

THE STATE AND NEEDS OF EDUCATION 1978 - 1979

**ANNUAL
REPORT**



**Conseil supérieur
de l'éducation
Québec**

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CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION

THE STATE AND NEEDS OF EDUCATION
1978-1979 REPORT

Québec 1980



Québec, le 30 novembre 1979

Monsieur Clément Richard
Président de l'Assemblée nationale
Gouvernement du Québec

Monsieur le Président,

J'ai l'honneur de vous présenter le rapport du Conseil
supérieur de l'éducation sur l'état et les besoins de
l'éducation pour l'année 1978-1979.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, l'expression de
mes sentiments les plus distingués.

Le ministre de l'Education

Jacques-Yvan Morin



Québec, le 20 novembre 1979

Monsieur Jacques-Yvan Morin
Ministre de l'Education
Gouvernement du Québec

Monsieur le Ministre,

Il m'est agréable de vous présenter le rapport du Conseil supérieur de l'éducation sur l'état et les besoins pour l'année 1978-1979.

Le Conseil vous soumet ce rapport conformément au mandat que lui confie sa Loi constitutive (L.R.Q., Chap. C-60, art. 9, par. c).

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur le Ministre, l'expression de ma haute considération.

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INTRODUCTION

"The Conseil supérieur, through its individual members, should correct the lack of information among the public at large, generally ill-aware of the needs of education and the way in which the system operates... This circulation of ideas, which the Conseil is called on to promote, will be further stimulated by its annual report to the legislature. While the annual report of a ministry tends to be of an administrative nature, that of the Conseil can supply an analysis in depth and in breadth of all the problems of education."

Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Québec, Québec 1963, Part one, p. 109.

In marking the fifteenth year of its existence, the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation recalls some of the insights and purposes which led to its birth and to its mandate as stipulated in its constitutive Act, to transmit to the Minister of Education who shall communicate it to the legislature, an annual report on the state and needs of education.

The annual report must contribute to "the circulation and diffusion of ideas and information". It is in this perspective that the Conseil again this year compiles the results of the observations and analyses of its one hundred and twenty members during the course of their meetings and their visits to school establishments and school districts during the past year.

Each of its two Confessional Committees and each of its five Commissions have contributed to the annual report. Their sectorial studies on the overall state of Catholic and Protestant education, primary, secondary, college, university and adult education are contained in Part Two of the report.

In the first section of its report, the Conseil presents an overview of the state of education and calls attention to one of today's major preoccupations of the school system at large - the quality of education. It also attempts to define more precisely this concept which is much in vogue but not always fully understood. The Conseil also discusses what it believes to be other major trends in Québec education today, or at least

what it feels should be considered as subjects of priority concern: equality of opportunity, continuing education, values education, respect for religious and ethnic diversity, parental participation. Finally, several major aspects in the development of the consultative function in education are emphasized in follow up to the creation of the Council of Colleges.

The advice and recommendations submitted by the Conseil during the course of the year are presented in the Appendix. Its activity report has been published under separate cover.

PART ONE

General Observations

I. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

1. THE NEW CHALLENGE

A popular theme

To understand what constitutes quality in education or why some education may be called quality education is a matter of prime concern to Québec at the present moment. The many fact-finding visits carried out by the committees and commissions of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation across the province at large amply testify to the above concern. Researchers, educators, parents and ratepayers are not only seeking to define quality but to assess and measure it as well.

If the people with an immediate interest in education are seriously préoccupied with the question of quality, it should be noted that those who govern also share their concern. The introduction to the *Plan of Action* for primary and secondary education contains no less than four paragraphs devoted to emphasizing the government's intention to deal with the challenge of quality:

"It (the government) is responsible for defining the main objectives of the school system and for selecting the means whereby the quality of education throughout Québec may be ensured". (1)

In taking a look beyond our own borders, we find the United States and Europe equally preoccupied with the quality of education.

And if the situation is so, it is hardly by chance.

(1) MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION, *The Schools of Québec. Policy Statement and Plan of Action*, Québec 1979, p. 12.

It seems, in effect, that the question of the quality of education first arose following a decline in the expansionist phase of various educational systems, and more particularly in the case of Québec, immediately after a serious inventory had been undertaken to assess the fifteen years of strenuous efforts expended by the population to develop its educational services.

After a lengthy period of activity stock-taking was inevitably necessary, especially in the face of the major changes now contemplated. The disturbing decline in the birth rate and its effects on the organization and distribution of school services, the budgetary restrictions now imposed by a seemingly gasping economy were all factors in helping to sound the alarm.

The pressures on the State's budget from other governmental divisions desperately looking for funds conspired to create the image of an educational enterprise increasingly difficult to support. Governed to a large extent by apparently incompressible expenditures, the education budget, which saw its costs rising with the pace of inflation, became an object of envy or cause for reflection. Some people quite naturally began to wonder whether education was worth the money being poured into it -- the normal reaction of the consumer inclined to re-examine the value of the product he is buying when its price goes up.

Parents, who are indeed ratepayers too, also began to demand that the school system be held responsible for its numerous promises and for the great expectations it had raised.

Furthermore, the multiple, constant and often major changes brought about by the educational reforms of the sixties and seventies -- an experimental period characterized by innovation and testing on all fronts -- were bound to have entailed some errors or miscalculations. Change, in itself, would soon be looked upon with apprehension, and when there seemed to be little control and evaluation, it would next be viewed with suspicion and later on, outwardly condemned.

The quality of the school's performance would also be questioned, often by the very persons who had initiated the reform and seen to its implementation. Thus were we to repeatedly hear, and from individual schools themselves, how much the school system would have to be further modified to eliminate some of the unexpected or undesirable side-effects of democratized schooling, once the major goal of the educational reform.

Consider, for example, the overall organization of a school, its environment, size, structures, the value of the programs it offers, the workload of its teaching staff, its pupil/teacher relationships, which are all matters to be taken into account where the quality of education is concerned, and education which must furthermore be geared to the needs of "individual students".

To conclude the above enumeration, let us see how our concern for quality relates to another larger concern — the quality of life. Today's industrialized societies, no longer besieged with survival problems but having created new ones linked to affluency and irresponsibility, are presently obsessed by environmental and ecological issues. When their vital needs are satisfied, affluent societies can turn to other aspirations, define better lifestyles and concentrate on the means to attain them.

The same situation doubtlessly applies to education. If we can now situate our educational reforms behind the banner of quality, no doubt we too have crossed the threshold of the essential minimum.

Would focusing our attention on the quality of education therefore mean to concentrate on an unduly exaggerated or superfluous problem?

*An expression
to be clarified*

If our concern for quality has now become a fact of life and not merely a fashionable theme, it still embodies the risk of being used as a magic formula. We may be tempted to believe we have now

solved all of our problems through the simple application of a new diagnosis.

Too much discourse on the quality of education can be an obstacle to the improvement of educational services. Rather than to focus our attention on the special problems that must be attacked in order to effect improvements, such discourse can nourish the illusion that the quality we seek will suddenly emerge through some good fortune or special miracle. Yet, quality education will never be more than the result of premeditated and sustained efforts.

It is therefore necessary to clarify the meaning of our expression and to remain critical of how it is used. The Council would like to point out how simple it is to let oneself get carried away by strong but fleeting currents. The quality of education is, indeed, one such current; care should be taken to see that it does not develop into a slogan. Though every reason urges us to speak of quality it should be done so only in the most realistic of terms.

Neither must the quality of education become the exclusive preserve of the specialists. There may be a danger in this area, just as in many others, of professionalization, or a tendency to place serious and important questions in the hands of the experts. As gradually happened in the case of objectives, quality may easily become a private domain, thus depriving the public and parents of their right to express themselves on the subject.

Again, a means must be found for relating the discussion on quality to the concerns of those who demand accounts and speak in terms of figures. If it is maintained that quality has nothing to do with quantity, then quality cannot be used as an argument for claiming larger subsidies. The temptation to reduce the search for quality to a multiplication of measures and statistics must therefore be resisted.

In adopting quality as a special theme, the Council refuses to seek refuge on neutral ground. Because of the enveloping nature of this theme and the fact it has been primarily presented in conjunction with the school and its educational process, quality must not serve as a pretext for neglecting other major and taxing

issues. In pointing to the need felt by the population to now concentrate on the quality of education, the Council has no intention of neglecting other important commitments such as equality of opportunity and continuing education.

*A challenge to
be accepted*

It is precisely the coordination of this concern for quality with other exigencies of the educational reform that, to the mind of the Council, constitutes the greatest and most difficult challenge of all. To convince oneself of this fact, one need only recall the current debates over quality and democratization. There is no doubt that the quality of education is plainly the new challenge in Québec education today. The Council believes that ahead of us lies an important task of defining and clarifying to be accepted, greater energy of purpose to be developed, and even certain possibly painful correctives to be envisaged.

Nevertheless, the most difficult task, in its view, is that Québec society will agree to accept this new challenge without renouncing, neglecting or relegating to the background the obligations it took on at the start of the reform of the sixties. And it will be necessary for us to speak of the challenge of quality in equality of opportunity, or else repudiate all that we have been trying to achieve over the past fifteen years.

2. AN OPEN DEFINITION

According to the dictionary, quality designates the superiority or inferiority of a thing, that which makes one thing more or less recommendable or establishes its essential value.

For consumers and investors, the quality of an objet is measured in terms of its cost price.

*The common
meaning*

The common meaning of quality is excellence; in other words, the combination of utility, solidity and beauty sought in an object that is able to perform the service expected of it.

What, then, do we mean by the quality of education?

The generally accepted meaning of quality education is education that pursues recognized and desirable objectives. For example, to offer a child a kind of education that will enable him to find interesting and lucrative work some day, a valid place in society with a chance to take advantage of the opportunities it offers would be considered quality education.

The commonly accepted meaning of quality education supposes quality human resources (teachers). The normal answer to the question of "what do you mean by an excellent teacher?" consists of examples or personal names rather than a precise definition of the terms.

The commonly accepted meaning of quality education also implies adequate material resources and a sound and stimulating climate.

*A multi-faceted
reality*

It goes without saying that there are many facets to quality education. It has numerous components and its content will vary according to different persons, groups, societies or time periods.

For many parents, quality is normally associated with the mastering of the basics: reading, writing and arithmetic.

Colleges and universities may equate it with the intellectual discipline that must be developed during compulsory schooling as a prerequisite to higher learning.

Industry may place the emphasis on a sound and versatile technical background for our market of competition.

Some educators may emphasize greater possibilities for personal development and new pupil/teacher relationships.

If they do sound somewhat commonplace, these spontaneous comments about quality are far from trite. To carry on farther, it then becomes necessary to isolate the criteria used for assessing quality.

The criteria of quality

Whether the quality of education is assessed in terms of its utility, its degree of excellence, the validity of its objectives or the quality of its resources, or in terms of its cost price, one is always confronted by the relative nature of the criteria used by different persons in forming their own value judgments.

The above criteria may be referred to when assessing the quality of education or one may have recourse to the internal norms of the school world, which is to say, to compare one system, establishment, program, or kind of training against an abstract model considered ideal by the experts who work within the system.

The quality of education may also be assessed by comparing a system, establishment, program, or kind of training to something found outside Québec in comparable areas of activity. This way of proceeding is obviously more simple than viable for the problem now consists in determining why this or that case was selected as a comparison point in the first place. The comparison is accepted more easily when the criteria used are models of international recognition based on indisputable achievements, as in the case of major universities of worldwide repute.

A third method for evaluating quality in education is to rely on established tradition. "History becomes a minimal norm which

permits us to avoid constantly starting anew". (1)

What has always been done and recognized as the right way to proceed becomes the answer as to how to continue to proceed. It might be added the movement back to the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic constitutes a timely illustration of the above statement.

In a similar but more limited sense we are led to the threshold of a definition that must be open and remain so.

*No universal
definition*

We must, it so seems, resign ourselves to the fact we will not find an absolute, final or totally satisfying definition of quality in education mainly because in such a matter values or obvious truths can never be imposed. Then, like all major concepts, to try to live by them is easier than to explain or analyze them.

To speak of quality, be it the quality of life or the quality of education, compels us to go back to selected standards or criteria, therefore to values, so we see we have little chance of finding objective references that can be imposed universally.

The problems awaiting those who tackle the issue of quality, and moreso quality in the area of education, are tied up with values, ideologies, traditions, conceptions of man and life which vary from one social, economic or cultural group to another. There is no neutral ground or no universal definition of quality in education. Quality is defined in terms of personal opinions or convictions, or on the basis of the meaning and value assigned to different aspects of education.

(1) COMMISSION D'ETUDE SUR LES UNIVERSITES, *Rapport du Comité d'étude sur l'université et la société québécoise*, Québec mai 1979, p. 99.

The choices made in this particular area have absolutely nothing to do with techniques, prescriptions or mathematical computations.

To define quality means to opt for a certain way of life or a particular system of values.

Quality, then, is an open concept; to suggest an absolute definition would be illusory, naive and most pretentious.

We all know that we live in a society where everybody does not see eye to eye on most major issues, hence the proverb "different people have different opinions". But on a subject that concerns something considered of vital importance to the population — namely, the education of its children — it is important to take the long detour before arriving at a common definition of what should be the essential minimum for quality education in Québec, in 1979.

This is all the more important in that we have been bent on demanding a great many different and even contradictory things from our schools in recent years. The Council of course realizes the school is not the only place of education, possibly not even the most decisive place. But, it is aware of the hopes that we, as a society, have placed on the school, often because of the unstable situation of other places of education, mainly with reference to the family.

If our definition of quality must remain open, if our educational aspirations are varied, if the reference points which guide us are multiple, it should then be possible to erect a few models of quality through different combinations of the elements of quality. And if we try to formulate several definitions, several proposed combinations as opposed to a single model containing all of the elements that are commonly acceptable to all, we may perhaps find ourselves on firmer ground.

3. SOME ELEMENTS OF CONTENT

Asked to complete a sentence beginning with the words "Quality education may be said to exist when...", members of the Council, its committees and commissions suggested the following elements. (1)

First block of proposals

The first block of proposals deals with the inner growth of the learner. They concern the development of the whole person, his or her intellectual development, socio-affective development, the take over of responsibility by the learner for his or her own education, the development of individual autonomy, creativity and freedom.

Quality education may be said to exist:

- when all students are able to reach their maximum level of development from the answers they find to their real personal needs (physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, social, religious);
- when all students are able find self-fulfillment as individuals and as active members of society;
- when every dimension of education constitutes a complete harmonious whole;

-
- (1) Divided into groups of five to ten persons, the members of the Council, its committees and commissions first began by compiling a long list of proposals (40 to 50 per group). They were then asked to select five proposals by order of priority. A total of 52 were submitted by the groups as a whole. Some of the proposals were reworded and combined in order to avoid repetition and the results of the above project were used here.

- when all students are led to the end of their capacity to learn, are helped to understand the why and how of what they are made to learn, and have acquired the basic principles of human conduct;
- when students have developed work methods that permit them to grasp problems and to work toward their solution in a critical and autonomous way;
- when students learn how to be open toward others and to appreciate diversity, how to develop their critical powers and recognize their responsibilities as active citizens;
- when students can acquire positive and accurate self-images, and reflect their personal values with due respect for their physical and social environment;
- when students are helped by their teachers to develop respect for hard work and a sense of obligation towards others;
- when students are treated and made to act as the chief agents in their own development;
- when each student has developed the necessary motivation and ability to pursue his or her development independently;
- when the child is considered the centre of gravity or first priority in the total educational scene;
- when learners are helped to develop autonomy, creativity, freedom and responsibility to an ever-increasing degree.

A first definition of quality

The above proposals reflect the strongest trend of opinion. Almost two-thirds of all proposals retained fell into this first category. This trend shows that the respondents define "quality" in concepts and terms used to describe the ultimate goals or objectives of education.

Education is therefore quality education when it is aimed at the right objectives, that is, at those to which each individual, group, society or age attaches the greatest importance.

The quality of education is identified with the quality of the individual who has submitted "*to the influence*" of education. The quality of this "*educated person*" is measured against the educational model each individual designs for himself. This model or ideal is expressed in the goals and objectives each person proposes. These goals and objectives are in turn based on the values to which each person adheres.

*Quality: a
function of
objectives*

Our first definition of quality may now be isolated. The quality of education is *the conformity of the results obtained with the objectives aimed at*. Thus, we cannot speak about the quality of a national system of education without first defining the objectives of education, of the school, of the curriculum, of the system. Again, it is necessary for these objectives to be such that it is possible to evaluate their degree of realization. To the extent that a particular objective is realized is the corresponding quality confirmed. Basically, the definition of quality has a subjective aspect to it, which is to say the choice of goals, no matter by whom they may have been chosen. But quality also has an objective aspect to it, which means we should be capable of measuring the distance between the goals and the results obtained.

