

The End of Citizenship? The Nation State, Threats to its Legitimacy, and Citizenship Education in the Twenty-first Century

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ABSTRACT *This paper argues that whilst citizenship as a concept has a long and venerable history, present-day conceptions are relatively new, being primarily constructs created two to three hundred years ago to bolster the status and influence of fledgling western nation states. They were generated to inculcate in disparate populations the belief that their primary allegiance should not be to their region and lord, but to a larger entity of disputed size and composition, the nation state. Yet because it is a political arrangement in time, and there are such variations in its practice, there is an increasing awareness of its nature as a construction which can be deconstructed. The present status of the concept of citizenship, then, depends at least in part on the perceived legitimacy of the nation state by those who inhabit its borders. Yet this paper will argue that not only is there a greater awareness of its artificiality, but there are also forces at large in the world today which constrain its powers and threaten its legitimacy. This paper thus asks whether the nation state will be able to call upon the loyalty of its inhabitants, and be the primary focus for a commitment to a form of citizenship in the future. Further questions are then posed as to what future forms of organisations would generate greater legitimacy and what forms of citizenship and citizenship education may come to prominence in the years ahead.*

IF CITIZENSHIP IS A CONSTRUCT, IT CAN BE DECONSTRUCTED

Western political systems are in a period of flux. Whilst the presidency of George W. Bush suggests that the radical market liberalism of Reagan and Thatcher has not died, a strong opposing current—of which the Blair government in the UK is a good example—indicates that governments will be much more involved and directive in their nations' economies and supporting policies. Such contrasts could be seen as largely a matter of rival nation-states using different economic strategies to make themselves more globally competitive. But there are bigger games afoot. One game is a competition over different visions of society, using different discourses, and different conceptual emphases. The

concept of ‘duty’, for instance, has little place in radical market liberal discourse, intent as it is on reducing the role of the state to that of disinterested umpire in the functioning of market relationships, convinced as its proponents are that markets constitute the essence of social and political relationships. ‘New Modernisers’, however, believe in the need for a government’s mediation (or control) of market economics, and see human relationships as richer and more diverse than radical liberals conceive. They see the concepts of rights and duties as both being essential to the creation of a healthy society: the former to sustain individual autonomy, the latter to sustain the community which provides such rights. Part of the resurgence of social democracy then has been through a vigorous debate about how ‘duty’ needs to be conceptualised: at the philosophical level, with the resurgence of virtue theory; at the socio-political level; with the emergence of communitarian theory, and at the educational level with the re-emergence of character education (see Bottery, 2000).

There is, however, an even larger game than this. It concerns the kind of political organisation within which people want to live. It is therefore concerned with the jurisdiction of the concept of citizenship, for citizenship is in essence a conception of the relationship between an individual and a political body, in which that individual is provided with certain rights, whilst certain responsibilities are extracted. At the present time the political body defining the terms and boundaries of citizenship is something called ‘the nation state’. Yet, what exactly this means is a matter of considerable debate, for ‘nation’ and ‘state’ are not synonymous terms, and their amalgamation into one entity is likely to produce considerable variation in practice. Anderson (1996), for instance, suggests that ‘nation’ is a concept constituted by being:

- *imagined*: for most members will never know the majority of their fellow members;
- *limited*: because all have finite (if sometimes elastic) boundaries;
- *sovereign*: for all are founded on notions of self-determination;
- *a community*: for despite vast differences of wealth and powers, all members share a sense of comradeship.

Conversely, the ‘State’ that McCrone (1998) suggests is:

- partly defined by its *unity*;
- partly defined by the fact that it is *artificial*: an institutional arrangement engineered for specific political purposes;
- based on a *rational-legal legitimacy*, expressed above all in its complex of laws.

So there is likely to be a spectrum of possibilities for ‘nation states’ occupying a position between the extremes of

- ‘state-less nations’—groups which sees themselves as communities, which fail to have distinct territories over which they have sovereign command and

- ‘nation-less states’—where states are deliberately engineered through the incorporation and assimilation of multiple ethnic, linguistic and religious groups.

Indeed, this might not be a bad description of the United States: as Hobsbawm said (1990, p. 88) ‘Americans are those who wish to be’.

Moreover, just as nation states occupy different positions on such a spectrum, so their historical development may produce different forms of nation-state, different conceptions of citizenship. Thus, Brubaker (1992) argues that the long historical recognition of the French monarchy has helped implant a view of nationhood, citizenship, and French identity that is assimilationist and expansive—a person can become ‘French’ after one or two generations. However, German conceptions—with its late development to a unitary state in 1871, and with Germans historically being subject to different monarchies and different states [citizenship and nationhood came to be seen more a matter of blood, and thus more exclusive]. In both cases however, there is a strong argument to suggest that France, Germany, and other ‘nations’ are as much an invention by the state as any genuine reality, there being so many linguistic, cultural and ethnic differences within most borders.

There is, then, very little that is natural about the political hegemony of nation states. Throughout recorded history, the relationship between the individual and the larger political body has changed, from the highly participative if parochial involvement of the citizen in the Ancient Greek city state, through the development of Roman notions of civic virtue, on to the variety of claims upon the medieval citizen, and then to the secular emphasis of the Renaissance. From here, citizen allegiance has moved to its location today: the overriding claims of the nation state. Yet even into the twentieth century such allegiance was problematic. Fishman (1972, p. 6) tells the story of peasants in Western Galicia who, when asked if they were Poles or Germans, could only describe themselves as ‘quiet’, or ‘decent’, identifying as they did with the specific location they inhabited, not having travelled conceptually from such concrete geographic identity to a more abstract national one. Such ‘voluntary’ allegiance then has had to be moulded. As the Italian nationalist D’Azeglio declared after the Risorgimento, ‘We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians’ (Hobsbawm, 1992, p. 44). Part of this was achieved by valuing national language over local dialect, part by the creation of a national standing army (and its use against other ‘national’ foes), and part by the formation of the kind of education system we know today, with critical parts to be played by such education for the creation of a nation-state citizenship. Thus, as Green (1997, p. 35) argues, education systems in countries like Germany, France, Italy and the USA were designed

to spread the dominant cultures and inculcate popular ideologies of nationhood, to forge the political and cultural unity for the burgeoning nation states, and to cement the ideological hegemony of their dominant classes ...

