most of whom had themselves succeeded in the formal education process. Further, in the NT, they had support from able, committed and experienced non-Indigenous practitioners, working as teachers, curriculum developers and professional development leaders. It was not suggested that the priorities, purposes and goals of the AEP were inappropriate, nor that strategies for their realisation were ill-conceived or
poorly implemented, notwithstanding some administrative shortcomings; in fact, evaluative measures were taken and adjustments were made in follow-up, yet progress generally remained negative. Learning lessons made it abundantly clear, so that no stake-holder could treat the issue with struthious ignore, that the situation was abysmally unsatisfactory.

Summary of the Study.

The study commenced with recognition that outcomes from public policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians were poor, with stark gaps evident when achievements were compared with those for others. I adopted the term, “formal education”, to distinguish Western-based mainstream schooling from the traditional Indigenous education that had been evolving since the Dreamtime. “Formal education” thus denoted schooling for youth of preschool- and school-age and education and training for adults. Policy, however, generally focussed more on children’s schooling than on post-school provisions.

A hypothesis, that the problem ultimately lay in cultural difference between the policy process and its clientèle, was proposed. As the focus was upon policy, the study moved to policy analysis theory, preparatory to identification of a model with which to examine public policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians. A bi-axial model based on policy analyst Craig Matheson’s (2000) conception of vertical and horizontal axes in policy formulation in the Australian public sector was adopted. Examination of the attributes and limitations of the bi-axial framework led to exploration of two further theoretical areas: in the field of culture, delving into differing cultures, differences between cultures and implications of cultural difference exposed the dual concepts of frames and ideas as pertinent to the study; and consideration of cultural difference, in the contexts of the study and of the bi-axial framework and its quantitative analysis facility, in turn determined that a qualitative dimension was required. Accordingly, qualitative analysis was considered and a purpose-designed instrument was devised, completing preparation for the study.

The second stage, the principal one, comprised study of developments affecting Indigenous Territorians and their formal education and analysis of related public policy and policy processes, from soon after Europeans first settled in Australia. There were three broad, quite distinct, eras. The first, by far the longest, to mid-twentieth century, when it was policy to “protect” Aborigines until their extinction, provided historical background to subsequent policy, but, predictably, quantitative and qualitative analyses both proved simplistic. In the second era, from the early 1950s to the early 1970s, after it was recognised that the Indigenous race would survive, the policy was to assimilate Aborigines into the Australian mainstream, and hence in the NT, effectively to acculturate them and to breed
out their Aboriginality. In perspective, it was a brief period of substantial development and implementation of constructively-intended, if paternalistic, policy, with significantly increased fiscal commitment, realising some progress. Its consideration, some recollections of Indigenous students of the assimilation era and analyses of policy and the policy process provided important background to study of the last three decades of the century. The final era, featuring so-called self-determination policy from 1973, was one throughout which policy-related activity and commitment of public moneys grew considerably, but, despite positively discriminatory programs, measurement of outcomes from formal education revealed little progress and some decline. Consideration and analyses of policy and the policy process revealed that Indigenous well-being, Indigenes' formal education in particular, was generally an elevated priority in the public policy arena in Australia and the NT, and that in practice the process was increasingly and more appropriately inclusive of the clientèle. There appeared to be little tangible return, with some relapse, however, despite the endeavours undertaken and the resources committed.

I became aware that provisions made for indigenous minorities elsewhere, also coexisting with European settlers and having done so for longer than had Indigenous Australians, could prove instructive. I therefore examined some such situations overseas. North America, with its history of British colonisation, was an obvious choice, and Scandinavia and Peru were included to broaden the perspective. It became apparent that, in the latter half of the twentieth century, substantial moves towards practical self-management, even a degree of self-determination, had been taken in all the settings studied, with the exception of the Peruvian Andes. I found principles espoused, rationales formalised and initiatives taken in each, other than in the mountains of Peru, to be potentially useful for reference in designing and delivering formal education services provisions for Indigenous Territorians.

Returning to the NT scenario, I studied recent (1990s) reviews and reports with implications for and/or reflections of formal education for Indigenous Territorians. With one modest exception, they portrayed a disheartening panorama of impressive infrastructure, policies, policy processes and implementation strategies and operations, with heavy fiscal commitment, juxtaposed, at the point of service delivery, with general failure to generate outcomes and realise goals in any way commensurate with the levels of investment of policy, human endeavour and resources. I singled out for analysis the latest development in the period covered, comprising the Collins Review, Learning lessons (1999), and the Indigenous education strategic plan 2000– 2004 (2001?), owing to their vital significance for Indigenous Territorians' formal education today and in the foreseeable future. The processes proved to epitomise balance in hierarchical and lateral activity and to optimise
inclusion of the clientèle and the extent of the activity involved. I also sought the ideas of some former NT education operatives who had served in both assimilation and self-determination eras and those of numerous personnel more recently involved. The policy, as reviewed, its proposed implementation, and prerequisites for success, will be considered further in the light of findings from relevant experiences abroad and some other reflections.

**Summary of the Information Obtained from the Analyses.**

Policy analysis was a key element of the study. Public policy and policy processes concerning management of Indigenous affairs, primarily on formal education for Indigenous Territorians, were analysed using a bi-axial quantitative framework and a checklist of questions for qualitative assessment. They yielded helpful data from each of the successive policy eras, and revealed patterns of change in emphases and activity across them as time passed and governments changed partisan hands.

From the 1830s to the 1940s, under protection for Indigenous Australians and Territorians, both policy and policy process were limited and had little, if any, constructive effect. The process was exclusive to government and hence predominantly hierarchical, and involved relatively little activity. The policy and its implementation were imposed upon the surviving Indigenes until, contrary to the expectation upon which the policy was based, it became evident that they were not on the brink of extinction. Their participation in the process was virtually only as the objects of the policy and the strategies employed for its implementation.

The next era, 1951–72, when, with some optimism, it was policy to assimilate Aborigines, the policy process became much more active, especially in relation to formal education for Indigenous Territorians. The policy to assimilate was calculated to offer Indigenes opportunity for citizenship and participation in equity with others in contemporary Australia. Formal education was believed to be vital to their effective assimilation, and therefore to the policy’s implementation. The process was still virtually exclusive to government, but there was much greater endeavour. Although lateral activity in the process increased, it remained heavily hierarchical. Policy and its implementation continued to be imposed, but participation by clients in the process increased, albeit still as objects of the policy and its implementation strategies.

From early 1973, with introduction of self-determination, public policy and the policy process for education, including formal education for Indigenous Territorians, became complex. They grew even more so, in comparison with those that had previously obtained, when the NT was granted Self-Government and the NTG accepted responsibility in the area.
From Self-Government, the NTG, with the Country Liberal Party in office, was determined that elected representatives, not bureaucrats, would control public policy and services. In contrast with previous administrations, both Federally and in the NT, politicians became committed to public participation in policy. In the Territory, most had some awareness of the unique needs of the Indigenes, difficulties entailed in trying to meet them, their status as citizens and the NTG's responsibility. It was as committed to what were believed to be the Indigenes' best interests as the Commonwealth and the Legislative Council had been, to provide for them opportunity in equity with other Territorians.

Formal education was still regarded as the key to their well-being, and hence to effective implementation of NTG policy for Indigenous Territorians. The Commonwealth remained the superior authority in Aboriginal affairs. The policy process grew much more inclusive of Territorians, including Indigenes, and there was significant increase in education-related policy activity, achieving relative balance between its hierarchical and lateral dimensions. A similar situation prevailed with inception of the AEP, but the process became more convoluted: it was driven by the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, the NTDE and the NT Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), Feppi, became partners in negotiating its implementation in the NT. Feppi wielded substantial power in quite volatile representation and involvement of the Indigenous clientele. The Indigenes were now active in the process, they were no longer just its objects. Decision-making and fiscal management in relation to implementing NTG policy on public education, including the AEP, could be devolved to the local education community level, an option that became a tacit requirement. Indigenes were engaged as employees of the system and in related advisory and deliberative bodies, and Feppi had fully-fledged partner status in the process. Prospects for developing appropriate policy and implementing it effectively were promising. Optimal outcomes, however, were for the most part far from realised.

Studies of formal education for Indigenous Territorians in the 1990s culminated in the 1999 Collins Review, Learning lessons and the Indigenous education strategic plan 2000–2004. Consultation with the Indigenous clientele and related agencies and interests was prominent, having become integral and fundamental to the process. Indigenes' involvement, such that the consultation was acceptable, enabling substantive input, was an important development, building on processes employed in related studies and policy-development in the 1980s. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, review of the AEP and the Collins Review and follow-up activity also involved Indigenous Territorians significantly in conducting the exercises, deliberation on input, reaching findings and subsequent planning.
Lateral activity was extensive and had a high profile, hierarchical activity was also extensive but less prominent than it had previously been, and balance between the two commonly prevailed. Indigenous ownership and responsibility for formal education locally, in partnerships between communities and government, was a recurrent theme.

Those studies found little positive to report on outcomes realised, however. The most significant development revealed by the analyses was that the policy process in practice swung, in the last three decades of the twentieth century, from being virtually exclusively the province of government to being truly and appropriately inclusive of Indigenous Territorians. The AEP and the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program had involved substantial Commonwealth funding, extensive negotiation, effective Indigenous participation and strict accountability, but had had limited beneficial impact. Although *Learning lessons* and the *Indigenous education strategic plan 2000–2004* provided direction into the new millennium, some scepticism may be excused in the light of history. In the main, they only conveyed that there was really no substitute for rigour and responsibility on the part of all concerned.

Several related developments coincided with Indigenous Territorians' inclusion in the policy process. All impacted upon policy on their formal education, the policy process and service delivery: Indigenous self-determination was the overarching policy of the era; the NT gained Self-Government and put it into practice; the NTG and the Commonwealth were partners in management of Indigenous affairs, including formal education, the Commonwealth the senior; there was fiscal commitment of unprecedented proportions; and outcomes from formal education policy and services plateaued and declined. It would be simplistic to attribute the failure specifically to one or another of these developments. It is unlikely, however, that any could be absolved of some responsibility for the failure to realise equitable outcomes.

**Review of the Analysis Instruments.**

The bi-axial framework (see Figure 10.1) for quantitative analysis of policy development was adapted from Craig Matheson's (2000) concept of vertical and horizontal axes in public policy in Australia. It was therefore apt for application to Commonwealth and NTG policy processes in relation to management of Indigenous affairs in the NT, including provision of formal education. It was adapted to record estimates of extents of activity: hierarchical activity, in the vertical plane, was plotted on the $y$ axis; lateral activity, in the horizontal plane, was plotted on the $x$ axis; and the mean generated by the $y$ and $x$ registrations was plotted as a function in the framework or as it projected. The registration of the mean in
relation to sectors into which the framework was notionally divided indicated the balance estimated to have been achieved between hierarchical and lateral activity.

Whilst allowing quantitative analysis, registrations on the framework were imprecise, being based on estimates of extent of activity in relation to that possible or desirable. Those estimates were based on my impressions, developed from study of records, discussions and observations. Use of the framework was helpful, illustrating swings in extent of activity from very limited to approaching optimal in the vertical plane and from virtually non-existent to approaching optimal in the horizontal plane, and in the means, from heavy hierarchical dominance to approaching an optimal balance between hierarchical and lateral activity. The framework could not assess the quality of provisions for Indigenes' participation in the process, however.
To that end, I devised a qualitative analysis instrument to use in each of the situations analysed. A check-list of questions was prepared (see Table 10.1), based on aspects of involvement understood to signify to Indigenous Territorians taking part in a public policy process with real effect and for obviating, as far as possible, hindrances from cultural difference that could impede open and comprehensive communication. The instrument was to be simple, cover areas of potential difficulty and be open-ended, to allow for contingencies likely to be encountered. It sought to examine seven aspects believed to concern Indigenous Territorians and to limit effective exchange of attitudes and ideas with public officials. The check-list's application was to check whether Indigenous Territorians were really able to participate in the process and do so feeling reasonably at ease, whether two-way communication was possible for them, whether the consultative process enabled them to participate with confidence, whether it was ensured that they knew what the consultation was about, whether their input was heeded and whether they were kept abreast of subsequent developments and allowed further input. Responses to the questions were inevitably more subjective than registrations on the bi-axial framework, but much information was recorded.

**TABLE 10.1 CHECK-LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS.**

1. Who participated in the policy process?
2. Where did the participation occur?
3. How were participants involved?
4. To what extent were participants familiar with the process?
5. To what extent were participants aware of the substance of negotiations?
6. To what extent was participant input evident in the policy and its implementation?
7. What feedback was provided to participants as the process progressed?

The patterns revealed through qualitative analysis were consistent with those from the quantitative analysis. Indigenous Territorians' virtual exclusion from the process, other than as policy objects, swung to their inclusion that in practice approached the optimum. The Collins Review and subsequent developments, in particular, were shown to have been conducted with cross-cultural sensitivity, without paternalism, in a balanced mix of culturally-appropriate arrangements to cater both for participants' preferences and individual needs and for the bureaucratic provisions required in any process involving public policy, and hence legislation, public moneys and formal documentation. The Review team was proven successful in accomplishing its tasks.

The analyses proved useful in two respects. First, they clarified evolution and implementation of public policy for Indigenous Australians in the NT since white settlement,
with focus on policy on their formal education: the pattern that emerged showed progression in practice from exclusively hierarchical to comprehensively inclusive. Second, they identified arrangements made for the clients' participation in the policy process and their appropriateness: the data showed progression in provision from negligible and inappropriate to comprehensive and appropriate. Collectively, they explained the situation as it stood at the turn of the twenty-first century and how it had developed. Explanation of policy's failure to generate intended outcomes, however, did not emerge.

**Potential Lessons from Arrangements for Indigenous Minorities Overseas.**

The scan of provisions in formal education for indigenous minorities overseas found some background similar to that in the NT. It highlighted ethnocentrism in provisions made by public agencies of predominantly European societies that had colonised the lands relatively recently, throwing into relief that fundamental aspect of formal education for Indigenous Territorians. With the distinct exceptions of rural Andean and urban Peru, there was emphasis upon revitalising indigenous cultural heritages, including languages, and incorporating them in school curricula. In northern Scandinavian, study of Sami language and culture was also encouraged and catered for in the mainstream. It appeared, in the materials perused, that indigenous peoples abroad were consistently enthusiastic about official recognition of their cultures and languages and opportunities made for their recovery and maintenance.

Inclusion of cultural heritages and languages in the school curriculum for Indigenous students in the NT, to support their recovery in the broader Indigenous populace, is an obvious option. Their provision for non-Indigenous students has been attempted without marked success, possibly indicating need for greater commitment, not least from the Indigenous peoples themselves. A feature of a reformed system for the Indigenous NT clientèle would be adjustment, locally, of its orientation to accommodate and capitalise upon the cultural heritages, particularly the knowledge and learning styles, of the Aboriginal language groups. Ownership, responsibility and policy could be negotiated accordingly, as could curriculum, formal education services and service delivery and their evaluation.

As minorities, Native North Americans and Indigenous Australians had in common being subject to the enduring idea, embedded in governments, that Western-derived education was the key to their well-being. That public policy conceived for their formal education was failing them and that they were disadvantaged as a consequence were also common to both. In Alaska, Ray Barnhardt and Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley&s (2004) ideas were pertinent to Indigenous Territorians. Extension of “political control” of local education
services to “professional control” is feasible, with school councils and the functions
devolved, or able to be devolved, for local management. Such provisions would enable
local negotiation of incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems and learning styles in
the curriculum. Service delivery would benefit with insight from analysis of Indigenous
Territorians' involvement “repertoires”, or customary modes of engagement, such as that
carried out by Kris D. Gutierrez and Barbara Rogoff (2003) amongst ethnic minorities in
the United States of America (USA). It would be especially useful in the NT to inform
non-Indigenous teachers' practices in dealings with Indigenous clients and assessing the
effectiveness of the provisions made. A concept that Barnhardt and Kawagley proposed,
“the intersection of diverse world views and knowledge systems”, has potential to take
account of similarities and disparities between the respective world views of the Indigenous
clientèle and the providers. Further, the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, in which Barnhardt
and Kawagley had particular interest, may be helpful in service delivery for Indigenous
Territorians in non-urban communities.

