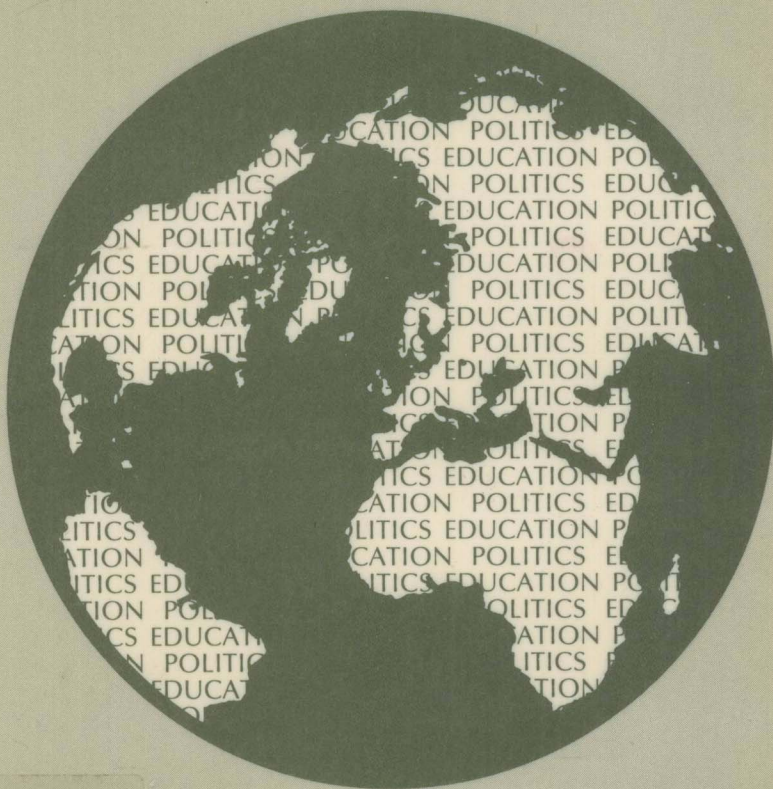


# POLITICS & EDUCATION

Cases From Eleven Nations

Edited by  
**R Murray Thomas**



**Pergamon Press**

# Politics and Education

*Cases from eleven nations*

Edited by

R. MURRAY THOMAS



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## **Politics and Education**

*Cases from eleven nations*



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## PREFACE

*Politics and Education: Cases from 11 Nations* is a product of the Comparative and International Education Society's western regional conference held at the University of California, Santa Barbara, at the close of 1981.

When the conference participants first arrived, they were given copies of the initial 12 chapters of this book so they might review the contents of the chapters in at least a cursory manner before the conference sessions began the following day.

The conference sessions then consisted of group discussions conducted in four parallel groups, each composed of from 15 to 20 discussants. The purpose of this format was to foster more active participation on the part of those attending the conference than would be possible if the authors read their chapters aloud to the audience. The group sessions were arranged so that 30 minutes was dedicated to each of the 11 nations. The content of the sessions was determined chiefly by preplanned questions that each discussion leader had posed about the politics-education issues in the chapter for the nation discussed during that 30 minutes.

Such a conference format proved so satisfactory that the discussion-question feature has been retained in this published version of the conference papers. At several points within each of the country chapters, 2-12, discussion questions have been inserted. As a consequence, readers have the option of either (1) offering answers to the questions in written or group-discussion form or (2) ignoring the questions, passing over them in order to follow the narrative without interruption.

### *The Selection of Authors*

A question about the selection of authors that was asked during the conference may well occur to readers as well. Hence, a few words of explanation appears to be in order. The question was: "Why are so many of the chapters written by people who are not citizens of the nations about which they have written?" The answer is three-fold.

First, the authors were all recruited from the western regional constituency of the Comparative and International Education Society, which is a constituency made up chiefly of American citizens.

Second, many of the political-educational issues treated in the chapters reveal such sensitive political matters that citizens of certain nations could not write such a frank chapter and then expect to be welcomed home again.