The nation-state, as a concept, then, is fluid, and historically and geographically contingent, and is not—as some would see it—a natural part of the political landscape. A growing awareness of this artificiality and of its claims to citizen allegiance is increasingly one of its weaknesses.

Nation-state citizenship also involves a form of exchange, even if such an exchange is in many cases never fully articulated. In return for a transfer of identification and loyalty by the individual from the local and regional to the national, nation states have increasingly provided a greater liberty of the person, freedom of speech, rights to justice and the ownership of property—what Marshall (1950) called *civil citizenship*. Marshall also argued that citizenship consists of *political citizenship* (the right to be involved in the exercise of political power) and *social citizenship* (the right to a degree of health and economic security, and educational provision, as essential to the exercise of the other forms). Moreover, he suggested that these not only followed chronologically, but that they represented ‘... an evolution of citizenship which has been in continuous progress for some 250 years’ (p. 10)—a natural, almost inevitable progression, then, from the earlier to the later, as nation states perfected their citizenry arrangements.

Their success—and the underpinning nationalist ideology—has been seen not only in terms of eruptions of radical ‘hot’ nationalism, but, as Billig (1995) describes, in the way in which much nationalism is so obvious, so overt, and yet therefore so hidden, that we fail to recognise the ‘flags’ that constantly direct us to identify with it. On this account, even the weather forecast is about the weather of *this nation*. As Billig says (*ibid.*, p. 8):

The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building.

Marshall’s analysis almost certainly insufficiently emphasises this grounding of citizenship within a nation-state base. This is critical, for should the nation-state as an entity come to be threatened, so also will be its role as primary guarantor of citizenship rights, demonstrating vividly that the citizenship of the nation-state is a construction, which can therefore be de-constructed. Indeed, in addition to the increased awareness of its artificiality, there are a variety of other forces acting upon the nation state that combine to undermine the loyalty of its ‘citizens’. This paper will argue that there are at least five of these, which may be described as:

- (i) The social citizenship critique;
- (ii) Economic globalisation and ensuing ‘mean and lean’ developments;
- (iii) Political globalisation and supranational developments;
- (iv) Consequent sub-national reactions;
- (v) The rise of ‘citizen consumers’.

Each of these will be examined in turn.

THREAT 1: THE SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP CRITIQUE

Whilst modern-day critiques of the individual's right to *civil* citizenship are still largely at the political periphery, there has been substantial debate regarding the need for an extensive *political* citizenship, particularly with respect to participation in the political process (see for example, Schumpeter, 1942). Furthermore, with the resurgence of the political Right in the 1970s and 1980s, there has also been a sustained attack upon a *social* concept of citizenship, which provides welfare goods in health, social security and education legislation (in essence, the provision of an extensive welfare state) in order to furnish individual citizens with essential prerequisites for political participation. Critiques have come essentially from three directions. The first has come from a philosophical and ethical aversion to the paternalistic, 'big brother' state. The second has come from a pragmatic belief in the declining capacity of the nation state to provide such goods adequately. The third has come from a belief in its inferior capability of providing such 'goods' in comparison with the market. All of these bear upon the status and legitimacy of the nation state, and therefore upon the citizenship bargain, for if the state is seen as an essentially malevolent entity, needing to be kept as small as possible and having neither the capacity nor the capability of providing the goods it has claimed to provide, what right has it to demand allegiance, loyalty and duty from the individual? Why should individuals provide these when it does so little for them? These critiques need then to be examined in a little detail.

The Philosophical Critique

The philosophical critique, first articulated by Hayek (1944), attacks the notion of the Welfare State as a natural and healthy development in the growth and functioning of the nation state. Such acceptance has happened through the conjoining of three forces. The first was an agreement, after the war years of government direction, on a prominent role for the state not only in economic but in social and welfare areas as well. A second was the demand by an electorate for years of duty and self-sacrifice to be rewarded by an increase in rights and entitlements. The third force was the belief in the possibility of such attainment economically. Not only were barriers to financial flows between nation states sufficiently effective for governments to adopt Keynesian economic policies without fear of capital flow out of a country, but companies, still essentially nationally-based, saw their advantage in a corporate compromise between themselves, Government and workers. In such circumstances, welfare state policies flourished, and the state was seen as both social engineer and as broker between capital and labour.

Hayek disagreed, arguing that the Welfare State functioned in a similar fashion to Fascist and Communist regimes, for they all strove to centralise the tasks of government, locating power and control in the hands of the few, instead of devolving power, decision-making and responsibility to the many. For Hayek,

whilst nation states needed to be active in securing and maintaining the proper functioning of markets, and in providing certain 'public goods' that the market was not good at supplying, yet social democratic governments were dangerously over-stepping these bounds. For him, welfare legislation was encroaching on individual liberties, and then, by interfering in the normal functioning of the market, would disrupt and damage the natural economic process, requiring more government intervention, the end result being

... a gradual transformation of the spontaneous order of free society into a totalitarian system conducted in the service of some coalition of organised interests. (1973, p. 2)

On the other side of the Atlantic, Milton Friedman (1962) found a similar if reduced kind of resistance, for here was a nation state created out of a revolt against an oppressive and arbitrary state. With such deeply ingrained suspicion of government, a historic celebration of the right of the individual against it, and of the need for personal responsibility for one's life chances, Friedman found a more receptive audience for an argument concerned with the need and right of individuals to make the most of their capacities unhindered by governments in the 'natural' environment of the market place. This link between individual liberty and the economics of the market would immeasurably strengthen the philosophical argument when the nation state found itself increasingly incapable of financing welfare projects, creating a destructive synergy which was greater than the sum of the individual arguments. This second part of this synergy will now be examined.