In pursuing this first consensus of opinion, we find ourselves dwelling on the results of education, of the school, of the school system, dwelling on what they produce, on what they actually lead to. This also entails the inevitable relationship between quality itself and the important question of evaluation.

*Second block
of proposals*

The operation carried out by the members of the Council permitted us to isolate a second block of proposals that relate to resources in general and to educators in particular, to programs and to the school itself.

Quality education may be said to exist:

- when all agents of education work together on an educational project that belongs to the school as a whole;
- when competent and motivated teachers act as models and friends and seek to establish positive pupil/teacher relationships composed of mutual respect, trust and affection;
- when a serious effort is undertaken to evaluate the school and its teaching/learning process, and all educators are willing to be accountable and feel responsible for being so;
- when the necessary human and financial resources are available to each individual to develop his potential to the full;
- when the school has a stimulating educational environment;
- when the school has a clearly defined philosophy;
- when moral and religious instruction are included in the curriculum to foster understanding of and respect for religious and cultural traditions and to provide something to students to give meaning to their lives;
- when courses and programs are designed and evaluated in terms of the educational objectives being pursued;
- when the school is consciously fulfilling its specific role: to provide knowledge to citizens for their own benefit and that of society, and to provide access to methods of learning;
- when the school and the community accept their respective responsibilities and cooperate together.

*A second
definition
of quality*

A second trend of opinion emerges from the reading of the foregoing proposals. Almost one-third deal with required resources and with conditions pertaining to the school environment and to the way in which schools operate. The main focus here is on the quality

of the school's human and material resources, study programs, interpersonal relationships, means and methods of operation, the environment or climate in which education takes place. The reasoning behind this conception of quality may be stated as follows: adequate resources and respect for certain conditions foster orderly operation and effective action which, in turn, fosters achievement of the desired results.

During the past decade, many attempts have been made to evaluate school establishments and their respective activities. These evaluations were primarily effected in terms of the resources invested in the school system. The evaluations carried out by American accreditation agencies were based on the proposition that an increase in the physical, financial and human resources of schools automatically entailed a corresponding increase in the quality or value of the education dispensed.

Again, today, we have come to realize that to evaluate results in education is no simple matter. The difficulty of measuring the qualitative, the problem of separating what is due to the influence of one factor or many other possible factors often obliges us to resort to indirect approaches for evaluating quality.

*Quality: a
function of
resources*

We now find ourselves with a second definition of quality. The quality of education is equal to *the value of the resources invested and the quality of the environment*. It is a function of the conditions under which schools operate and a function of the climate that surrounds their interpersonal relationships.

*Third block
of proposals*

Our third and final block of suggestions formulated by the members of the Council deals with the attitudes of the school's clients toward education.

Quality education exists

- when positive retroaction exists; in other words, when most students are still satisfied with what they got from their school a few months or years later;
- when teachers like to teach and students like to learn;
- when students like their school and are happy to be there.

*A third
definition
of quality*

This third block corresponds to a new tendency to now define quality in terms of the attitudes and testimony of the clients. Client satisfaction becomes the criterion of quality in education.

*Quality: a
function of
satisfaction*

A third definition of quality may then be expressed as follows. *Quality education is what the population regards as quality education and wants for its children.*

The expression "*quality of education*" evokes content, and consequently, different realities, if we address ourselves to a population which is itself diversified.

As in the two previous cases, the link between the notion of quality and evaluation is most obvious. Evaluation, in this case, will be based on an inventory of the aspirations of the population and on the measures taken to satisfy them.

Our three blocks of proposals illustrate different ways of defining quality in education. In our view, they confirm the necessity of keeping our definition of quality open.

On the other hand, the proposals selected by the members of the Council, its committees and commissions are, for the most part, of a general or abstract nature. It is obvious that if such definitions are to be utilized, they must be decomposed in order to identify certain basic elements on which concrete action can be taken. The Council believes this to be the task to which we must address ourselves in the coming years, thereby joining the ranks of all those involved in research on social indicators.

Some distinctions

Within the same vein, a complementary remark appears essential in order to emphasize certain elementary distinctions.

To speak about the quality of education is to speak about too many things at once. Far too many things, for the word education includes everything directly related to the school system and all that extends beyond it. If it is natural to give priority to the school, it is well known that education and learning do not happen at school alone.

We may then choose to speak about the quality of school education. But this again means to speak about too many things at once, because the school, by definition here, means all formal education — primary, secondary, college and university. It is not likely that the elements used to define the quality of primary education would apply equally to university education. Of course, some common points do exist but their standards are scarcely the same.

One may choose to speak of the quality of education at individual levels of education. But this again implies covering too many things at once. Primary education, for example, now consists of an immense network whose quality may reasonably be questioned. Primary education also concerns hundreds of establishments; it would thus be necessary to determine the quality of each establishment. Primary education moreover involves hundreds of educational activities, thus the quality of these activities would also have to be established. Finally, and above all, primary education concerns thousands of children who are daily subjected

to the educative influence of their respective schools, which may be of greater or lesser quality.

If the above proposals on quality in education are to have real meaning, it is imperative to clarify their scope. If not, then our above efforts fall into the category of well-intentioned but idle talk.

4. THE STEPS AHEAD

Quality education will then be education that pursues desirable objectives, that respects certain specific conditions, that benefits of adequate means and resources, and that satisfies the aspirations of the population for whom it was instituted to serve.

This is the conclusion suggested from a cursory examination of the concept of quality in education. It is the conclusion toward which the persons heard by the Council, its own preliminary research and the Québec government's recent publications on the subject all seem to point.

As initially stated, the quality of education has become a subject of widespread concern to the world of education — teachers, administrators and the government — and to parents and the general public as well. This is an auspicious sign. Yet, if our efforts in the forthcoming years are not centred on providing quality with a solid basis and with instruments for its verification and evaluation, then our concern for quality may eventually weaken and even disappear.

After this preliminary reflection on the concept of quality and its varied components, the Council is more convinced than ever of the need for further research to lead to a clearer definition of the concept.

Without attempting to confine quality within too narrow a concept, it is important that the components of quality education be defined and analyzed more precisely.

It is especially important, and this is undoubtedly the most difficult task of all, to proceed beyond empirical collections of definitions gathered from the spontaneous expression of opinions. Though the present text does see fit to compile expressed opinions, the Conseil supérieur knows full well it is necessary to proceed much farther. And to go farther first means to make choices. Juxtapositioning current preferences no longer suffices for it is quite possible that they cannot all be reconciled. The risk and the difficulty of making choices cannot be put off for ever.

The fields of investigation are immense. The notion of quality must be investigated as applied to teacher education, to individual schools, school programs and activities, to particular networks and to out-of-school resources and learning activities.

All given definitions of the expression "quality education" must be thoroughly re-examined in terms of content and evaluation, and in terms of the responsibilities that belong to each agent in education.

Now that the Council has taken this first step, it is convinced of the need that now exists for systematized research on the identification of the components or indicators of quality, which is a prerequisite to comprehension of the language of quality. If an understanding of the language of quality in education presupposes knowledge on the part of the initiated about the "world of education" and the school world in particular, then the means must be found to translate this language for the layman or general public. The public is looking for indicators, reference points or clues, in a word, for reliable guidelines to point out when quality is present or not in education.

Educators, administrators and the government, on their side, absolutely need means, and the least controversial possible, for evaluating quality in education.

The Council is not without knowing that evaluation is a delicate undertaking, that it can generate much apprehension and even meet with outright resistance, beginning with the familiar postulate that quality cannot be poured into units designed to measure quantity.

The Council has one final wish to express: that its concern for quality may be shared by everyone connected with education as a challenge of the utmost importance and urgency. And if this challenge is to be taken up adequately, its full importance and implications in everyday life must be totally recognized and accepted by all.

2. MAJOR TRENDS IN QUEBEC EDUCATION

Society has presented the world of education with a new subject for consideration -- that of quality, and the world of education is responding to the subject to a constantly increasing degree. It is one of the characteristic traits of the current educational situation. *The quality of education.* The Conseil has sought to grasp the meaning or to give operational definition to this both elusive and most inclusive of themes. There are, nonetheless, other strong currents or trends now affecting the direction of our education which are not irrelevant to quality and which have served to inspire a number of research projects, advice and recommendations from the Conseil supérieur in the course of the year under review. They are identified and briefly described below.

THE PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS

Let us begin with the active involvement of parents. Parents, in recent years, have been tentatively seeking a new role and place in the educational system. A rigorous and extensive survey of the executive and membership of the school committees enabled the Conseil to trace their development towards a more active exercise of parental responsibility in school education. (1)

The very recent legislative provisions adopted in follow up to the consultation on the *Green Paper* and to the policy statement *The Schools of Québec* mark only one step in a process of development that will continue to demand strong attention.

The results of the survey offer at the same time a concrete and detailed picture of the school committees from which these

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- (1) P. GOERGEAULT, L. SYLVAIN et alii, La participation des parents dans les Comités d'école, Direction de la recherche, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1978 et 1979, 14 fascicules.

committees should be able to draw great profit for refining their operations and exploiting more fully the new arrangements provided for in the legislation of June 30, 1979.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The issue of equality of educational opportunity has gradually begun to reveal itself in all its complexity in recent years. This theoretical concept or political policy which may have seemed unquestionable not so very long ago has shown itself, as confirmed by the facts, to have been based on a very incomplete perception of the educational reality or system and its intricate relationships with the social system as a whole. The problem of equality of opportunity is essentially the same in other sub-systems, such as that of health services, for example.

It is a question that must continue to generate serious study. There is a growing awareness of the problems involved in most educational circles, as shown at the general consultation session convened by the Conseil in March 1979. (1) But the new and finer perception of the phenomenon of inequality in educational opportunity and the new concentration on the theories and practices it has aroused up to now will lead to new choices and commitments. (2)

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Thirdly, continuing education. Within the frame of its policy of cultural development, the government was quick to espouse the concept of continuing education adopted at the last General

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- (1) See Rencontre de consultation 1979. L'égalité des chances en éducation. Compte rendu, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1979.
 - (2) See M. LEVESQUE, L'égalité des chances en éducation. Conceptions théoriques et approches empiriques, Direction de la recherche, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1979.

Assembly of UNESCO: continuing education "designates a global project aimed both at restructuring the existing educational system and at developing all of the possibilities for training exterior to the educational system", (1) The twofold objective of the government in the area of education is "to give a new impetus to continuing education" and correlatively, to bring the school back to its "basic" role.

It cannot be said this ambitious project is reflected as clearly as stated here in the present plans of the ministère de l'Education for its schools and colleges. Must the "new impetus" to continuing education be delayed until a later stage, such as the promised policy on adult education? It was the upsurge of the adult population towards the school system that gave birth to the idea of continuing education. It may still be through the medium of adult education that this concept will be put into concrete application. In 1978, the Conseil submitted advice to the Minister of Education, the content of which it regards as extremely important. Recommended are elements of a policy of adult education within the context of continuing education. (2) But the Conseil insists on emphasizing that the educational enterprise as a whole must be much more sensitized to the concept of continuing education.

VALUES EDUCATION AT SCHOOL

Our forth new trend in education concerns values education. The Conseil returns again this year to this vital question which has been the subject of serious studies and experimentation in most north-American and European educational circles.

(1) Recommendations on the development of adult education adopted by the General Assembly of UNESCO at Nairobi (Kenya) october-november 1976; See GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, A Cultural Development Policy for Québec, Quebec 1978, Vol. 2, pp. 410-416.

(2) See chapter on adult education.

With a view to contributing to Québec's experience with this subject, the Conseil in the course of the year launched the results of a major research study on values in school education. The study includes an analysis of the situation of values education in the school system and proposes guidelines for new action. (1) It is to be hoped that the educational milieux will be prompted to conduct their own analysis of the situation and to determine their individual orientations. The Conseil also points out that the policy statement and plan of action *The Schools of Québec* identifies a certain number of values as sources of inspiration for school education, and adds that "it is the responsibility of each school to identify the values necessary for its educational project and to effect choices which reflect the aspirations of the community". (2) It is essential that determined and constructive efforts are made at the level of the system as a whole and at the level of each school establishment to give values education its proper and explicit place in educative practices.

Two major preoccupations solicit our more immediate attention - religious and ethnic diversity in the school sector, and the function of consultation in education. Both are developed to some extent by the Conseil in the following pages.

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN THE SCHOOL SECTOR

In expressing its agreement with those sections of the policy statement *The Schools of Québec* on "the Open School", "A Diversified Institution" and "Types of Public Schools" (3),

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- (1) ANDRE NAUD and LUCIEN MORIN, *Values in School Education*, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1979; supplement by REGINALD GREGOIRE Television and Values in the Educational Project, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1979.
 - (2) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC. MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION, *The Schools of Québec. Policy Statement and Plan of Action*, Québec 1979, p. 27 ss.
 - (3) Ibid., pp. 17-23.

the Conseil wishes to underline once more the exigencies of a growing diversity in the school milieu. (1) It notes with satisfaction that the Comité catholique, in a remarkable brochure, has suggested areas for reflection and action in order to help Catholic schools to be more receptive to children of different religious and cultural backgrounds (2). The Conseil is equally pleased with the strong and clear stand recently taken by the Comité on the question of the revocation of the confessional status of an establishment recognized as Catholic. (3). The repercussions created by the Comité's decision relative to Notre-Dame-des-Neiges school in Montreal are indicative of the sort of problems that diversity raises in the school system and also the extent to which serious attention will have to be paid to this question in the future.

Throughout the past and present year, the Conseil sought to learn more about the expectations of the principal religious and ethnic minorities which make use of the school system. Recommendations were recently submitted to the Minister of Education.

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Let us begin by reviewing certain guidelines relative to religious diversity within our confessional school system.

a) Wherever moral and religious confessional instruction is offered, as in the case of most schools, parents have the right, on the one hand, to withhold their children from following such instruction if they consider it unacceptable, or on the other hand to obtain non-confessional moral instruction for their children from the school. This right to exemption is recognized in principle, but further measures must be taken

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- (1) See CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education. Report 1977-1978, Quebec 1978, pp. 13-35.
 - (2) COMITE CATHOLIQUE, Dans ce pays. A l'école catholique l'accueil des enfants de traditions religieuses et culturelles diverses, Québec 1978.
 - (3) COMITE CATHOLIQUE. Critères de révocation du statut confessionnel d'une école catholique, May 1979.

so that parents may avail themselves of it without prejudice to their children: objective information to parents on this right; adequate supervision by the school of exempted pupils; the application of a programme of moral instruction adapted to exempted pupils. It must be admitted that the implementation of these provisions is often complex, sometimes neglected or even hampered. (1)

b) In the application of the historically recognized right of the Catholic and Protestant communities to moral and religious confessional instruction, the expectations of other important communities cannot be ignored, particularly the Jewish and Orthodox communities.

c) In an increasingly pluralistic milieu such as Montreal in particular, it would not appear advisable to multiply schools under various labels: Jewish, Orthodox, Moslem, etc. It would be preferable to have public schools offer diversified moral and religious instruction, or again, instruction adapted to a heterogeneous clientele. This latter method is probably the best when taking into account the increasing dispersion of the school population in urban centres, or the preference of parents for the neighbourhood elementary school. But in a democratic society such as ours, it would be unacceptable for the State to impose a single type of school. Today, a high percentage of parents choose schools whose educational philosophy corresponds to their religious beliefs; others favour schools either more open to variety, or pluralistic; others prefer neutral public schools. *In the following years, new developments will demand a lot of cautiousness and flexibility on the part of school administrators, otherwise attitudes may crystalize and lead to serious quarrels and conflicts.*

(1) See observations of the Comité catholique in CONSEIL SUPÉRIEUR DE L'ÉDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education; Report 1977-1978, Québec 1978, pp. 132-134, and those of the Commissions of elementary and secondary education in chapters 3 and 4 of Part Two.

d) No programmes of moral and religious confessional instruction should be offered in the school environment unless parents and the religious communities to which they belong have something to say on their content and application; which leads to the need for mechanisms that allow the communities to be consulted and to participate.

These guidelines should enable us to trace certain lines of action, or at least to make a few realistic moves immediately without allowing our customary positions and practices to harden or stifle all initiative until the end of some unduly exhaustive debate.

Rather than to be restrained by the difficulties encountered, the school milieu should reflect imagination and even audacity in a search for suitable means to ensure due respect for the religious freedom of students and parents.