Therefore, the "native sons" of such countries currently residing in the western region passed up the opportunity to write analyses of politics and education in their home lands, since to do so would have jeopardized their future careers at home. In these cases, only a foreigner could safely write such things.

Third, all of the foreign authors who did contribute to this volume have had considerable experience within the countries they have written about. In addition, all are well versed in both the popular and scholarly literature treating their nation's political and educational affairs. As a result, both the foreign and indigenous authors have been able to bring a substantial measure of expertise to their assignment.

### *The Comparative Aspect*

A second question asked at the conference may also occur to readers: "Since the conference was sponsored by a comparative-education society, is not the comparative aspect absent, since each of the 11 country chapters is solely an analysis of one nation?" True, each country chapter does stand on its own and makes no reference to any of the rest. However, there are three ways that the volume provides the comparative aspect.

In the first place, the initial chapter serves as a general mapping of the territory of politics and education. Then each of the 11 country chapters draws on some elements of this opening map or model as the foci for discussion. In the prologue that opens each chapter, the link between the initial chapter and that country chapter is usually mentioned, thus providing readers with a basis for comparing the country chapter's contents with the model in Chapter 1.

A second comparative aspect is furnished by the clustering of country chapters into three main groups, with several nations included in each cluster. A general theme for each of the three groups provides a dimension along which the nations within the group can be compared. The theme for Part I is "educational strategies to achieve political ends". The theme for Part II is "varied patterns of educational accommodation to majority-minority group relations." The theme for Part III is "multiple political-group influences on educational decision-making."

However, the most prominent comparative aspect of the book is found in the final chapter which consists of lessons the author has derived from a comparative analysis of the preceding country chapters. When readers have completed the first 12 chapters, they should be well prepared to follow the author's line of argument and to match their own interpretations against the ones he has extracted from the 11 national cases.



*The Backgrounds of the Authors*

We close our prefatory comments with a brief description of the professional affiliation and pertinent background experience of each author, with the authors listed in the order in which their papers appear following the opening chapter.

**WEST GERMANY**—Hans N. Weiler is a professor of education and political science at Stanford University and former director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning in Paris. Dr. Weiler has published *Education and Politics in Nigeria* and *Educational Planning and Social Change* as well as numerous articles on education and political development.

**ZAIRE**—James S. Coleman is chairman of the Council on International and Comparative Studies and a professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles. Two years after publishing his widely used volume *Education and Political Development* (1965), Dr. Coleman spent more than a decade as the Rockefeller Foundation representative in East Africa (1967–1974) and Zaire (1972–1978). Dr. Coleman's co-author is Ndolamb Ngokwey, a Zairian with a licence from the National University of Zaire and currently a doctoral candidate in anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles. Mr. Ngokwey's publications have focused on religious movements in Central Africa and include "Imanya: un mouvement antisorcellerie chez les Bashilele" in *Cahiers Zairois d'Etudes Politiques et Sociales* (1974) and "Possession: analyse des somatisations du sacré chez les Bashilele du Kasai" in *Cahiers des Religions Africaines* (1980).

**NICARAGUA**—Richard J. Kraft, professor of education and chairman of the Division of Social and Multicultural Foundations at the University of Colorado in Boulder, has served as an educational consultant in Nicaragua and El Salvador, as director of an educational program in Mexico and as a Fulbright scholar in Portugal, as well as an invited scholar to mainland China. His publications include *Education in Nicaragua* (1972) and *Nicaragua: The Values, Attitudes, and Beliefs of Its Educated Youth* (1980).

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**—Nathan Kravetz, professor of education and former dean at California State College in San Bernardino, has served as a senior staff officer in UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning, as a technical director for US-AID in Peru and as a Fulbright scholar in Argentina. He has published *The Evaluation of Educational System Outputs* (1972) and *Education of Ethnic and National Minorities in the USSR* (1979).

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**—John N. Hawkins is vice-chairman of the Department of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles. His publications include "Educational Transfers in the People's Republic of



China' in the *Comparative Education Review* (June 1981) and the mainland-China chapter in *Schooling in East Asia* (1983).