The Incapacity Critique

The history of the decline of the financial capacity of western states can be traced to a number of factors:

- Increased expenditure on the welfare state did not reduce demand for its services but in many instances increased it; in health, for instance, people living longer exhibited more chronic than acute conditions, which in the long term were more costly; as new technologies were created, people saw their access to them as a right rather than as a privilege;
- The oil crises of the 1970s dramatically increased the costs of a variety of materials, services and power supplies vital to the continued functioning of western societies, reducing the ability of governments to keep pace with demands in spending in welfare areas;
- As western nation state demographics showed an increasing elderly percentage of their populations, allied to declining fertility rates, so a reduced tax base was created which made it increasingly difficult to finance welfare promises, whilst paradoxically creating an increase in the demands from this elderly population for an increase in such provision;

- Welfare states created bureaucracies who were, if the critical literature is to be believed, self-serving, who were closed to the efficiencies of the market, and who therefore exacerbated an already difficult financial situation.

The result has been a continual search for solutions to these problems of expenditure. George and Miller (1994) argue that the social and political arguments about the nature and provision of a future welfare state centre around three possibilities, a *universal*, an *affordable*, and a *residual* welfare state. The first and earliest of these was a commonly agreed aspiration, the last was that of right-wing ideologues, pursued in rhetoric if not always in reality by the Thatcher governments, whilst the middle, ‘affordable’ option seems increasingly the choice of the pragmatist—and of New Labour. At present, the universal option is not considered seriously by any major political party, whilst if the ‘residual’ welfare state option were to be adopted, there seems little reason why citizens should feel any allegiance to the nation state—as evidenced, it might be argued, by the increased crime, vandalism and general anti-social behaviour which has accompanied such policies. With the ‘affordable’ option, the level of ‘affordability’ depends in part upon a country’s economic productivity, and in part upon the level of taxation that the state is able to extract from individuals who have money to contribute. As this paper argues, levels of affordability—and therefore of nation state legitimacy—may be increasingly threatened by the increased ease with which individuals are able to locate themselves and their finance beyond the reach of the nation state.

The Incapability Critique

Even if there were no doubts about the political wisdom of nation states developing extensive welfare regimes, or about them having the financial capacity to do so, there might still be doubts about whether they were the best actors to perform such functions. The incapability critique argues precisely this: that this is not a very good way of delivering welfare, and that there is a superior alternative—the market. This argument is founded upon three further arguments, the *epistemic* argument, the *incentive* argument, and the *autonomy* argument. The epistemic argument proposes that centralisation prevents individuals from using and benefiting from their own knowledge, whilst markets make available information that the centre cannot supply, and allow the use of unarticulated and un-articulable knowledge. The incentive argument suggests that centralisation prevents individuals from developing their own projects and purposes, and thus depresses people’s desire to work hard and improve their situation. The market, it is argued, because it facilitates the development of such private projects, is much the better mechanism for doing this. The final argument suggests that centralisation depresses individuals’ autonomy by compelling them to act on others’ purposes, and whilst also having effects on their

motivation, more importantly argues that this damages a core principle of a democratic state, that of personal liberty.

Together these arguments suggest that when governments embark on welfare legislation—and therefore on a developed social citizenship—they necessarily over-reach themselves, they encroach on individual liberties, and interfere with and disrupt the efficiencies of the normal market process. This then leads to more government intervention, which in turn leads to a vicious circle of interventionism and abrogation of personal liberties. Together, these arguments helped forge a political consensus across the western world that continues to be very influential today. Even ‘Third Way’ approaches accept many of its tenets, for a limited and ‘affordable’ welfare state is still seen as the best that is possible or desirable, while the public sector needs to emulate the practices and values of the private sector, as seen, for instance, in the enthusiastic espousal by Clinton and Blair of the works of writers like Osborne and Gaebler (1992), and in the use of ‘internal’ and ‘quasi’ markets to increase the productivity and efficiency of the public sector. Such issues raise real problems about extending citizenship beyond Marshall’s civil and political conceptions, and yet if this is the case, the bargain between the nation state and those citizens who would benefit from an enhanced social citizenship conception is seriously weakened. This is a process exacerbated by a second threat, the increased impact of global forces.

THREAT 2: ECONOMIC GLOBALISATION AND ‘MEAN AND LEAN’ NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Whilst present-day governments do not wish to return to the social democratic welfare policies of the mid twentieth century, there is still good evidence to suggest that states are *more* interested than previously in taking responsibility and in central direction. The reasons for this lie in the rise of forces of globalisation.

‘Globalisation’ is a much-debated word and it has been argued elsewhere (Bottery, 2000) that there are at least six different meanings to the term. Three—cultural, environmental and managerial—are not directly related to this paper, and whilst extremely important in other contexts, will not be developed here. A fourth—demographic—has already been referred to with respect to the problems of financing welfare states. The final two—economic and political—are directly implicated in threats to the nation state, and will be examined in a little more detail.

