CHAPTER 3

NICO CLOETE

POLICY EXPECTATIONS

Higher education in South Africa in the post-1994 period is woven into the bargain struck by President De Klerk and prisoner Mandela – both in terms of the baggage it carried and the promises it offered. The 'miracle' transition put enormous pressure on supporters of the new government, in all sectors, not to fail Mandela, arguably the last saint of the 20th century.

The post-1994 period saw unprecedented changes in South African higher education. The first two years were dominated by a massive, participatory drive towards policy formulation that culminated in a report from the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in 1996. The next phase converted the Commission's report into a White Paper (Department of Education, 1997) and a new Higher Education Act, promulgated in 1997. During 1997 the newly constituted higher education division within the new unified Department of Education started the implementation process. In 2000 Kader Asmal, the second education minister to be appointed under the democratic dispensation, started a process of reassessing whether the system was putting South Africa 'on the road to the 21st century'.[1] While the phase from 1994 to 1999 was mainly about putting a new policy and legislative framework in place, the post-1999 phase was declared to be a period of implementation (Department of Education, 2000).

This chapter describes some of the assumptions, the policy processes and the main recommendations of the government-driven approach to transformation.

1. THE APPROACH TO TRANSFORMATION[2]

When the new government came to power in 1994 on the basis of an 'implicit bargain' (Gelb, 2001) reached between the National Party and the liberation movement led by the African National Congress (ANC), there was agreement in the government of national unity that higher education was in need of transformation.

The concept of 'transformation' was a compromise between 'revolution' and 'reform' – 'revolution' being a victory that only the most ardent liberation movement supporters claimed for 1994, and 'reform' being the outcome which many people suspected was most likely to occur, but dared not admit in public. Apartheid had been driven through one of the most formidable social engineering exercises ever undertaken by a government anywhere in the world, and the common sense view amongst activists and academics was that the new government would have to undo what the previous government had done.

N. Cloete et al. (eds.), Transformation in Higher Education, 53-65.

The only question was how direct state steering would be. A paper written in 1994 by three participants in the NCHE process (published in 1996), argued that all over the world new relations between the state and civil society were emerging which rendered old conceptions of the dichotomy between self- regulation and state intervention obsolete (Moja, Muller & Cloete, 1996). The authors noted the emergence, worldwide, of more co-operative, interactive and functionally interdependent forms of state/civil society regulation. In their discussion on state/higher education relationships, they introduced three ideal types of state regulation:

- *Model one: State control.* This is premised on effective and systematic state administration of higher education and training, executed by a professional and competent civil service – the 'continental model' characteristic of Western Europe in the 20th century.
- *Model two: State supervision.* This model is founded on less centrist forms of control in higher education and sees the locus of power shifting from 'centralised control' to 'steering'. In this model, governments provide the broad regulatory framework within which the administrations of higher education institutions are expected to produce the results which governments desire. It is a 'leaner' state because fewer civil servants are required in the central state apparatuses. It is also 'smarter' because state action is less focussed on actual administration and concentrates more on defining the parameters of 'steering'.
- *Model three: State interference.* This is based on control in higher education that is neither systematic (model one) nor 'regulation through steering' (model two), but which involves arbitrary forms of crisis intervention. These interventions are 'either sporadic, or they become an attempt to control through a fairly narrow and rather crude set of measures aimed at establishing quiescence' (Moja, Muller & Cloete, 1996). Key characteristics here would include a weak education ministry and education department, and a poorly trained bureaucracy unable to implement higher education policy. Also characteristic, unlike the first model cited above, is the conflation of the political (managing institutional crises) with the professional (an independent civil service, freed from political interference, able to implement policy). The bureaucracy is politicised to the detriment of effective administration. The authors refer here to the experiences of higher education and training in certain post-independent African countries in the 1980s and 1990s (Moja, Muller & Cloete, 1996).