**MALAYSIA**—R. Murray Thomas, head of the program in international education at the University of California in Santa Barbara, has served as a university professor and educational consultant in Southeast Asia for the past 25 years. He wrote the chapter on education in *Malaysian Studies: Present Knowledge and Research Trends* (1979) and is co-author of *Schooling in the ASEAN Region* (1980) and *Political Style and Education Law in Indonesia* (1980).

**JAMAICA**—John J. Cogan is a professor of education at the University of Minnesota and a widely published author of articles on global education. His recent publications range from a coauthored volume on educational foundations to articles on "China's 'Fifth' Modernization: Education" and "Decision-Making in the U.S. and Japan."

**ISRAEL**—Naftaly S. Glasman is dean of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of works on the evaluation of educational programs and on the politics and economics of education, particularly as related to Middle-Eastern nations. Dr. Glasman's book on *Improving Educational Administration in Israel* was published in 1977.

**GREAT BRITAIN**—Susanne M. Shafer is a professor of education at Arizona State University and a past president of the Comparative and International Education Society. Dr. Shafer spent the major part of 1980 as a visiting scholar at Cambridge University. She wrote the chapter on "Social Studies in Other Nations" for the 1981 *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*.

**CANADA**—David L. Stoloff earned a doctorate in comparative and international education at the University of California, Los Angeles. Earlier he served as an educational researcher at Concordia University in Montreal (1976–1977) and has published articles on language policy in Quebec.

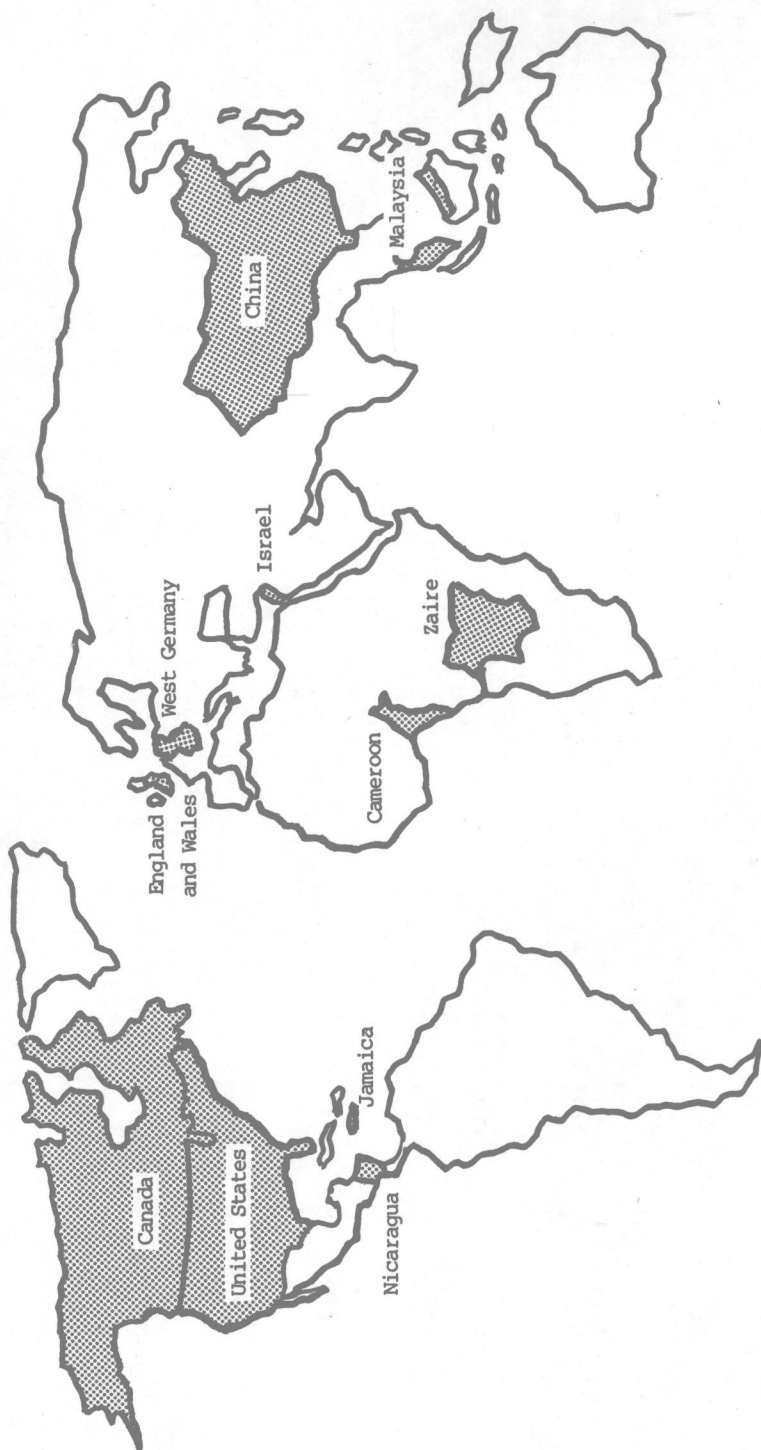
**CAMEROON**—William M. Rideout, Jr., is a professor of education at the University of Southern California and business manager for the Comparative and International Education Society. He has served extensively as an educational consultant, particularly in West Africa, and has written widely about development and education.