Thus, the Conseil believes we must apply ourselves resolutely to facilitating exercise of the right of parents to choose moral instruction rather than catholic or protestant moral and religious instruction for their children. Because of the high percentage or even majority of orthodox or Jewish students in many Montreal schools, the Conseil also believes such students could be offered readapted moral and religious instruction programs designed in cooperation with the Orthodox or Jewish communities.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

In both its policy on the French language and its cultural development policy, the government has stated "that a viable society must consider the contributions from its own diversity to be essentially enriching". (1) This principle is then applied to Québec society:

(1) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, La politique québécoise de la langue française, June 1977, II; A Cultural Development Policy for Québec, Québec 1978, Vol. I, chap. III.

"The necessity of French-speaking Quebecers to be constantly preoccupied with their own cultural survival, their economic and political inferiority, had as a consequence a neglecting of the efforts made by their Italian, Jewish, Greek and other fellow citizens to preserve their respective mother tongues and cultural values. The "melting pot" model adopted by American society is, nowadays, fortunately more and more questioned. The hasty assimilation of all new immigrants, to the point that in one or two generations they lose all ties with their motherland, is not a desirable goal. A society which allows its minority groups to preserve their language and culture is a wealthier and probably better balanced society. This could be the case of Québec". (1)

Within these perspectives, it would not be right for the school to neglect its proper role. If French-language schools contented themselves to remain socially isolated in the past, they must henceforth actively cultivate greater understanding between young Quebecers of all origins. In particular, they must:

- a) give place, in the transmission of Québec's heritage, to the values of the ethnic groups and thus develop receptiveness within the Québec cultural frame;
- b) consider the values of the various ethnic groups as a positive contribution to the development of Québec culture - the teaching of history, geography and languages being particularly conducive to this goal - which means more than simply adopting an attitude of tolerance or compromise;
- c) favour the pursuit of fundamental human values which are common to all, irrespective of ethnic differences;
- d) encourage ethnic groups to maintain their diversity.

Minimal emergency services are required for newcomers. Reception classes offer these services only in part, but they must do more in order to facilitate the transfer of immigrant children

(1) La politique québécoise de la langue française, II.

to regular classes. These newly arrived children feel lost, completely overcome in a new group. They need sustained individual help, and often particular pedagogical intervention, otherwise they rapidly experience problems of adaptation and learning from which they have difficulty to recover. Various measures several of which do not entail any expenditure, such as "the sponsorship of pupils" for example, are indicated. Even the teaching of certain subjects, such as language, history and geography of the country of origin of the newcomers could greatly favour their integration. Besides, the difficulties of adaptation are not a particularity of the immigrants only. The pupils from the various ethnic groups born in Québec and often of parents who are Quebecers of ancient stock, may experience the same difficulties. Therefore educators ought to take care of these particular pupils as well. Without such preoccupations, ethnic minorities' students often find themselves in so-called "decelerated" classes or in special classes.

The teacher's role, then, is obviously of primary importance; thus, the following measures might be applied.

- Teachers of schools that receive children of ethnic minority groups should be sensitized to the special needs of these children.
- A special pupil/teacher ratio for these schools is also indicated.
- Wherever ethnic groups are relatively important in numbers, school boards should be allowed to appoint teachers of similar ethnic origin to these schools.

Finally, within the perspective of implanting the school more firmly in its own environment, it seems that school boards could make their schools more available to the communities they serve and to their cultural activities.

Indeed, the Conseil is fully aware of the difficulties created by the sheer complexity of interconfessional and intercultural relations in the school sector which must be confronted with

force and determination, and advantage even taken of educational opportunities such relations afford. That is why the Conseil urges reflection and action for a more open and attentive reception to children of different religious and cultural backgrounds in the public school system of Québec.

THE CONSULTATIVE FUNCTION IN EDUCATION

Before presenting an overview of the state and needs of each sector of the educational system in part two of its report, the Conseil once again seeks to bring to light another concern of a general nature - the situation and future of the consultative function in education. In celebrating the fifteenth year of its existence, the Conseil could well have been persuaded to take a new look at the consultative function in education of which it was made the principal trustee at the start of the school reform of the 1960s, but regrets it was never given an opportunity to do so. The question found itself raised and settled in a precipitated way with the government's creation of a Council of Colleges as announced in October 1978, and effectively realized in June 1979.

The Ministère de l'éducation undertook to revise the educational system in a series of successive steps. A consultation was held and a policy statement and plan of action for the primary and secondary levels next released. The plans of the government have already been developed in the area of the CEGEPs. It is now preparing to draw its conclusions from a study done by a special commission on the universities, and has announced it will then concentrate on a policy of adult education. Its revisions are based on the way the education system is patterned and point to the utility of consultative bodies fashioned in the same way, limited to single levels of education, attuned to the realities of separate branches and capable of satisfying in an ad hoc and rapid way requests for advice from the administration which is, itself, structured in terms of levels or branches. Created in 1968, the Council of universities provides an example of a relevant and efficient consultative body. The government's intention had been to create a Council of Colleges patterned after the above model while at the same time limit the field of action of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation to the primary and secondary levels of education.

The Conseil supérieur does not reject the principle of sectorial councils. It has the experience of specialized commissions with which it was endowed on a recommendation of the Parent Report and to whom it has given full responsibility for satisfying countless requests for advice from the Minister on very specific questions. It was the Conseil itself who had recommended, in 1966, the creation of an Office, to be later called Council of Universities, and in 1975, the creation of a Council of Colleges. The administration should be able to solicit specific advice and obtain a prompt reply on matters related to one education level or another, often of a technical and detailed nature.

Nevertheless, drawing from its experience and from the reasons which led to its inception, the Conseil supérieur is convinced that there must be a place where citizens are able to reflect upon education as a whole, to watch over its orientations, to determine future trends, to see about the development of the educational system as a whole.

Must we be reminded of the origins of the Conseil supérieur?

"A Ministry of Education would be incomplete without a Council of Education... The magnitude of the investment in education has led us to recommend the appointment of a Minister. Education, however, involves other dimensions concerning which representatives of a different kind have the right and the duty to make themselves heard". (1)

"The Council will contribute to the co-ordination of the disparate elements which now make up the educational system - the public and private, Roman Catholic and Protestant sections, secondary and higher education, etc. These various elements should emerge from their present isolation to constitute a whole... one of the most important tasks of the Council will

(1) Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the province of Québec, Québec 1963-1964, Part one, p. 86.

be to promote the progress of education as conceived as a whole, to encourage unity and balance between all its objectives and all its constituent parts," (1)

"Once relieved of executive responsibilities, the Council could retain its proper independence in its relations with the Minister. It would be in a better position to offer fresh points of view on educational policy, to make bold suggestions, to take a broad over-all view and to criticize when criticism is in order. Persons who are closely involved in burdensome administrative work do not always have the perspective and the leisure to see clearly what changes are needed. Responsibility to keep the educational system in contact with the evolution of society, to point out what changes should be made and to encourage long-term planning will rest above all with the Superior Council of Education." (2)

This point of view has been defended by the government itself in its White Paper on cultural development. This document, which promotes the development of general culture in all aspects of life - health, leisure, work, communications, etc., explicitly defines the role of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation within this wide perspective. (3) Education's scope extends beyond the educational system and, in keeping with the broad concept of continuing education to which the government expressly wishes to give a new impetus includes all education taking place in and out of school within a given community. (4) The document *Colleges in Québec* recognizes the need for a "thorough implementation of continuing education" and for the "institution of an authentic learning society". (5) Both

(1) Ibid., pp. 110 and 114.

(2) Ibid., p. 107.

(3) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, A Cultural Development Policy for Québec, Québec 1978, Vol. 2, p. 299.

(4) Ibid., p. 448.

(5) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, Colleges in Québec. A New Phase, Québec, 1978, p. 43.

documents, on the other hand, urge school establishments at all levels to open themselves above and beyond their conventional tasks to the service of the community they serve,

The hopes and aspirations of the 1960s, far from having faded away, take prominent place today in our expectations for the 1980s. Our present society is, in effect, disturbed "by the dangers represented in a galloping bureaucracy and in an incessantly increasing expansion of State intervention in the life of the citizens". (1) There is a strong demand for democratic participation in the selection of policies affecting collective life, particularly in such areas as health, welfare, environmental planning, education. The government is also much more involved in various forms of consultation - socio-economic conferences, green papers and ministerial hearings, parliamentary commission hearings. So that consultation, however, may not risk becoming monopolized by those bent on protecting their own immediate interests, it must be "structured, in other words, pass through an organism claiming a certain degree of permanency... and, because of its continuity, permits a group of individuals or representatives of society to reflect on certain questions, to furnish an opinion to the government, and to mirror the currents of thought and opinion circulating through the population". (2) The democratic evolution of our collective life itself calls for such a consultative body which, in education, considers things not from the point of view of the operation and development of a network of establishments or a level of education, but from the point of view of the overall dimension of education within society at large.

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- (1) Guy ROCHER, L'avenir de l'administration publique. International Symposium on Future Trends in Public Administration, Québec, June 1979.
 - (2) Roland PARENTEAU, Address to the Conseil de planification et de développement du Québec, October 1978.

These perspectives, which the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation endorses, do not fit into the mandate of councils instituted in terms of school levels; they call for an advisory body immune to the fluctuations of politics or to the needs of the administration, whose mandate and membership are both conceived in terms of the formulation of comprehensive policies on education in the broadest sense of the term.

That is why the Conseil supérieur, following the creation of the Conseil des collèges, warns the government against a partitioning and reduction of the consultative function in education if it is meant to be exercised exclusively through a juxtaposition of bodies based on educational levels - Conseil des universités, Conseil des collèges, Conseil des écoles... It firmly believes the public is entitled to a special body through which it can express its views and aspirations on education as a whole.

Part Two
SECTORIAL OVERVIEWS

I. THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The 1978-1979 school year took place under generally favourable conditions. Free from major disruptions, Québec schools witnessed a normal year which could be characterized in the following terms: it permitted us to embark upon a search for the essential.

This effort was primarily sustained by two recent Québec undertakings: the publication of the *Green Paper* last year, and the ministerial document *The Schools of Québec* made public during the course of the year under review. Their effect was to inspire reflection and action centred on the pedagogical aspects of school life.

The Comité catholique emphasizes two specific events related to its area of competence that are directed towards the essential. The key case of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges school which raised in an acute way the issue of the specific character of the Catholic school and of the future of the confessional school in a pluralist Québec. Under the new influence of the educational project, the need for clarifying the specific project of a Catholic school was strongly felt in many quarters.

The first section of the following pages deals with our search for the "specifics" of the Catholic school and with a return to basics in two major fields of Christian education: religious instruction and pastoral animation.

Our search for the essential was also stimulated by a world-wide event - the celebration of the International Year of the Child which prompted much discussion and reflection on the person who is claimed, in principle, to be "at the heart of the educational process". It was an occasion for promoting

or criticizing our conception of the child, for revising the place it occupies in normal school life. In the second section of these pages, the Committee submits various observations and reflections on childhood, not to be added to the popular list of platitudes, but to help to readjust the focus on children and on their special rights and privileges.

1. The Specific Character of the Catholic School

*"If I differ from you, I do not diminish
you, I enhance you."*

Saint-Exupéry

In 1974, the Committee took a decision, which when viewed in retrospect appears both bold and positive. Five years ago, the Committee effectively declared that all existing schools under the authority of school boards established for Catholics would be recognized as Catholic schools and, as a result, subject to its regulation.

It was a bold gesture. First of all, it arrived ten years after the creation of the Comité catholique. Secondly, it skimped on consultation, necessary in principle but which might also serve to divert the Committee from its obvious responsibilities. The Committee utilized the declaratory process, taking the confessional character of the schools for granted on the strength of "common report", though some schools would be excluded from the declaration.

The Committee's gesture also had the positive effect of formally placing school authorities and educators before if not necessarily a new situation, at least a newly clarified, spelled out and publicized one. It provoked a new awareness of a reality that had dimmed under the double exposure of time and the activity of the quiet revolution. It prompted reflection and precise action on the part of various milieux, the

ministère de l'éducation and the Comité catholique itself. For example, the Plan for the Development of Christian Education very likely stems from the action taken by the Committee in 1974. Clarification is always liberating.

*The Persistent
Need for
Clarification*

However, no human reality can be clarified in a lasting and final way. The action taken by the Committee in 1974 had furthermore been concerned with juridical and administrative aspects of the school system. Today, teachers, principals, parents, commissioners feel an unprecedented need for identifying more precisely what characterizes or should characterize a Catholic school.

This need is mainly demonstrated in four ways. It first develops in the school board as it starts out to formulate an educational project. This operation, which entails reviewing the principal aspects of school life, often leads to questions on the meaning and relevance of the confessional status of a school. The questions are raised as soon as one begins to "seek the truth" on this dimension of school life. What are parents really seeking with respect to moral and religious instruction? Is the school's confessional status a delusion or a reality? Do the daily operations of a school correspond to its title of Catholic? What is the real philosophy of the Catholic school? How can the profound aims of the Catholic school be translated into simple and operational terms? And how does one concretely administer the confessional dimension of a school?

The need for clarification has greatly increased since publication of the ministerial document *The Schools of Québec*. The government in chapter one of the Action Plan begins by confirming the relevancy of Catholic and Protestant confessional

schools, which, it feels, correspond to the expectations of the majority of the population. Next, it asserts the advantage of having non-confessional public schools in areas where diversity is such that the requirements of the common good invite opting for another type of school (to be defined by the community). This governmental option in favour of plurality in the schools will now urge schools to define or assert their colours. It creates the search for identity.

Another factor that incessantly raises the issue of the specific character of the Catholic school is the growth of diversity within the population, especially within urban centres. This increased diversity now obliges the Catholic school to define better its positions and to find a new balance between its own project and the pluralism which surrounds it.

Last year the Committee had based its entire report on the question of how to situate the Catholic school within the existing pluralist context. It showed that the Catholic school, far from being opposed to a fair perception of pluralism, could on the contrary be seen as a positive element of a democratic and diversified education policy seeking to recognize the respective differences of social and religious groups. On the condition, however, that, barring any kind of monopolistic perspective, the Catholic school is prepared to show its colours clearly with due respect for the religious beliefs of others. Each milieu must come to grips with the question of pluralism if we really hope to clarify the options at the confessional level.

Another element should be added. The captious or overly critical spirit of our times forces us to deal with the ambiguity and silence often surrounding the question of the confessional status of schools. Before the dull and insipid confessional character of some milieu, many are tempted to wonder what the confessional status of a school does in fact mean. Indeed, as Domenach said, in a way "what is expected of men of faith is excessive: day and night they have to show

proof of the sincerity of their commitment". (1) Neither can the Catholic school remain aloof. It has to confront its milieu and constantly express what is specific to it. It has to be able to define its real or ultimate nature.

Finally, the case of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges school also contributed substantially to raising the issue of the Catholic school in that for the first time since publication of the Committee's regulation in 1974 did it become necessary for us to ask what causes a school to have its confessional status revoked? In the case of the request of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges school, the Committee published a declaration on May 9 concerning the criteria for revoking the status of a Catholic school. To confer or to revoke a status are two gestures that require, each in their own way, a definition of what is essential or specific to Catholic education.

*The "specifics" of
a Catholic school*

Let us begin by establishing one fact. We must not expect to find here a "brand-new" definition of the Catholic school for the reality of the Catholic school is not conspicuously new. If it is necessary to renew and define its essential nature more precisely, it is not for purposes of falling into the misleading novelty of publicity or the latest ideological fad.

In its definition, the Catholic school will always include the three following essential features: an attentive concern for the education of the whole person; an explicit and respectful presentation of the Christian Faith; a priority concern for

(1) J.-M. DOMENACH, Ce que je crois, Paris 1978, p.13.

human relationships. Below is a brief description of these three features.

An attentive concern for the education of the whole person.

This means the role of the Catholic school is never limited to mere instruction or juxtaposed courses, though catechetics courses may be included. It wishes to be open to every aspect of a young student's life and to foster his development at all levels. Without trying to do everything, it at least tries to take an educational interest in such pertinent matters as the emotional and sexual education of the young, values education and basic human positions with respect to society and to God. Though it is not the only school preoccupied with the integrated education of the young, it nevertheless reflects a special concern for unity and synthesis in education.

An explicit and respectful presentation of the Christian Faith.

The spiritual, moral and religious dimension is an integral part of the educational philosophy of the Catholic school. It offers religious instruction aimed at permitting the young to broaden their understanding of Christ's message as contained in the Gospel, while developing their sense of moral obligation and religious culture. Within the framework of pastoral animation, the young are also provided an opportunity to practise the Gospel and to live life according to their Faith through concrete learning experiences. Such courses and activities are offered in keeping with the student's rate of development and understanding of his Faith. Students are also entitled to be exempted from this instruction.

A priority concern for human relationships. Catholic schools have always sought for quality relations between their students and teachers, teachers and management, the school and family, the school and the Christian Community. Other schools may place the emphasis either on teaching techniques, on power structures or strategies for social change, etc.. These are all worthy objectives, but quality education in the traditional view of

the Catholic school basically consists of quality relationships among the school community as a whole. Through such relationships, both students and teachers are permitted to grow as human beings and Christians.