According to Kraak (2001) it is clear that the state supervision model was highly influential within the National Commission for Higher Education and underpinned the 1997 White Paper. The Commission adopted the concept of 'co-operative governance' between the state and civil society, where the two players clearly 'find themselves in a relationship of functional interdependence'. A relationship of this kind 'signals the necessity of a shift away from the traditional opposition between state and civil society to negotiated co-operation arrangements' (NCHE, 1996:57–60). In developing a co-operative governance relationship, however, the Commission warned that the 'state' must occupy the leadership role in this partnership:

> A shift in the overall direction of society requires leadership by the government, the only actor with powers of political co-ordination in society. This means there is always a possible tension between central government trying to assert authority directly to implement change, and the more indirect regulation and steering that is the trademark of co-operative governance. … Having said that, it should at the same time be emphasised that the shift to co-operative governance arrangements is not unique to South Africa. It is an international trend that the relationship between government and civil society is being redefined. Government is increasingly becoming a partner, albeit a very powerful one, which, through regulation arrangements, involves a range of other institutions, bodies and agencies in governing. This shift, from government from the centre to government becoming a powerful partner in a multitude of governing arrangements, is part of a movement from government to governance, a process of redefining and reconfiguring the state. (NCHE, 1996:57–60)

Co-operative governance has implications for relations between the state and higher education institutions. It seeks to mediate the apparent opposition between state intervention and institutional autonomy. The directive role of the state is reconceived as a steering and co-ordinating role. Institutional autonomy is to be exercised within the limits of accountability. A co-operative relationship between the state and higher education institutions should reconcile the self-regulation of institutions with the decision-making of central authorities. The viability of such a reconciliation depends to a significant degree upon the success of a proposed intermediary body with delegated powers, and of proposed structures for consultation and negotiation. The state uses financial incentives and other steering mechanisms as opposed to commandist measures of control and top-down prescriptions (Kraak, 2001).

Co-operation also has implications for relations between higher education and the organs of civil society. It requires the establishment of new linkages and partnerships between higher education institutions and commercial enterprises, parastatals, research bodies and non-governmental organisations, nationally as well as regionally. In the process, local stakeholders acquire a greater interest in participating in the governance of higher education institutions (Kraak, 2001).

The White Paper for higher education transformation (Department of Education, 1997) embraced the notion of co-operative governance at the heart of which was the idea of a single nationally co-ordinated system of higher education that would be achieved through state co-ordination. The government would strategically 'steer' the system via a regulatory framework of financial incentives, reporting and monitoring requirements (particularly with regard to key performance indicators) and a system of programme approval. In line with the constitutional notion of co-operative governance, the central state's role would be to manage the system in co-operation with other role players and not through prescriptive fiat or other interventionist mechanisms. The state would govern through a 'softer' regulatory framework, which sought to 'steer' the system in three important ways:

- *Planning* would be used to encourage institutions to outline a distinctive mission, mix of programmes, enrolment targets and overall institutional plan. The process would involve institutions developing three-year rolling plans, while the government would develop a national plan for higher education.

- *Financial incentives* would encourage institutions to reorientate provision to address national, regional and local education and training needs and priorities.
- *Reporting requirements* would be developed, using performance indicators dedicated to measure, in the spirit of greater institutional accountability, the extent to which the institutional plan and national priorities were being met. In so doing, these performance indicators would be highly influential in shaping the allocation of the next cycle of financial awards.

Despite the model of co-operative governance which assumes a certain 'dialogical' notion of change, the assumption in the policy documents was quite uni-directional: from centre to periphery, or from top to bottom.

2. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

2.1. From protest to policy proposals

In the political turmoil following the 1948 assumption of power by the apartheid regime and its introduction of separate systems of education, higher education experienced sporadic disruptions and protests. Some 40 years later, from the middle of the 1980s to 1993, higher education protests and disturbances were virtually a weekly occurrence as campuses became 'sites of struggle' for the various anti-apartheid organisations. In certain cases the resistance was spontaneous, but mostly it was organised by one of the many anti-apartheid education organisations active on the campuses. The most prominent ones were the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC), the Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (Udusa), and the National Union of Health and Allied workers (Nehawu). Most of the opposition was initiated by the national student organisations such as the National Union of South African Students (Nusas – the second oldest student body in the world), the South African Student Organisation (Saso), the South African National Student Congress (Sansco) and the South African Students Congress (Sasco).

The manifestation of campus protests was not uniform across the system. The Afrikaans-medium institutions, with their student bodies being almost exclusively white, experienced no serious disruptions while the University of Cape Town experienced only one violent protest and the institution was never closed. At the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, with many black students living close by, in Soweto, students and a minority of staff regularly fought battles with the police; one academic, Professor David Webster, was assassinated off-campus by the security police. A number of academics and large numbers of students from the historically white English-medium institutions were detained without trial or charged, mainly under the Suppression of Communism Act.