Parallels between the situations of the Nunavummiut in Canada's north and those of
Indigenous Territorians were also evident. In Nunavut, however, the Nunavummiut had
progressed further, evidently due largely to their taking the initiative. They had in fact, in
negotiation with the federal Canadian Government, realised a degree of self-determination
in their own affairs. Priorities and problems for the Inuktitut language of Nunavut
identified by Alexina Kublu and Mick Mallon (1999) may be elevant to the NT. The Indigenous Australian languages that have survived to date, however, may be less
endangered than Inuktitut was, but demographics and the multiplicity of languages in use
render any language-focussed initiative such as that taken in Nunavut unrealistic other than
locally or across a language group. Kublu and Mallon conveyed a point of significance
also for Indigenous Territorians, that self-help and commitment in language recovery and

Learning”. Article submitted for publication to Anthropology and Education Quarterly. Alaska Native
Repertoires of Practice”, in Educational Researcher Vol. 32, No. 5, June/July 2003. Washington DC,
www.gov.nu.ca/Nunavut/English/premier/.
the Map of Canada. Iqaluit, NU, Canada. Nortext Multimedia Incorporated and Nunavut Tunngavik
maintenance were vitally important and primarily families' and communities' responsibility.10

Governments of Sweden, Norway and Finland differed in their respective stances on Sámi, who were partly, or de facto, acknowledged as indigenous inhabitants. Early in the twenty-first century, public policies on formal education for Sámi did not differ significantly from those for the respective mainstreams. Where there was variation, it discriminated positively: the indigenous languages/dialects and cultures were recognised and related legislation required their incorporation in school curricula. By virtue of comparatively small numbers and multiple indigenous languages/dialects, each arrangement for Sámi was potentially useful for reference in relation to formal education for Indigenous Territorians. The Norwegian approach was particularly so, in the mainstream context as well as in the provisions made especially for Sámi. The Norwegian Sámi Parliament gave priority to enabling “the Sámi people of Norway to maintain its language, culture and social life” and ensuring that they could do so,11 although it was thought that most Norwegian Sámi had been “integrated with the rest of society.”12 Early in the twenty-first century, the Norwegian “Sámi minority (had) its own primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools (and) text books written in the Sámi language” with official sanction.13 Logistically, again due to demographics and linguistic diversity, publication of print materials for schools in Indigenous languages in the NT would have to be locally-, or language group-, based.

Formal education for indigenous Peruvians offered three scenarios, all recognisable in the NT. There were the people who had assimilated into the mainstream, mostly in cities; there were those living in rural settings in the Andes, who saw assimilation as their prime option; and there were the peoples of the Peruvian Amazon, re-assertion of whose cultural entities and languages had been catalysed by threat of multinational corporations’ exploitation of natural resources in their homelands. Lucy Trapnell (2003) credited the Intercultural Bilingual Education Teacher Training Programme with having revitalised the Amazon peoples and generated recovery of “pride in their cultural heritage and identity.”14

10 Kublu & Mallon. P. 5.
Formal education for Amazonian Peruvians had previously differed little from that in the Andes, but the initiatives triggered by motivation to preserve and benefit from the region's assets had been productive. Their situation was not unlike that of Indigenous Territorians, with respect to land rights, sacred sites and mineral resources, but the measures taken in the Amazon appeared to have rejuvenated the indigenous cultural heritage to a greater extent.

In retrospect, I realised that in my study of formal education provisions made for Indigenous Territorians I had found little reference to the extensive and potentially relevant experience overseas. Study tours undertaken by Gallacher and Giese in North America in the 1960s were exceptions, and Watts and Gallacher referred briefly to anthropological research and provisions made under quasi-colonial administrations in the Territory of Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific. The situations of indigenous minorities in North America, Scandinavia and Peru and ideas underlying policies and services for them may also be useful in the NT. Familiarity with such systems' practices, experiences and research and their indigenous clients can inform provisions and practices in the NT and assist pursuit of directions set in Learning lessons. The necessary study would most appropriately be conducted by Indigenous persons who have been involved in the Collins Review and related developments.

**Ideas from some Other Significant Frames.**

The thoughts of some people involved in education for Indigenous Australians and Territorians under assimilation are worth considering. As Paul Hughes (1981) presented the ideas of the National Aboriginal Education Committee, most of whose members' primary education, at least, would have occurred under assimilation, high priorities included Aborigines training as teachers, other teachers of Aborigines being personally suitable and appropriately trained, and Aborigines' being competent in English literacy and numeracy. A division amongst indigenous peoples similar to that detected by Jon Reyhner (1993), “between dominated minorities who (resisted) ‘colonial’ education and voluntary minorities that (viewed) education as a path to economic success”, was evident in the NT. Whereas the “dominated minorities” category was generally applicable,

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“voluntary minorities” instances tended to occur individually rather than in groups. The Indigenous women, to whom reference has been made as experiencing schooling in the NT under assimilation and moving on to success with tertiary education, fitted the “voluntary minorities” category: for Miriam Stead Raymond, it was a matter of course for a child of mixed parentage placed at the Mission on Croker Island and subsequently adopted by missionaries in SA; Veronica McClinic and Mary Ann Bin-Sallik applied themselves in education to realise vocational aspirations; Isabelle Adams and Veronica Arbon engaged in formal education to escape economic disadvantage; and Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann chose to combine her cultural heritage with Western schooling and Catholicism in order to provide the education she believed her people needed and lacked. Whilst all took pride in their Indigenous background and embraced formal education for their own well-being and livelihood, only Ungunmerr-Baumann took the further step of meshing her Indigenous heritage with the contemporary Western-oriented world. In doing so, in the Nangiwumirr/Daly River/NT context, she may have approached the ideal envisaged by Ray Barnhardt and Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley in their “intersection of diverse world views and knowledge systems”.

Provider personnel such as Graham Benjamin, Earl Watter, Cecil Nielson and Frank Brennan, who experienced both assimilation and self-determination, would have concurred with the National Aboriginal Advisory Committee’s priorities. Those priorities, or similar, were first officially articulated by Watts and Gallacher for assimilation, the Committee reiterated them when self-determination and self-management were supposed to direct service-provision, and they differed little from those underlying the directions emanating from Learning lessons (1999). Although Benjamin et al may have been moderately sympathetic, they would not have striven for Barnhardt and Kawagley’s conceptual “intersection” of intellectual diversity. That appears to be precisely what Richard Trudgen considered essential, however, for formal education to be relevant and useful in Arnhem Land.

Some Recurrent Themes.

Several themes recurred in much of the information gleaned, from the 1950s, when formal education for Indigenous Territorians was first seriously tackled as a public responsibility. The principal one was enduring all-pervading belief that it was fundamental to Indigenous well-being and advancement in contemporary Australia. Increasingly accompanying it was a corollary, belief that educational failure was at the root of Indigenous disadvantage generally, yet expectations of formal education ultimately to resolve disadvantage did not diminish. Such conviction was registered in most reports and policy documents consulted and other input obtained.

There were some more specific themes. The vital necessity of sustained regular attendance for effective teaching and learning to take place occurred most frequently, juxtaposed with paucity of attendance by Aboriginal students and their low rate of retention in the formal education continuum. The importance of parental and community support for children's schooling, and, notwithstanding protestations to the contrary, its relative rarity in practice, were also common. Observers routinely cited social and health issues as impeding learning and attendance, with cumulative adverse effect. Cultural influence was invoked just as often, both as hindering Western learning and for inclusion in the curriculum and teaching methodology.

Two qualifications also occurred quite often. First, notwithstanding the fact that providing education services for Indigenous Territorians was very costly, with a great deal of public money spent in the process, providers, Indigenous leaders and commentators stressed that the problem could not be solved simply with funding, that a great deal more than “just money” was required. Second, they acknowledged that, for all governments' efforts and commitments in relation to education for Indigenous Territorians, and those of the people involved in delivering the services, both non-Indigenous and Indigenous, the Indigenous populace's willingness and capacity to be responsible for its own formal education ultimately determined its effectiveness. The indications were that the latter was an area of concern for most Indigenous Territorians and in most communities. There were exceptions, but not many.

Several salient matters were identified, all constituting problems for formal education's rôle in Indigenous Territorians' well-being and education and training. The main issue, obviously, was the sub-standard outcomes realised from formal education. Then came the main apparent causes, low and erratic school attendance, lack of parental and community interest in and practical support for children's schooling and the compounding effects of
adverse social and health circumstances, exacerbated by incongruence between cultural accommodation and the substance and delivery of formal education. There was also limited preparedness, from will or aptitude or both, on the part of most Indigenous Territorians to be responsible in the ultimate sense for the formal education of their youth. *Learning lessons* proposed a composite of solutions, to address the diverse issues comprehensively, constructively and concurrently and with consistency and cohesion.

Some of the efforts made in formal education for Indigenous Territorians by the Commonwealth and the NTG and, on a smaller scale but no less earnestly, by nongovernment providers, Catholic Education in particular, were also highlighted. It would be simplistic to dismiss the time, effort and resources committed to the cause as having been wasted, and it would be untrue to say that nothing was achieved. Little was accomplished, however, in arresting the decline in standards for most from the mid-1970s. Certainly, there was little, if any, progress towards realising the purpose of the AEP concerned with educational outcomes for Aborigines that were equitable with those for non-Aborigines. Such failure is *per se* an anomaly in view of the advances made in Indigenous participation in decision-making, developing and implementing policy and service-delivery.

This study focussed mainly upon evolution, substance and implementation of policy. A consistent general trend emerged, in policy on Indigenous Australians and Territorians and on their formal education: initially it was dictated by the political and bureaucratic hierarchy; then consultation came into practice and there were attempts to forge partnerships; and responsibilities, especially in decision-making, were subsequently devolved to the local community level, and community ownership of policy was promoted. Whilst little consequent tangible benefit in terms of educational outcomes was evident, the fact of the measures' having been taken meant that the commitments could not be dismissed as being of no avail. In fact, two features remained steady throughout, despite both gross and subtle changes in policy direction and priorities: the assumed ability of formal education for Indigenous Territorians to resolve their problems and to catalyse and support their advancement into or with the contemporary Australian mainstream; and governments’ initiation of developments. Thus, whilst local ownership of policy and practice may have been officially negotiated and accepted, the reality is that it resulted from government imposition, or at least initiation, and remained effectively government property.

**Cultural Difference, Frames and Ideas.**

Throughout the evolution and implementation of policy on education for Indigenous Australians in the NT, several frames interacted with each other. It would have been
convenient and orderly to be able to examine the provision of formal education services for Indigenous Territorians in terms of interaction at the interface between two frames, that of the providers and that of the clients. It became increasingly evident as the study progressed, however, that to entertain such a scenario was to be seriously over-simplistic, that the reality was quite different. Reality, for both the public providers and the Indigenous clients, was multi-faceted and complex.

The mainstream society's civic culture, assumed by and manifest in the public sector, predominated. First there was the frame of the Commonwealth Government; within it, from World War Two to Self-Government, a virile NT-focussed sub-frame grew; and by Self-Government, it had become the discrete NTG frame. So, in the 1980s–90s, there were the two distinct official frames within which policies were conceived and whence they were implemented, confused by various divergences and overlaps. Their complexity was exacerbated by their manifold agencies and publicly subsidised non-government providers providing services for Indigenous Territorians, each with its own civic cultural-cum-professional-cum-ideological-cum-commercial interest. My study has focussed on policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians, but it could not be considered in isolation from the other fields of policy and endeavour which supported it, supplemented it or impinged upon it, each with its own bent. They had in common, or were supposed to have, responsibility and commitment to support and advance Indigenous well-being.

The same is true of the reality for agencies' Indigenous clients, albeit for different reasons. Reference has been made to popular fallacies of “the Indigenous people” and “the Indigenous culture”: there are in the NT as many discrete Indigenous peoples and cultures as there are Indigenous language groups, between whom cultural differences range from shades of similarity to distinct difference. Also noted was the estimate of there being forty-seven Indigenous languages in the NT in 2003 judged to be “healthy” and thirty-four “nearly extinct”.19 Broad generalisations may be made about an Indigenous frame, tribally-, linguistically- and/or culturally-based, but in so doing one endeavours to embrace prominent characteristics shared by most of eighty-one discrete frames, more than half of which were relatively strong and accounted for the majority of NT Indigenes. The reality of Indigenous frames is more complex than tribal/linguistic/traditional cultural factors might suggest: they may also be grouped, with cultural orientation, theoretically, on such variables as religious affiliation and commitment, educational attainment, occupation, locality of dwelling, independence, mobility, relation to the mainstream, ideological leaning, and,

putting so-called political correctness aside, mixed ancestry. Collins might suggest social functionality as another. The frame of an individual group would in fact be a product of the mix of several such factors, attitudinally- and experientially-based, as well as by tribal affiliation. In such perspective, the inadvisability of generalising about Indigenous Territorians is self-evident.

Other frames also came into play. The missions have been acknowledged, as “subsidised non-government providers”: they may be grouped with public providers, being committed by their subsidisation to work in consistency with current public policy. They were long-established, initially pioneering such provisions and later augmenting governments' endeavours significantly, each under the mantle of its respective church. The number of missions reduced towards the end of the assimilation era, the Protestants transferring their operations and facilities to the Government; only those operated under the auspices of the NT Diocese of the Catholic Church endured. The frame of the NT Branch of the Australian Education Union, formerly the Northern Territory Teachers Federation, was primarily focussed upon the well-being of personnel and industrial matters, including efforts on behalf of members deployed in schools in outlying communities, but it had particular interest, partly ideological, in formal education for Indigenous Territorians. The NT Council of Government Schools Organisations brought another frame to bear, geared mainly to parent perspectives and concerns in urban mainstream schools, but it supported and promoted Indigenous parents' interests and informed and involved them wherever it could. In major policy exercises, such as negotiation of Direction for the eighties and Towards the 90s and changes proposed for schooling structures, the Council of Government Schools Organisations and the Union worked together, complementing each other in stances taken on some issues, and thereby exemplifying Paul Sabatier's policy advocacy coalition concept. Other, specifically-focussed, frames, such as those of individual Indigenous organisations, professional associations, advocacy groups and interest lobbies, also exerted influence from time to time, ensuring that their respective ideas were taken into account.

A veritable profusion of ideas might be expected to have flowed, with so many so disparate frames bearing on such a sensitive and complex subject as formal education for Indigenous Territorians. They did, as evidenced in this study, with increasing abundance and

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20 In 1990, as Superintendent, Darwin Aboriginal Schools Region, I sought from Senior Executive officers clarification, informally, of my rôle in relation to the four Catholic mission schools located within my area of administrative responsibility. The response was to the effect of “You should supervise them just as you do our schools, but don’t give them a hard time because we can’t afford to do the jobs they do”.

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frequency, voiced and recorded articulately, sometimes stridently, by practitioners, clients, researchers, policy-developers, decision-makers, politicians, lobbyists, critics, observers and others with stakes in the area. Many ideas, or idea systems, were enduring, some unchanged, some evolving with time, prevailing influences and experience, others surfaced and recurrently surged and waned, and still others surfaced only to fade into oblivion. Given the controversy, disappointment and disillusionment that enshrouded the related issues, one may wonder if there were yet more that did not come to the fore, but might have made a difference if they had.