**LESSONS FROM THE COUNTRY CASES**—Laurence Iannaccone, professor of education at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is a recognized authority on the interaction of politics and education. He is the coauthor of *The Politics of Education* (1974), was recently the editor of the American Educational Research Association's *Review of Educational Research*, and was the 1981 recipient of the Professor-of-the-Year Award from the American Association of School Administrators.

As a closing acknowledgment, I wish to express appreciation for Knut Forfang's helpful comments about the first version of Chapter 1 and for Lorraine Del Duca's skillfully typing the final version of selected chapters.

*University of California, Santa Barbara*

R. Murray Thomas



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## CHAPTER 1

# **The Symbiotic Linking of Politics and Education**

R. MURRAY THOMAS

POLITICS and Education live in a symbiotic relationship, with each influencing the fate of the other. The nature of this politics–education interaction can vary greatly from case to case, depending on the circumstances involved. The range of such variations can be suggested briefly by the following examples.

In some nations, after students are taught patriotism in school, they willingly join the nation's armed forces to help protect their country's political system against intrusions by activists from competing political systems. In contrast, students in other nations under different circumstances not only avoid protecting their government but they work to overthrow it, motivated by a revolutionary spirit engendered during their studies at school.

Different still is the politics–education interaction which finds one region of a country enjoying superior educational opportunities—more and better school facilities, more and better teachers—because key political leaders located in the nation's capital originally came from that particular region and consistently favor its requests for educational support. Many youths of the region now find that the superior educational facilities fit them well for influential positions in the civil service. Consequently, the percentage of government officials from that region continues to increase and the bias of the government in favor of the region continues to grow.

A third version of political–educational symbiosis results when members of the dominant religious sect in a country pass a law requiring religious instruction in the nation's schools. Thereafter, the sect can expect to gain superior opportunities to propagate its beliefs, thus further strengthening its position as the nation's dominant faith.

In ways such as these and many others, politics and education affect each other. The aim of this book is to explore in some detail a variety of facets of such politics–education relationships and to illustrate the facets with cases from 11 nations. The role of Chapter 1 is to identify the principal facets that will be featured in subsequent country chapters.

The book might be labeled a “participatory text” since it is designed to invite the active participation of readers in solving problems of the politics–education interactions depicted throughout the volume. This invitation



takes the form of questions and issues posed at several points in the cases that compose the 11 country chapters. Such a format, with its questions about critical issues, is directed at the needs of discussion groups that seek to grapple with strategies for resolving conflicts in the realm of education and politics.

#### MEANINGS ASSIGNED TO "EDUCATION" AND TO "POLITICS"

Since not everyone uses the terms *education* or *politics* with the same meanings, it is useful at the outset to identify the meanings assigned to them throughout this book.