The real sites of struggle, however, were the historically black universities. At many of these institutions police and even the army fought pitched battles with students and some staff. Hardly a year went by without at least a few of these institutions being closed for

months at a time. Thousands of students never completed their studies, either dropping out because study conditions were impossible, or going into political exile, or joining the underground within South Africa. Although no students were killed on campus, thousands still bear the physical and emotional scars of beatings and teargassing, and a number paid the ultimate penalty for political struggles that started on the campuses. Steve Biko and Onkgopotse Tiro (Nkondo, 1976) are perhaps the best known amongst those for whom a university education led to sacrificing their lives for their beliefs. Whilst the black universities had been established mainly to provide separate training for black teachers and homeland bureaucrats (Habib, 2001), these institutions became major sites for opposition to the government. This was perhaps the first major instance in South Africa of a higher education policy having serious unintended consequences.

Following the 1994 election, President Mandela promulgated the National Commission on Higher Education to 'preserve what is valuable and to address what is defective and requires transformation' (1996:1). The appointment of a commission was not unexpected; it was a continuation of a policy formulation process that started in the late 1980s. During 1989 progressive academics who were involved in critiques of apartheid education and in endless street demonstrations, were informed by leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF) – the internal mass movement – and the National Education Co-ordinating Committee that secret talks between the National Party and the ANC leadership had started. For intellectuals this meant a shift from critique to policy deliberation, while continuing to march against apartheid in the streets. The shift from a role in the struggle as critics of apartheid education to developing policy for the new government, meaning a change from opposition to governing, has been described in number of publications (Muller & Cloete, 1987). (For a much more detailed history of higher education policy development, see www.chet.org.za/papers.asp.)

The first major policy document that formed the basis for the development of much higher education policy during the 1990s was the Post-Secondary Education report of the National Education Policy Investigation (Nepi, 1992). This 'peoples education' project put together education activists and trainee policy experts in a participatory, consultative and argumentative process. The project understood that this was just the first stab at policy-making and therefore focussed more on frameworks and options than actual policy proposals. (For a review of the National Education Policy Investigation see Muller, 2000.)

Following the Nepi exercise, the Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (Udusa) established a policy forum to enable the organisation and its member institutions to participate in the debates about restructuring higher education. This group produced a document that was widely discussed in higher education institutions and was often called the 'red book' – both a reference to the colour of the cover and to what many saw as its leftist leanings. It was based on five principles: non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy, redress and a unitary system. The new framework for higher education embodied all these in 'four pillars' which are still the central frames for higher education policy: equity, democracy, effectiveness and development (Udusa, 1994).

Referring to the Nepi Report and the work of the late Harold Wolpe, the Udusa document argued that policy formulation had to locate itself within sets of tensions or contradictions, particularly between equity and development. For example, it argued

that a higher education system could be established that would be more democratic than the past system (through representative government and councils) and more equitable with large numbers of black students in cheap courses (biblical studies and languages). Because increases in enrolments, however, could lead to massive increases in student-to-staff ratios, such a system could lead to a drastic reduction in quality and might contribute little to economic development. Another strategy would be to maintain high entry requirements and to put disproportionate amounts of resources into science, engineering and other forms of technology. This might increase effectiveness and directly contribute to development, but would not satisfy the demands of the majority for greater access (equity) and would be difficult for a democratic government to defend.

In anticipation of winning the first democratic elections in April 1994, the ANC's education department-in-waiting, located at the newly-established Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD), produced a Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC 1994). As the product of a political movement about to accede to power, the ANC education policy framework promised all that the pre-election policy deliberations recommended, but contained no warnings about the possible trade-offs between equity and development, or between individual and institutional redress, that might be required. Chapters 12 and 13 deal extensively with how this tension played itself out.

The pre-election period of policy formulation could be characterised as having a strong emphasis on redress for individuals and for the historically disadvantaged institutions. The debate slowly shifted from institutional equality (Nepi) to 'reducing institutional differences in status', but with the assurance that high quality education would be offered by all institutions (ANC). Another feature of this pre-governance period was that the emphasis on redress was not accompanied by concrete implementation strategies.

2.1.1. National commission on higher education

The National Commission on Higher Education started operating in January 1995 and submitted its report to the Minister in September 1996. The Commission consisted of 13 members (nine blacks, four women), comprising a fair balance between people with policy expertise (mostly the policy trainees from Nepi who by now had four years of experience) and people representing certain powerful constituencies, such as university and technikon principals, labour and business. At this stage, operating under a government of 'national unity', the Commission's membership also included people who had served in senior positions in the previous government. The Commission mobilised more than a hundred local and international academics and policy experts who made contributions in five working groups. This largely voluntary group produced more than a hundred papers and reports in less than a year.