The descriptions of the above three features of a Catholic school contain nothing new or exclusive. It is only through them or through their synthesis that the basic nature of the Catholic school emerges. These features are not the attributes of an ideal or abstract school, nor can they be imposed through any form of constraint or even charisma. Rather, they are the necessary and natural expression of an educational philosophy based on the Gospel. They are the essential conditions for allowing young people to grow and develop through the inspiration of their Faith.

How do these "specifics" influence the school's project?

It shall now be seen how these three features may be articulated within the educational project of a school, for this is the basic question the school sector is primarily concerned with at the moment. How do these three confessional elements affect the school's project as a whole? How can they be compounded so that confessional aims may be stated in simple and meaningful terms for all who are involved in the project of a school?

We shall attempt to answer these questions by proposing two separate paths that converge. But it shall be only a limited attempt for we know that to find the words for describing a project and its articulation does not suffice. What is especially necessary is to find the people to carry it out. And its means of administration as well. Yet there is still use in attempting to describe it. Lucidity leads to responsibility. It makes it possible to create the conditions that lead to advancement.

First approach: To foster a coherent and open environment

The Catholic school wishes to enable young people to experience a christian environment that is both coherent and open. In a pluralist society, it is desirable to have an opportunity to experience an institution and education that are truly based on the Gospel.

In our exploration of this approach, we should begin by saying that Christian faith is not a purely personal or private affair as the reigning doctrine of individualism claims, often relegating faith to the recesses of individual conscience, or as marxist ideology holds, viewing it as an opiated reality and itself as the sole possessor of a concern for the structures and objective conditions of existence. But Christian faith does not reside only in the recesses of the heart. On the contrary, it has always sought to expand into all aspects of social and cultural life.

The Catholic school's goal is precisely to offer the experience of a Christian faith that is openly expressed and in concrete contact with school life: its climate, interpersonal relations, its values and culture. Montherlant once said he could recognize a Catholic convent by the way in which its doors were closed. Therefore, it should be possible to distinguish a Catholic school by certain tangible signs. Perhaps by the way in which its doors are closed or not closed.

Let us take another step. The Catholic school, as we have said, wishes to foster a coherent and open environment. But this is a goal that is not exclusively restricted to Catholic schools. Every school is, in effect, trying to develop its own style and establish a form of coherency. Whether a school be a traditional school, a so-called modern school or free school, in all cases its pedagogical style is invariably defined by adults. They are the ones who have the exclusive right to

select what they think is best for the students. Whether we like it or not, education is always a directive practice.

Even the grandest treatises on non-directive teaching are not exempt from this basic directivity. The pretensions of non-directive teaching have been sufficiently demonstrated and demolished by the work of D. Hameline and M. J. Dardelin for us to have to dwell on them here.

"Every educator is a moralist. And we are quick to add we do not see anything dishonorable about it, even if nowadays the term may have a certain derogatory connotation.

Would this, then, suggest that non-directivity be a moral? Certainly so, if this is intended to mean that principles of action are based as much on values to be promoted as on decisions to be taken into account. Let us say, which is a commonplace, that it at least constitutes a definite program of educative influence on the same footing as any program of education, whatever it be."⁽¹⁾

Every school therefore supports a definite program of educative influence. There is no escape from it. The inevitably contradictory role of any education program must thus be recognized. So that freedom may emerge, it must be provided with a launching pad.

A school, in this sense, would lose its *raison d'être* if it ceased to be indicative and directive. Besides, there is no disgrace in wanting to be directive. But it would be dishonest and dangerous to be directive without defining a direction, in

(1) La liberté d'apprendre, Situation II, Paris 1978, p. 261.

other words, without acknowledging or stating where one is attempting to lead the young. Parents have a right to know and are insisting more and more on that schools inform them of where they are leading their children.

When the Catholic school takes its confessional character seriously it can say clearly in what direction it wants to orient its students with respect to the vision of the world and of life, values and basic moral rules. This at least provides it with a reference point or a guiding principle which can be identified, and moral exigencies which may be prescribed. This permits it to give itself certain poles of coherency or guidelines and therefore the possibility of putting into operation the project of creating an environment that is both coherent and open.

A common purpose and convictions

The Catholic school lays down in principle what there is too great a tendency today to lay down at the end of a lengthy process. It lays down in principle a Faith, a community, a will to live together in freedom and charity. This prevents "beginning again" at every turn, reconstructing or "revolutionizing" the world every new day. It believes in an essential nucleus from the start, a nucleus of teachers who although they may not share each other's convictions entirely, accept to work together at least with respect for certain common beliefs and values.

The Catholic school therefore lays down as principles certain beliefs and values, not as abstractions nor as futile ideals, but as anchorage points of what is at the heart of reality. The values, writes J. M. Domenach, that are often accused of being escapisms or abstractions, are precisely "what permit us to persevere along the uncertain paths of our "semi-successful semi-deficient lives".

Values are what permit the young to persevere along the uncertain path of their school day, of their human development, of their more or less successful daily lives. Values are what permit a team of teachers to endure.

To what beliefs are we referring? Those that are rooted in faith in Jesus of Nazareth, and in faith in mankind.

Of what values are we speaking? Of those that are not the exclusive possession of any religion, and that correspond to the basic aspirations of all persons and that the Christian faith incites us to pursue with extra motivation: solidarity, justice, honesty, due respect for others, liberty, truth. On this subject we recommend an outstanding study by A. Naud and L. Morin *Values in School Education* published this year by the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation.

The very idea of coherency may seem questionable to many persons. On the one hand, there is a legitimate fear of indoctrination, fanaticism, the ghetto. These derivatives are possible and that is why the idea of coherency cannot be dissociated from that of openness which will be discussed later. But if one starts out at once by focussing on the dangers of coherency, one is poorly acquainted with or insufficiently mindful of the dangers of incoherency such as confusion, indifference, disorientation, insecurity, emptiness. To try to provide a coherent universe does not mean to indoctrinate, but to create an environment where identification and direction are possible. A human being needs physical and psychological coherency. Not every person has the capacity to review or renew his philosophy each day.

Because of its concern for coherency, the confessional school may sometimes seem like a ship heavily charged with an ancient cargo. But, reversely, both young people and adults alike soon tire of new or latest wave schools which force them to go to sea every morning without either a compass or map.

The Catholic school "reposes" - in the twofold sense of the word - upon both values and an educational tradition that have already proved their mark.

We do not claim that the Christian faith should constitute the organizational principle of school life as a whole for it is clear that today's school - a complex and autonomous institution - operates in terms of a teaching and administrative reality that is obviously not to be found in the Gospel. What we do claim is that Christian faith plays the role of a guiding principle, thus a norm, in what concerns our conceptions of man and life, conceptions which preside over the educational process and the day-to-day activities of the school. Extending beyond the stage of Faith recognized as an individual or personal option, the specific purpose of the Catholic school is communal expression as such.

An open environment

A respect for others and a preference for the universal, two further essential attributes of Christian faith, must also be a mark of the Catholic school. Accordingly, it must be open and receptive to and considerate of all its students or personnel who do not share the Christian faith. We believe that the Catholic population of Québec would like the environment of its school to be both coherent and open, that is to say, a school environment where the young can discover the full meaning of their own identity, while learning to live in a pluralist world.

As a result, it is important that the Catholic school be constantly concerned about ensuring due respect for the beliefs or convictions of others. Reservations or opposition that are sometimes expressed relative to the clause for exemption from religious instruction, for example, demonstrate a lack of openness which can be seriously detrimental to the purposes of Catholic education. In the ever-increasingly pluralist world

in which we live, the future of the Catholic public school depends on the extent to which it is faithful to coherency and openness in the education it provides.

Second approach: To attempt to teach the young the language of the Gospel

To define the essential character of a Catholic school and to show how it can influence the educational project of the school, another approach may be adopted and, in particular, an analogy with the mother tongue. The objective of the Catholic school is as follows: to teach students the language of the Gospel together with the teaching of other languages such as those of science, literature, arts, history, technology. This second approach may be developed as follows.

What do we mean by a French-language school? It is more than just a school where courses are taught in the French tongue; it is a school where French is spoken throughout the entire day, where the young can develop a taste for what is known as French culture.

Analogically, a Catholic school is a school where children learn the language of the Gospel through specific courses and activities, speak this language throughout the entire school day and as a result, develop a mental outlook and perspective of the world inspired by the Gospel. It is a school where one learns how to speak and live the Gospel.

By language, we obviously mean not only a mode of oral and written expression but a way of living, reacting and understanding the world and finding a place within it. The debates on the French language have made us aware of this wider signification of the word language. And the same applies to the language of the Gospel.

Whatever a Christian may know about the "things hidden since the beginning of time" - the meaning of life, love, death, suffering, the future, the origin of the world and its destiny - he has obtained it from Christ, from His speech, His Word. As a rule he has learned it in conjunction with his mother tongue. He now wishes to transmit this language to his children with something of the same attachment he has for his national tongue, a headstrong, conscious or unconscious attachment that does not have to be constantly explained. And he expects the school to collaborate in this learning of the language of the Gospel.

In this land, for both Christians and non-Christians, the language of the Gospel is an unquestionable cultural fact. It is, therefore, to the advantage of a young person that he at least know its basic phonemes and principal cultural and social expressions if he doesn't want to be like a foreigner incapable of understanding the customs of the people of the land. And this kind of language learning needs the cooperation of the school.

It is often said that the teaching of Faith is a family affair. Indeed, the family is clearly the primary place for learning the language of the Gospel. But were the learning of this language to be left exclusively up to the family, there would be a great danger of reducing the Faith to the level of a domestic religion. The major part played by the school in the socialization of the child permits one to think it is also able, on the religious plane, to help a young person to accede to a religious experience that will not isolate him from the universe of the family. Again, analogically, in order to promote the French language in this land, one cannot count exclusively on the school, although its part may be vital.

More profoundly, while the young at school are learning the language of writing, mathematics, history, science, technology, it is important that they have also a chance to progress in learning the language of the Gospel, which is another approach

to meaning. At this very moment when their culture is taking shape, their Faith should be presented and integrated into their process of growth and development.

The school of the past often placed too much emphasis on religious language, provoking indigestions of meaning among some persons. Since the school reform, the school has shifted the emphasis to the so-called culture of scientific humanism, sometimes provoking spiritual undernourishment. Today, the Catholic school could distinguish itself by seeking to articulate at one and the same time the new culture of scientific humanism and the old and ever new dynamism of the Christian faith.

"Wherever technology advances, the spoken word recedes" (Domenach). In a society where the means of communication are plentiful, people are speaking to each other less and less, so advertising comes to the rescue: "faut se parler". In a school where the techniques of communication abound, students often say that pastoral and religious instruction are the only courses where they are able "to speak". It is up to the Catholic school to preserve the spoken word, and the Word, in a world of babelic communication.

Our present civilization not only massacres wild animals, it also makes life very difficult for spoken languages. "One half of all the living languages in 1950 have since disappeared in the past twenty-five years. About two languages die each month. With each one goes a special way of perceiving and living" (1). The Catholic school wants to contribute to keeping the language of the Gospel alive in the culture of Québec. It wants to give the young the words that are needed for ensuring the survival of the Faith. Are there not plenty of crusades for preserving the baby seals of Labrador?

(1) J.-M. DOMENACH, op. cit., p. 139.

A need for "rediscovering the essential"

In the learning of the language of the Gospel, there are, to some extent, the same problems involved as in the learning of the mother tongue. Certain correctives are also required. In this field as in many others, there is a need to return to basics. This desire has been expressed in different but equally insistent ways by various groups of parents, students and teachers. The hearings of the Committee in recent years leave no room for doubt in this respect.

On first sight, this desire to return to basics may create a fear of a return to purely dogmatic and notional religious instruction or to outmoded pastoral practices. Let it be clearly understood, however, that this new orientation has no wish to promote any nostalgic return to the past.

Rather, it is an invitation to religious instruction and pastoral animation to determine and to demonstrate more clearly the content and subject matter that are specific to each. It is to urge them to identify and to inform each other of their respective missions within the school. It is a call to them to avoid dispersion, to be critical of methodological and anthropological detours which sometimes lead to couching the Gospel in faddish psychological and sociological terms or to sinking into the sands of shared and savoured experience. It is to ask them to separate and select among the experiments and innovations of recent years, so that the views and approaches of the Christian Faith may be taught with more rigorous methods.

Such research has already been initiated in religious instruction, especially in the overall effort now being made to define the objectives of this instruction more clearly, to improve teaching materials, and to plan and evaluate daily accomplishments. It must be pursued and extended. We

add that in the teaching of moral and religious instruction it should be seen to it that purely informative content is not neglected. During the past six years, this content has been seriously neglected. This kind of information and knowledge which are part of the common language of Faith, should be given a wider place, otherwise different generations of believers may no longer find it possible to communicate among themselves. As Jean Guitton has said, there is a need to rehabilitate "that inner and precious faculty of memory which is the fuel of the mind - learning by heart" (1). Religion, like French is learned and lived by heart.

Where pastoral animation is concerned, the Committee is planning to release an orientation document shortly that develops in length and breadth the need for emphasizing the essential practices of the Gospel. We shall limit ourselves here to five areas of learning on which the work of pastoral animation should be centred.

Study of the Christian meaning of life, through a continuous dialogue between the Gospel and the realities of personal and group existence. Study of life in common and in communion with others. Study of personal contact with God in silence, prayer and the celebration of the sacraments. Study of moral behaviour in the light of the Gospel. Study of the ties to be woven between human culture and Faith during the process of growth and development.

To rediscover the essential in therefore to return to the sources of the Gospel and to the basic elements of the language or the Gospel. But it also means that the teaching process must not lose sight of its subject matter - Jesus of Nazareth

(1) J. GUITTON in Le Figaro, November 1976.

and His message for mankind. Religion is sometimes taught without mention of the name of Jesus, and pastoral animation transformed into secular animation. Fortunately, the school world increasingly refuses to accept such practices because it is now seeking the essential.

To present the experiment of a coherent and open Christian environment and to learn the language of the Gospel while learning other languages of human experience are two converging ways of answering the question frequently posed in the school milieu: what is the specific project of the Catholic school? These are two ways of announcing the colours of the Catholic school and of situating it in a school system that wants to be diversified and in a pluralist society that wishes to recognize the right to be different.

This project of the Catholic school may exist even if the words to define it may be few. That the words to define it should outweigh the number of persons prepared to carry it out must be avoided. Yet again, it is necessary to name it and to dare to present it.

2. More Attention to the Child

*"We know that childhood is happiness,
or sorrow, accumulated forever."*

Jean Sullivan, La traversée des illusions

The essential, in school education, is the child. This basic truth is in the process of becoming abused or trite. What don't we do, supposedly, "for the good of the child"? How many interests are hidden beneath this virtuous statement - a statement often used either as a banner or a pretext. There is an urgent need for verifying it, that is, for giving it more truth. The educational project and its development provide a good context for verification. And this year, the

International Year of the Child provides another good opportunity for examining the truth about the child.

Because of the nature of its mandate and the positions it has taken in the past, the Comité catholique feels it has a place among all those who have paid tribute to the child at the request of the United Nations. It was an occasion for us to reassess our conceptions of childhood and the practices that stem from such conceptions.

On one hand, more profound analyses can easily give way to sentimentality in the case of an abstraction such as childhood. On the other hand, much scientific thinking in recent years has been partial to non-directive teaching and Quebec's pedagogues have been equally partial to this approach. Finally, contemporary political behaviour, Western behaviour at least, has developed an unprecedented cult for rights which is at times easily conciliated with a form of outright cruelty equally without precedent. As Bernanos said, "man's heart is hard while his guts is soft. As after the Flood, the world of tomorrow shall perhaps belong to the spineless monsters."

That is why the Committee would like to comment upon the pitfalls of expediency into which much action taken with respect to children falls. It also refers to the Christian tradition on childhood and offers some guidelines for more valid pedagogical practices.

The pitfalls of expediency

The Committee would first like to emphasize that the Year of the Child was a happy endeavour in the sense that numerous countries, organizations, publications, in brief, as many persons as possible were invited to reflect upon the respect

that is due to the child.

But it also insists upon showing up what can be twisted, artificial or hypocritical in an area such as this. There is, in fact, in this endeavour something typical of our societies. We isolate a function, an age, like we isolate a product to boost sales and consumption. There was a Year of the Child, as there was a Year of Woman, Mother's Day, or the Day of the Unknown Soldier. As Nietzsche said, "we have our special sin for daytime, and another for the night, yet we still take care of our health." Likewise, the world proclaims the Year of the Child, just as it keeps the flame of the Unknown Soldier burning but spends billions on arming yellow, red, brown, black, and white hatreds of all sorts.