Belief that formal education is fundamental to human well-being, personal fulfilment, societal advancement, economic viability and prosperity, an idea in the main recurrent theme, has endured more than most. In modern times it has proven the least malleable, and that it should signify so is not disputed. It was founded in Britain's Industrial Revolution, evolving quickly throughout the Western world to application, inter alia, to the indigenous peoples of lands colonised, including Australia, in the quest to “civilise and Christianise” them. It emanated from within the British civic cultural frame, and was sustained by colonial administrations and then national and jurisdictional governments. It tended to be absorbed generally, as through osmosis, by the Indigenous peoples themselves to the point of becoming fundamental in their frames generally, or at least being voiced as such. That this was the case in Australia was clearly evident in the development and reviews of the AEP.

In the contemporary NT context, an anomaly has resulted, both arising from and flying in the face of cultural difference between the providers and their clients in their respective locations and circumstances. The same, or very similar, schooling and training have been provided for mainstream and other children in mainstream schools, for mainstream and other adults in mainstream post-school education institutions, and for Indigenous children and adults in environments where, despite the lip-service paid, formal education appeared in practice neither valued nor regarded as relevant and desirable. The NTG and Indigenous bodies could be well-advised to grasp the related idea posited by Trudgen: he held that “Yolŋu-friendly” environments, substance and methodology should be engaged for strategies and programs in community education to understand the Balanda world, to enable Yolŋu to live in or co-exist with it and to realise the aspirations that resulted. Accordingly, he proposed that non-Indigenous educators learn Yolŋu languages, in the interests of optimal effectiveness in community education. An alternative is to have motivated native speakers of the languages trained to use their languages to teach in their home communities. It

warrants exploration, and has the appeal of being, *per se*, a sound long-term community education investment.

The idea that Aborigines need to be literate in English and numerate has been integral and fundamental to their formal education. Two related features emerged in this study. First, English literacy and numeracy together fluctuated as priorities, as did emphasis on English as a second language methodology and curriculum materials for literacy acquisition. That English literacy and numeracy were required was evidently taken for granted in the earlier days, Watts and Gallacher then highlighted them and they featured in teacher-training and school programs in the 1960s. They waned in the 1970s, in coincidence with self-determination, amalgamation of the school services and the advents of the Commonwealth Teaching Service and open education. English literacy and numeracy regained prominence in *Direction for the eighties* and with Feppi’s input, waned again during the 1980s, but resurged with the inception of the AEP and throughout the 1990s. For instance, in 1997, just over $2.1m, almost 20% of the NT’s Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program allocation, was devoted to developing English as a second language-based curriculum materials, implementing them and monitoring the outcomes. Learning lessons strongly reinforced English literacy and numeracy as priorities for Indigenous students.

The second feature to emerge was contradiction evident in emphasis upon English literacy and numeracy in Indigenous children’s formal education in bush schools *vis-à-vis* emphases and arrangements in urban schools. Logically, non-Indigenous Territorians from backgrounds in which English was the mother tongue received no especial attention. Migrant children from non-English-speaking backgrounds were especially catered for in small withdrawal groups for intensive English as a second language instruction with specialist teachers and with specialist support in mainstream classes, such provisions’ being phased out as the language was mastered. They apparently needed no such support to develop numeracy skills. Although most classes in most mainstream schools had some Indigenous students on their rolls, for many years those whose mastery of English was limited and/or limited their ability to learn, did not qualify for the English as a second language provisions because they were not migrants. In predominantly Indigenous schools, after the services amalgamated, it was officially desirable, but not essential, for teachers to be trained to teach English as a second language, and pupil : teacher ratios were similar to those in mainstream primary schools. Cases made for reducing class sizes and appointment of above-formula specialist English as a second language teachers to bush schools were commonly

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countered with any of several standard responses: the reality of class sizes in Indigenous schools due to poor attendance; students in classes in such schools all having similar needs and therefore not needing the exceptional arrangements made for migrant children in urban settings, coupled with the fact that the Commonwealth provided the funding and specified its use; an expectation that all lessons would involve intensive English as second language teaching and be structured accordingly; the availability of English as a second language training for teachers who needed it, should they want it; relatively generous support staffing positions (for Indigenous personnel); and recent development and distribution of English as a second language-based materials. Regarding the curriculum materials, provisions to instruct school staffs on their use and to ensure that they were used and used appropriately, may have been productive.

Although English literacy and numeracy were accorded key status for effective formal education for Indigenous students, from the 1970s neither the system nor the schools, generally speaking, made certain that they were effectively taught. That was not the only shortfall: the legacy of the *laisser-faire* ethos that developed in many schools in the 1970s, teachers' disillusionment with students' attendance and application, lack of community support and the high turnover of teaching staff also made for poor outcomes. That anomalies such as those in teaching English as a second language could develop, however, demonstrated that strong leadership and enforceable direction in curriculum, curriculum implementation and follow-up were lacking.

Fundamental teaching principles and practices in formal education, deeply ingrained in traditionally trained teachers, were not insisted upon. Schools' and individual teachers' demands and expectations of students, parents and communities and respect for them appeared generally to decline. The accounts of people who served from the 1950s/60s indicated that under Welfare Branch administration, high levels of demand, support, expectation and respect, albeit paternalistic, prevailed: they stemmed from the official frame of the time, catalysed and focussed by the Watts/Gallacher Report and driven by teachers' belief and pride in the their work and the potential and achievement of their charges. Such spirit generally dwindled, although not universally, in coincidence with the various changes that occurred from 1973. With notable exceptions, demanding but supportive teaching, expectation of students to attend school regularly, apply themselves and realise

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23 In my experience, ironically from the mid-1970s, reasonably high and sustained levels of demand and expectation of children and liaison with parents and communities in the operation of some small schools on pastoral properties realised quite good academic achievement, to which successive principals of Kormilda and Yirara Colleges attested.
their academic potential, with encouragement through feedback and liaison with parents and community appear to have been casualties from the mid 1970s. All are fundamental to responsible and effective teaching in any context.

Ironically, again, as purpose, direction and order in schooling and training for Indigenous Territorians were waning, commitment to and bases for accountability in education were growing. Lack of prescribed curriculum and benchmark-based student assessment and reporting in Welfare schools was certainly not addressed when school-based curriculum development was in vogue. From Self-Government, initiatives taken both nationally and in the Territory, with the rôle of the NT Board of Studies evolving, made for accountability in schooling. They were principally curriculum and assessment-based, to do with competencies, standardised testing and reporting, generally seeking to raise standards and make for consistency across and between systems. English literacy and numeracy benchmarking was introduced. Such developments reflected advance in official frames relating to public education. In the 1990s, arrangements were in place in the NT for the Board of Studies to be able to issue its related statements, “Common Assessment” (1992) and the more definitive “Common Assessment and Reporting” (1998). Introduction of the latter declared,

(planned, effective assessment and reporting of student achievement and progress, from individual classroom level to national level, can contribute significantly to improved student learning.24

Teachers and parents needed to appreciate the rationale for the Board's stance (see Appendix V) for perspective regarding children's progress. That it be appreciated and acted upon by teachers of Indigenous children and their parents was as important as for other teachers and parents; it may have been more so, given the precarious state of schooling for Indigenous children and the potential that informative reporting may have had for its resuscitation. Conveying the Board's rationale to Indigenous clients, however, presented particular challenges for staffs in bush schools, despite Indigenous involvement throughout the curriculum and assessment structure.

Ultimately, the major problem is cultural difference, difference in perspectives and frames, between the public provider and the client communities and their situations. There has been limited connection between the provider and the Indigenous clientèle, prominently manifest in poor school attendance. Thoroughly devised policy, infrastructure, purpose-

designed curriculum and support, services, resources and legal provisions notwithstanding, children's low attendance hinders their learning critically. This study has identified several underlying factors: first, compulsory academically-focussed structured schooling is set in the Western frame, accepted by Europeans and other non-Indigenes, and its enforceability is ingrained in the civic culture; second, Western ethnocentric education is, *ipso facto*, alien to the Indigenes' traditional education, which, where still practised, is directly needs-related and understood, practical and predictable, and integral to frames evolving from the Dreamtime; third, where Indigenes do not practise traditional education, the society is likely to have broken down to a degree, making for welfare dependence and dysfunction and sapping motivation for commitment to schooling; and fourth, for all the rhetoric about youth needing “whitefella education”, little tangible purpose is seen in making the requisite effort, with scant prospect of paid employment or other productive livelihood for school leavers, and the perceivable inevitability, for most, of failure. Radical measures are required, to identify and remove impediments, to devise and insert motivating elements and to give parents and communities ownership of formal education services which they can value, support and implement, and for which they can embrace real responsibility. Strong connections must be forged, between the provider's frame and those of the Indigenous client groups. Barnhardt and Kawagley's idea of an “intersection between of diverse world views and knowledge systems”, Trudgen's proposal for “Yolŋu-friendly” provisions in Arnhem Land and Ungunmerr-Baumann's accomplishment in reconciling values have much to offer.

Neither Collins nor Trudgen lent himself to association with any of the broad frames to which reference has been made. The two had much in common, including white Australian background, experience in work and training with Yolŋu in Arnhem Land and credibility with them. Both appreciated issues of concern to Yolŋu, in particular in relation to the Balanda world, and were concerned for their well-being, dismayed at the state of formal education in communities but certain that it could and must be redressed. They were blunt and articulate in expressing their assessments and sentiments. Further, they were familiar both with official frames, from dealing with assorted public agencies, and with Yolŋu frames, from sustained direct engagement. They were affected by all those frames but belonged to none of them. As well, Collins' comprehensive relevant background was supplemented with his exceptional first-hand appreciation of the political dimensions of the issues from his experience as a Member of the NT Legislative Assembly and as a Federal Senator.

Their ideas on solutions to the education dilemma were at variance. Collins thought essentially that the NTG overall, with practical commitment and unity of purpose, and the NTDE, now the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training, should set about
generating, or regenerating, rigour in its delivery of formal education, and that Indigenous parents and communities should accept related responsibilities and perform related rôles if children were to learn in schools. Implicit in the approach advocated was that the necessary provisions, previously lacking to some extent, were in place but needed to be made to work. Apart from advocacy of Indigenous participation in the process, however, the priorities presented in Learning lessons differed little from those registered by Watts and Gallacher thirty-five years earlier.

It is unlikely that Trudgen would have disagreed with any of the Learning lessons recommendations. He saw additional measures as necessary: community education about the Balanda world and linkage between the skills and understandings required to deal with and succeed in it and in the formal education programs of which they could avail themselves; and community education and formal education to be conducted in “Yolŋu-friendly environments” using “Yolŋu-friendly” methodology. Effectively, he wanted the NTG to think and act beyond the conventional official frame. Directions proposed in both Learning lessons and Why warriors lie down and die had substantial merit There were always the qualifications, however, registered strongly by Trudgen, that ultimately Yolŋu needed to give Western education sufficiently high priority to make and sustain the commitment required for it to be effective, but that they needed governments to “empower” them to do so.25

NT Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling (?2001) declared formal Indigenous Territorians’ education a key responsibility for the Department of Employment, Education and Training, with responsibility for implementation of the Collins Review recommendations shared throughout and in all schools. Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000–2004, the plan for the Indigenous Education Program, embodied the NTG's “commitment and approach” to improve Indigenous students' educational achievement.26 It could be judged successful when satisfactory outcomes from formal schooling indicated that all stake-holders had accepted and were fulfilling their respective responsibilities. For parents and communities to be able to do so, however, could require the conditions that Trudgen judged necessary. Developing them would be likely to prove a lengthy and expensive process. Re-introduction of adult education would be needed, possibly similar in form to that instituted from Watts and Gallacher's investigation and curtailed by the advent of the Employment and Training Authority, but distinctly more focussed and ordered.

Ultimately, perseverance, patience and conviction that the Program's objective can be realised are essential. The implementation of the Learning lessons recommendations, programmed in the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000–2004, was to be oversighted by the Learning lessons Implementation Steering Committee, established in 2001 for that purpose and to advise the Minister on “priorities and directions for DEET in Indigenous education”. The Committee was co-chaired by Esther Djayhguurŋa, Principal of Gunbalanya community education centre, and Collins; eight of its fourteen members were female; twelve were Indigenous persons from a representative array of language groups, occupational and social backgrounds, or frames. The non-Indigenous members were Collins and a senior executive departmental officer. Implementation was thus to be oversighted, monitored and evaluated in a consultative/collaborative process by a predominantly Indigenous group of people, each member appointed for his/her ability to contribute in an arrangement consistent with the spirit of the Collins Review and Learning lessons.

**Indications from the Study.**

Directions from the findings of this study may be condensed into six fundamental but exacting priority tasks. The impedimentary effect of cultural difference on formal education, between the civic culture of the provider and the cultures of the clientèle, must be addressed, to establish connection between the public education system and the client groups in the individual communities. Sustained implementation of the Learning lessons recommendations is required, in the longer term as well as immediately, with rigorous monitoring and evaluation and on-going review essential to its effectiveness. Indigenes' self-management of formal education in Indigenous communities is integral to the process. Concurrently, how to effect Indigenous self-management of formal education in urban, largely non-Indigenous, settings must be explored and effected. Also integral to the process is the devolution, without abdication of shared ultimate responsibility, of ownership, planning, operation, monitoring and evaluation from the official frames of governments to Indigenous frames at systemic and local levels.28

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The challenges of formal education for Indigenous Territorians cannot be met in isolation, however. There must be support in the provision of other services and from other initiatives, in such areas as health, housing, local government and police. For that, a genuine and practical whole-of-government commitment is essential, and may prove the most difficult task to accomplish. Another truism is apt: governments can endeavour to protect or to assimilate Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, but only they can determine themselves. Indigenous Territorians must rate their formal education priority, as Earl Watter intimated to the National Aboriginal Education Committee in Alice Springs more than twenty-five years ago: they must make and sustain the necessary effort, with support from public agencies, to achieve outcomes that are equitable with those for other Territorians. In the meantime, the spirit of the fundamental principle, that “the Territory values Indigenous languages and culture, and the desire of Indigenous people to preserve, maintain and participate fully in that culture”, has to be embraced in practice at all levels and by Indigenous Territorians themselves. Ultimately, more practically, the goal should be to include in formal education the principles embodied in the need for “Yolŋu Garma curriculum or Yolŋu ‘both ways’ pedagogy and curriculum”, as articulated by Yirrkala teacher linguist Raymattja Marika (1998).

Directions for the future need to be informed also by additional studies, to which I have alluded in the introductory chapter and elsewhere in this thesis. My study has been pre-occupied with the policy-development process, my perspective having evolved in public education in colonially-administered Papua New Guinea and in the NT. I have acknowledged and endeavoured to incorporate Indigenous viewpoints, but I am not an Indigenous Australian. As a product of my background, I have addressed the issue with bias towards the dynamics of the vertical dimension of the process and how it interacts with the horizontal one. A complementary study is required, to present Aboriginal client perspectives on policy and practice in public education for Indigenous peoples in the NT. Such a study should be conducted by an Aboriginal person, or persons, preferably with client background/s rather than involvement within the hierarchy, to examine the process with bias towards the dynamics of the horizontal dimension and how it interacts with the vertical one. The findings of such a study combined with the ones reached herein could offer policymakers and service-providers useful insights for future directions.