From the outset the NCHE decided that part of its role must be to break out of the academic isolation of the apartheid years. The commissioners visited several industrialised and developing countries to draw on their experiences in reforming the South African system and to re-establish contact with the international higher education community. The countries consulted included ten in Europe, seven in Africa, two in

Latin America, as well as the USA, India, Malaysia, Japan and Australia. Policy experts from some of the world's best-known agencies such the Centre for Higher Policy Studies (CHEPS, Netherlands), Commonwealth Higher Education Management Services (CHEMS, UK), the American Council on Education (ACE, Washington) and the World Bank were invited to contribute to working groups. The five working groups also held seminars to which prominent academics from developed and developing countries were invited. There was great interest in the transformation of South African higher education and there was a certain amount of competition amongst funders and exchange agencies to sponsor policy work.

The central proposal of the NCHE was that South African higher education should be massified. Massification was the first policy proposal that attempted to resolve the equity-development tension since increased participation was supposed to provide greater opportunity for access (equity) while also producing more high-level skills that were necessary for economic growth. This was not a simple-minded 'more for all' proposal because the NCHE was quite aware that massification is a driver for both differentiation and efficiency. There is no 'equal' massified system anywhere in the world since massified systems are by definition differentiated systems. For example, as the US, UK and Australian systems massified, differentiation increased dramatically.

Efficiency would be driving expansion of the system without increasing funding levels, thus doing more with the same. The NCHE acknowledged that the government could not increase the proportion of its education budget to higher education, and that handling more students would have to occur through innovative delivery systems and co-operation in course delivery. To ensure that increased numbers of students would not lead to a serious decline in standards, the establishment of a national Higher Education Quality Committee was proposed. Massification was to be the key policy and implementation driver.

The second and third pillars of the NCHE report, namely increased responsiveness and co-operation, were intended to deal mainly with development needs. Greater responsiveness would require new forms of management and assessment of knowledge production, dissemination and curricula. It was hoped that this would result in a more dynamic interaction between higher education and society, which in turn would promote development and accountability. The third pillar, increased co-operation, was intended to improve co-operation amongst a broad range of constituencies, leading to greater participation and accountability.

Apart from a small group of black intellectuals who complained that the report did not sufficiently locate higher education within an African context, the proposals of the NCHE were received with great acclaim. In an interview recently conducted, Trevor Coombe, formerly education department Deputy-Director General, had this to say (2001:5):

> The [NCHE] Report was a superb piece of work. What it did for the country was ensure, through its members and its chairperson, that it delivered something of high authority, of unquestionable authority, which had been painstakingly negotiated, not just consulted upon, and which would have international recognition. International recognition was consciously worked on right up to the last minute. In all of those respects, I think the National Commission Report is an ornament to our post 1994 dispensation.

> But the Commission was an extremely difficult thing for the Department to manage, right from the beginning. For reasons that were never very clear to the leadership of the Department, it used its autonomous status as a National Commission to take a very independent, bureaucratic organisational course of its own.

As will be shown later, implementation did become a major problem and the key proposal of the NCHE, namely a massified system, was not accepted. The 'independence' of the Commission, and the tensions alluded to by Coombe, could be one of the reasons why the capacity mobilised by the Commission was not fully utilised by the new higher education branch.

2.2. From policy to implementation

After another period of consultation the Department of Education, drawing heavily on the NCHE report, published the new higher education policy in the form of Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (Department of Education, 1997). The White Paper started by stating that despite acknowledged achievements and strengths, the present system of higher education was limited in its ability to meet the moral, political, social and economic demands of the new South Africa. It was characterised by the following deficiencies:

- An inequitable distribution of access and opportunity for students and staff along lines of race, gender, class and geography. In particular, there was a shortage of highly trained graduates in fields such as science, engineering, technology and commerce (largely as a result of discriminatory practices that limited the access of black and women students), which had been detrimental to social and economic development.
- While parts of the South African higher education system could claim academic achievement of international renown, too many parts of the system observed teaching and research policies which favoured academic insularity and closed-system disciplinary programmes.
- The governance of higher education at a system-level was characterised by fragmentation, inefficiency and ineffectiveness, with too little co-ordination, few common goals and negligible systemic planning. At the institutional level, democratic participation and the effective representation of staff and students in governance structures was still contested on many campuses (pp4–5).