In celebrating the child, the Committee would like to refer to a danger that exists in appeasing our consciences expediently and in considering ourselves freed from our deepest and most enduring commitments because of some sentimental and passing tribute to childhood.

There is also a danger of distortion or methodological deceit inherent in any laboratory process that consists of isolating and magnifying one aspect of a complex organic reality. A mother is not only a mother, nor is a child only a child.

The first pitfall of expediency is its spineless style. To celebrate the child, we feel compelled to downgrade the adult. We idealize or mythicize childhood. Any concern about the future of the child is interpreted as a violation of childhood, as a race towards the future, as alienation from the mother's womb onwards. We speak of the child as if he were only grace, goodness and innocence.

Another form of expediency is to hitch all of one's wagons to a series of ideological fads. During the course of recent

years, the "Rogerian" engine has been hauling a considerable number of trains, especially in teaching, for it cannot be denied that the theory of non-directivity has had a strong hold on current teaching practices.

The basic postulate in this school of thought is that each person has an instinct for growth, health and social adjustment which denies the reality of destructive conflicts and forces. According to this ideology, the child is treated with a form of optimism that leaves little room for the order and authority of the adult world. Intellectual directivity is replaced by affectivity, which may prove itself a more deceitful and tyrannical master than intelligence or reason. The "I love you - do you love me" is not a wide enough basis for confronting reality in general, and human reality, in particular.

This school of thought overrates the child and often leaves him alone and unarmed before the immense task of reconstructing the world on his own. Criticism of this school of thought is growing stronger today. It may be observed that the objective of "personal growth" produces unexpected repercussions like the downgrading of contents, insecurity, lack of rigour and competence, opting out. (1)

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- (1) See KIRSCHENBAUM, H., On Becoming Carl Rogers, Delacorte, 1979. In the recension of this work, C. Larsh writes: "(...) On the one hand, rogerian psychology legitimates the abdication of familial, educational and religious authority; on the other hand, it provides industrial managers and government bureaucrats with new techniques of psychological manipulation and with an ideology of anti-authoritarianism that helps to disguise mind control as a sincere attempt to promote the individual's "personal growth". (The New Republic, 31.03.79). See also D. HAMELINE and M.-J. DARDELIN, La Liberté d'apprendre, Situation II, Paris, Ed. Ouvrières, 1978.

The Christian tradition is both more realistic and more demanding. It does not try to downgrade childhood nor to treat it as myth. This tradition has certain convictions taken from the Gospel, which the Committee would like to keep in constant circulation, because of their power to enlighten pedagogical practices.

In the Christian tradition, childhood is not exalted as a golden age. It is not the lost paradise that adults sometimes regret, nor a land that one should never leave. "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, thought like a child, reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I evacuated everything that belonged to the child." (1 Co 13,11). A child is a being oriented toward the future. It wants to become a man or woman. It is just as false to want to enclose it in its childhood as to limit ourselves to seeing only the future adult in it. The school system has sometimes swayed from one position to the other. "Woe to the country - and one could also say to the school system - whose prince is a child" (Qo 10,16).

In the Christian tradition, childhood is not only grace, spontaneity and innocence. In each child there may well be a lamb, but the fact is that there is also a beast. As Saint Augustin said: "The innocence of a child stems from the weakness of his limbs, not his intentions." If a child knows how to be good and generous, it can also be cruel. Christian tradition dares to face this ambiguity, even in the child.

In Christian tradition, the spirit of childhood is a marvelous grace. To quote from the Gospel, the kingdom of heaven belongs to children and to those who are like them (Mt 18,3). However beware, for puerility is not the spirit of childhood. And "spiritual candour is something much more than intellectual deficiency".(1)

1) H. DE LUBAC, Paradoxes, Seine, p. 10.

In Christian tradition, a child is entitled to rights but is also subject to obligations. If this tradition emphasizes the child's right to protection and love, it also insists, in a surprising and sometimes almost glaring way, upon the responsibility of the child. One need only mention the concept of the "age of reason" derived from Roman law, placing moral obligation upon a child at the age of seven years.(1)

Even if our own times tend to overrate a child's rights, the best course is to say that it has all of the rights and obligations of an adult, proportionate to its age.

The International Year of the Child has emphasized the rights of the child as defined by the United Nations in 1959. There is no need, here, for listing the ten principles contained in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, but it is worth comparing this list of rights with that of Pope John Paul II at the start of the present year. (2)

On the one hand, the principles of the first list may indeed be valid and unquestionable, but are not linked to anything specific. They are abstract principles for which no one is accountable. On the other hand, the Church designates concrete subjects of responsibility. It demonstrates clearly how the rights of the child are the duties of parents and educators.

The Church dares to go farther. As experience shows, the rights of the child are especially threatened when they do not obtain the vital protection of the family. School teachers are well aware that most of a child's problems, even at the threshold of maturity, can be traced to its family. Therefore, the Church dares to reaffirm that a child has the right to be born

(1) See Encyclopédie Catholique, tome IV, Paris, col. 142.

(2) Address delivered January 1979.

within a stable marriage, and again, that the basic right of the child, a right without which there can be no others, is the right to exist, the right to be.

We therefore see how the thinking of the Christian tradition on the child is at the opposite extreme of easy sentimentality and is both more demanding and more realistic than the more or less provisional or exhaustive theories successively in style.

*wards responsible
pedagogical practices*

If our tribute to the child is to have valid meaning, it must result in responsible pedagogical practices.

To simply say "the focus of education is the child" or "the school is for the child" is not sufficient for freeing ourselves of our responsibilities towards children. Criticism must be directed against a form of lyrical and naive "pedo-centricity" whose slogans and clichés are often substitutes for sound thinking.

When we declare that "a child has a right to free and compulsory education", this compels us to provide children with a livable school environment, otherwise we are parking children in the "captive youth camps" condemned by Montaigne four hundred years ago.

In its publication in 1976 of A New Start in the School, the Committee was in a sense reasserting the rights of the pupil-child, or the rights of students.⁽¹⁾

[1) See CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education, Report 1976-1977, pp. 315 - 324.

It emphasized, in particular, the child's right to a livable educational environment; to a school where the climate is relaxed; a school where clear relationships are stressed; a school able to solve its own problems; a school concerned about the quality of life; a school where the rights of children are respected; a school able to change and to grow; a school accountable for its actions; a school that assures equality of opportunity; a school that respects disparities; a school that caters to excellence; a school capable of evaluation; a school that does not belong to any special clan; a school that recognizes necessary constraints; a school able to define its goals; a school that recognizes values; a school that helps to give meaning to life; a school that does not neglect the moral and religious dimension.

There is a right of the child that is too readily and virtuously wielded under the banner of "acquired rights". In reality, it is an ancient acquisition of civilization expressed as follows in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child "Under all circumstances does a child have the right to be among the first to receive protection and assistance."

With the next round of teachers' negotiations in view, the Comité catholique repeats here what it submitted in its advice on the Green Paper.

"Education is primarily a matter of climate. When one is angry or conditioned to be angry by the policy councils of the central unions, there can be no form of education or teaching. One of these days adults are going to have to stop settling their accounts at the expense of children. Even in so-called primitive societies, women and children always have priority over the crew when the ship goes down." (1)

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- (1) Advice of the Comité catholique of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation to the ministère de l'Éducation on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education in Quebec, 1978-03-14.

Our focus may not have been on the above-quoted principle of the Declaration when this passage was written. Yet, above and beyond the catastrophies of nature or the horrors of war, the principle of the Declaration still stands.

Children first!

2. THE PROTESTANT SCHOOL

The Comité protestant presents in the four following paragraphs its overview of the state and needs of Protestant education in the Protestant sector for the year 1978-1979.

1. FEATURES OF PROTESTANT EDUCATION

During the past year the Comité protestant continued to reflect on the nature of the Protestant school and on the effects of religious and cultural diversity. In a study to be published shortly, the Comité examines the development of a Protestant way of interpreting confessionality and the features that characterize what may be termed Protestant education. One stable feature of this development is that instruction has never been exclusively linked to any particular church. From the outset, Protestant schools have always served students of different religious beliefs.

In response to a study carried out by the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation on the expectations of various ethnic and religious groups (1), the Comité agreed that under certain conditions students of the Jewish or Orthodox faiths could be offered a moral and religious instruction program designed in cooperation with the religious affiliations concerned. Such programs will be taught in schools where the necessary situation obtains and when judged feasible by the school authority. Furthermore, in conformity with the nature of Protestant schools, such courses are not to be offered to students in any catechetical sense.

(1) See appendix for CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, *School and the Children of Various Ethnic and Religious Groups*, Advice to the Minister of Education, May 1979.

The Comité also decided to reassess its Regulation for the recognition of a Protestant school in the light of the following factors: the indicated need for a better definition of a Protestant school since the promulgation of its last Regulation which is still in force (1), the flexible nature of the moral and religious instruction program, the persistent demands of minority groups for options other than those permitted in the present program, and finally, the implications of the government's Policy Statement and Plan of Action concerning the implementation of moral and religious instruction courses at all levels.

2. MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The Comité wishes to express its endorsement of the place given to moral and religious instruction in the Policy Statement and Plan of Action. The goals of this instruction are as follows: to give to students a general knowledge of the Bible; to develop an understanding of the moral and religious values of their community; to promote understanding and appreciation of their own religious tradition and due respect for the religious traditions of others.

Protestant schools have always tried to help students to develop personal values and to understand their Protestant heritage. Moreover, they have always taken a positive stand on religious and cultural diversity as an indispensable enrichment. A chance to explore the various religious traditions often represented in Protestant schools gives students a growing understanding of the richness of such diversity. Moral and religious instruction is important for the full growth and development of every student and for the creation of a positive

) Regulation of the Comité protestant of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, September 1975.

and respectful climate among the school community at large. The Comité is concerned about the obvious lack of merit accorded to moral and religious instruction by many teachers and parents up to the point of its no longer appearing on the student's regular timetable.

The measures adopted to make this instruction available are one of the criteria used in the recognition of a school as Protestant. In its former reports, the Comité points out that many schools offer no specific form of moral and religious instruction whatever. It wishes to mention that there is at this very moment a resurgence of interest in the putting into practice of the Regulation of the Comité protestant due, in part, to the government's budgetary priorities placed on confessional education and also due to the Comité's efforts and those of the Service de l'enseignement protestant which are producing results. The Comité will continue to visit schools and parents organizations to inform them on the aims and content of the moral and religious instruction program and to facilitate the implementation of the program in all schools.

3. INDICATORS OF CHANGE IN THE PROTESTANT SCHOOL

1978-1979 was a year of change and challenge in the Protestant sector. It was the first year of the operation of reception classes for anglophones and also the first year of a widespread and significant decline in student enrolments. According to some persons, certain local groups proved incapable of settling their problems successfully. There were many ad hoc solutions but little logical overall planning.

It was a period of great anxiety for a large number of people. The drop in enrolments led to school closings and the result of this move was to cause different groups to collide with each other and run each other down in many cases, instead of working together towards positive solutions. Again, because of declining enrolments, teachers were fearful about losing their jobs. Others factors contributed to their fear, such as

changes in the Plan of Action of the time normally devoted to different subject matters, more and more demands from parents for French immersion classes or for total instruction in the French language for their children. Parents were apprehensive about the possibility of new conflicts developing out of the new round of negotiations between teachers, school boards and the government. Available subsidies are also more and more limited; the latter factor in conjunction with the decline in enrolments and parental demands for instruction in the French language is rendering the school system less capable of adapting to change or of suggesting new options. School commissioners are afraid the boards may lose some of their power and are often inclined to display a defensive attitude.

The governments' Policy Statement and Plan of Action is another source of uncertainty. This document has been considered by some as just one more change in a long series of changes with no guarantee of improving the education of children.

The growing demand for French immersion programs and education in the French language raises the question of the future shape of the Protestant school. This demand in conjunction with declining enrolments is creating numerous problems. As soon as a given course is offered in the French language, there are fewer students in that same English language course, which makes it necessary to set up multi-level classes.

This practice is generating deep concern as to the quality of education and as to the gradual disappearance of English-language education itself. The situation has also serious implications for the teaching staff. There will be a surplus of qualified teachers for English-language subjects and the average age of the staff will also rise because few young teachers will be able to enter the profession. Then there is a fear that many teachers will be obliged to teach multi-level classes or French as a second language or teach any subject whatever in French without previous experience or no preparation at all. The question of the future nature or shape of the Protestant school is again revived through the recruitment process applying to teachers for French immersion classes or

total instruction in the French language. It is feared that the recruitment of a large number of teachers with absolutely no experience of the Protestant school may lead to a displacement of values and identity. Nevertheless, this long neglected sector of education in the French language is obtaining attention and expanding.

Some Protestant school boards have taken steps to meet the school needs of Franco-protestants while others continue to see themselves as English-language school boards, a position that can have a detrimental effect on Franco-protestants and the Protestant community. There is no great sign outside the Montreal region that Franco-protestants are prepared to opt for Protestant schools. The truth is that it is a real problem to find a large number of Franco-protestants in the school system. Though listed in the Federal census figures, they cannot be found among the school statistics. The Comité remains convinced of the need to sensitize the Protestant population to the Franco-protestant fact and to the expectations of Franco-protestants.

4. THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT AND PLAN OF ACTION

The Comité is pleased to observe that the government's Policy Statement and Plan of Action responds to the wishes of the population expressed during the consultation on the Green Paper on primary and secondary education. However, it is persuaded of the need to place the emphasis on logical implementation by planned phases over a period of several years. The consequences of any effort to introduce the moral and religious instruction program too rapidly could prove disastrous to the quality of the program and the will to pursue it. Among the needs foreseen by the Comité are: (1) the need for qualified teachers, that is to say re-educated to cope with the requirements of a modified program, informed on the student's moral and spiritual development and helped to obtain the knowledge and skills required; (2) an obligation on the part of school boards to ensure that parents are appropriately informed of the content of the program and of its importance. The keys to success reside in rational planning and adequate information services.

3. PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

The September 1978 school year opened with a fresh impetus furnished by the *Green Paper* (1) and with expectations for renewal generated by the widescale consultation undertaken in connection with the above Paper. The primary and secondary education sectors now looked forward to the *Plan of Action* (2) that was to announce the Government's official positions on most of the major issues debated during the consultations, and also the new orientations of the Québec school system as a whole. Finally released in February, the document was generally well received; and now that intentions were known, concrete action remained to be seen.

Within a relatively peaceful climate for the second consecutive year, certain concerns were reflected. If, at the pedagogical level, the future seemed sufficiently reassuring because of the correctives promised in the *Plan of Action* though somewhat disturbing with respect to the rise in the average age of the teaching profession, at the administrative level, the future was less clear against a background of declining enrolments, decreased subsidies and reduced services due to their spiraling costs.

This overview will be further substantiated by examining separately several of its component parts: the drop in student enrolments, various aspects of the teaching process, the school principal, parent participation, application of the right to exemption from religious instruction.

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- (1) QUEBEC, MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, *Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education*, Québec 1977. Released November 1977, the document was then submitted to consultation up to the summer of 1978.
 - (2) QUEBEC, MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, *The Schools of Québec*. Policy Statement and Plan of Action, Québec 1978. Released February 1979.

The comments that follow on the above five points retained by the Commission de l'enseignement élémentaire result from its observations at the local school level during the course of the past year ⁽¹⁾ and from the Commission's own personal reflection. They are a selective synthesis of the messages received, a reflective analysis of the problems perceived and needs expressed, a collection of considerations on the observed realities of the school sectors visited and the personal sectors to which the Commission members belong. ⁽²⁾

THE DECLINE IN THE STUDENT POPULATION

The school system of Québec has been subject to a new phenomenon in recent years, namely the loss of its clients - a phenomenon which, at the rate of its development, would have led more than one enterprise to the edge of bankruptcy. If the system does not seem to be too seriously afflicted at the present moment it is not because of the discovery of some miracle drug. However disturbing the situation may be, it has not yet progressed much beyond the status quo or the compilation of statistics. Nevertheless, reductions in personnel and the suppression of certain services are starting to create obvious signs of discontent.

The prevailing situation

Very few school boards are immune to the phenomenon, created

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- (1) The regions visited by the Commission de l'enseignement secondaire in 1978-1979 include Beaconsfield, Sherbrooke, Shawinigan, Mont-Joli and Rimouski.
 - (2) The Commission also took a close look at preschool education. A recommendation on *Education and Preschool Services* was drawn up by the Commission and adopted by the Conseil supérieur in September 1979.

by the drop in the birth rate and the negative effects of migratory displacements, which have left no region of the province untouched. (1) Some areas are furthermore subjected to the loss of a large segment of their population because of economic slowdowns in given sectors, and have had to face an even greater decline in their student enrolments.