29 Cited by Ramsey, Gregor. P. 159.
Some Ideas for a Sustainable Way Forward.

I believe that systemic shortcomings in the provision of formal education services for Indigenous Territorians have included impatience and incoherence. They are related to a degree. In my understanding, Welfare services, both in formal education and in assimilation generally, regardless of how one judges the policy, were steadily and logically developmental, and, in theory, consistent across the public services and cohesive. Even where services separated, as in streaming and progression to postprimary education and secondary education, and on to different forms of adult education, all endeavours took place under a single structure and one comprehensive policy. All people concerned could therefore be aware of the direction in which they were proceeding and be confident in and certain of the process. With disbandment of Welfare Branch and the fragmentation of the functions it had performed, relatively cohesive policy and service delivery infrastructure were lost, the momentum built up during the 1960s waned, and confidence and certainty were at least undermined.

Two generations or more later, demographic, socio-economic and political dynamics and circumstances have changed greatly, for the mainstream as well as for Indigenous Territorians. Nothing may be gained from trying to recreate Welfare provisions, but there are some aspects of that approach that are applicable. Consistency is one. Overall, consistency in policy and cohesion across services and their delivery is essential. The main implication of such requirement is a holistic approach to Indigenous well-being: whole-of-government commitment is required in practice as well as in the rhetoric, with party political bipartisan support. It must apply to both NT and Commonwealth administrations, with cohesion between them and their respective arrays of agencies. Inconsistent services undermine each other.

A necessary departure from the Welfare model is inclusion of the Indigenous element of the population, with macro-policy perspective, at the apex of commitment. There are several options for such engagement: one is to establish a non-elective council of elders from the major language groups to engage with a body comprising relevant NT and Commonwealth ministers and/or relevant officials; another is to develop an interface of ministers and/or officials with a body comprising elected Indigenous Members of the Legislative Assembly, and possibly Indigenous Federal politicians as well, instead of a council of elders; the Indigenous Education Council could perform such a consultative rôle, wherein lay Feppi's genesis; alternatively, an Indigenous consultant (e.g. Patrick Dodson or Noel Pearson or Tom Calma for Indigenous affairs, or Paul Hughes or Jeannie Herbert or Paperbark Woman
Lenore Dembski for formal education) could be contracted to advise governments and providers, to consult Indigenous organisations and clients, and to liaise between involved parties. There may be a case for adaptation of a model perceived as effective elsewhere, such as the Sámi parliaments of the Scandinavian countries or the Nordic Sámi Council.

At several points in this thesis, I have urged that further research in relevant areas be undertaken and that Indigenous researchers conduct it. Clients' motivation is an aspect requiring immediate investigation: it must be ascertained how Indigenous Territorians may be motivated to engage in formal education and how to sustain that motivation and their engagement in practice: an appropriate Indigenous person is likely to be most discerning in the conduct of such research. With that information, policy-makers, providers, consultants, relevant education-focussed bodies and practitioners should all be better able to devise and deliver effective services.

I hold that once a broad course of action has been determined, its stake-holders should persevere with it. This is not to say that it should be immutable; the process should be dynamic. If provisions to monitor implementation are apt, they will register progress in accomplishment and the achievement of goals and they will detect shortcomings. In response, adjustments must be made. As goals are achieved, new ones must be set and provisions upgraded or replaced with more advanced ones; weaknesses in the process must be addressed and remedied. It is a matter of improving and progressing implementation, not diverting to take a different direction. The bi-axial framework has potential to monitor and regulate such dynamics.

I do not advocate persistence with inappropriate policy. However, only where it is proven inapt or unworkable should it be phased out, especially if its development has been consultative. When such a step is taken, an appropriate replacement course of action, negotiated with the benefit of recent experience, must be instituted promptly. I believe abandonment of strategies before they have had commitment and time to be proven viable or otherwise, such as in withdrawal of commitment to adult education in “cradle to grave” community education, undermines confidence and certainty in both the practice of consultation and the services generally. It is also very wasteful of the system's public credibility as well as its resources.

In retrospect, I believe the Department of Education was seriously negligent in allowing enforcement of the directions set by the Watts/Gallacher Report to lapse in the 1970s, especially when so much else was changing. The decline in Indigenous Territorians'
educational achievement may be attributable, at least in part, to the loss of momentum, direction and systemic commitment that resulted. Modifications would have been necessary, possibly redirection, with self-determination the overarching policy on Aboriginal affairs, the ethos of the Commonwealth Teaching Service and Beare's idea of school-based curriculum development. The momentum and direction in formal education for Indigenous Territorians should have been sustained, however, and adjusted as necessary as policies and circumstances evolved. Had that been the case, achievement from AEP initiatives in the 1990s may have been more substantial. It was not so, however, and no speculation on what may have been achieved will help address the issues which confront the Territory in the early 2000s.

There was much fanfare around the Collins Review and promulgation of its report. Learning lessons, now the authoritative working document, reported findings of comprehensive research into Indigenous Territorians' formal educational needs and expectations at the turn of the twenty-first century, and was adopted by the NTG with commitment to implement its recommendations. The Department was charged with the task, its Indigenous Education Branch managing policy and the Learning lessons Implementation Steering Committee directing action, schools were staffed (occasional vacancies notwithstanding), curriculum and assessment provisions were in place, school communities could, if they so chose, determine the education services suited to local needs and priorities, and isolation in the bush was reduced by contemporary information technology. Such infrastructure, appropriately staffed and resourced, optimised arrangements to implement the Review recommendations. Perseverance with them as integral to the direction, design and delivery of services, adjusted as necessary is critically important. Also vital are consistency and continuity in personnel and service, wherein the transience of European staff is an ever-present liability requiring attention. If possible, no hiatus should be allowed to develop.

Policy and adequately resourced infrastructure and processes are important in a public education system, but it is in schools and post-school situations in education communities that policy is implemented. The effectiveness of service delivery determines the policy's success or failure, regardless of its strengths or limitations. In an education community, the head of the school, or other institution, plays a critical rôle: he/she is concurrently the system's front-line manager, professional leader of staff, administrative manager of the institution, the Department's adviser to the institution's council, that body's executive officer and, effectively, the Department's local public relations officer. In order to discharge that battery of functions, such an operative must be kept fully abreast of any new policy measure and the outcomes sought, the process for its implementation, where related responsibilities
and functions lie, how to make use of relevant elements of system infrastructure, what resources are available and how to harness them. Locally, he/she needs to know what is expected of the institution and the community. For optimal implementation, the principal must also be persuaded of the policy's aptness and workability, in order to brief his/her staff, the institution's council and the community accordingly, to convince them of its worth and to explain the rôles required of them. The system therefore needs to ensure that heads of institutions are thoroughly briefed.\textsuperscript{31} Local self-help on the part of clients should be urged constantly in that context.

Consistency in policy and its implementation is essential for viability and desired impact. In an education community, the principal should ensure consistency in related practice and information disseminated. Apart from performing these standard functions, he/she also has to liaise on a variety of matters with Employment, Education and Training staff and personnel from other agencies. In an Indigenous community, official supervisory, advisory and consultative visitors tend to be numerous and their visits frequent and unco-ordinated. Such visitors commonly have some responsibility for and/or interest in a current policy: when this is the case, they can disrupt its efficient and effective implementation locally as a result of their having differing understandings of, or positions on, that policy. The disparity implied occurs both within the public education system and across other public agencies. Minister Sterling directed that all elements of Employment, Education and Training support implementation of the \textit{Learning lessons} recommendations: it may be necessary for provision to be made to ensure consistency in understanding and commitment to the policy and the process throughout the agency's operations. Optimal effectiveness, in my opinion, requires that consistency to extend to all other public agencies, both NTG and Commonwealth, with responsibilities pertaining to Indigenous Territorians. In-principle whole-of-government commitment and operation at both levels is required.

Public officials must be sensitive, and hence well-prepared, in their policy-related dealings with Indigenous Territorians and in relation to services provided. In formal education, as communities accept responsibility for their own services, with the sort of latitude that Frank Brennan mentioned, governments' rôles are primarily to monitor and support, not to dictate. Dealings can become delicate, especially where the accountability necessary in provision of services at public expense is involved. Logistically, and out of consideration for schools and their communities, there is much to be gained in credibility and goodwill,

\textsuperscript{31} That such briefing is needed may seem axiomatic, and the detail I have given superfluous. Unfortunately, in my experience, principals were not always adequately briefed; conversely, there were occasionally principals who were inclined to disregard the briefings they were given.
as well as for consistency, from coordination of official visits that relate in any way to education services, both within the Department of Employment, Education and Training and with other agencies. It may be appropriate for the Indigenous Education Branch to perform such a function.

In the design of local education services and programs, in tandem with implementing *Learning lessons* recommendations, I should advocate exploration of Trudgen’s ideas. His idea of Yolŋu-ising the nature and conduct of services, effectively realising Barnhardt and Kawagley’s “intersection” concept, could be incorporated in research into clients’ motivation to support and engage with formal education locally.\(^{32}\) Where there is real interest and circumstances are propitious, pilot projects should be instituted. It would be important to act promptly in a promising situation, to obviate risk of losing momentum, interest and will. A promising, if radical, innovation should have immediate support from governments, to be sustained long enough for its viability to be proven. I think it appropriate that the Commonwealth fund an initiative of this nature, as an experiment in Indigenous well-being, for a period of five years or so. If/when it is proven educationally viable and valuable, as judged jointly by the community, the school council (or other such body) and the public provider,\(^{33}\) and approved for continuation, it would become a NTG responsibility as a recurrent funding item in the institution's annual budget. If proven non-viable, the project would be abandoned, but extenuating circumstances could justify extension of its trial under rigorous scrutiny. In such an approach, a successful venture which earns incorporation in regular operations should continue to be monitored and supported until its viability needs no exceptional treatment. Many good innovations have lapsed for want of sustained support, making for disillusionment and waste.

An innovative project that is successful, of educational benefit to participants and their communities, should be publicised. When another community seeks to emulate it, and gains sanction to do so, adaptation, rather than replication, should occur: no two communities are identical, and each needs to own and be responsible for its ventures. Any move to introduce a new idea across the Territory, whether it is homegrown or borrowed from abroad, should be subject to the utmost scrutiny before it proceeds, and even if it does

\(^{32}\) Reference to the Intercultural Bilingual Education Teacher Training Programme employed in Amazonian Peru in this context may be helpful.

\(^{33}\) Jointly, the Indigenous Education Branch and the appropriate Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training section would signify in monitoring such projects, possibly employing the bi-axial framework.
so, it should be gradual and monitored. Ill-prepared blanket innovation can do long-lasting, even irreparable, damage.\textsuperscript{34}

In the meantime, there is no instant \textit{panaçaea} for difficulties in formal education for Indigenous Territorians. Patience is required, hand-in-hand with perseverance. There is a tendency, amongst Indigenes as well as others, to overlook the fact that for only half-a-century authorities have been trying, in formal education, to accomplish with peoples of pre-industrial, hunting and gathering, background, what it took the new settlers, with their industrial foundation, three centuries to accomplish for themselves. Much effort and commitment is devoted, predominantly within the civic cultural frame of the public provider, to devise and deliver formal education services that are appropriate for the cultural background and circumstances of their Indigenous \textit{clientèle}. Ultimately, however, given a holistic approach to Indigenous well-being jointly by the NTG and the Commonwealth, there is no substitute in formal education for the fundamental principles of demanding teaching, respect for and sustained high expectation of students, rigorous assessment with feedback and encouragement, and collaboration with parents and community leaders. Enlightened ideas may be gleaned from individual success stories, locally and inter-state, and from ventures overseas, but \textit{Learning lessons} provides the authoritative guidelines.

Isabelle Adams (1998) foreshadowed several early twenty-first century developments. One provided, potentially at least, a key objective for policy on formal education for Indigenous Territorians and bore implications for the policy process. It had to do with their self-actualisation:

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{(A)} a new wave of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will span two generations As a collective group they will be able to present and articulate the issues which will affect their cultural groups more realistically and effectively than their predecessors.

Through this process, they will be able to negotiate practical and equitable agreements for their people with Governments and organisations, and establish positive working partnerships between their people and other groups of Australians.
\end{enumerate}

\textsuperscript{34} I think the Commonwealth Teaching Service and school-based curriculum development were examples of rash innovation.
They will work with Governments and organisations at all levels, and be politically neutral to achieve the significant improvements that will result for Indigenous Australians during the first two decades of the 21st. century.

They will be viewed as the advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and will replace the activists who have led the charge for Indigenous Australians since the 1960s.35

For this prediction to be realised, familiarity with and confidence in their own heritages and understandings of the Western-oriented mainstream and the skills to deal with it, such as Barnhardt and Kawagley envisaged for Native Americans in Alaska and Trudgen-proposed for Arnhem Land, were required. Notionally, Adams had in mind realisation of the prediction over the period for which the directions provided in Learning lessons were conceived.

With the benefit of Adams' vision, it may be timely to reconsider the purpose of formal education for Indigenous Territorians. The nexus between schooling and training and employment or other productive livelihood for adults, a fundamental tenet in rationales for public education dating from the Industrial Revolution, although still touted, does not exist for the majority of Indigenous Territorians; and Indigenous students in the second or third generation of poor school attendance and declining academic achievement, not unlike apparently intractable generational welfare dependence and possibly related to it, should now be passing through schools. An aspect of the crisis in formal education for Indigenous Territorians may well be that in reality it lacks tangible purpose or that its stated purpose is defunct and has been for some time. Identification of a meaningful purpose could be act as a catalyst its resurgence. For that matter, review of the purpose of education for everyone else could also have merit.

Appendix A. APPENDIX A.
EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA, 1996–98. ¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Australians</th>
<th>Indigenous Australians*</th>
<th>All Northern Territorians**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree or higher:</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate or Associate diploma:</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled or Basic vocational qualification:</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The ABS acknowledged that the sample of Indigenous people, with exclusion from representation of approximately twenty-five per cent, people living in more remote areas, and the number of people in the sample who Identified as indigenous being small, the findings of the survey “(had) relatively high standard errors”.

** The data on the NT were obtained from urban centres only. Hence, from the data on the NT populace available at the time, the sample was taken from a little under two thirds of the total NT population which included less that one third of the NT's Indigenous residents.². The findings therefore in all likelihood comprised reasonable representation of educational achievement amongst non-Indigenous Territorians but was representative of only a relatively small proportion of Indigenous Territorians, amongst whom the higher achievers were likely to be found, and excluded a large proportion, amongst whom would be a large number of people less likely, on the criteria used, to have achieved academically or vocationally. Also, the ABS acknowledged a possible “relative standard error” of 25–40% with respect to the “low” ends of the literacy skill ranges in the NT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed highest level of secondary school available:</th>
<th>All Australians</th>
<th>Indigenous Australians*</th>
<th>All Northern Territorians**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete highest level of secondary school available:</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still at school:</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills (prose scale low):</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills (prose scale high):</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills (document scale low):</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills (document scale high):</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills (quantitative scale low):</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The ABS acknowledged that the sample of Indigenous people, with exclusion from representation of approximately twenty-five per cent, people living in more remote areas, and the number of people in the sample who identified as Indigenous being small, the findings of the survey “(had) relatively high standard errors”.

** The data on the NT were obtained from urban centres only. Hence, from the data on the NT populace available at the time, the sample was taken from a little under two thirds of the total NT population which included less that one third of the NT’s Indigenous residents. The findings therefore in all likelihood comprised reasonable representation of educational achievement amongst non-Indigenous Territorians but was representative of only a relatively small proportion of Indigenous Territorians, amongst whom the higher achievers were likely to be found, and excluded a large proportion, amongst whom would be a large number of people less likely, on the criteria used, to have achieved academically or vocationally. Also, the ABS acknowledged a possible “relative standard error” of 25–40% with respect to the “low” ends of the literacy skill ranges in the NT.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Australians</th>
<th>Indigenous Australians*</th>
<th>All Northern Territorians**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills (quantitative scale high):</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The ABS acknowledged that the sample of Indigenous people, with exclusion from representation of approximately twenty-five per cent, people living in more remote areas, and the number of people in the sample who Identified as indigenous being small, the findings of the survey “(had) relatively high standard errors”.