Economic Globalisation is a long-term trend towards the creation of a system of unrestricted global free trade and laissez-faire economics. This agenda is increasingly influential in the functioning of nation states, as more national policies are penetrated by global economic structures and demands. Such influence is spread by three main factors. A first is the ability of individuals and organisations to move finance easily and quickly around the world, thus preventing nation states from creating ‘fire-walls’ to protect particular welfare or

cultural agendas from the movement of finance out of a country. A second influence is the activities of supra-national organisations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation, and the World Bank, which, whilst having different foci, attempt to lock nation states into international free market agreements that limit their room for individual manoeuvre. The third influence is the activities of trans-national companies (TNCs) who, because of their enhanced ability to locate and then relocate finance, plant and labour around the globe, are able to pressure and manipulate government policy to an extent not seen previously, leading not only to short-term acts of tax breaks and financial 'sweeteners', but also to longer term changes in domestic policies.

It has already been mentioned that the New Right response to increased pressure upon welfare state expenditure has been an attempt to reduce expenditures in these areas. This has been attempted primarily by a concentration on efficiency as a key value, the employment of a vigorous and assertive management ideology as opposed to a previous facilitative administrative one, the re-education and employment of professionals as 'on tap' rather than 'on top', and the use of quasi-markets to heighten financial awareness and to stimulate entrepreneurship. This financial austerity road continues to be travelled by a number of nation states, despite changes in the colour of governments, who appear to believe that by hollowing out state responsibilities, and reducing welfare expenditure, they will be the leaner and fitter to compete on the global economic stage. In the USA, the advent of the Bush government has increased this trend. Luttwak (1999) describes such an approach as a 'turbo capitalist' one, and his analysis of the benefits and drawbacks are highly pertinent to this paper. He claims that such a regime produces greater economic growth, less bureaucracy, more entrepreneurship, increased technological progress and less structural unemployment. Yet these are societies 'captured' by the discourse of economics, in which attachments to culture and other societal values are downgraded in favour of the rationality and functionalism of economic calculation. Such an approach leads to a widening of income differentials, a lower average wage, increased worker insecurity, and decreased welfare and labour protection. Only in those areas where state intervention might actually aid this approach—such as in the state-sponsored acquisition of requisite worker skills and attitudes by its national education system—would such states see the need for a sizeable state presence. The result of such policy may be to make people more flexible and adaptable to changing economic conditions, yet it also leads to increased differentiation of income between rich and poor in each country. Such a strategy might well lead to a reduced citizenship allegiance, as individuals come to question whether they should show responsibility and duty to a political body which increasingly shows less responsibility and care towards them.

THREAT 3: POLITICAL GLOBALISATION AND SUPRANATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

If economic globalisation has led to one form of threat to nation state legitimacy, another form—political globalisation—has added to this pressure. Political globalisation, the drive to political organisation above and beyond that of the nation state, has reduced many areas of traditional nation state responsibility, and has resulted in the formation of trans-national governmental organisations. Their increase has been dramatic: Held (1989, p. 196) estimates that in 1905 there were 176 international non-governmental organisations, yet by 1984 there were 4,615. One critical form of such political globalisation has been the re-location of nation states into larger trading blocks to provide themselves with greater political and economic leverage and protection, and to have access to an enlarged market. These may develop along the lines of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), essentially an organisation designed to deliver more of the free market, with a dash of US hegemony and cultural imperialism thrown in. They may, however, develop along the lines of the EU, with a well-articulated (if disputed) vision of itself as a supra-national entity committed to extensive welfare provision, and to the creation of an identity which might locate citizenship allegiance beyond the nation state. Whilst NAFTA is a good example of the ‘mean and lean’ development described above, the EU, because of its welfare and cultural protectionism, is a very different beast. To some, its commitment to agendas that transcend the economic may seem very attractive, for as the conceptual field is widened, so is the moral circle. Yet such re-conceptualisation moves the focus from the national to the trans-national, and might involve jettisoning many (national) practices, and the acceptance of some new ones (honouring the EU flag?). In the process, it might well reduce allegiance to nation-states. Furthermore, EU policies of extended welfare provision may mean a less competitive economic base globally, and a workforce insufficiently motivated to re-train because of the high level of benefits provided, resulting in the long term in a much reduced welfare provision. Resorting to the safety of supra-national absorption then might not only reduce identity to the nation state, and hence its perceived legitimacy to demand citizenship duties, but also long-term protectionism might reduce an ability to pay for welfare, and further weaken nation-state legitimacy.

Nor should one forget such effects at the personal level. Here, Billig (1995) suggests that there is a reciprocal interaction between post-modern themes and globalism, for as the post-modern suggests a stance of playing with ideas rather than being committed to them, so the global and supra-national facilitates such a perspective by allowing personal exit from identification with the national, where a post-modern psyche ‘is at home playing with the free market of identities’ (p. 134). In such ways is nation-state citizenship undermined and degraded.

THREAT 4: THE SUB-NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Globalisation and supra-national identities may have an air of economic inevitability about them, but this does not mean that people relish them. The larger become those bodies and organisations which control peoples' lives, the more distanced and alienated they become from the political process, the less loyalty they feel, becoming like global nomads, wandering between places which provide them with no sense of identity. As this happens, the more they will relocate and define themselves at the local level, treasuring 'the traditions that spring from within' (Naisbett & Aburdene, 1988, p. 133). Indeed, it seems significant that in 1945 the United Nations had a membership of 45; in 1960 it was 100; in 1996 it was 185 and is still rising. The increased political visibility of separatist movements in Quebec, Wales, Scotland, Macedonia, Catalonia, the Basque region, the Kurdish part of Turkey, Eritrea, and the general increase in intra-state rather than inter-state conflict, conflicts being more often defined around ethnic and religious identities, all suggest that current nation-states are not satisfying current needs in personal identity and allegiance. There are then likely to be real tensions within a number of other nation states in the future—China, for instance, has 56 regional groups within its boundaries. However, the interaction between economic and cultural factors is likely to be extremely complex and difficult to predict. If, as Daniel Bell said, the nation state is becoming too small for the big problems of life, and too big for the small problems of life, complex, highly individual, and problematic scenarios are likely to be created. Yet one thing does seem clear: nation-state legitimacy *is* threatened, from below as well as from above.