In spite of the quantity of demographic studies and plans for the maintenance, freezing or reduction of personnel or services, the remaining impression is that the phenomenon has been much more observed than treated with logic and perspective. In other words, Quebecers, as opposed to their Ontario counterparts (2), have done little forward planning in order to provide for the necessary adjustments and protection against this inevitable process.

*Foreseeable end
of the decline*

One thing appears certain, however, that the most severe part of the decline is drawing to an end. Demographic studies show that at the primary level the bottom of the curve will be reached next year and a slight and slow climb will occur

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- (1) See CLARK, DEVEREAUX and ZSIGMOND, *Les classes en 2001*, Statistics Canada, Ottawa 1979, particularly Appendix A-B, pp. 91-108; J. DURAND, *La diminution de la clientèle scolaire*, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1977, Tome 1, pp. 15-23.
- (2) COMMISSION ON DECLINING SCHOOL ENROLMENTS IN ONTARIO, Implications of Declining Enrolments for the Schools of Ontario. Final Report, 1978-10-31, 331 p. About twenty research studies on the subject were done for this Commission.

automatically.(1) They also show, as a probability, that the heights reached by the school population of the sixties will never be reached again.(2) Although these studies point to a certain stability in the school age population between 1981 and 1986 for Québec as a whole, it should be noted that the 6 to 11 year old population will have decreased by one half between 1971 and 1981 in the Gaspé, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and Trois-Rivières regions.(3)

Generally speaking, a drop in the younger population leads to the following question: will these lesser numbers of children be the first to profit from the new situation in terms of quality life and quality education? It may be prematurely concluded that more vital space for children and more adults at their service are clear indicators of increased quality. But it is to be hoped that our society will benefit of this opportunity for enhancing its educational services at no additional costs.

*Observed administrative
measures*

What is sometimes observed in the school sector to compensate for the decline in enrolments are mergings of school boards or

(1) See J. DURAND, Op. cit., p. 92; CLARK et alii, Op. cit., pp. 43, 58 and 63. This does not pertain to the M.C.S.C. which expects to lose 7% of its primary enrolments before 1988 according to its Planning Office's recent statistics.

(2) See J. DURAND, Op. cit., Table 3, p. 72.

(3) Ibid., Table 4, p. 73.

special agreements contracted among them in an effort to share and maintain services. As a rule, though, services are simply cut, schools closed down, personnel reduced and students transported to other schools. The administration finds its excuse in the norms that must be applied, norms not always sufficiently attentive to the human dimension in general, and the educational dimension, in particular. Finally, too many of these problems are solved in a fragmentary way, indeed showing that administrative action is not always synonymous with foresight.

And cutting services in proportion to the decline in enrolments may also be stretched beyond the ordinary limit. The breadth of the range of factors that can sometimes be taken into account when cuts are envisaged is illustrated in the following example. A school board whose enrolments had dropped to 1800 students saw its commissioners asking themselves whether their number of fifteen might not now be excessive. This sort of thinking could easily lead to other such absurdities on the infrastructures of the school system.

The above example is indicative of a need for sounder assessments of given situations and more flexible ministerial norms, but there is also a need for a local collective effort involving educators and parents alike. These problems must be considered from every angle and therefore concern everyone. And everyone must also be prepared to accept inevitable inconveniences and to work for the welfare of the greater whole.

Effects of the observed measures

Since the primary *raison d'être* of the school is the child, the question is whether enough consideration is given to how he may be affected by the measures taken because of the drop in enrolments: shared administrations, teachers either forced into retirement, dismissed or transferred to another grade-

level or school, multiple division classrooms, lack of specialists, morning, noon, evening transportation, and so on. Yet, these effects must be understood if we want to be able some day to decide the minimal services schools ought to supply.

Another side-effect is the rise in the average age of the teaching profession. In cutting out the youngest teachers and in keeping the recruitment rate at close to zero, the staff seems to be unrelentlessly ageing. Will there be anything done at the forthcoming negotiations to counter the above phenomenon? What, in effect, could be done under the present circumstances, for just how reassuring does the Service de la démographie scolaire (1) sound with its estimated need for 4 000 new teachers from 1979 to 1987 against the 5 000 estimated last year for the same period of time? (2)

This field of work requires that legislators and labour relations experts display increased imagination in their spending of public funds for the provision of the best possible services. As long as the decline in enrolments lasts, different possibilities should be examined - premature retirement for those who desire it, retraining and upgrading opportunities, shared workloads with corresponding fringe benefits for teachers willing to cooperate. These approaches may prove to be more effective and not necessarily more expensive than anything explored up to now, by a simple transfer of credits from one administrative sector, program, or budgetary item to another.

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- (1) D. DUFOUR, *Le personnel enseignant du précollégial de 1979-1980 à 1986-1987*, Service de la démographie scolaire, MEQ, February 1979, Document No. 47.
- (2) See ROLAND ARPIN, *Allocution de clôture à la rencontre générale de consultation du CSE sur le Livre vert tenue à Montréal les 9 et 10 mars 1978*, in *Compte rendu de la rencontre*, Québec 1978, p. 147.

Where effects on school facilities are concerned, they should indeed be very negligible, and people in general only indirectly affected. At times certain buildings should be either demolished or put to other purposes so that other organizations can benefit of these facilities under conditions acceptable to both sides. Regulations already exist for the disposal of superfluous buildings by school boards but there are still obstacles associated with their application. Since these are public facilities paid for by the State and that the State is forever in search of such facilities to meet the needs of public groups, thought should be given to associating the ministère des Travaux publics directly in the process by transferring unneeded buildings to this Ministry, where requests for facilities could then be centralized and school board administrations relieved of an onerous task. Projects for expanding present facilities or for new school construction should be treated with great caution. Before pursuing new projects, those involved should perhaps be required to prove they are unable to satisfy their needs from the above Ministry's bank of resources.

The reactions of parents

The Commission was able to observe this year in the negotiations between parents and school boards brought about by the decline in enrolments, that the issues were more firmly defended and emotions less rampant on both sides. Of course there are still a few administrators who continue to ignore parents on the pretext they are unable to see the problem in its wider perspective because of the fact their children are involved.

There seems to be unanimous agreement that concessions are necessary in such situations, whether they be multiple division classrooms, transportation to a neighboring school, the hiring of "outside norm" personnel, the composition of groups of

different numerical sizes, etc... Parental pressure is particularly strong in small towns or municipalities and the concessions made there by the administrators also seem to be more numerous and urgent than in larger urban centres where decisions have a tendency to remain anonymous.

School bus transportation is one obvious means, among others, of adjusting to the new situation. Yet, parents have understandable reservations about the uprooting of children from their natural environment and the lengthy distances that must sometimes be travelled to the school of a neighboring town. Care should be taken to see that we do not abuse of this particular solution. Other measures, such as action to keep the last school of a town or village open are to be hoped for but until such measures are found that can do away with school bus transportation for good, we should at least get rid of an exaggerated fear of this method, for the security regulations to which school bus drivers are subject are growing more and more stringent.

The whole situation is open to discussion. Parents should be informed and consulted for they have the right to accept or challenge the fate reserved for their children. Everyone complies when it is a matter of information and consultation but administrators are hesitant about the kind of power parents should actually have. The presence of an ombudsman for education in each administrative region with the power to hear grievances and force administrators to reconsider decisions considered unsatisfactory to parents would be worth contemplating. The Ministry would probably be open to this suggestion since the *Plan of Action* shows that it has every intention to increase the power of parents.

*The anglophone
situation*

The drop in the birth rate is also the cause of the declining

population of non-francophone schools. But there is more to it. Governmental policies for the promotion of the French language and French character of Québec as translated into Bill 101 and its by-laws have limited the right to English education in Québec to strictly authentic anglophones.

On the other hand, some boards have witnessed a decline in the numbers of students registered in their traditionally English sector because of the rapid development of their French immersion programs. If the non-francophone sector were to consider this impact as disadvantageous, it would be up to it to evaluate this practice and to alter whatever might be considered necessary. The *Plan of Action*, for its part, has no intention of imposing immersion programs on English schools, any more than French second-language instruction prior to cycle two of primary school.(1)

The school, which is charged with the application of basic political decisions, can help to foster closer ties between all Quebecers and the francophone majority, without obliging anyone to give up his culture of origin. If something is now being done within French schools towards the preservation and development of the cultures of ethnic minority groups with the new Study Program on Languages of Origin, the fact of having English schools guarantees not only the survival but the development as well of the culture of the anglophone minority, which is Quebec's most important and largest minority group numerically.

(1) See *The Schools of Québec*, p. 127, para. 12.5.6.

Conclusions

In the light of the preceding pages, the Commission concludes with the following recommendations.

- In keeping with the objective of living according to one's means, the minimal services to be provided by the ministère de l'Education, the school boards and schools should be defined precisely; a better articulated system of budget balancing grants or equalization payments is also needed for ensuring the provision of these services.
- Sustained and planned efforts are needed to arrive at rational decisions on the maintenance or reduction of services, with the essential cooperation of all concerned.
- There should be stronger cooperation from the parents and citizens of a district or village in order to show that education is a community affair. The results are much better when responsibility is not left fully to schools. Because the school plays an important part in the life of a small community, when it is threatened, the community as a whole should come to its rescue.

PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS

Some familiar sights were again visible this year — the frantic search of teachers for content to fill up the incomplete programs; the secure state of other teachers having gone back to former programs and teaching methods; the superficial knowledge of many students but their surprising ability to communicate; the high level of satisfaction of parents in some cases and their relative discontent in other cases.

People acquainted with the primary school situation would testify to the accuracy of these observations and also admit that the consultation on the *Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education* raised high hopes and expectations which the *Plan of Action* is now attempting to satisfy.

*Towards the desired
correctives*

Every school sector visited expressed the desire for more detailed programs. The *Plan of Action* announces that, in future, the course of study will be more detailed, will indicate objectives, and include basic compulsory items.⁽¹⁾ It cannot be emphasized enough that this will be serving a profound need. But now that the new programs are on the horizon, teachers are concerned about the amount of content that may have to be imposed upon their students in order to "cover" given programs, without due attention to students' individual learning rates.

The large assortment of teaching methods in use is another source of contention, especially in reading, writing and arithmetic. In its *Plan of Action*, the Ministry refuses to "lay down one teaching model to be followed at all times and in all places".⁽²⁾ There must be room for innovation, and particularly in the case of teaching methods, the best should be permitted to emerge by themselves. Yet, where handwriting is concerned, many teachers and parents feel only one method should be used, either script or cursive. Some research could be done in this area to allow for a sounder decision.

(1) Op. cit., p. 91.

(2) Ibid., p. 82.

Another shortcoming in the view of teachers and parents alike was the absence of Québec produced textbooks. Apart from the importance of the pedagogical aspects involved, there exists a real need for special reference material, for identification by the teacher with a special author or educator. In its *Plan of Action*, the Ministry agrees with the need for action in this area in order to provide the basic teaching material that has been sorely lacking in recent years.⁽¹⁾

Again this year, educational circles are demanding, and with justification, that students improve their reading skills and develop a taste for reading. While respecting these most basic expectations, the *Plan of Action* has nothing to say about the use of more adequate instruments, so it seems the only choice left to teachers is to employ the methods that suit them best, while focusing on better performance from their students in decoding and comprehension.

Considering the deplorable condition of most primary school libraries it is difficult to understand the Ministry's inertia in this vital area. The *Plan of Action* offers nothing more than an effort to continue to "review" the status of school libraries.⁽²⁾ For years, primary school libraries have been left to fend for themselves with whatever resources at their disposal, while large sums have always been available for quantities of audio-visual equipment most schools don't even know what to do with. Yet, the primary school library requires very little — an adequately large and well-lit room, basic reference and reading material and, naturally, some one in charge of this facility. The teaching material should be supplementary rather than optional at both the primary and secondary levels. Without adequate library facilities, the new action taken to train teachers in the use of children's

(1) Ibid., para. 9.2.1 to 9.2.11.

(2) Op. cit., para. 9.4.

literature will be worth very little. The *Plan of Action's* three paragraphs devoted to school libraries show small concern about the limited resources of primary schools. (1)

The gymnasium and other areas of physical activity — comprehensive room, recreation yard — also serve as supplementary teaching material. This statement can hardly be refuted when one considers the excellent facilities available to schools of higher education for sports and recreational activities. The silence of the *Plan of Action* is difficult to explain in the light of the many successive studies and development plans undertaken since 1973. In the face of the above shortcomings, there are those who smile and those who are shocked to see the Ministry providing for only two hours of physical education and sports a week in its new subject schedule for primary and sixth year students. (2) And what about kindergartens, which also need facilities for physical activities?

The same situation also applies to art and the natural sciences, two further subject areas of the primary program where the lack of human resources and teaching material is all too apparent. The absence of workshops and working material for students commits them to a passive role when to work with their hands would be much more interesting and profitable to them.

*Towards the
consolidation of
acquisitions*

On the other hand, there are certain acquisitions primary schools must make an effort to preserve or to consolidate. A

(1) Ibid., para. 9.4, 9.4.1 and 9.4.2.

(2) Ibid., pp. 128-129.

new trend to improve the school's image has already begun in some sectors with the encouragement of the Ministry. This dynamic effort may be sometimes expressed within the frame of the educational project. It should be noted that some schools have already developed authentic educational projects, if minus the title, while others seem to experience problems in passing from the written to the concrete stage.

On the list of acquisitions, for example, would be the increasingly personalized appearance of certain schools, a sign that local colour is now being reflected in the immediate school environment. This is generally accompanied by an aura of spontaneity among the students not meant to imply indiscipline or lack of constraint but rather education in self-discipline with a special emphasis on warm human relationships, factors considered very important by the Minister of Education in the introduction to his *Plan of Action*.⁽¹⁾

Another acquisition is the greater openness of schools to the community and its resources, if action in this area may be regarded as still somewhat timid. There is a growing awareness that education is the product of social or collective efforts and not only scholastic, and that certain human and material resources schools are not always able to supply to themselves may sometimes be found at very close range. It has been demonstrated that schools can achieve their objectives much better with parental and community support.

The members of the Commission also had an opportunity to witness effective action taken by some highly committed teachers and parents. It is certain that schools are worth only as much as the individuals involved in their operation. The most interesting school for a student, no matter how perfect the model it presents, will never be one devoted solely to satisfying

(1) Op. cit., p. 13.

minimal board and ministerial requirements. In this new period of negotiations, it must be impressed upon personnel how much education depends on their professional and personal commitment. Encounters with teachers have also convinced the Commission that stimulation and encouragement are necessary to teachers and that the media should make more effort to portray teachers and their work in a better light.

We would also like to commend certain efforts made to produce teaching material, efforts that must be encouraged, for we cannot rely solely on the teaching material promised in the *Plan of Action*, particularly with respect to textbooks. To invent his or her own material is part of the workload of the teacher who is the one who knows best what students need.

Finally, a word about professional improvement for teachers. A remarkable number of teachers have followed professional improvement programs, thus have upgraded their teaching skills, developed new confidence and a contagious enthusiasm. Many among them had obviously participated in the PPMF (Upgrading Program for Teachers of French) which, integrated into their workload, proved very successful. But very few programs are offered under such ideal conditions. All existing or future upgrading programs to support the implementation of the new primary school courses should be given similar consideration, despite the obvious fact teachers cannot be away continuously from their classrooms or relying constantly on substitute personnel.

Conclusions

Considering that the *Plan of Action* provides for the desired correctives in the majority of cases but tends to ignore certain realities as pointed out above, the Commission de l'enseignement élémentaire submits the following advice.

- It is prime importance that all new changes at the primary level, especially the new programs in view, be introduced progressively since the teacher is almost exclusively the sole target aimed at. Paragraph 7.1.24 of the *Plan of Action* does not sufficiently take this factor into account to prevent us from mentioning **it** here.

- A breakthrough is urgently needed at the ministerial level in such areas as primary school libraries, gymnasiums and playgrounds. The Commission returns to this problem once again (1) while the authors of the *Plan of Action* agree that, in many cases, "a reallocation of available funds" is also possible. (2) Access to these supplementary pedagogical facilities is essential to preschool and primary teachers. It is about time the Government does something for the 600 000 preschool and primary children still deprived of these resources. A five or ten year plan could be adopted but a plan that provides if not necessarily all of these facilities to every school, at least adequate access to such facilities for every child.

(1) See Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *The State and Needs of Education*, Report 1976-1977, Québec 1978, p.156.

(2) *The Schools of Québec*, para. 12.8.2 .

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The Conseil supérieur took a special look at the role of the school principal in its 1971-1972 annual report. Indeed today the school principal's role is no less complicated. As if to testify to its importance, many persons when interviewed by the Commission — parents, teachers and principal themselves — were quick to bring up the subject and the varied problems principals must cope with from day to day.