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### Appendix B. APPENDIX B. AUSTRALIAN AND NORTHERN TERRITORY POPULATION STATISTICS (September 1998).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Indigenous Population</th>
<th>% Age Indigenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia</strong></td>
<td>18 812 992</td>
<td>402 404 – 429 386*</td>
<td>2.13–2.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Territory</strong></td>
<td>190 875</td>
<td>53 687 – 54 416*</td>
<td>28.13–28.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New South Wales</strong></td>
<td>6 363 012</td>
<td>114411 – 126 402*</td>
<td>1.80–2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victoria</strong></td>
<td>4 674 939</td>
<td>23 002 – 24 507*</td>
<td>0.49–0.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Queensland</strong></td>
<td>3 471 483</td>
<td>110 324 – 117 454*</td>
<td>3.18–3.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Australia</strong></td>
<td>1 488 838</td>
<td>22 953 – 23907*</td>
<td>1.54–1.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Australia</strong></td>
<td>1 840 443</td>
<td>58 321 – 60 522*</td>
<td>3.17–3.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tasmania</strong></td>
<td>471 560</td>
<td>15 841 – 18 257*</td>
<td>3.36–3.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australian Capital</strong></td>
<td>308 659</td>
<td>3 266 – 3 723*</td>
<td>1.06–1.21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Experimental projections: low series – high series.
Appendix C. APPENDIX C.

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIVING LANGUAGES</th>
<th>RELATIVELY HEALTHY</th>
<th>NEARLY EXTINCT</th>
<th>EXTINCT LANGUAGES</th>
<th>VICINITY</th>
<th>VICINITY</th>
<th>VICINITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>VICINITY</td>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>VICINITY</td>
<td>VICINITY</td>
<td>VICINITY</td>
<td>VICINITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anindilyakwa</td>
<td>Groote Eylandt, Andegerebinha East of Alywarra to Qld..</td>
<td>East of</td>
<td>Wanderang Roper River area, E Arnhemland.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anmatyere</td>
<td>Mount Allen, Dayi NE of Alice Springs.</td>
<td>E Arnhemland,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i ‘Living Languages’, “Languages of Australia”, 2003. http://www.ethnologue.com.show_country?asp=Australia. The assembly of the data from which that in the above table has been extracted is dated 2003, but the original sources date from as early as 1981, so the status quo with some languages may have changed. The data I have recorded is therefore indicative rather than definitive. In some instances, where changes in place names have occurred (e.g. Gunbalanya was formerly Oenpelli, Alekerenge was Ali Curung, and previously Warrabri, and Belyuen was Delissaville), I have entered those currently in official use. Some variety occurs also in the names of the languages; I have exercised no licence with them. I have elaborated on where the languages are, or have been, commonly spoken.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIVING LANGUAGES</th>
<th>NEARLY EXTINCT</th>
<th>EXTINCT LANGUAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Healthy</td>
<td>Nearly Extinct</td>
<td>Extinct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>VICINITY</td>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranta (Western)</td>
<td>Alice Springs area, Hermannsburg.</td>
<td>Djingili Elliott &amp; Newcastle Waters to Elsey Station &amp; Ashburton Range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burrarra</td>
<td>Maningrida, N Arnhemland.</td>
<td>Gadjerawang Victoria River mouth to WA &amp; inland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhangu</td>
<td>Elcho Island, NE Arnhemland.</td>
<td>Gagadu Gunbalanya, N NOTES.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhuwal</td>
<td>Roper River, E Giyug E Amhempland.</td>
<td>Giyug Peron Islands, GENERAL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djambarrpuyngu</td>
<td>Elcho Island, NE Amhempland.</td>
<td>Jamango Crocodile Islands, off N Amhempland coast.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the total of 268 Indigenous Australian languages listed in “Languages of Australia”, ethnologue.com (2003), 235 were classed as “living”, 2 as having no “mother tongues” and 31 as “extinct”.

Cf. the NT, in which 89 Indigenous languages were classed as “living” (47
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIVING LANGUAGES</th>
<th>EXTINCT LANGUAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relatively Healthy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nearly Extinct</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LANGUAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>VICINITY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djauan</td>
<td>Bamyili, E of Katherine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djebbana</td>
<td>Maningrida area, N Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djinang</td>
<td>Blyth River to Ramingining, N. Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djinba</td>
<td>Nganalala, N Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garawa</td>
<td>Borroloola, inland from Gulf of Carpenteria, on McArthur River.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumatj</td>
<td>Yirrkala, E Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING LANGUAGES</td>
<td>EXTINCT LANGUAGES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELATIVELY HEALTHY</strong></td>
<td><strong>NEARLY EXTINCT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>VICINITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gupapuyngu</td>
<td>Milingimbi &amp; Elcho Island, NE Arnhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurgone</td>
<td>Mann River, Arnhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurinji</td>
<td>Victoria River &amp; Kalkaringi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwaidja</td>
<td>Croker Island, N Arnhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaytetje</td>
<td>Barrow Creek area, N to Alekerenenge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunbarlang</td>
<td>Gunbalanya, Maningrida &amp; Goulburn Island, N Arnhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangerayi</td>
<td>Mataranka &amp; Elsey Station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIVING LANGUAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>VICINITY</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>VICINITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maridjabin</td>
<td>Inland from Anson Bay, SSW of Darwin.</td>
<td>Ngalakan</td>
<td>Roper River area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marithiel</td>
<td>Daly River area, Bagot (in Darwin), Belyuen (Cox Peninsular) &amp; Roper River.</td>
<td>Ngurmbur</td>
<td>Between West &amp; South Alligator Rivers, N Arnhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mudbura</td>
<td>Victoria River to Barkly Tableland.</td>
<td>Nyangga</td>
<td>Gulf of Carpenteria coast from Robinson River to Qld.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirrinh-patha</td>
<td>Wadeye (Porft Keats) area, SW of Darwin.</td>
<td>Tyaraity</td>
<td>Belyeun Cox peninsular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakara</td>
<td>Maningrida &amp; Goulburn Island, N Arnhemland.</td>
<td>Umbugarla</td>
<td>Between Mary &amp; South Alligator Rivers, Arnhemland.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXTINCT LANGUAGES

- Pitjantjatjara at Areyonga; - Pintupi/Luritja at Papunyah; - Pintupi/Luritja at Haasts Bluff; - Pitjantjatjara at Docker River; - Tiwi at Murrupurtiyanu; - Warlpiri at Yuendumu; - Warlpiri at Willowra; - Warlpiri at Lajamanu; - Warlpiri at Yipirinya.iii

N.B. There is some variation in the spelling of names of languages between the sources cited, as there is amongst others consulted.
### Living Languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Vicinity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nangikurrungg</td>
<td>Daly River area, S of Darwin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngalkbun</td>
<td>Gunbalanya, N Wadjiginy Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngarinman</td>
<td>Jasper Creek, Victoria River area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nungubuyu</td>
<td>Numbulwar, S Wambaya Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pintupi-Luritja Papunyah, Yuendumu &amp; Walunguru (Kintore) to WA, WofAlice Springs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitjantjatjara</td>
<td>SW NT to SA &amp; WA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remburungu</td>
<td>Roper River &amp; Maningrida, Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritorungo</td>
<td>Rose &amp; Roper Rivers, E Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Nearly Extinct Languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Vicinity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urmingangg</td>
<td>NW Amhemland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Along coast</td>
<td>and Finnis River, SW of Darwin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagaya</td>
<td>Avon Downs/Austral Downs area of Barkly Tableland to Qld..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headwaters</td>
<td>of McArthur &amp; Limmen Rivers, E of Lake Woods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangamala</td>
<td>Hay River, SENT, to Qld..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangaŋuru</td>
<td>SE comer of NT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waray</td>
<td>Adelaide River area, SSE of Darwiit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wulna</td>
<td>Darwin area E to Adelaide River mouth ft inland.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Extinct Languages

- Nangikurrungg
- Ngalkbun
- Ngarinman
- Nungubuyu
- Pintupi-Luritja Papunyah, Yuendumu & Walunguru (Kintore) to WA, WofAlice Springs.
- Pitjantjatjara SW NT to SA & WA.
- Remburungu Roper River & Maningrida, Amhemland.
- Ritorungo Rose & Roper Rivers, E Amhemland.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIVING LANGUAGES</th>
<th>EXTINCT LANGUAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LANGUAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>VICINITY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi</td>
<td>Tiwi Islands, N Yangman or Darwin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wageman</td>
<td>S of Pine Creek &amp; Tipperary Station, S of Darwin, &amp; Bagot, in Darwin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wardaman</td>
<td>Upper Daly River, S of Darwin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlmanpa</td>
<td>Mount Leichhardt area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlpiri</td>
<td>Alekerenge, Willowra, Yuendumu &amp; Lajamanu, central-midwestern NT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warumungu</td>
<td>Tennant Creek area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanuwa</td>
<td>Borroloola &amp; E to Qld.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

ii Amery, Rob, & Colin Bourke, “Australian Languages: Our Heritage”, in Colin Bourke, Eleanor Bourke & Bill Edwards (eds), 1998. *Aboriginal Australia: An Introductory Reader in Aboriginal Studies* (second edition). Pp. 123–29. In several instances, Amery and Colin Bourke grouped together “dialects” that were treated as discrete “languages” in the ethnologue.com analysis. In terms of the latter approach, 30 would consequently be classed as “strong”, with 18 of them located in the NT. Such divergence highlights the subjectivity and complexity of the topic; it also reinforces my qualification, that the information provided above is indicative, not definitive. Further, Amery and Colin Bourke observed that “(u)ndoubtedly some languages have disappeared without trace”, which suggests that those identified above as “extinct” are ones of which there is some trace and that unknown others have almost certainly also gone.

iii NTDE, 1989. *Handbook for Aboriginal Bilingual Education in the Northern Territory*. Darwin, N.T.: NTG. Pp. 3–5. I have included Kriol in the “Bilingual Education” list as the NTDE accepted it as valid; I have not included it amongst the living Indigenous languages as I do not personally believe it qualifies as one.
Appendix D. APPENDIX D.
NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY: MAIN PURPOSES AND LONG-TERM GOALS.

Involvement of Aboriginal people in educational decision making.

1. To establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal parents and community members regarding the planning, delivery and evaluation of preschool, primary and secondary education services for their children.

2. To increase the number of Aboriginal people employed as educational administrators, teachers, curriculum advisers, teacher assistants, home-school liaison officers and other education workers, including community people engaged in teaching of Aboriginal culture, history and contemporary society, and Aboriginal languages.

3. To establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal students and community members in decisions regarding the planning, delivery and evaluation of post-school education services, including technical and further education colleges and higher education institutions.

4. To increase the number of Aboriginal people employed as administrators, teachers, researchers and student services officers in technical and further education colleges and higher education institutions.

5. To provide education and training services to develop the skills of Aboriginal people to participate in educational decision making.

6. To develop arrangements for the provision of independent advice from Aboriginal communities regarding educational decisions at regional, state, territory and national levels.

Equality of access to educational services.

---

1. To ensure that Aboriginal children of pre-primary school age have access to preschool services on a basis comparable to that available to other Australian children of the same age.

2. To ensure that all Aboriginal children have local access to primary and secondary schooling.

3. To ensure equitable access of Aboriginal people to post-compulsory secondary schooling, to technical and further education and to higher education.

**Equity of educational participation.**

1. To achieve the participation of Aboriginal children in pre-school for a period similar to that for all Australian children.

2. To achieve the participation of all Aboriginal children in compulsory schooling.

3. To achieve the participation of Aboriginal people in post-compulsory secondary education, in technical and further education and in higher education, at rates commensurate with those of all Australians in those sectors.

**Equitable and appropriate educational outcomes.**

1. To provide adequate preparation of Aboriginal children through pre-school education for the schooling years ahead.

2. To enable Aboriginal attainment of skills to the same standard as other Australian students throughout the compulsory schooling years.

3. To enable Aboriginal students to attain the successful completion of Year 12 or equivalent at the same rates as for other Australian students.

4. To enable Aboriginal students to attain the same graduation rates from award courses in technical and further education, and in higher education, as for other Australians.

5. To develop programs to support the maintenance and continued use of Aboriginal languages.

6. To provide community education services which enable Aboriginal people to develop the skills to manage the development of their communities.

7. To enable the attainment of proficiency in English language and numeracy competencies by Aboriginal adults with limited or no educational experience.

8. To enable Aboriginal students at all levels of education to have an appreciation of their history cultures and identity.

9. To provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal traditional and contemporary cultures.
Appendix E. APPENDIX E. THE NORTHERN TERRITORY OPERATIONAL PLAN, 1990–1992 TRIENNium INITIATIVES. ¹

Schedule A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>1990 $</th>
<th>1991 $</th>
<th>1992 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 20 Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (CLOs)</td>
<td>1 337 820</td>
<td>1 337 820</td>
<td>1 337 820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rural Area Teacher Education (RATE) Program</td>
<td>1 119 360</td>
<td>1 119 360</td>
<td>1 119 360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 65 Outstation Aboriginal; Assistant Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>500 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Aboriginal Education Program Management Unit</td>
<td>600 000</td>
<td>600 000</td>
<td>600 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Primary school facilities including forward commitment of Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait</td>
<td>2 720 000</td>
<td>2 350 000</td>
<td>2 350 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Adapted (slightly) from NTDE, 1991, The Northern Territory Operational Plan, P. 16.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>AESIP FUNDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islander (ATSI) schools' capital</td>
<td>1990 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1991 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Increased Community Education Centres (CECs)</td>
<td>955 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>955 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>955 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Developing Junior Secondary Studies Certificate (JSSC) in CECs</td>
<td>147 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>147 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>147 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Early Childhood Course Training – Batchelor College</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>148 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>148 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Aboriginal Health Worker Training– Batchelor College</td>
<td>700 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>700 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>700 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Curriculum development resources</td>
<td>701 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 300 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 300 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Distance education curriculum</td>
<td>337400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>337400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>337400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Teacher in-service instruction</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>150 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>150 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Primary Assessment Program (PAP)</td>
<td>294 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>294 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>294 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Special Provision for Hearing Impaired Students</td>
<td>391 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>391 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>391 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Aboriginal Studies Centre – Alice Springs</td>
<td>139 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>139 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>139 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Yirara computing programs</td>
<td>9 020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## AESIP FUNDS

### Schedule B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>1990 $</th>
<th>1991 $</th>
<th>1992 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL</td>
<td>9,490,980</td>
<td>9,989,380</td>
<td>10,487,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCRETIONARY</td>
<td>9,020</td>
<td>10,620</td>
<td>12,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>9,500,000</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
<td>10,500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Schedule C.

1. **New pre-school facility** (Kintore) - $150,000
2. **Extra upgrading of primary school facilities** - $400,000
3. **Remote areas teacher accommodation** - $70,000

**TOTAL** - $1,250,000

---

### AESIP FUNDS

#### Schedule C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>1990 $</th>
<th>1991 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Principals' Mentor Scheme</strong></td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Admin/Management Mentor Scheme</strong></td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Outstation Assistant Teacher Tutor Training</strong></td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** - $1,500,000

---

N.B. *The Northern Territory Operational Plan* gave the sum committed to Schedule C, Initiative 3, as $1,500,000 *pa*, which has been taken to be an error as the total also read as $1,500,000 *pa* and the actual total allocation from the TAP for the Schedule C initiatives was $1,500,000 *pa*. 

TRIENNIUM: INITIATIVES & AESIP SUPPLEMENTATION, 1993.¹

1. Early Childhood Education Course Implementation: supporting and contributing to the educational development of young Aboriginal children and their families: $160 000.