THREAT 5: THE ELITE CONSUMER DEVELOPMENT

A fifth threat, what Lasch (1995) called the 'revolt of the elite', is where the wealthy cease to identify themselves and their futures with any particular nation state, and utilise the market option of 'exit' rather than the citizen option of 'voice' in order to achieve their personal aims. This 'elite consumerist' agenda stems from the combination of political arguments and economic opportunities. A first may be found in a critique of Marshall's 'evolutionary' hypothesis of citizenship, for within it is embedded the notion that a necessary but insufficient condition for citizenship is the recognition and acceptance of equal rights between genetically *unequal* individuals, and that for this to happen, there has to be a measure of social and economic equality as well. However, once the wealthy can escape the demands of such citizenship, such allegiance is likely to founder under the weight of the responsibility left to the rest. Furthermore, arguments that taxation is theft, and violence to the person, in that the state arbitrarily extracts from its richer citizens moneys to be redistributed to its poorer citizens, also lend intellectual support to those who would opt out of one national policy approach and locate themselves and their earnings within a more favourable regime. This, suggest Martin and Schuman (1997) is leading to a

20/80 split between a globally connected elite (20%), and a less privileged national majority (80%).

Davidson and Rees-Mogg (1999) take this analysis one stage further by extrapolating from the present to a situation, not too far-distant, where the cyber-economy will allow any individual, any organisation, to relocate their financial holdings and themselves to the most profitable (i.e. least taxed) location around the world. The result could be, as Davidson and Rees-Mogg (1999, p. 21) argue:

... you will no longer be obliged to live in a high-tax jurisdiction in order to earn high incomes. In the future, when most wealth can be earned anywhere, and even spent anywhere, governments that attempt to charge too much as the price of domicile will merely drive away their best customers.

The implications of such movement on a large scale could be, for the nation state, grave in the extreme. If their argument is correct (p. 269), 'the leading welfare states will lose their most talented citizens through desertion', and with the widespread flight of capital and disappearance of major contributors, many nation states will have increasing difficulties providing the basics of welfare provision. However, it would be extremely risky for a nation state to actually increase taxation, or even attempt to maintain present levels, because this would give an extra incentive for others to relocate their finances elsewhere. The scenario is then for present fledgling competition between nation states in terms of taxation policies to dramatically increase, and for citizens (at least the rich ones) to become consumers, 'shopping around' for the best 'deal' in low-cost citizenship. Davidson and Rees-Mogg argue (p. 259) that '... the massed power of the nation-state is destined to be privatised and commercialised ...' and in the process citizenship in any recognisable form will disappear. There will be few (perhaps only the affluent for whom the book was written) who would find such a world agreeable. Whilst they believe that there will be 'transition difficulties' (p. 224), prospects nevertheless are 'bullish'—even though the price will be walled enclosures for the rich, and the demand for new survival strategies by the poor such as crime (p. 256).

Yet one must be careful to separate the prescriptive from the descriptive in this argument. Whilst Davidson and Rees-Mogg are in favour of these developments, the central argument is based upon a description of existing realities and extrapolation from them. Whether one likes the consequences or not, the possibility of individuals opting out of citizenship commitments and relocating to a more attractive state is an increasingly possible—even probable—one. Were this to happen on a sufficiently large scale, a nation-state's ability to demand responsibilities and duties from the remaining population would be severely threatened by its inability to deliver *its* side of any citizenship bargain. Such a futuristic scenario of a world made up of competing tax-havens, where the poor live either by serving the rich or by scraping a living in walled-off locations of alternating anarchy and tyranny, is, to this writer at least, ethically and politi-

cally grotesque, but still needs serious consideration and rebuttal, for there is sufficient factual detail in this scenario to give it a disagreeable credibility. So what can be the responses of the nation state to these threats to its existence, to current conceptions of citizenship?

NATION STATE RESPONSES TO CITIZENSHIP THREATS

Five developments have been described which threaten the existence of the nation state, and which also threaten current conceptions of citizenship. However, it would be surprising if nation state governments were not aware of these developments, and were not taking steps to counter them. Indeed, this paper argues that there exist at least six different responses that may be described as:

- (a) Responding to the rich;
- (b) Enhanced competitive skills;
- (c) The human capital option;
- (d) Intensifying citizenship;
- (e) The social capital option;
- (f) Enhancing participation.

Each will be discussed in turn.

Option 1: responding to the rich

If financial elites *are* increasingly 'shopping around' for the most competitive residence option (i.e. that state which provides them with the most security for their assets and demands the least in return), one response might be premised on the assumption that whilst the rich can move, the poor cannot, so the emphasis should be upon meeting the needs of the rich. This is the option described critically by Luttwak (1999) and approvingly by Davidson and Rees-Mogg (1999), yet it seems to be a mixed blessing, whichever party you are. It clearly rewards the rich and enterprising, but produces constant stress and insecurity for the less talented. It also seems to threaten the legitimacy of the nation-state. It would be an ugly place to live if you were not rich, ugly even if you were rich and used your money to ensure that this ugliness was kept some way from where you live. Moreover, Wilkinson's research (1996) suggests that societies which have higher income differentials between rich and poor, also have the lowest life-expectancies, for both poor *and rich*: in other words, there is doubt whether such societies ultimately profit even the rich within them. It remains to be seen whether those considering such an option take this factor into account: there must be some doubt that they will. What is clear, however, is that such states would not be sponsoring any citizenship worthy of the name.