Though the Commission members know the Ministry is fully aware of the importance and complexity of the role of the principal whom the Minister himself in his *Plan of Action* calls "the prime mover in the (educational) project" (1), members nevertheless insisted upon focussing on certain difficulties associated with his task.

*Too much
"administration"
involved*

All persons interviewed agreed with the foregoing heading. The lack of educational leadership today may be explained by the requirements of administration and when principals seek refuge in their administrative functions to escape from other duties. If not all principals seemed deeply aware of or particularly concerned about the situation, many no less felt required to justify themselves.

The administrative aspects of the principal's role cannot be

(1) *The Schools of Québec*, para. 3.7.1

denied. The principal is a delegated administrator, the legal representative of the school board within his own school. Much of his time is taken up by problems associated with working conditions or the coordination of the activities of an ever growing number of agents now operating within schools, by meetings with countless participatory groups, by provincial or regional projects (school milk programs, student exchanges, field trips, etc...). Many principals have moreover requested that such administrative functions be assigned to them because of their confidence in their ability to carry them out.

But administration can become a refuge when a principal devotes his full time to it to the detriment of the supervision of instruction or leadership he is also called on to provide. Because of the lack of stability and continuity and lack of evaluation norms in the educational process in recent years, principals have considered themselves incapable of coping with the enormity of this side of their task and have preferred to remain within the confines of well-defined tasks. Nevertheless, now that this period of uncertainty is over, principals must take a firm grasp on the wheel and see to it that, *in keeping with the Plan of Action*, every teacher contributes as he or she should to the specific role of the school, i.e. teaching things to students, supplying them with facts, teaching them how to learn, and giving students the keys to true access to knowledge.

*Could tenure be
considered a handicap?*

It appears that some principals would do well to resign because they are not doing the kind of job they should. Though their number may be few, it is no less a problem for the schools concerned, a problem related to tenure and the duration of office. It also relates to the ageing of the school staff brought about by the decline in enrolments. Various measures are sometimes applied such as compulsory transfers or changes of assignment. If in the Protestant sector such provisions

tend to be negotiable at the local level, in the Catholic sector they are prejudicial to principals because the time served by a principal, whatever it be, cannot be cumulated for more than two years of seniority in the eyes of the board.⁽¹⁾ On the other hand, to urge principals to retire prematurely is hardly an appropriate solution. But are there not other dimensions to the problem? In this case as in many others, it is not sure that employment security or tenure is the main reason behind inadequate performances.

The best teacher in the world does not necessarily make a good principal. Action should be taken to refine the methods of selection and the criteria for transfer to available posts. Thought should also be given to the support, stimulation and encouragement that should be given regularly to principals. The wave of renewal and improvement now sweeping over the Québec school system, should also help to motivate principals perhaps more than any of the more subtle measures that are available to management.

The principal of the institutional school

Some principals responsible for two or three small schools and finding much of their time taken up by travelling and their workload doubled or tripled, are not inclined to look upon their job as an easy one. Yet they realize the advantages of this type of arrangement — less travelling on the part of students and a chance for the community to keep its own school.

(1) See Entente between the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards, the ministère de l'Éducation and the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers 1975-1979, art. 5.7.00; Entente between the Quebec Federation of Catholic School Commissions, the ministère de l'Éducation and the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, 1975-1979, art. 5.7.01a.

It so happens that the schools of some principals contain multiple division classrooms. The prevailing contract agreements are not suited to such situations and some clauses are inapplicable. If this method of operation is destined to expand with the drop in enrolments, its special implications will have to be seriously taken into account.

Conclusions

The Commission concludes as follows.

- A principal should be able to set his own imprint on his school. The *Plan of Action* has tried to define his status more fully within the context of the existing mechanisms of participation for school personnel and parents (1), but his role as delegated administrator of the school board must be defined more precisely in order to establish his authority.
- Principals can become the educational leaders they should be if they avoid the trap of purely administrative functions and have an active part to play in major changes in education, and if they are able, with provision of the proper means, to evaluate the quality of education offered by their schools.
- The principalship may be enhanced by better methods of selection and transferring, and by regular support, stimulation and encouragement for principals.

(1) *The Schools of Québec*, paras. 4.4.1 and 4.4.2.

- When a principal is to be assigned the responsibility of more than one school, careful consideration must be given to the number of schools and travelling involved prior to the confirmation of his assignment.

THE PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS

The Commission found it impossible to ignore this important aspect of school life during the course of its visits. It found that individual relationships between parents and teachers, principals, administrators or commissioners were on the whole good. Mutual respect and even esteem were sometimes reflected on both sides. On the other hand, group relationships fared less well. Institutionalized structures often have the strange quality of making human relations difficult when their purpose is to promote them. It is true that structures at times impose them at the wrong moment, delimitate areas of competence, intensify authority but also the pressure a group must bear in the face of another one concerned about the image it projects. Below are a number of situations that generate tension in group relations.

The terminology of information

There are various complaints about the terminology used in the information given to parents. Is education much different from medicine, law or the arts? That each field has its own vocabulary and expressions cannot be denied. The technicality of the language used varies with its users, i.e. specialists or laymen. At the theoretical level it is only normal for the language used to be that of the initiated. At the level of ordinary use, parents who want to participate should make an effort to understand and specialists should avoid the use of obscure terminology. If they are able to explain to children, they should also be able to make parents understand.

Information is the first step in the participation process. Every group should have access to clear and complete information which captivates the interest of the reader. To speak the same language is the best way to avoid a dialogue of the deaf. The second step is the will to listen carefully to what each side has to say.

*Consultation: how
frustrating is it?*

The majority of parent associations claim they are never adequately consulted by school authorities. Not only do they find themselves powerless to influence the decisions that are contemplated, but the subjects of consultation are usually never more than technical matters or extra-curricular questions. Yet, if parents are willing to be consulted, it is because they expect their views to have some weight on the decisions to be taken. To consult does not mean asking others to do all of the thinking and deciding, but it at least implies taking their points of view into account prior to final decisions.

The *Plan of Action* wishes to compel school boards and school principals to consult the Parent Committees and School Committees on certain issues. (1) Will it also lay down the procedures for consultation? Before putting everything into regulations, the interested parties should be consulted, as intended, because the value of such regulations will depend very strongly upon the spirit in which this obligation is accepted by school boards, principals and parents themselves.

(1) *The Schools of Québec*, para. 4.5.14

*Resources of the
Parent Committees and
School Committees*

The limited resources of the Parent Committees and School Committees are often designated by parents' groups as the major cause of their ineffectiveness. Parents will be pleased to read in the *Plan of Action* that the government intends to improve their operating conditions, especially with respect to resources.⁽¹⁾ A larger budget would contribute substantially to increasing the influence of these groups and to guaranteeing more effective action on their part.

Conclusions

In a democracy it is vital that the constituents be informed and consulted on a regular basis and that the elected, sometimes through their delegated administrators, remain invested with the powers of decision. Is not society today trying to establish a custom of associating consumers in some of the preparatory stages of the goods or services that are directed to them?

The intended correctives of the *Plan of Action* show that, on the whole, parents were justified in speaking up. They grouped themselves and raised their voices when they considered the quality of the services to be less than adequate or when they felt certain services should not be withdrawn. The government has decided to give them a more active part in the management of the school system. The merits of this move must be fully recognized.

(1) Ibid., para. 4.5.13.

The Commission concludes these brief comments with two further remarks.

- School authorities must accept to inform parents sufficiently, to consult them adequately and permit them to contribute intelligently to the educational process. Today, with new restrictions on the funds allotted to education and with the development of a new awareness about the value of community schools, it is important to multiply the occasions for associating parents in the education of their children.
- It is only fair that the travelling, lodging or child care expenses incurred by parents who attend committee meetings be reimbursed by the school board at the rate in effect. This recommendation obviously applies to school boards servicing extremely large districts.

APPLICATION OF THE RIGHT TO EXEMPTION FROM RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The right to exemption from religious instruction and its application have been the subject of much debate in recent years. Concentrated mainly in the Montreal area, interest in this question has now spread to other regions.

The Ministry has already demonstrated a concern about this right and the *Plan of Action* (1) indicates its intention to find a solution to the problems associated with its application. But do the school boards reflect a similar concern?

(1) Op. cit., para. 12.8.6.

The Commission took a look at this question during the course of its visits and its observations are contained in the following paragraphs. They deal above all with the Catholic sector for there are no serious problems in the Protestant sector which presents an entirely different situation. The Protestant sector, less homogeneous as to religious affiliation and composed of the heirs to "free inquiry", offers a moral and religious instruction program that seems to suit the majority of the beliefs represented. The most frequent explanation given is that many Churches take it upon themselves to provide religious instruction to their younger congregations outside school hours, an explanation, in our estimation, worthy of retention.

A chain of problems

Since the adoption by the Comité catholique of its ad hoc regulation (1), the information provided to parents on their right to request exemption for their children from confessional religious instruction has been seriously inadequate. But could much more have been expected in five years'time from a Catholic school sector literally forced to open itself up? Without seeking to excuse those responsible, it may at least be said this right suffered the same fate as other issues where information is concerned. Once a law is sanctioned or a regulation promulgated, it is accompanied by a brief period of publicity and those responsible move on to other affairs, leaving to the parties involved the task of obtaining information on their own. In this case, the Association québécoise pour l'application du droit de l'exemption de l'enseignement religieux (AQADER)* has taken up where the official channels left

(1) *Regulation of the Comité catholique of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation*, Québec 1974, arts. 14 and 16.

* Quebec association for application of the right to exemption from religious instruction.

off in providing information to parents — a task that has not always been easy for this voluntary group.

On the other hand, school boards have not been wont to cooperate much with parents seeking to find out about or to utilize the right to exemption for their children. Parents have encountered systematic resistance from certain boards.

The new moral instruction course ⁽¹⁾, the option in exchange for religious instruction, has only begun to take hold since last Fall. The past school year seems to have been spent in seeking out ways to implement it. Does it meet the approval of those who reject catechetics for their children? There are too few people sufficiently familiar with the course to answer this question adequately. Most teachers still know little about it. But it is one more subject that a teacher who decides to teach the course is compelled to master in exchange for another teaching task.

The presence of exempted students at school is synonymous with school organizational problems. Generally, adjustments have to be made in the distribution of the teacher's workload, and there seems to be less attention paid to examining the qualifications of teachers than to obtaining their necessary consent.

The program also calls for certain adjustments to the timetables of some students and planning for the required class space. So that a handful of students may have access to moral instruction, the size of other student groups must be

(1) M.E.Q., *Programme de formation morale à l'élémentaire pour les exemptés de l'enseignement religieux dans les écoles catholiques*, 1977.

increased, and the sometimes diffused catechetics classes concentrated in one area at a specific time. Students may also have to be grouped into multiple-age groups, thus requiring considerable skill from teachers not yet totally familiar with the program. In brief, it is the organization as a whole that is actually involved in the problem of making an exception to a rule. Difficult cases are settled in terms of constraints or accesses and everything reflects improvisation for a long time, thus evoking dissatisfaction. Nor have we mentioned those small groups of students left to themselves, these unacceptable solutions which only help to marginalize children because of the application of their right to exemption. This type of school organization is obviously to be condemned.

*The problem of
numbers or the
courage to be on
the fringe*

There are not many requests for exemption from religious instruction. Outside the Montreal area, less than 1% of the total student population has requested exemption. Is this need, nevertheless, being met? The answer seems to be yes or no according to one's point of view. For some, the low rate of citizens who still practice religion and their general indifference towards it indicate that with better information there would likely be more exempted students. For others, religious belief and practice are two separate entities, and most parents still want religious education for their children in a Catholic school. Beside those who consider it reasonable that exemption is not requested more often, are all those who believe most parents are indifferent to the whole issue. Their primary concern is that schools teach their children how to read, write and calculate above all.

Though exempted students are more numerous in the Montreal metropolitan area, it still remains that those who profit of this right are always a minority group everywhere, and they, indeed, deserve some respect for their courage to opt for a marginal status. The Québec school system, for its part, has started to display greater openness of mind and good will. It is obvious that above and beyond the question of exemption from religious instruction is the larger issue of the confessionality of the school system and the schools which no one wishes to question at this moment. Right now, Quebecers are concerned about other issues and this subject leaves them cold. We must accept this reality and avoid precipitation. The groundwork is being prepared, and before a settlement can be reached that is satisfactory to all, the prevailing attitude must be one of compromise.

A parental right

The rights concerning the education of children are concentrated in the hands of parents. It is said that children, up to a certain age, are incapable of making the right choices for their "own good". The same applies to the right of exemption from religious instruction. It is the parents who decide, not the children. Parents are trying, of course, to provide for consistency between school education and family upbringing. Yet, does there not exist here something that should perhaps be examined more closely?

It is necessary to distinguish between the child's views on the subject and those of his parents. Both sides perceive the school situation very differently. Leaving aside the natural candour of the child and the prejudices of the adult, it is obvious both do not have the same capacity for analysis. But this does not prevent a child from having an opinion, perhaps less on the main issue itself — "Should I or should I not take religious instruction?" — as on the immediate implications of his choice — a marginal status —. On the other hand, is

there truly a danger that school-aged children can be so strongly indoctrinated as to never recover?

The example of many adults in their thirties today is highly indicative of the limitations of even the most rigorous form of religious instruction. The question is whether the marginal status imposed on an exempted child does not have a greater determining influence on his personal growth and development than other existing alternatives.

Even without clear answers to the above questions, it seems that a child's opinion on the options available to him should at least be sought out by his parents and taken into consideration if such practices do not already exist. Showing due respect for a child's opinions in this case as in others is nothing but a reflection of the attitude to be adopted.

We would like to add one more word on the options available — the catechetics class or the moral instruction course. The innovations and progress of the past fifteen years have made catechetics instruction one of the most advanced programs on the primary curriculum, whereas the moral instruction program has scarcely begun to function. This fact can be perceived by the child, if in a way undoubtedly different from ours, and he may feel himself deprived of something interesting in his eyes when his opinion is disregarded or the motives behind the choice of his parents fail to satisfy him.

Conclusions

The Commission de l'enseignement élémentaire submits the following recommendations.

- The ministère de l'Education must inform parents more adequately than in the past on the right to exemption from

religious instruction. The new brochures published by the Service de l'enseignement catholique are a step in the right direction. A further step would be that the proposed registration forms for school boards contain a blank space for requesting exemption from religious instruction. The Ministry, through the medium of the school board, should assure itself that all parents are reached by its information services.

- The ministère de l'Education must take further corrective action to eliminate the numerous problems that persist. The first task, as pointed out in the *Plan of Action* (1), is to implement as rapidly as possible the exchange option or course in moral education that school boards must offer to exempted students. The Ministry should nevertheless bear in mind both the number of new programs teachers are already compelled to master, and the variety of organizational problems the school principal must cope with.
- Any reticent school boards must now show due respect for the Regulation of the Comité catholique. If the Ministry facilitates conditions for the application of the right to exemption from religious instruction, it would be hardly appropriate for school boards to be less open-minded than the Comité catholique itself.
- Parents must be encouraged to seek and to consider the views of their children before taking any final decisions. A child may also know "what is best for him".

(1) *The Schools of Québec*, para. 12.8.6.

CONCLUSION

The five points designated above by the Commission de l'enseignement élémentaire and directed to the special attention of all educators — authorities and agents alike — reflect its desire to assist in the solution of some of education's current problems, and its concern to support the efforts undertaken by the government for the "constant improvement of the quality of the education offered in our public schools".⁽¹⁾

The Commission, however, is more concerned with the future than it is with the present. The *Plan of Action* is reassuring as to questions of a pedagogical nature, but both the work of the Québec Conference of School Commissions last January and the tentative collective agreements submitted by the educational syndicates reflect certain legitimate apprehensions. Where administrative questions are concerned, the government surely has the necessary means to provide for long term planning and thus, for conceivable hypotheses about the future of all those engaged at the levels of primary and secondary education.

This, then, may be how "the educational, administrative and financial aspects of the long awaited renewal fit together"⁽²⁾, to the satisfaction of the Minister of Education himself.

(1) Ibid., p. 12.

(2) Op. cit., p. 13.

4. SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

To the members of the Commission de l'enseignement secondaire of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, the past school year was a remarkably eventful year - the collective negotiations were initiated, the government and the school boards met together, the Policy Statement and Plan of Action *The Schools of Québec* was released more or less as scheduled, new action was taken on all fronts. It may reasonably be said that secondary education in 1978-1979 witnessed orientations and decisions taken that should mark it strongly in the years to come.

It is this sort of turning point year that the members are now attempting to examine in an effort to isolate its most salient points and submit them to further analysis.