In its broadest sense the concept *education* can be equated with that of learning. And learning can be defined as "changes in mental processes and in overt behavior as a result of a person's experiences." But for the purpose of this volume, education is more properly defined in a narrower manner. We will use *education* to refer only to "what goes on in a society's institutions of systematic, planned learning." Such a definition therefore eliminates from consideration such incidental or informal learning as that acquired in people's daily social interaction. It eliminates as well learning by means of such media as the press and recreational radio and television. So *education* in these pages will concern only formal schools and systematic non-formal instructional programs. Our interest in such institutions will center particularly on their philosophical foundations, their goals, their curricula and instructional techniques, and the people associated with them as staff members and students (see Coleman, 1965: 13-18).

The term *politics*, like education, can be defined various ways and with either broad or narrow meanings. In one broad sense, *politics* can mean "the process of exercising power," with *power* intended to mean "the wielding of influence over people's opinions and behavior." In such a sense, the relationship between husband and wife, teacher and pupil, one football team and another, management and labor, or between any two nations can be labeled "political." A closely related, more formal definition proposes that "politics is the set of interactions that influence and shape the authoritative allocation of values." However, such broad definitions are too general for the purposes of this book. A narrower meaning will prove more useful.

In the following chapters we use the term *politics* to describe "efforts exerted by groups to promote their beliefs or welfare in relation to other groups." Political action thus involves attempts of groups to exercise power over others, with the use of political strategies ranging from gentle persuasion and logical reasoning through bribery and intimidation to physical violence.

In specifying groups rather than individuals as the units of political behavior, we are not intending to ignore the individual and his actions. Rather, our purpose is to emphasize that individuals ally themselves with groups to attain the ends they desire. The individual uses the group as the

instrument for exerting power. And the group, in turn, uses individuals as its tools or agents to promote group goals.

In seeking to identify groups and analyze their activities, we find it convenient to divide groups into two sorts—those in power and those out of power. At a national or regional level this division means that there are political activists currently operating the government, while at the same time other activists who do not operate the government serve as opponents and critics of those in official power. It is apparent, however, that the distinction between those in power and those out of power is often not sharp or absolute. Frequently the distinction is one of degree of control. For instance, an elected legislative body may be composed of members from two competing parties. And the percentage of members of the legislature from each party helps determine the degree of power each party can wield. Obviously, a party that controls 85 percent of the legislators is more in power than one which controls only 52 percent. Likewise, the extent to which a particular group, such as a party, is in power depends also on how thoroughly members of the government's permanent civil service corps are in sympathy with the current leaders and their policies. And more complicated still is a political environment in which not two but several groups compete and, of necessity, cooperate in wielding power.

While our illustrations so far have referred to politics on a *macro* level—national or regional politics—the principles discussed are also applicable to micro-politics, those found within a single school or within a section of town. Neighbors who form groups to support or to oppose the busing of children are as much political activists as are legislators who require the singing of the national anthem in all schools at the opening of the school day.

As the foregoing discussion is intended to suggest, one useful perspective to adopt in analyzing relationships between politics and education is defined by the three-part question: "Who is in power, to what degree and with what effect?" The reciprocal of this question is also important: "Who is out of power, to what degree and with what effect?" These two serve as key questions in the separate country analyses offered in Chapters 2–12.

Before moving ahead to other matters, we can note a further aspect of our earlier definition of politics ("efforts exerted by groups to promote their beliefs or welfare in relation to other groups"). We have mentioned both *beliefs* and *welfare* in order to recognize that people's political behavior is not always motivated by their immediate self-interest or personal welfare in terms of increased wealth, prestige, or official position. Sometimes political behavior is motivated chiefly by people's ideals. A desire to "do the right thing" in terms of a philosophical or religious commitment can influence them to act in ways that do not enhance their material well-being. Indeed, material welfare may be sacrificed in favor of a belief. However, in many cases political action does seem to be founded more on motives of material gain—of wealth, fame, and power.