The new policy of the government was, and continues to be, underpinned by the following principles: equity and redress; democratisation, effectiveness and efficiency; development; quality; academic freedom; institutional autonomy and public accountability (pp8–10). According to the White Paper:

> The transformation of the higher education system and its institutions requires:
>
> - Increased and broadened participation. Successful policy must overcome an historically determined pattern of fragmentation, inequality and inefficiency. It must increase access

> for black, women, disabled and mature students, and generate new curricula and flexible models of learning and teaching, including modes of delivery, to accommodate a larger and more diverse student population.
> - Responsiveness to societal interests and needs. Successful policy must restructure the higher education system and its institutions to meet the needs of an increasingly technologically-oriented economy. It must also deliver the requisite research, the highly trained people and the knowledge to equip a developing society with the capacity to address national needs and to participate in a rapidly changing and competitive global context.
> - Co-operation and partnerships in governance. Successful policy must reconceptualise the relationship between higher education and the state, civil society, and stakeholders, and among institutions. It must also create an enabling institutional environment and culture that is sensitive to and affirms diversity, promotes reconciliation and respect for human life, protects the dignity of individuals from racial and sexual harassment, and rejects all other forms of violent behaviour. (p7)

In order to give effect to the above, the government promised to put into place measures that would:

- Provide for expanded access (with a focus on equity and redress) through the planned expansion of the system over the next decade (but not massification).
- Develop a single co-ordinated system of higher education encompassing universities, technikons, colleges and private providers.
- Incorporate the colleges of education, nursing and agriculture into universities and technikons, and develop a new further education sector spanning general, further and higher education.
- Expand the role of distance education and high quality 'resource-based' learning.
- Institute a system of rolling three-year institutional plans and develop a national higher education plan.
- Develop a new goal-orientated performance related funding system that combines block grants with earmarked funds.
- Include higher education programmes in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and in a new quality assurance system to be developed within the broad ambit of the new South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).
- Expand the national student loan scheme (Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa) and funding for programmes to bridge the gap between further and higher education.
- Promote the importance of research within higher education and its contribution to a National System of Innovation.
- Establish programmes for capacity development. (White Paper 3, 1997)

In not accepting massification as a driver both for redress and efficiency (having to do more with the same), the White Paper implied that efficiency gains would have to be achieved through the implementation of a number of policy instruments such as a planning dialogue with institutions, a new funding formula, a reliable information system and a national plan that would provide benchmarks for planning and funding. In many respects, the White Paper was similar to the NCHE report because it was also a

policy framework and did not go beyond the NCHE by being more specific about policy instruments and the trade-offs that would be necessary. Chapter 13 explores further the problems which arise with this type of policy formulation.

The ambitious implementation agenda outlined in the White Paper would have been daunting for a well-established education department in a first world country. For a department still in the process of being established, it was always going to be many steps too far. Some of the implementation problems that occurred during the post-1994 period are discussed in chapters 4 to 11.

2.3. New implementation priorities?

It was in the context of a perceived lack of implementation that the education minister appointed after the second democratic election in 1999, asked the Council on Higher Education (1998/99) to review the institutional landscape of higher education as a matter of urgency. 'This landscape was largely dictated by the geo-political imagination of apartheid planners. As our policy documents make clear, it is vital that the mission and location of higher education institutions be re-examined with reference to both the strategic plan for the sector, and the educational needs of local communities and the nation at large in the 21st century.' (p5)

In June 2000, almost exactly three years after the publication of the White Paper and four years after the government announced its new macro-economic policy (Gear, 1996), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), established in May 1998, produced a report called 'Towards a New Higher Education Landscape'. According to the CHE (2000), the key perceived problems in the system were the continued and increasing fragmentation of the system, the geographic location of some institutions, major inefficiencies related to throughput and graduation rates, skewed patterns of student distribution between science, commerce, the humanities and education, low research outputs, and poor equity with regard to academic and administrative staff.

From this analysis, the CHE (2000) identified three key challenges:

- Effectiveness, relating mainly to the relevance of higher education to the labour market.
- Efficiency, concerned mainly with quality and throughputs.
- Equity, concerned mainly with setting equity targets for the distribution of students and staff by race, gender and social class in different fields of learning and teaching.