2. Support for Aboriginal Languages in Schools: providing community-based assistance for Aboriginal language and cultural maintenance. $365 000.

3. Improved Hearing for Aboriginal Students: helping teachers to improve Aboriginal students’ health: $519 000.

4. Remote Area Teacher Education (RATE) Tutors: assistance to increase the number of formally qualified Aboriginal teachers: $1 033 000.

5. Aboriginal Education Workers (AEWs): providing the opportunity for Aboriginal communities to employ Aboriginal people on part- and full-time bases to address locally-determined educational needs: $635 000.

6. Curriculum Materials Implementation in Remote Schools improving students’ academic understanding through relevant curriculum materials: $1 246 000.

7. Aboriginal Student Assessment Program: providing teachers with a better understanding of their students' strengths and weaknesses and reporting at a Territory-wide level on student academic progress: $300 000.

8. Delivery of Primary Education to Remote Aboriginal Students: providing additional assistance to the Territory's Schools of the Air to support Aboriginal students: $172 000.

¹ Adapted (slightly) from Aboriginal Education Policy Support Unit, 1993. “Aboriginal Education News” Issue No.2. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG.
9. Increased Professional Support for Aboriginal Teachers: assisting NTTS Aboriginal teachers through providing classroom support and training leading to gaining promotional positions: $862 000.

10. Aboriginal Involvement in Decision-Making: to facilitate further involvement of Aboriginal people in educational decision-making: $168 000.

11. Aboriginal Education Liaison Officers (AELOs): providing a link between school, home and the Department of Education: $1 106 000.

12. Provision of School Facilities to Remote Communities: improving local access to education facilities in remote Aboriginal communities: $1 000 000.


14. Tertiary Aspirations for Aboriginal Students: providing encouragement to enable Aboriginal students to gain Year 12 results facilitating their entry into tertiary studies: $220 000.


16. Trial Delivery Junior Secondary Education: trialling and monitoring the use of new technologies to provide access to secondary education for Aboriginal students in remote areas: $441 000.

17. Curriculum and Co-ordination in Community Education Centres (CECs): extending education services in Aboriginal communities from preschool to adult education: $259 000.

18. Aboriginal Health Worker Training: increasing opportunities for Aboriginal people to control and manage their community health services: $500 000.

19. Access Courses for Remote Communities: making a start to English literacy through the Certificate to Employment and Further Study: $315 000.


21. Centralian College Aboriginal Enclave: supporting Aboriginal students in their efforts to succeed in mainstream programs: $270 000.

22. Aboriginal Offender Advancement: providing further opportunities for Aboriginal offenders to develop their academic and trade skills whilst in prison: $390 000.

23. Monitoring and Reporting on the National Aboriginal Education Policy in the NT: providing information to the community and government on progress towards achieving the goals of the National Aboriginal Education Policy: $536 000.
Appendix G. APPENDIX G.
EXCERPTS FROM ABORIGINAL HEARING PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT 1998 EMBODYING ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM'S SUCCESS.

The NTAHP is recognised nationally as a fine example of an intersectoral program that has created change within Aboriginal communities by delivering services that develop, enhance and support Aboriginal involvement and ownership.¹

The intersectoral, multi-disciplinary nature of the NTAHP is unique in the NT Government's approach to challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.²

Increasingly, NTAHP personnel are becoming involved with professional development, orientation and networking presentations. The most enlightening fact (is) that the majority of these intersectoral meetings are attended in response to invitation. The service and support of the NTAHP addressing ear disease and subsequent hearing loss is becoming increasingly recognised for its quality and reliability. In particular, the Aboriginal Hearing Program's ‘grass roots’ approach to addressing issues by involving community members and local service providers wherever possible, … (encourages) ownership … a unique approach to individual communities.³

Deriving from an evaluation of the NTAHP, it was concluded more work needed to be done in the area of awareness at a community level. I have taken this on board and have developed a number of plans and packages to take the NTAHP to a community level. Packages are worked out in consultation with individual communities and have been very

successful during 1998. For example, the planning of an ‘Ear Day’ in the community of Port Keats involved consultation and arrangements between the school, health centre, rural services, community members and the local store. The timing of the ‘Ear Day’ worked in with community activities, ensuring the highest degree of community participation as possible.\(^4\)

(The) NTAHP Co-ordinator, Senior (Aboriginal Health Worker) and Darwin (AHP Education Officer) have been in consultation with Dr. Barbara Patterson's development of the School Age Health Policy since July 1995.\(^5\)

There has been a recorded doubling of community workshops in the Darwin region with response to increased demand. EOs and the Senior (Aboriginal Health Worker) record vast distances travelled in response to community demand for NTAHP Involvement.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) NTAHPCC, 1998. *N.T. Aboriginal Hearing Program Annual Report 1998*. P. 17 The Senior Aboriginal Health Worker was a Territory Health Services employee with NT-wide responsibilities with respect to Aboriginal Health Workers, and he was also the elected chair of the AHPCC. He described his professional *role* in relation to the AHP as “(c)o-ordination of the delivery of services for education, training and support for AHWs … (in the context of their) identification and management of Otitis Media and Conductive Hearing Loss”.

Appendix H. APPENDIX H.

1. That MCEETYA endorses the *National Strategy for the Education of the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*.

2. That all State/Territory and Commonwealth Ministers acknowledge that they and their governments have a clear responsibility to implement the following eight priorities which incorporate the 21 goals of the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy*:
   - to establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in educational decision-making;
   - to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in education and training;

---

1 MCEETYA Taskforce for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 1995.  

*A National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 1996–2002.*  
Canberra, ACT. MCEETYA, Commonwealth of Australia. P. ii, with minor adaptation.
• to ensure equitable access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to education and training services;
• to ensure participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in education and training;
• to ensure equitable and appropriate educational achievement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
• to promote, maintain and support the teaching of Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander studies, cultures and languages to all Indigenous and non-Indigenous students;
• to provide community development training services including proficiency in English literacy and numeracy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults;
• to improve NATSIEP (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy) implementation, evaluation and resourcing arrangements.

c. That, to meet the above responsibilities, all Ministers support the achievement of the outcomes proposed by this Taskforce for the early childhood, schooling, vocational education and higher education sectors.

d. That State and Territory Ministers endorse the strategies proposed by this Taskforce and agree that all systems within their legislative responsibility will examine these strategies and implement them in ways appropriate to their particular State or Territory.

e. That each State and Territory Minister agrees to the preparation of system Annual reports on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training which will report on the outcomes and performance measures established by the Taskforce. Ministers should note that such a report should be in a form to maximise reporting to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

f. That State and Territory Ministers acknowledge that the Commonwealth, in partnership with the States and Territories, will negotiate in future discussions the development of clear guidelines for education and training providers in developing appropriate NATSIEP operational plans, requirements for reporting and review, and allocation of State/Territory and Commonwealth NATSIEP funds.
Appendix I. APPENDIX I.
NORTHERN TERRITORY
ABORIGINAL & TORRES
STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION
OPERATIONAL PLAN, 1997–1999:
PRIORITY AREAS, INITIATIVES
& ABORIGINAL EDUCATION
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
PROGRAM SUPPLEMENTATION,
1997.¹

PRIORIT Y AREA NUMBER ONE

To Establish Effective Arrangements for the Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Educational Decision-Making.

Aboriginal Involvement in Educational Decision-Making: $130 000.

ATSI Educators Support Unit – Training: $86 000.

Parent Liaison Extension: $73 000.

PRIOR ITY AREA NUMBER TWO

¹ Adapted from AEPSU, 1997, Aboriginal Education News Issue No. 9, Pp. 4–23, 26–41.
To Increase the Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Employed in Education and Training.

ATSI Educators Support Unit – AIEWS and AROs: $2 391 000.

Mentoring Support: $993 000.

PRIORITy AREA NUMBER THREE

To Ensure Equitable Access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students to Education and Training Services.

Early Childhood Extension Programs for Aboriginal Children: $573 000.

Extending delivery of Primary Education to Remote Aboriginal Students: $125 000.

Junior Secondary Curriculum for Remote Areas: $390 000.

Junior Secondary Curriculum to Remote Communities using Communication Technologies: $351 000.


Delivery of Education for Secondary-age Indigenous Students in Remote Communities: $106 000.

Aboriginal Hearing Program: $496 000.

Remote School Facilities: $600 000.

PRIORITy AREA NUMBER FOUR

To Ensure Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students in Education and Training.

ATSI Educators Support Unit – Improved Enrolment, Attendance and Retention: $185 000.

Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program: $265 400.
PRIORITY AREA NUMBER FIVE

To Ensure Equitable and Appropriate Educational Achievement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.

Development of Curriculum Materials to Assist Indigenous Primary School Students: $514 000.

Implementation of Curriculum Materials to Assist Indigenous Primary School Students: $377 000.

Aboriginal Students Assessment Program: $357 762.

Using Technology to Provide Professional Development for Teachers in Remote Communities: $155 000.

PRIORITY AREA NUMBER SIX

To Promote, Maintain and Support the Teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Cultures and Languages to AH Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Students.

Cross-Cultural Awareness: $106 000.

Indigenous Studies Program: $216 000.

PRIORITY AREA NUMBER SEVEN

To Provide Community Development and Training Services Including Proficiency in English Literacy and Numeracy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adults.

Centralian College Aboriginal Enclave: $260 000.

PRIORITY AREA NUMBER EIGHT

To Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Implementation, Evaluation Resourcing Arrangements.

Information, Accountability and Financial Reporting: $300 000 (educational) + $225 600 (fiscal).
Appendix J. APPENDIX J.
INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATION
IN NTDE ADVISORY AND
DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES,
1996. 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BODIES</th>
<th>INDIGENOUS MEMBERS</th>
<th>NON-INDIGENOUS MEMBERS</th>
<th>INDIGENOUS MEMBERSHIP</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Councils</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>School-based; no break-down on urban <em>vis-á-vis</em> non-urban.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Student Support &amp; Parent Awareness Committees</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>School-based, with Indigenous focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Advisory Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Systemic, Indigenous representation required by legislation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Board of Studies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>Systemic, Indigenous representation required by legislation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>Systemic, with Indigenous focus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BODIES</th>
<th>INDIGENOUS MEMBERS</th>
<th>NON-INDIGENOUS MEMBERS</th>
<th>INDIGENOUS MEMBERSHIP</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standing Committee</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>Systemic, with Indigenous focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education Co-ordination Committee</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Systemic, derived primarily from school councils but regarded as “the parents; body”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Government Schools Organisations Executive</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Systemic, with Indigenous focus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K. APPENDIX K. BELIEF UNDERPINNING ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING IN NORTHERN TERRITORY EDUCATION.¹

The Assessment and Reporting Statement (1998) was founded on belief that:

- **students** who are well informed about their achievement and progress are able to set personal goals and take responsibility for aspects of their learning;
- **teachers** who are well informed about the development of their students' knowledge, skills and understandings can be more effective in their teaching and can assist all students in their care;
- **parents** who are well informed about their children's progress are able to support and encourage learning;
- **education systems** that are well informed about student achievement can determine priorities and provide more effective education programs and support;
- **communities** that are well informed about young people's achievements in schooling are more likely to provide support and assistance where it is needed;
- **a nation** that knows how its young people are performing is better placed to chart a course for a prosperous future.

Appendix L. APPENDIX L. NT

Appendix M. APPENDIX M.

MAJOR INITIATIVES – SCHOOL FOCUSED.

• Implement a revised primary school staffing formula to give almost all urban primary schools an improvement in both administrative and teaching staff resources, in response to identified areas of need in Early Childhood and small primary schools.

• Guarantee bush schools a minimum staffing level for the entire school year. Government will be injecting a further $4 million to fund these staffing initiatives.

• Decrease head office staff numbers and restructure the Department to bring together schools administration, schools curriculum and advisory services within the same division.

• Restructure the Curriculum function of the Board of Studies Services along key learning area lines to achieve better integration with advisory services.

• Rationalise school curriculum priorities and simplify documentation to assist teachers, particularly those in small and remote schools.

• Maintain the operations of the Quality Outcomes area of the Board of Studies Services over the busy Christmas period to ensure a smooth certification process but review this area during First Term 1999.

• Reorganise major Departmental activities so as to minimise the impact on schools during term time and thus reduce the pressure for relief teachers.

• Realign the role of Superintendents to provide a flatter management structure and direct educational support and leadership through a ‘cluster principal’ arrangement.

• Refocus policy and program delivery in Aboriginal Education within one area of the new Departmental structure. This will ensure a more consistent and structured approach to improved literacy and numeracy for Aboriginal students.

• Progressively withdraw the Bilingual Education program, allowing schools to share in the savings and better resource English language programs.

• Increase resources to Student Services to support behaviour management of students.

• Consolidate Information Technology policy and school support services within one area of the Department.

• Revise the Department's Information Technology Business Case in line with current developments in the field.
• Revise the administrative procedures within the Department to streamline processes for compliance and acquittal consistent with the spirit of school based management.

• Streamline processes for distribution of funds under both Commonwealth and Northern Territory programs to reduce submission writing and minimise committee meetings.

• Consolidate the Depart of Education in Darwin, preferably into one location.

• Realign the Department of Education's Budget to better reflect its operations and to provide a clear framework for ongoing program evaluation and reporting.¹


In reporting an efficiency review of the NTDE's central and regional offices, conducted in 1996, the Review Team worked from the basis that the NTDE's “core business ... (was) to provide quality education for students” and made its recommendations to the Steering Committee, and through it to the Secretary, with that consideration paramount. The areas identified then as needing particular attention included inter-divisional and inter-sectional information-sharing and co-operation, budget management, staff development and information technology planning, development and integration. The measures to be taken, as declared in *Schools ... Our Focus*, in these areas were in many respects similar to the recommendations made by the 1996 Review Team. (See Efficiency Review Team, 1996, *Review of Regional and Central Offices*. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG.) I was a member of the Review Team: I recall CEO Michael Fong's considerable displeasure at learning, from our feedback as the review progressed, that at least one of his senior officers had not been keeping him fully and accurately briefed on difficulties being experienced in critical areas for which he, Fong, was ultimately accountable.
Appendix N. APPENDIX N. COLLINS REVIEW: TERMS OF REFERENCE, KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDED ACTION AREAS.¹

Terms of reference.

The review was commissioned to establish:

• the views and educational aspirations of Indigenous parents and community members in relation to their children's schooling, with particular reference to English literacy and numeracy;
• the key issues affecting educational outcomes for Indigenous children; (and)
• supportable actions for educational outcome improvements.

Key issues.

The single greatest challenge for the Northern Territory Department of Education is to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students in partnership with Indigenous people and other agencies and jurisdictions.

The review established that there is:

• a widespread desire amongst Indigenous people for improvements in the education of their children;
• unequivocal evidence of deteriorating outcomes from an already unacceptably low base, linked to a range of issues, led primarily by poor attendance which has become an educational crisis;
• substantial evidence of long-term systemic failure to address this situation;
• a number of complex long-standing issues that must be addressed which have significant resource implications for the Department of education and the Northern Territory government;

• evidence of failure to access significant available Commonwealth funds to address poor outcomes with intensive projects;
• a need for the Indigenous Education Council Northern Territory to be completely restructured;
• a need for management systems of the Department of education to be organized to ensure that Indigenous education is a critical core business of the (D)epartment;
• a strong imperative for an outcomes-based approach to Indigenous education at all levels;
• Northern Territory Government responsibility for turning around the poor educational outcomes jointly shared by many departments, in particular Territory Health Services, Territory Housing, Local Government, (Power and Water Authority) and the Office of Aboriginal Development, making a whole-of-government response all the more essential; (and)
• a need to establish partnerships between Indigenous parents, communities, and peak bodies, the service providers and both the NT and Commonwealth Governments, to honestly acknowledge the gravity and causes of declining outcomes, its destructiveness to future Indigenous aspirations, and to assume the joint responsibility of immediately reversing the downward trend.