Options 2 and 3: the enhanced competitive skills and human capital options

Considerably less odious, though still problematic, would be the enhanced competitive skills and human capital options. These are placed together because together they form a particular approach to the development of workforce skills in a competitive economy. The *enhanced skills option* has formed the core of 'Third Way' approaches to education. It is predicated upon the belief that governments should not provide the kind of extensive welfare safety net seen previously for individuals who fail, but rather should equip citizens with the requisite skills to make them employable in the job markets of the future. Hence the clarion call of 'Education, education, education' by Tony Blair at the 1997 election. However, this is not education for social amelioration *per se*, and certainly not education as a good in itself. It is rather a tight focusing upon education for employability, in the belief that an employed workforce is a more socially cohesive and prosperous citizenry. Social cohesion and prosperity, then, provide the props to support nation state legitimacy. Yet there remain major problems with this approach. One problem is that any concentration upon skills for employability may fail to tackle issues of structural inequality, and thereby exacerbate an already unequal situation, for if governments fail to address the fact that individuals do not begin from the same starting line, and then they also fail to provide equal entry into the competitive skills marketplace. Whilst another strand of New Labour policies has been an emphasis upon an inclusion agenda, there remain a number of critics who believe that these two agendas are either incompatible, or are being implemented with the managerialism of previous New Right administrations and therefore are likely to be largely ineffective (see Clarke *et al.*, 2000). Another problem is that an 'education for employability' agenda all too easily becomes too rigid, and too dogmatic in what must be learned, leading, as Lauder *et al.* (1998) suggest, to a 'trained incapacity' of individuals to adapt to a rapidly changing scenario. Paradoxically, for governments, the best way may be to allow greater freedom and creativity in the school, as this allows for the kind of quick responsiveness that a rapidly changing national and global economy demands. And yet such educational liberation may actually accelerate the reduced role of government—and so exacerbate the threat to the nation state.

The second part of this economic package, *the human capital option*, has been a major way in which western governments have conceptualised education since the Second World War. Indeed, organisations like OECD seem, if anything, to be increasing this emphasis. This is in part due to the apparent success of this approach by Asian Tigers like Japan, Singapore, Taiwan and Korea, where governments have not only provided training for the workforce in competitive skills, but have been much more intrusive, attempting to mediate and fashion global forces to suit the particular talents and capabilities of a nation's workforce. Ashton and Sung (1997) provide a particularly good example of how the Singaporean government adjusted its education policies to match

its economic objectives, prioritising the raising of workers' skill levels to match the needs of 'preferred' multinationals, a policy which the New Labour government in the UK has attempted to copy. Yet it is noteworthy that many of these Asian Tiger governments have changed tack in the last few years, recognising the strength of the 'trained incapacity' argument mentioned above: their workforces are compliant but unimaginative, hardworking but uncreative, and it is the ability to nurture the imagination and to foster creativity which is now seen as essential to successful competition in the future.

Options 4 and 5: the enhanced citizenship and social capital options

If the last two options concentrated upon the skills required by a workforce, the next two concentrate upon the attitudes and affective skills required. *The enhanced citizenship option* is concerned with sustaining the legitimacy of nation states as definers of citizenship, partly by stressing the responsibilities of citizens as well as their rights, and also by further utilising the flags of 'banal' nationalism. Formal education, and citizenship education in particular, are critical in this respect. In England and Wales, for instance, citizenship education has become statutory in secondary schools, helping pupils 'to become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of their duties and rights' (QCA, 1999, p. 12). Such direct stipulation is also aided through defining areas of study in critical areas, which contribute to the contextual understanding of this particular form of citizenship—such as in the selection of history, social studies, and national literature. Whilst some of the thrust of such educational legislation is more properly located within the 'participation option' discussed below, nevertheless, part is much more directive, as exemplified in the widespread espousal of 'character education' approaches, which stipulate the particular virtues which are socially desirable, and then inculcate these into populations (Bottery, 2000). This helps to account for the paradox that in a culturally heterogeneous world, where the fragmentation of norms and values is a developing reality, teachers are experiencing an increasing control and direction of the content and practice of their work, resulting in feelings of stress and de-professionalisation. Here then, education is being used by nation states in attempts to bolster their legitimacy, and there then exists the possibility that the more centralising, directive, and repressive that governments become, the less they will be able to maintain the confidence and loyalty of their electorates.

The second part, *the social capital option*, is concerned with enhancing the social bonds between individuals such that there is less fragmentation, more cooperation and more social cohesion within communities and workforces. Whilst there is considerable debate in the literature as to precise meaning of the term (see Baron *et al.*, 2000), the present multi-governmental endorsement of Putnam's (2000) conception of benign social capital as a key force in generating trust and better relationships between individuals, and within fractured communities, is a strong pointer to its use as an aid in reducing a more general

societal fragmentation, consequent upon the kinds of supra- and sub-national threats described above.