For the first time in a post-1994 South African national policy document, effectiveness and efficiency were listed before equity. The remedies that the CHE prescribed were to establish a differentiated system with hard boundaries between three types of institutions:

- Bedrock institutions whose sole mission would be to provide undergraduate programmes of high quality to the majority of learners.
- Extensive masters and selective doctoral institutions whose main orientation would be to provide quality undergraduate programmes, an extensive range of masters

level programmes, a limited number of doctoral programmes, and selected areas of research.
- Comprehensive postgraduate and research institutions which would offer undergraduate programmes, comprehensive course-work doctoral programmes and extensive research across a broad range of areas.

In addition, the CHE (2000) recommended, without offering any selection criteria, a list of 'examples' of institutions that should be considered for 'combination' (more commonly understood as merger) with other institutions.

Whilst the NCHE report and the White Paper had been received by the higher education community with a fair degree of consensus, at least in relation to their principles if not all the details, the CHE proposals caused a heated debate and were opposed not only by the university principals (Kotecha, 2000), but by the government.

In February 2001, the Ministry of Education published a National Plan for Higher Education which, in the words of the Minister 'outlines the framework and mechanisms for implementing and realising the policy goals of the White Paper' (Foreword). The plan was also a response to, and had been prompted by, the report of the CHE (2000).

The Minister of Education rejected the three-level differentiation between institutions because 'the danger with structural differentiation is that it introduces an element of rigidity, which will preclude institutions from building on their strengths and responding to social and economic needs, including labour market needs, in a rapidly changing regional, national and global context.' (Department of Education, 2001:54)

The NPHE quite unambiguously started by saying that the 'main focus over the next five years will therefore be on improving the efficiency of the higher education system through increasing graduate outputs.' (p1) The central tenets of the plan were to use the interaction between institutional and national planning to make the system more efficient and effective. It proposed, through a National Working Group, a 'more rational arrangement for the consolidation of higher education provision through reducing, where appropriate, the number of institutions, but not the number of delivery sites.' (p3) The intention was thus to transform the system through a combination of steering (using planning and funding) and legislative intervention in identified cases. Amendments to the Higher Education Act (1997) were subsequently made in 1999 and 2000 (Olivier, 2001).

The NPHE acknowledged major policy implementation shortfalls by using the term 'implementation vacuum'. The NPHE stated that 'it is arguable whether a more robust and timely implementation of key policy instruments would have been possible, given the capacity constraints at both the national and institutional levels. However, it is clear that the *implementation vacuum* (my emphasis) has given rise to a number of significant developments, including unintended and unanticipated consequences which, if left unchecked, threaten the development of a single, national, co-ordinated, but diverse higher education system.' (p8) As Chapter 1 intimates and later chapters in this volume will show, the manifestation of unanticipated consequences has to be understood as arising from a much more complex set of factors than a lack of capacity or an implementation vacuum.

3. CONCLUSION

The post-1994 period can be summarised as having started with a huge, participatory policy effort within a context of optimism for both the expansion of the system and redress for past inequities. This was followed by an 'implementation vacuum' in relation to the new policies, a shift in emphasis after 1997 to efficiency, and finally a reassessment of priorities and a more interventionist approach by government in 2001.

Chapter 1 on global reform trends alerts us, in hindsight, to the reality that whilst the South African transformation process invested heavily in a state-driven, linear, overly rationalistic notion of progressive policy formulation, policy implementation and change, other countries had not found this form of change very successful. The NCHE and the White Paper were silent on the role of institutions and the market as drivers of change, while co-operative governance created unrealistic expectations about direct societal participation. The policy was indeed a basket of 'best practices' culled from different parts of the world, but it did not adequately take into consideration the global pressure for increasing efficiency, nor that the two pillars of transformation (policy and implementation) were inadequately theorised. The remaining chapters in this book show that both these factors had considerable implications for what followed.

While Nelson Mandela's famous walk to freedom resulted in a definable moment of triumph with South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, the new South Africa is a complex mixture of remarkable achievements and unexpected disappointments. Similarly, the progressive road of higher education transformation, based on a grand policy narrative and driven, 'co-operatively', from the centre by the new government, can claim many achievements. However, the path also led to consequences and effects not remotely anticipated in 1994. The rest of the chapters in this book tell the story.

NOTES

[1] Education Minister Kader Asmal in the Foreword to the National Plan for Higher Education, 2001.

[2] This section draws on a paper written for this project by Kraak (2001).

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