Recommended action areas.

Review process.

Student assessment:

• system testing;
• feedback;
• English as a second language;
• profiling;
• secondary assessment.

School and system reporting:

• school annual reports;
• system reporting.

Information technology (and) telecommunications.

Commonwealth-Territory roles and relationships:

• Commonwealth (Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program);
• on-costs for (Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program);
• Abstudy.

Funding and costs:

• tracking costs;
• measuring disadvantage.

Repairs and maintenance.

Parity in infrastructure.

Housing and future needs:

• housing – general;
• housing for local recruits.

Recruitment and retention:

• principals;
• Indigenous education staffing strategy.

Preparation and training:

• tertiary preparation;
• orientation and cross-cultural effectiveness training;
• ongoing professional renewal.

Indigenous recruits:

• Indigenous teachers and other Indigenous staff;
• assistant teachers;
• (Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers) and Aboriginal Resource Officers);
• Professional development of Indigenous staff.

Secondary schooling.

Post-compulsory schooling:

• vocational education and training;
• adult education;
• (Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program).

Students with special needs.

Two-way learning:

• second language learning;
• language teaching.

Literacy and numeracy:

• explicit pedagogy;
• literacy and numeracy support materials;
• Strategic Support Unit;
• libraries;
• literature production centres;
• attendance.

Mobility.

Health issues and wider social context:

• general;
• hearing.

Data deficiencies:

• attendance data;
• participation;
• staff turnover.

Community partnerships:

• the Indigenous Education Council Northern Territory;
• the new Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory;
• self-managing schools program.
Appendix O. APPENDIX O.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF CAUSES OF POOR EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES. ¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT</th>
<th>PROXIMATE</th>
<th>DISTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor attendance, poor attention:</td>
<td>• poor health (students and carers), including hearing and nutrition;</td>
<td>• unemployment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• mobility;</td>
<td>• overcrowding;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sleep deprivation;</td>
<td>• parent experiences of school;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• family and community disruption;</td>
<td>• school-community relationship &amp; history;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• distractions – sport, TV, travel, etc..</td>
<td>• cultural priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher turnover:</td>
<td>• housing;</td>
<td>• national teacher supply and demand;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• salaries and conditions;</td>
<td>• school facilities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• family facilities, e.g. access to secondary schools;</td>
<td>• departmental valuing and responsiveness;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• preparation and training;</td>
<td>• community relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• school leadership.</td>
<td>• few sites other than the school for literacy/numeracy tuition or reading opportunities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language learning difficulties:</td>
<td>• English as a second or foreign language;</td>
<td>• inherent difficulty of English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• poor health, especially hearing impairment;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ NTDE, 1999. Learning lessons. P. 29, a little modified, mainly in punctuation, not in substance. It may have been more appropriate, in the interests of consistency, to have used the term “proximal” rather than “proximate”.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT</th>
<th>PROXIMATE</th>
<th>DISTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• minimal exposure to Standard Australian English (SAE) and structured numeracy;</td>
<td>• inadequate grounding in oral SAE;</td>
<td>• <em>ad hoc</em> access to ESL/EFL Programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attrition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT</th>
<th>PROXIMATE</th>
<th>DISTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• poor academic performance;</td>
<td>• secondary and adult education processes/facilities;</td>
<td>• unclear pathways to employment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• local social and family environment;</td>
<td>• cultural priorities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• carers not fully aware of child's learning situation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fragmented approaches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT</th>
<th>PROXIMATE</th>
<th>DISTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• lack of policy co-ordination;</td>
<td>• Indigenous education historically peripheral to core business of NTDE.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lack of outcomes data;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• poor management systems.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix P. APPENDIX P.

STRUCTURE AND SUBSTANCE OF INTERVIEWS.

A. Events.
   1. What do you consider the most important event, or events, to have happened in education and training for Indigenous Australians?
   2. Why is it/are they important?
   3. Why did it/they happen?
   4. What benefits, if any, resulted from it/them?
   5. What problems, if any, did it/they cause?
   6. Did you have anything to do with it/them, and, if so, what?
   7. What is your own opinion of it/them?

B. Initiatives.
   1. What do you believe to have been the most important initiative/s or program/s that has/have been introduced in education and training for Indigenous Australians?
   2. Why is it/are they important?
   3. Why was it/were they introduced?
   4. What benefits, if any, resulted from it/them?
   5. What problems, if any, did it/they cause?
   6. Is it/are they still operating, and if so, why?
   7. If it/they is/are no longer operating, why was it/were they stopped?
   8. Did you have anything to do with it/them, and, if so, what?
   9. What is your own opinion of it/them?

C. Priorities for the future.
   1. What are the most important issues for the future …
      i. for the clients?
      ii. for the providers?
      iii. for government/s?
   2. What do you think will…
      i. improve progress in education and training for Indigenous Australians?
ii. slow progress in education and training for Indigenous Australians?

3. What advice do you have to offer…
   i. the Indigenous clients of the education and training services?
   ii. the providers of the education and training services for Indigenous clients?
   iii. governments, in relation to their policies and the provision of education and training services for the Indigenous clientèle?

4. How important do you think education and training are for Indigenous Australians?

5. How do you rate education and training for Indigenous Australians, in relation to their health, employment and housing?

D. Other comments.
   1. Do you have any other ideas about education and training for Indigenous Australians?
Appendix Q. TABLE OF EVENTS:  
A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY AND THEIR FORMAL EDUCATION.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1824</td>
<td>• first white (military) settlement in NT.</td>
<td>1838</td>
<td>• British Parliament determined Aborigines to be protected.</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>• Province of SA established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>• Colony of North Australia established in February &amp; revoked in December.</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>• SA granted self-government</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>• <em>Northern Territory Act</em> legislated annexation of NT to SA.</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>• work commenced on overland telegraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>• William Whitfield started</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
<td>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS</td>
<td>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>private school in Wesleyan Church in Palmerston.</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>• Lutheran Finke River &amp; Hermannsberg Missions opened.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>• first public school, Palmerston, 34 pupils, John Holt teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rapid Creek Jesuit Mission opened.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Jesuit Mission, Daly River, opened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rapid Creek Mission abandoned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1892</td>
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<td>• Tennant's (sic) Creek, Larakeah (sic), Manassie, Woolner</td>
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<td>1893</td>
<td>• Pine Creek school opened, plus “travelling teachers” for goldfields.</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>• Daly River Mission closed.</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>• Federation of Australian States &amp; inception of Commonwealth of Australia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>• Anglican Kaparlgoo (later) Kapalga Mission opened, South Alligator River.</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>• motion to transfer NT from SA to Commonwealth passed in C’wealth HR.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>• two private schools opened in Palmerston.</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>• CMS Mission opened, Roper River.</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>• SA passed <em>Northern Territory Surrender Act</em> for NT’s transfer to C’wealth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>• Wongoak Aboriginal Reserve gazetted.</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>• C’wealth passed <em>Northern Territory (Administration) Act</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Plymouth Brethren made “a small attempt… to educate a few Aboriginal children in Darwin (ex-Palmerston).</td>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>• Fr. Gsell led establishment of RC Mission, Bathurst Island.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>• NT transferred to C’wealth under Northern Territory Acceptance Act.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>• NT ordinance to protect Aborigines passed, H. Basedow Chief Protector; Palmerston re-gazetted Darwin.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>• all Aboriginal Reserves re-gazetted under Commonwealth legislation.</td>
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<td>1912</td>
<td>• Very Rev. 1912 John Flynn appointed Supt. Of Australian Inland Mission, Alice Springs.</td>
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<td>1912</td>
<td>• J. A. Gilruth appointed NT Administrator; Baldwin Spencer appointed Chief Protector of</td>
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<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>• J.I. Rossiter took charge of public education in Darwin; • School for Aborigines opened in Kahlin Compound, Darwin, with “16 half-castes and 9 full-bloods”.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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</table>
| 1916 | • Methodist 1916 Goulbum Island Mission established on South Goulbum Island. | 1916 | • Administrator abolished position of Chief Inspector of Aborigines in NT, economy measure. | 1918 | • Aboriginals Ordinance forbade “cohabitation with Aboriginal women by whites and Asiatics”;
<p>|      |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |    | • Compulsory Attendance |</p>
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<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>• Administrator Gilruth dismissed.</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Ordinance came into force in NT.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>• South-West, Oenpelli &amp; Daly River Aboriginal Reserves gazetted.</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>• leading Darwin citizens, incl. H.G. Nelson, gaolled non-payment of taxes, “no taxation without representation”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td></td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>• CMS Mission, Groote Eylandt, &amp; Methodist Overseas Mission, Milingimbi, opened.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>• secondary education commenced in Darwin.</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>• Methodist 1922 Mission opened</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>• C wealth passed Northern Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>• scholarships to attend high schools in Qld. replaced secondary education in Darwin, due drop in students numbers; • Qld. Curriculum adopted for Qld. Schools.</td>
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<td>1925</td>
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<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>• CMS Mission opened at Oenpelli; • CMS “home for halfcaste children” opened on Groote Eylandt.</td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>• Dr. C.E. Cook appointed joint NT Chief</td>
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Medical Officer & Chief Protector of Aborigines;

- North Australian Workers Union boycotted hotels employing Aboriginal labour.

1928

- J. W. Bleakley studied status & conditions of “Aboriginals & Half-castes” in NT.

1929

- Bleakley submitted report on enquiry to C’ wealth;

- conference
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<td></td>
<td>• of missionaries, pastoralists &amp; unionists held on wages for “Aboriginals &amp; halfcastes”;</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>• Arnhemland Aboriginal Reserve gazetted, subsuming Oenpelli Reserve.</td>
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<td>1932</td>
<td>• “halfcaste boys” moved from Kahlin to Pine Creek (later on</td>
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<td>to Alice Springs).</td>
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<td>1933</td>
<td>• training of “half caste girls” as nursing aides in “Aboriginal hospitals” introduced.</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>• Methodist Yirrkala Mission opened.</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>• RC Mission opened at Port Keats (Wadeye).</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>• Dr. D. Thomson began study of Arnhemland tribes for C’wealth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>• first school in Tennant Creek opened.</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>• (New) Wolwonga Aboriginal Reserve opened.</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>• Aboriginals Ordinance amended to allow “certain halfcastes” exemption “from…</td>
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<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
<td>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS</td>
<td>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>• Jay Creek gazetted.</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>• RC Mission opened in Alice Springs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(constraining provisions).</td>
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<td>1938</td>
<td>• Umbakumba gazetted; • Bagot Aboriginal Reserve, Darwin, opened, Kahlin Compound transferred there.</td>
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<td>1938</td>
<td>Thomson's advice on “Policy in Native Affairs”, from study, 1935–37, tabled in Federal Parliament.</td>
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<td>1939</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Development of new policy on Aborigines (McEwan Minister for Interior) commenced</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Native Affairs Branch</td>
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<td>1940</td>
<td>• Govt.-subsidised “halfcaste homes” opened by missions on Melville Is. (RC) and Croker Is. (Methodist).</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>• first Native Affairs patrol officer, Gordon Sweeney, appointed</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>• Japanese hostilities looming, women &amp; children, mostly non-indigenous,</td>
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<td>1942</td>
<td>• formal education north of Tennant Creek ceased</td>
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<td>1942</td>
<td>• RC Mission, Alice Springs, moved to Arltunga</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>• Official records relocated from Darwin, NAB ones to Mataranka, 11/2; • Japanese first bombed Darwin, 17/2; • NT A HQ relocated to Alice Springs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>• SA curriculum adopted for NT urban (“community”) schools, staffed and supervised from SA; • Pine Creek School re-opened;</td>
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<td>1945</td>
<td></td>
<td>• July, NTA HQ returned to Darwin; • September, Japanese surrendered in Timor; • H.V. Johnston, Interior Minister,</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION Event</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS Event</td>
<td>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS Event</td>
<td>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION Event</td>
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<td>1946</td>
<td>• First school in Katherine opened.</td>
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<td>prepared for NT’s return to peace time operations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>• Darwin Primary School re-opened.</td>
<td>1946 • St. Mary's 1946 Hostel for remote locality Aboriginal children, Alice Springs</td>
<td>1947 • <em>Northern Territory</em> (Administration) Act amended to establish Legislative Council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td></td>
<td>1948 • Hooker Creek Reserve gazetted.</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>• C’ wealth Office of Education assumed responsibility for education</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>• first NT school library, Tennant Creek.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Reserve gazetted.</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Beswick Reserve gazetted.</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Benefits Trust Fund established, for royalties from economic activities on reserves.</td>
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<td>1953</td>
<td>Aboriginal Teaching Assistants were first employed in NT schools.</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>• LegCo passed <em>Welfare Ordinance</em> to introduce assimilation in NT, effective 1957;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>• pre-school for Aboriginal children, Amoonguna (ex Bungalow),</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>• Areyonga &amp; Papunyah, hitherto outposts of Hermannsburg Mission,</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>• RC Mission relocated from Arltunga to Santa Teresa.</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>• H.C. Giese appointed first Director of Welfare for NT.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>• policy on secondary education for “part-coloured children” in southern schools announced.</td>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>• relocation of Phillip Creek settlement to new site, Warrabri, commenced.</td>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>• Welfare Branch created under Welfare Ordinance (1953), with Giese Director;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>• Native and Historical Objects Preservation Ordinance passed.</td>
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<td>1956</td>
<td>• now 10 public &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>• move of settlement</td>
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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>• New Daly River</td>
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<td>1956</td>
<td>• course for NT patrol</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 church schools for 2,649 non-Aboriginal children, 14 special &amp; 14 mission schools for 1,633 Aboriginal children &amp; 115 non-Aboriginal children with Adelaide Correspondence School;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- education of Aborigines in NT transferred from COE to Welfare Branch; |
- secondary section of AS Higher Primary |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from Phillip Creek to Warrabri completed.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission (RC) opened.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>officers instituted at Australian School of Pacific Administration, Sydney;</td>
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</table>

- LegCo established select committee enquiry into all aspects of NT (Administration) Act. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMAL EDUCATION</th>
<th>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</th>
<th>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS</th>
<th>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>School completed;</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>• Darwin High School opened.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>• now 7 pre-schools, 2 in AS, 1 in Tennant Creek (Peko Mine), 4 in Darwin.</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>• Welfare DEOs, under SEO, appointed to Darwin &amp; Alice Springs;</td>
</tr>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>• Parap and Elliott schools reopened;</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>• school at Maningrida;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
<td>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS</td>
<td>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>• Government proposed subsidising churches &amp; mission authorities to build &amp; run hostels to accommodate young Aborigines accessing secondary education and training.</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>• consolidation and extension of Petermann, Haasts Bluff and South West Aboriginal Reserves gazetted.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>across the NT, other than indigenous communities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Misses Weier &amp; Murdoch seconded from Qld. for domestic science for senior female Aboriginal students &amp; home management training for women;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• pre-schools approved for inclusion in educational program for Aborigines;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>more representative &amp; give local members more control, with 17 members, 8 elected, with effect from 1960;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• NT Representation Act amended to extend voting rights of NT MHR;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Social Service benefits made available to Aborigines on same basis as others;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• school at Papunya opened.</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>• Warrabri Aboriginal Reserve gazetted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>• inception of teacher-training for Cadet Education Officers for Aboriginal schools in the NT at ASOPA;</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Administrator Council passed Administrator Council Ordinance.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Weier &amp; Murdoch's report laid basis for home management training in settlements</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>• report on educational needs in NT to</td>
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<td>1961</td>
<td>• new Retta Dixon Home opened;</td>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>• Bungalow transferred to Amoonguna</td>
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<td>1961</td>
<td>• Mataranka School opened.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>• pre-school1961 opened at Milingimbi.</td>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>• 4-year forestry program approved</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hasluck by Marsh, Pratt &amp; Griggs, findings not made public; • high school in AS and primary schools in Nightcliff, AS and AS East (Ross Park); • pre-school groups established at Papunyah &amp; Warrabri.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Hasluck set up Working Party (B Watts &amp; J</td>
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<td></td>
<td>establishment of NT A Education'Branch, to incorporate Aboriginal education to obviate objections to separation&amp; to make for eventual integration;</td>
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<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
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<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
<td><strong>Event</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>• Watts/Gallacher Report on formal education for Aborigines in NT submitted; • E.P. Miller seconded, devised basis of boys’ post-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>primary manual training program,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Claremont Teachers College, Perth, introduced training for NT Aboriginal schools;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Middle Point School opened,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Tambling, HT, Bagot School, retired;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• now had 21 NT A, 4 private &amp; 3 subsidised schools, on SA curr.;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>• transitional residential school in Darwin planned.</td>
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- Rapid Creek School Stage 1 opened;
- in Alice Springs, Hartley Street School closed, Traeger Park School opened.