Option 6: the active participatory option

Perhaps the most acceptable approach, from a liberal-democratic perspective, is one which is less restrictive, less directive, more participatory, which sees the saving of the nation state through its ability to motivate and engage all of its citizens in the grand societal project of not only creating a more equitable and harmonious society but a more equitable and harmonious world as well. Some of this is certainly seen within current conceptions of citizenship education within the English National Curriculum. It is fairly radical (judging it against most current UK legislation) in that it argues (DfEE, 1998, p. 10) that citizens must 'shape the terms of such engagements by political understanding and action', and that students must learn 'about and how to make themselves effective in public life' (p. 64). Nevertheless, there are issues still to be addressed. It is non-statutory in the early years; only 5% of curriculum time is supposedly devoted to this area; it has a teaching force, which is still largely ill equipped to deal with it; and it is based around formal school education. This option is better seen in its wider expression in the Council of Europe project on Education for Democratic Citizenship (Council of Europe, 2002), which argues that the development of EC citizenship has to explicitly recognise that developing citizenship is a multi-stranded project, encompassing not just the development of appropriate school curricula and organisation, but a project for life-long, workplace and informal learning, which stresses inclusion and social cohesion. Critically, it suggests:

Education for Democratic Citizenship is not mainly and essentially the inculcation of democratic norms, but more essentially the development of reflective and creative actors, the strengthening of the ability to participate actively and to question. (2002, p. 16)

Such aspirations certainly address more directly those critics who argue that nation-state citizenship is dying from within because of apathy, a fragmentation of values, and the exclusion of minority groups, yet it remains to be seen whether a supra-national project can have genuine impact at the nation-state level, and whether there are sufficient citizens in them who wish to commit to it, or whether the EC will replace these in terms of citizen allegiance.

WHITHER CITIZENSHIP? WHITHER IDENTITY?

Of the options considered, nation states, and western states in particular, seem to be converging around a conceptualisation of their role as a mixture of 'middle' options—as providing an 'affordable' welfare state, an increased steerage of areas where they can exert effect (such as in education, and particularly in skills training and enhancing social cohesion), a re-assertion of notions of

‘community’ and ‘duty’, with an enhanced stress upon citizenship participation, whilst accepting the reality of the expanding influence of global markets and multinational forces.

However, it would be unwise to think that this issue will be resolved in purely planned, conscious, transactional terms, for citizenship is also determined by affective notions of identity, which run deep into the subconscious, underpinned by the hidden ‘flags’ of ‘banal’ nationalism, and aroused when ethnic and religious identities are threatened. In such circumstances, it is not enough to look at current governmental strategies, at the ‘bargains’ between state and citizen; one also needs to look at the ways in which citizenship is currently formed to see whether the nation state is threatened. Carrington and Short’s (2000) study of the conceptions of citizenship by US and UK children is useful here, for it shows that whilst UK children are more likely to think of citizenship in terms of being born in the UK, and of being able to speak English, US children are more likely to identify citizenship in terms of its formal, juridical, components. This indicates that the USA, with an identity based more upon the assimilation of immigrant populations than the UK, is producing citizens who much more clearly see citizenship as a construction rather than a ‘natural’ and given identity—reflecting once more Hobsbawm’s observation that ‘Americans are those who wish to be’. This constructivist conception of citizenship is (surprisingly) supported by Parmenter (1999), who investigated children’s attitudes to citizenship in Japan. This is a country wedded to a view of history as ‘*kokkahattenshi*’—as a description of national unity, whose official education policy has historically been, and continues to be, that of the inculcation of a conception of citizenship by ethnic-genealogical definitions of national identity. Yet Parmenter argues that

The majority of students ... seem to believe that national identity is an identity that has to be constructed by the efforts of the individual through his/her acquisition of knowledge, development of abilities, maturity and way of living ... the individual has a choice in whether to be ‘Japanese’ or not ...

Furthermore, her findings suggest that there currently exists a significant body of student teachers who believe that, in a globalised world, national identity is becoming increasingly redundant. Such findings do not diminish the importance of the indoctrinatory impact of the flags of banal nationalism, nor of the appeal of the ethnic, religious and linguistic loyalties, but they do suggest that a global generation is growing up which is more able to see the ways in which nation-state citizenship is constructed than previously. And once a construction is seen, it can be questioned, and it can be asked whether it should be exchanged for something else.

There must then be doubt as to the ability of current nation states to repel all the threats listed above. They may be attempting to retain certain core functions and economic, cultural or political influence, yet their ability to do so is compromised by three factors: by some of the actions they take, by an

increased recognition by populations of the construction of nation-state citizenship, and by an increased tendency by individuals to calculate advantages rationally. The result is likely to be a paradoxical combination of enhanced identity for some at the sub-nation-state level, and for others, an enhanced consumerist orientation towards nation-state citizenship. Thus, whilst nation states attempt to mediate the effects of global markets by relocating themselves within supranational bodies, *this* has the effect of spurring on identification at sub-national levels, as people search for an identity that provides meaning to their personal lives. Yet at the same time, because of the increased availability of comparative evidence, the continued intrusion of the market into all walks of life, and the increased mobility of individuals and their capital, there is likely to be a new kind of citizen in the twenty-first century—the consumer citizen. In an increasingly mobile and knowledgeable world, one can expect an increase in the number of individuals choosing their citizenship commitments, and for current nation states (and other levels of governance) to have to compete for their custom. One is then likely to find less talk of allegiance and duty, and more of proprietor and customer. Nation states and their representatives will then have to be far more concerned with the views—or apathy—of their citizens than previously, because increasing numbers will be able to—and want to—vote with their feet if service is unsatisfactory. If current trends continue, exit, not voice, will be for some the preferred option.

WHITHER CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION?

What of schools and citizenship education? What will be provided in schools if trends in citizenship follow the lines described above? If we pull together the political and economic threads described above, then citizenship education is likely to be either an emphasis upon one of, or a blend between, the following four options.