- *NT (Administration) Act* amended to remove Administrator from Legislative Council, President to be elected from 8 elected & 3 non-official members;
- NAWU sought coverage of Aborigines & domestics of in NT Cattle Industry Award;
<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>• 4,142 Aboriginal children now attending some form D; Darwin High School Stage II, Rapid Creek Primary School Stage II and Alyangula, Stuart Park</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>• 29 welfare centres now caring for Aborigines, 16 government (NTA) and 13 mission.</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>• judgement that Aborigines be included in Cattle Industry Award, effective 12/68; 2 branches of Country Party established in NT; Gurindji employees walked off Wave Hill Station;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>• pre-school opened at Angurugu.</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>• Kormilda College opened (September).</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>• 1967 Referendum supported inclusion of Aboriginal natives in Census &amp; gave Commonwealth power to legislate on aboriginal matters.</td>
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</table>

FORMAL EDUCATION
- Schools and Katherine School of the Air opened, KSOA 1 pupil.

RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS

CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS

LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION
- • Menzies retired, succeeded by Harold Holt as PM;
  - • MHR Jock Nelson retired, succeeded by Country Party's Sam Calder.
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<th>Year</th>
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<td>1968</td>
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</table>

Aboriginal affairs;

- Gurindjis sought return of their land, in vain;

- Max Daniels first Aborigine to win Churchill Fellowship;

- Holt disappeared, succeeded by John Gorton as PM.

- Territories reverted to Interior, NT A transferred accordingly;

- *NT Representation Act*
<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Planning Committee</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>full cash economy</td>
<td>1969</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• amended to give NT MHR full voting rights;

• *NT (Administration) Act* amended to abolish non-official MLCs in LegCo, set elected MLCs at 11 & official MLCs at 6, & add Administrator's Council, 3 elected + 2 official MLCs;

• 1/12, Aborigines covered by Cattle Industry Award.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>• Nightcliff High School opened.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Theatre Foundation formed;</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Gibb Committee reported on conditions of Aborigines on pastoral properties, recommended they be given</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to recommend on development of Darwin Community College established.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• significant sites identified under Native and Historical Objects and Areas Preservation Ordinance, Gove Peninsula (3), near Oenpelli (2) &amp; near Wattie Creek (1).</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>• Aboriginal Education Section upgraded to Branch of Welfare Division, Gallacher Director; • John Steinle, Director [Community Schools]; • 269 apprentices training in NT; • transfer of responsibility for teachers in all NT public schools from SA to C'</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>• Yirrkala Aborigines tried, through NT Supreme Court, to prevent bauxite mining at Gove, in vain;</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>• Gorton replaced by W. McMahon as PM;</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>• NTA Welfare Branch upgraded to Division.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>• 65 schools for Aborigines (56 Welfare, 9 missions), 6,181 pupils, 306 teachers; • field inspectors appointed, Ted Robertson (Darwin), Bill McGrath (Katherine), Graham Benjamin (Tennant Creek) &amp; Earl Watter (Alice Springs), &amp; functional inspectors Don Williams</td>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1972 • Arnhem Land Missions Yirrkala, Galiwin’ku, Milingimbi, Minjilang and Goulburn Island granted fully-elected councils, with measure of local government.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>• Department of Northern Territory replaced NT A; • 12/72, E.G. Whitlam-led Labor elected to federal office.</td>
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<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>K. Beazley (snr.)</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minister for Education; • Advisory Group on bilingual education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>established.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 22 818 students in 144 schools;²</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>• Commonwealth Teaching Service established to supply teachers for Australia's Territories;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• pre-schools integrated with primary schools in urban centres;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Yirara College opened;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Darwin Community College</em> Ordinance, to establish DCC, endorsed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>• Commonwealth fully</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
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<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
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</table>
|  | responsible for public education in NT;  
• Commonwealth assumed full financial responsibility for tertiary education institutions;  
• ML A E.J. Andrew given liaison responsibility for education in NT;  
• 12/74, Beare transferred to ACT Schools Authority as CEO. |  |  |  | Territories) Act gave NT 2 senators in Federal Parliament;  
• NT Country Party became Country Liberal Party;  
• Joint Committee on NT reported on constitutional development;  
• Justice Woodward presented report on Aboriginal land rights to Government;  
• fully elected |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>• 1/75, Gallacher a/Director, NT Division, Commonwealth Education; • 10/75, J.H. Eedle commenced as director, Gallacher reverted to Asst. Director.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>• Belyuen gazetted a township; • Gurindjis given control of pastoral lease of 1,250 sq. miles, part of Vestey-owned Wave Hill.</td>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>• B. Kilgariff (CLP) &amp; E. Robertson (ALP) elected to Federal Senate; • est. 33,000 moved to Darwin, post-cyclone, not all</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>• 115 schools catering for 24,839 students;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 12/76 MLA M.B Perron given education liaison responsibility;</td>
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- East Timor refugees began to arrive;
- Whitlam Government dismissed, J.M. Fraser-led Coalition appointed caretaker, then elected.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>• 9/77, J.M. Robertson appointed Executive MLA for Education within Community &amp; Social Development portfolio.</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>• Lajamanu and Batchelor were gazetted townships.</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>• transfer of functions from Canberra to NT, preparatory to Self-Government.</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>• C'wealth proclaimed Ayers Rock-Mt. Olga area Uluru National Park; • P.A.E. Everingham elected</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>• 7/78, Robertson appointed Minister for Education.</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>• under Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act (1976–78), land titles for</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>• Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act was passed;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Amoonguna, Arnhemland (incl. off-shore islands), Bathurst Is., Beswick,</td>
<td></td>
<td>• NT became self-governing, assuming most state-type functions, with</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Daly River, Delissaville, Hooker Creek, Lake Mackay, Larrakeah,</td>
<td></td>
<td>health and education notable exceptions, Everingham Chief Minister</td>
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<td>Melville Is.,</td>
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Majority Leader and Chief Secretary in NT elections (CLP 12, ALP 6 and Ind. 1).
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<td></td>
<td>Petermann, Santa Teresa, Wagait, Warrabri, Woolwonga and Yuendumu declared.</td>
<td>of NT Government.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>• 1/7/79, NT Division of C'wealth Department of Education became NTDE as NTG took responsibility for education, Robertson Minister &amp; Eedle Secretary; • NT AECG, Feippi, established,</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>• Darwin became a Capital City, Mayor E. Stack Lord Mayor; • NTG accepted responsibility for health &amp; control of Supreme Court.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>chair Bill Baud;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CTS remained teachers' employer;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• area school at Yirrkala opened.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>• <em>University (Interim Arrangements)</em> Act was passed, first step</td>
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<td></td>
<td>towards Northern Territory University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>• enrolments 30,554</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>• Ti Tree gazetted a township.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>• LA terms extended to 4 years;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• LA elections returned Everingham-led CLP (11 CLP, 7 ALP, 1 Ind);</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Aboriginal Development Commission established.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• University (Interim Arrangements) Act was passed, first step</td>
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<td></td>
<td>towards Northern Territory University.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS**

- University (Interim Arrangements) Act was passed, first step towards Northern Territory University.

**CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS**

- Aboriginal Development Commission established.

**LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

- University (Interim Arrangements) Act was passed, first step towards Northern Territory University.
- LA terms extended to 4 years;
- LA elections returned Everingham-led CLP (11 CLP, 7 ALP, 1 Ind);
- Aboriginal Development Commission established.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMAL EDUCATION</th>
<th>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</th>
<th>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS</th>
<th>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>[non-government 4 335, government (bush) 4 937, government (urban) 20 282];</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NT Teaching Service, N. Stewart Commissioner, replaced CTS as teachers' employer,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 6/81, S. Saville appointed Secretary, NTDE, Eedle appointed NTU Planning Vice-Chancellor;</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
<td>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS</td>
<td>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>• Professional Services Branch of NTDE moved to Rapid Creek.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>4/82, G.J. Spring appointed Secretary, NTDE;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>• Tennant Creek High School opened;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>• Yulara School opened.;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>• 12/82, Perron appointed Minister for Education.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>3/83, NT education policy statement, NORTHERN</td>
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<td>1983</td>
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<td>1983</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>• LA elections held early, Everingham led CLP</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>• 5/86, D.W. Manzie appointed Minister for Education; • Cameron/Thiele Report, <em>Further Education Beyond Year 7 in Aboriginal Communities: A Planning Proposal</em>.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>• 12/87, R.A.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Hanrahan appointed Minister for Education;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>• 5/88, T. Harris appointed Minister for Education;</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>• S.L. Stone appointed Minister for Education, Arts, Employment &amp; Training; Policy (AEP).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>• plans for implementation of the AEP in the NT, National Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander Education Policy in the Northern Territory; • Isaac Brown elected chair of Feppi;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>• NT BoS assessment policy statement, <em>Common Assessment Statement</em>,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 9/92, M. Fong appointed Secretary, NTDE;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 12/92, F.A. Finch appointed Minister for Education &amp; Training &amp; Public Employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>• NT gifted education policy statement, <em>Revised Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>• NT special education policy statement, <em>Special Education Policy: Provision for Students with Disabilities in Northern Territory Schools;</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NT parents in education policy statement, <em>Partners in Education – Parent Policy,</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• evaluation of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1995 | • redirection of AEP with *A National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* 1996–2002,  
• Feppi was renamed the NT Aboriginal Education Consultative Committee (AECG);  
• Lana Quail elected chair of Feppi. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>• NT PAC Report on Provision of School Education Services for Remote Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>• Howard Coalition elected to Federal Government;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Review of Central and Regional Offices of NTDE;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• High Court Wik judgement found pastoral leases did not necessarily extinguish native title;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 6/96, P. Adamson appointed Minister for Education &amp; Training;</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NT revised</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7/95, S.P. Hatton appointed Minister for Education;</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
<td>CHURCH-SPONSORED MISSIONS</td>
<td>LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>special education policy statement, <em>Revised Special Education Policy and Guidelines – Provision for Students with Disabilities and Impairments in Northern Territory Schools</em>;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>• inception of Cooperative Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The NT AECG was renamed the Indigenous Education Council of the NT (IECNT).</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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| 1998 | • NT assessment policy statement, *Common Assessment and Reporting Statement, Preschool to Senior Secondary.*
|      | • W. Czernezkyj appointed Secretary, NTDE; |

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>• Howard Coalition re-elected to Federal office;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• NTG's comprehensive policy, <em>Planning for growth.</em></td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1998</td>
<td>Education Review and policy, Schools... Our Focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Implementation of Schools... Our Focus, with Shaping Territory Education, include. “Consolidate Aboriginal program delivery” &amp; “Phase out the Bilingual language program”;</td>
</tr>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>NTG’s growth policy statement, The Northern Territory: Foundations for our Future;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal &amp; Tropical Health Strategic Plan 1999–2004.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>RESERVES AND SETTLEMENTS</td>
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<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
<td><strong>Event</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>students in the NT, <em>a Shaping Territory Education initiative</em>, report in <em>Learning lessons</em>;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• P. Plummer appointed</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>S. Stirling appointed Martin Labor Minister for Employment, Education</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- “Northern Territory Department of Education Plan on a Page” introduced;

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>16/8/01 C. Martin-led Labor elected to office in NT.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

They comprised 4 high schools (3 107 students), 4 area schools (2 017 students), 28 primary schools (8 298 students), 30 pre-schools (1 639 children), 7 special (special education) schools (178 students), 2 residential colleges (161 Aboriginal students), 26 public Aboriginal community schools (3 608 students), 27 public pastoral property schools (722 Aboriginal students), 7 church schools (1 589 students) and 8 mission schools (1 499 Aboriginal students).
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Director, Aboriginal Education Programs Management Unit, 14 September 1990. “Implementation of AEP Monitoring Arrangements”, to Secretary, NTDE. Darwin, NT. NTDE, NTG.

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Benjamin, Graham: Welfare teacher from late 1950s, founding principal of Kormilda College, continuous service with Commonwealth Education and NTDE, Director (Equal Opportunities) at retirement in late 1990s. Interview in Kunda Park, Qld., April 2004.

Bolton, Geoffrey: historian, at 16 April 2002 seminar on research on Sir Paul Hasluck, at the Northern Territory University, Darwin, NT.


Carpenter, Gavin: NT bank staff, ex SA, then businessman, from 1960s, in Tennant Creek from approx. 1973. Interview, Tennant Creek, November 2002.

Carpenter, Joan: NTDE/Department of Employment, Education and Training Home Liaison Officer, Tennant Creek, from late 1970s to retirement in 2004. Interview, Tennant Creek, November 2002.


Coutts, Noel: Welfare teacher from mid-1960s, continuous service with Commonwealth Education and NTDE with particular focus on formal education for Indigenous Territorians


Hughes, Professor Paul AM, FACE: Indigenous teacher in SA, prominent in policy development and associated research in education for Indigenous Australians, at time of interview, Director, Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research, The Flinders University of South Australia, subsequently Chair of Executive of College of Indigenous Education and Research, University of South Australia, first Indigenous Australian to earn a professorship. Interview in Darwin, November 2001, and Australian College of Education NT-sponsored public presentation, “Reflections on Indigenous Education”.


Jones, Peter J.: Welfare teacher from early 1970s, NTDE advisory and Principal Education Officer rôles in bilingual education, a/Director (Schools Policy Branch), late 1990s, transferred to Department of Industries and Business, 2000. Interview in Darwin, November, 2001.

McCarthy, Dawn: adult education, training and enterprise support in Barkly Region from late 1980s, manager of an adult training and resource centre in Tennant Creek at time of interview. Interview in Tennant Creek, November, 2002.

McCarthy, Gerry: enterprising NTDE/Department of Employment, Education and Training bush school teacher/principal in Barkly Region from early 1980s, Education Officer, Aboriginal Hearing Program, at time of interview. Interview in Tennant Creek, November, 2002.


McGill, Graham: NTDE Principal Education Adviser (Bilingual Education), Principal, Yirara College, at resignation, early 1990s. Telephone conversation and e-mail exchanges, Darwin-Newcastle, NSW, 2002.


Ramsey, Dr. Gregor: SA science teacher at Darwin High School early in career, senior roles and significant contributions in TAFE and tertiary education, in particular in relation to teacher training, in SA, NSW and nationally, at time of interview inter alia Project Director, Desert Peoples Centre, based at Centre for Appropriate Technology, Alice Springs, led review of
secondary education in the NT in 2003 and was appointed Interim Chair, National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership in 2004. Interview in Alice Springs, November, 2002.


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