One bleak scenario from a democratic point of view would be where nation states resort to force, both mental and physical, in order to retain their power. In this scenario, nation states will seek to increase control and direction of their educational institutions. This would not only be in terms of the curriculum, with the intensification of a skills/competency approach in those areas felt necessary to equip the nation's 'human resources' to compete successfully on the global economic stage. It would also be in terms of 'character education' and 'social capital' approaches, which would attempt to inculcate certain virtues and dispositions into a population, not only to further their attractiveness to transnational companies as a pliable and compliant workforce, but also in order to reduce the discontent consequent upon the increasingly 'mean and lean' approaches to national economic policies. Such a prognosis would not only contradict the need for a flexible, creative and entrepreneurial workforce, it is also bleak for the development of human potential and political freedoms. One could well envisage a depressing cycle of state domination, increased internal and external protest, and repressive state reaction, within which citizenship

education became little more than a mockery of the true meaning of the term. It is not a pleasant scenario to contemplate.

A second bleak scenario, which might well be allied to the first, is one which follows from the threads of threats to identity, and is a citizenship education predicated upon intense commitment to particular beliefs and practices, and upon the fear and exclusion of others. It would be indoctrinatory, probably intolerant of other beliefs, and certainly partial. It would probably take all the elements of a 'hot' nationalism, based upon particular geographical, ethnic, religious, cultural or linguistic differences, and combine them with the elements of a 'banal' nationalism, which quietly, insistently, and subconsciously, point the individual to unthinking identification. It would run counter to the aims of any project which attempted to develop 'reflective and creative actors', and which sought to strengthen their ability 'to participate actively and to question' (Council of Europe, 2002). Whilst there are those who would comfort themselves with the belief that this is only a scenario for distant underdeveloped countries, the 'Talibans' of the world, there are too many examples close to home to permit such complacency.

A third and more optimistic alternative follows from the potential recognition by nation states that nation-state citizenship is a concept that needs to be both more participative and at the same time nested within different levels of citizenship. Enhanced participation is an idea increasingly accepted at the nation-state level, for instance in the English citizenship curriculum. This is in part because of democratic ideals, in part because of the recognition of increased electoral apathy, and in part as part of a larger agenda which requires citizens to take greater responsibility for things that the state no longer feels capable of providing. There are then some hopeful signs here. 'Nested citizenship' is an idea raised by Heater (1990), and is also recognised by the Council of Europe (2002), yet there seems little recognition of this option by individual nation states so far. However, were nation states to accept that some allegiance was better than none at all, and that they needed to work towards a global system within which some power was ceded both upwards and downwards, then national education systems would necessarily be involved in the business of providing their citizens with an understanding of the different functions, rights, responsibilities and powers of these different levels, and of providing citizens with the skills to negotiate their way through such complexity.

A final scenario follows the trends of an increasingly consumerist world, where the market penetrates deeply into every form of societal activity, 'capturing' its discourse, and rendering its values second order to those of the market. In such circumstances, 'citizenship' becomes another consumer good, to be designed, displayed, marketed, and sold just like any other. Nation states would then not provide education. They would not have ownership of plant, nor ownership of content and ideas, because educational opportunities for both child and adult would be the subject of intense competition between rival international organisations, who would sell not only different kinds of access, but different kinds of experience and different kinds of curriculum. We already

live in an age where universities sell their products on-line around the world, and private companies increasingly see education as a market opportunity to be exploited like any other. On this scenario, nation-states would be no more entitled to a monopoly on educational provision than would any business. If citizenship is as much a part of the market as any other commodity, then the function of schools and of citizenship education is likely to be that of providing the discerning consumer with the knowledge and skills to make the right choice in a world of global opportunity—one that extends to examining the different ‘brands’ of citizenship on offer.

CONCLUSIONS

To draw some final conclusions, we must retrace some of the steps of this paper, and consider the future of the nation state, and of citizenship within it, for on these, rest the future of citizenship education. An initial problem with talking about the ‘death of the nation state’, as we have seen, is that it has no one Platonic form: examples of the nation state are situated along a spectrum stretching from the stateless nation to the nationless state. Thus, it is possible to have forms that are driven primarily by the needs of the state, whilst equally possible to have forms driven by the needs of particular ethnic groups, linguistic minorities, and religious communities. In other words, as a current nation-state splits, it is possible to have smaller, but still viable, political entities which deserve the same name: the Czech Republic and Slovakia are as identifiable as ‘nation states’ as was Czechoslovakia (and, some would argue, with even more justification than the previous entity). As current nation state power is relocated below, there is good reason to believe that such re-location of identity and allegiance will continue to result in the proliferation of new ‘nation-states’, rather than in their dissolution. However, as globalisation forces drive nation-states to relocate some of their power above in supra-national organisations, who is not to say that some of these supra-national states may not then weld different linguistic, cultural and religious groups into new larger ‘nation-states’—perhaps, for instance, ones the size of the USA?

What does this do to citizenship? I think it does at least two things. First, it makes people increasingly aware that nation states, citizenship, and its current location, are constructions, which can therefore be deconstructed. This might mean that citizenship becomes a more multi-layered concept, in which people locate their allegiance at different levels. However, given the fact that new ‘nation-states’ may be constructed out of amalgamations or dissolutions of existing arrangements, it is quite possible that such multi-layered attachment is more a transitory stage, after which people relocate at one new level, where the functions of the ‘state’ and the ‘nation’, as described above, are then re-constituted.

Finally, what does this suggest about the future of citizenship education? It may well be that whilst none of the four types of citizenship education described above will exist in ‘pure’ form, evidence of the de-stabilisation and de-legitimi-

sation of current nation states suggest that something like them is a likely response, and a liberal-democratic model may not be the dominant one. In the longer term, if both larger and smaller forms of nation state are constructed, it is highly possible that a cycle will repeat itself—that these new states will attempt to convince their ‘citizens’ that these new arrangements are a natural, eternal, form. In which case, as always, as we look to the future, there is much to be learnt from the lessons of the past.

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