Since the Commission is composed of individuals carrying out different functions and roles in the school world, its purpose is to reflect through its comments and observations the reality of secondary school education. It hopes to prove it is possible to arrive at a consensus on sometimes rather delicate questions without necessarily requiring its members to relinquish their personal points of view.

It was within this spirit that the Commission, in follow up to the *Green Paper*, produced a working paper during the course of the past year on the proposed creation of a Secondary VI in the professional education sector. (1) All of its members are, moreover, actively engaged in either one of the two following thematic studies being conducted in conjunction with

(1) COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE, *The Proposed Institution of a Secondary VI*, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1979.

the Commission de l'enseignement élémentaire: "Educational Services and Career Planning for Professional Educators", or "The Transition of Students from Primary to Secondary School".

The Commission furthermore hopes to have a meaningful contribution to make here since it is founded on material taken from an abundant variety of sources such as, for example, the personal views and working experiences of individual members, its study and discussion of the document *The Schools of Québec*, its analyses of press clippings, the reports of its visits this year to Matane, Grand'Mère and Alma, the reports of members who participated in the visits of the Conseil supérieur to Rimouski and Laval. The above all contributes to supporting in perhaps an empirical but consistent way the statements to be presented in this exposé of the situation of secondary education and the conclusions that emerge.

More particularly, in its visits the Commission is given a first hand chance to see how different milieux attain their educational objectives. These occasions permit it to examine closely a typical school region of the province. The Commission meets as many people as possible in an effort to discover their views and opinions on a number of predetermined subjects.

In Matane, Grand-Mère and Alma, the Commission had an opportunity to meet with dedicated educators highly committed to their work. Its repeated contacts and animated discussions with these primary agents of the school milieux were to permit Commission members to isolate two leading concepts that should be retained constantly throughout the pages that follow.

- *The situation appears conducive to certain desired changes that could be effected with the proper amount of motivation on the part all agents of education.*
- *We speak too much in place of the students and too often in terms of money, when the best way to satisfy their needs would be to allow students a greater chance to assume responsibility for their own education.*

For its 1978-1979 report on the state and needs of secondary school education, the Commission sets out by attempting to review the overall situation at this level after which are submitted some of its own reflections around the theme of uncertainty that has characterized the past year.

Also submitted to the attention of the reader are various considerations on the hopes raised by the new orientations and aims of *The Schools of Québec*, with a special emphasis on the movement initiated by the educational projects.

A. UNCERTAINTY

As far as secondary school education is concerned, the 1978-1979 year was characterized by a climate of apprehension and uncertainty. Not only did a number of old problems continue to persist but certain new events also occurred, leaving a profound mark upon the whole course and operations of secondary school education.

Parallel to certain major events like the appearance of the *Plan of Action*, might also be listed a few rather questionable events which have left the school milieu puzzled about its present situation. The school milieu is divided between a feeling of exhilaration it would not like to be called naive and a feeling of pessimism which it would like reality to prove ungrounded. Hasn't it already learned from experience just how fragile worthwhile initiatives can be in face of the unsuspected proportions certain movements sometimes take?

1. SOME ENCOURAGING OBSERVATIONS

For the optimists, the past school year was a good year in itself and in its prospects for the future.

*A good year for young
people*

Most secondary school students seemed happy and satisfied, making many people say it was a good year for the young, a statement further substantiated by Marianne Favreau's articles in *La Presse* (1), the research work of *Opération-Humanisation* Saguenay--Lac-Saint-Jean (2), and the results of the Ministry's questionnaire on *School Life*.

The large improvement in the climate and life of secondary schools as depicted in the above works presents a picture totally opposed to the sad situation portrayed to the public in the TV series *Les enfants des normes* (3).

Without denying the presence of the economically disadvantaged in the school system, this TV series must all the same be condemned for the harm it has done to the secondary school's image because of the lack of nuance in the situations portrayed and because of the adverse overtones and sarcastic quality of the dialogue used.

Based on the experiences of disadvantaged students at secondary school, the series has led to generalizations and overall judgments that have, in turn, led a large segment of the population to adopt a defeatist and false attitude toward the secondary school.

- (1) Marianne Favreau, *Les écoles de la colère s'appriivoisent*, in *La Presse*, February 10 to 16, 1979.
- (2) *Opération-Humanisation* was conducted by a research team of the Faculty of Education of the Université du Québec in Chicoutimi. Mr. Louis-Philippe Boucher was project leader.
- (3) *Les enfants des normes*, by Georges Dufaux. Produced by the National Film Board in eight episodes and presented by Radio-Québec from March 26 to April 5, 1979.

The personal experience of the members of the Commission as well as what they were able to observe in the course of their school visits testify to the contrary of the needless alarm raised in this series.

*More availability
time for teachers*

If students seem more satisfied with school, this may be largely attributed to the fact that teachers now have more time for making themselves available to their students. Teachers should be congratulated for having discovered, through force of circumstances, the good that results from practices based on more personalized relations with their students. The public school's new methods of educational supervision appear increasingly necessary for improving the quality of education and the school environment for different categories of students. Teachers are gradually becoming sensitized to the humanization factor that has been sorely lacking in schools for some time.

*An extension of
the school*

To take over where the family leaves off or to help out in cases of an increasingly growing number of working mothers and one parent families, many community centres are offering lunch and after school activities to students within an educational context. Some school doors are also open to students after school hours in an effort to develop a greater social commitment among students through various extra-curricular activities.

*Publication of
"The Schools of
Québec"*

The Ministerial document *Policy Statement and Plan of Action* was generally well received by most school sectors. Though it has produced no spectacular show of enthusiasm and some of its proposed measures have been criticized and rejected by certain sectors, it may be said that most of the new orientations contemplated reflect the wishes of the public and a need to return to sounder educational practices.

Included in the above document are the results of the consultation on the *Green Paper* which are available to everyone and constitute a wealth of information for the public.

The population had been waiting for the government's official position, thus the *Plan of Action* now gives the Ministry and school sector something to guide their operations in the coming years. The Minister of Education should be congratulated for his determination to publish this document and outline his objectives as planned.

Vocational education

Secondary vocational education has developed vigorously in recent years and is attracting more and more students who would like to move onto the labour market. The hypothesis presented in the *Plan of Action* for the institution of a secondary VI has gained much support and would surely result in increasing the quality of vocational education because of its emphasis on providing a better basic education to students. This subject will be discussed more fully later in the text.

*International year
of the child*

The year 1979, the International Year of the Child, gave birth to a variety of organizations and special activities for examining in depth the reality of childhood. Every aspect of this period of life was emphasized and focussed on by adults, citizens and educators alike- the child with learning disabilities, the poor child, the creative child, the happy or unhappy child. Official and unofficial events were organized by different educational circles and social action groups. Since most of these functions would like to operate on a permanent basis, this movement should certainly succeed in helping children to be better loved and understood.

*Act for the Protection
of Youth*

In conjunction with the Year of the Child, Bill 24, An Act for the Protection of Youth, was promulgated in Québec to ensure more fair and human treatment for younger citizens confronted by various social problems. This law, often qualified as avant-gardist, seriously concerns the school which is often, under multiple aspects, the witness or location of problem situations affecting younger children or teenagers.

The school is given an increasingly responsible part in terms of this Act which states that "the security and development of a child are considered compromised when a school-aged child does not attend school or is frequently absent without cause". (1)

(1) Article 38e.

*An educational policy
for children with
difficulties*

The year 1978-1979 also witnessed the shaping of the Ministry's long-awaited policy for children with special needs. If the principle of integrating these children into the regular system to foster their social development poses no problem as to obtaining the sanction of educators, there is still much emotional or mental resistance to be overcome as well as problems dealing with resources, support and the coordination of efforts.

Nevertheless, judging from today's context which is far more conducive to equality of opportunity, we should see the development of a greater concern for various categories of disadvantaged students. Positive attitudes are visible everywhere in efforts to solve various problems. Studies are being conducted on failure at school; detection, remedial and corrective measures are being intensified; priorities are being set to deal with maladjustment at school. There is a growing desire and awareness of the need to meet the needs of students neglected by the regular sector. (1)

(1) CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Comments on the Policy of the MEQ for Children with Adjustment and Learning Disabilities, February 1979. See Appendix for text.

2. SOME UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATIONS

Each year, and especially this past year, the many improvements and innovations at school give us reason to rejoice. But unfortunately, there are still too many other occurrences that weigh heavily, generating a feeling of fear with respect to the future among the users of the system.

The decline in enrolments

If there is one major problem which most school sectors are obliged to cope with, it is certainly that of declining enrolments. The effects of the decline not only continue to hurt but leave little room for hope. According to the existing budgetary rules, school officials have less funds at their disposal than their budgets are obliged to reflect while fixed costs continue to climb annually. And these budgetary restrictions must be added to other general restrictions now affecting all public administrations. From year to year, financial discomfort accrues and painful decisions must be taken - school closings, cuts in personnel and services.

Thus, each time a substantial drop in the student population occurs, the question that arises is whether to close a small school in support of a larger one. A certain number of teachers must be placed on the availability list in keeping with the relentless clauses of the collective agreements in full knowledge that serious human injustices are at times being committed. To this must be added the recurrent seasonal apprehensions of teachers and the rise in the average age of the teaching profession. Then there are the choices that must be made between retaining the non-teaching professionals, lowering the heat or closing a certain facility.

It is difficult in some cases to understand the spirit in which these budgetary cuts are made, considering the intention of the Ministry to increase certain services.

The question is whether the largest part of the governmental funds allotted to education should not be concentrated on areas where needs are strongest felt, which means at the base, when serious problems arise.

*The way in which
school boards are
financed*

We are now witnessing a requestioning of the process of financing school boards and allocating subsidies. In this movement, the matter of greatest concern to commissioners and school administrators is their inability, so they say, to make themselves heard with respect to the changes contemplated. But is this not directly opposed to the Plan of Action's philosophy of participation?

They fear being served a mass of directives without any preliminary hearings. They also fear an abusive increase of Treasury Board controls, given that the school boards are to be subsidized in full by the government.

Above and beyond this proposed reform, it is the operation of the system at large which is involved here.

For example, the Ministry now has in mind a number of development plans to be subsidized by specific means to fill, according to it, more flagrant needs. There is a basic inconsistency in this process if one compares the idea of an overall decentralized budget with the excessively centralized specific methods of financing. To benefit from these grants, too often the smaller boards must accept these plans that are more or less suited to them to then find themselves subject to the constraints they entail.

Collective negotiations

Despite the lack of disorder surrounding the current collective negotiations with the teachers, the situation is not all rosy. A certain malaise is starting to emerge, especially visible in the local negotiations which are making little headway. The stakes are important for education in Québec has now reached a turning point and everyone wants to be involved, on all sides. To this should be added the fatigue of the population faced with extreme demands or demands judged too advanced. This is the strange climate surrounding the start of the negotiations.

The integration of the school boards

Another source of concern results from the uncertainty of existing services when plans are made to integrate different school boards in many places. This action is no doubt legitimate but it is important that it be undertaken under the best possible conditions. In some cases, people are poorly informed of the aims, advantages and disadvantages of integration. The battles are fought among "grown ups" with not much concern for the situation of the children once the plans have been carried out. There is even a possibility that costs will be increased in some cases, because of a duplication of services in the smaller boards. The regional boards were set up to serve the population of a given region in terms of course options, guidance services, services for children with learning disabilities, adult education facilities --- and we now risk finding ourselves obliged to contract all kinds of agreements between school boards in order to offer the same services when the regional boards have not even reached their maximum capacity to operate under calm and serene conditions.

It should not be too surprising, then, if many requests for a moratorium have been sent to the Ministry so that it may ask

the school milieux for certain estimated guarantees and apolitical overall planning for proposed changes. Those who live these projects have good reason to be concerned.

Adult education

With the integration of the school boards, there are some people who fear the fate reserved for adult education. The regional boards have developed a wide range of services suited to different clients. Not only is the adult education sector now being threatened by the integration of the school boards, but so are certain guidelines of the government's document on *Colleges in Québec* aimed at assigning to the colleges the responsibility for the coordination adult education in general. A large number of persons are involved for the adult clientele exceeds the number of students in the regular sectors of several school boards.

Vocational education

Vocational education has also been disturbed by the plans to integrate the school boards. There is a fear that the quality of education may be adversely affected as well as the number of options available.

If vocational education is also having a difficult time to maintain its image because of the scarcity of employment opportunities for graduates and the lack of job training and placement services in the schools, it is a sector where nothing seems to be going right.

The problems between the construction field and the Office de la construction du Québec prevent graduate students from practising their trade in this field. Students and teachers alike find themselves in a difficult situation.

Furthermore, the secondary VI certificate of the short vocational students is in many cases not recognized by employers as a secondary school leaving certificate which is a serious obstacle to their finding work.

*The problems of
the Island of
Montreal*

The Island of Montreal is faced with a number of basic problems right now concerning, for example, the confessional structure of the school system, the application of Bill 101, the reception of immigrants, second language instruction, the right to exemption from religious instruction, the concept of polyvalence, the decline in the birth rate, and so forth.

Certain traditions are being confronted by different kinds of resistance because the operational structures of the school system did not necessarily follow the reform of the middle sixties at the same pace as the rest of Québec. And yet, the issues being played out in Montreal will have a determining influence on the rest of Québec in the years to come.

Mainly in connection with the right to exemption from religious instruction, certain events that have occurred in Montreal point to the need for measures to permit the full exercise of this right in conformity with the regulations of the Comité catholique of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation.

*The right to
exemption from
religious instruction*

The question of the right to exemption from religious instruction is still a problem in the secondary schools, especially in Secondary I and II. Though the problem is more serious in

Montreal and Québec, it is starting to spread across the province and may be expected to reach serious proportions if adequate solutions are not found.

What is most striking is the attitude of intolerance and opposition to exemption. And this opposition does not always emanate from officially Catholic circles. Though diffuse, it is active in spite of the clear and precise regulations of the Comité catholique.

Information concerning the moral instruction programs is either lacking or simply withheld. It is even impossible in some places to arrange for an evening information session on these programs. Exempted students are often obliged to attend another school and when this cannot be done, are treated with rejection and more or less ignored.

Pressure is sometimes exerted on the young in the form of propaganda in favour of religion courses or even surveys on the religious practices of their parents! The diffused pressure emanating from certain groups has a strong influence on the young. Younger children reject marginality. Through conformity or solidarity, or because of a basic need for emotional security, they prefer to follow the majority without consideration for the contents of the course.

One could say that at this moment genuine measures to permit exemption are hard to be found.

How can this situation be improved? The solution might be to start operating "other" schools immediately, or else to give greater room to pluralism in our existing public schools. Since it does not seem to be considered advisable to fragmentize the public system further, then there must be a possibility to allow for diversity. An interesting brochure has been published by the Comité catholique to foster greater openness and receptivity by schools toward children of different religious or cultural backgrounds. We hope it will serve to inspire

local sectors refractory to diversity without delay. (1) The above Committee has also distributed a document to school boards containing several criteria for consideration in the process of revocation of the confessional status of a school, should the case arise. (2)

The main criterion consists in counting on the development of skills that contribute to the exercise of moral judgment and the application of moral values. It is not only a question of inculcating upon the young a set of predetermined values, even as excellent as Christian values, but to encourage self-responsibility among the young. This should be the goal of any educational project and offer a meaningful occasion to local sectors to solve their problems about heterogeneous student bodies in an autonomous way.

*The lack
of resources*

In the wake of the consultation on the *Green Paper* on primary and secondary education, if the school world is pleased to know about the government's new proposed reforms, it is to some extent concerned about the measures and regulations still in store to carry out its aims. Nonetheless, this state of "insecurity" has proved beneficial to many sectors, forcing them to take stock of their present positions, then shifting gears and advancing in their respective areas of activity without necessarily waiting for the green light. On the other hand, many administrators and educators are still marking time and

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- (1) COMITE CATHOLIQUE, Dans ce pays. A l'école catholique, l'accueil des enfants de traditions religieuses et culturelles diverses, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec 1978, 32 p.
 - (2) COMITE CATHOLIQUE, Critères concernant la révocation du caractère confessionnel d'une école catholique, April 1979.

wondering about the requirements for carrying through the proposed reforms. The necessary means and resources, which are already rare under present conditions, are lacking for the preparation and implementation of many of the proposed reforms.

Restraints on innovation

The general public is happy about the return to tried and tested measures with respect to the use of textbooks, better educational planning, more detailed programs, but some educators are less happy, even concerned about what appears to be a brake on innovation or deaf ear to some acquisitions of the "reform", such as education that emphasizes self-responsibility and freedom...

Indefinite categories of students

If we hope to integrate students with learning or behavioural problems into regular school classes, we will need, in addition to a change in mentalities, more effective working tools. These categories are virtually absent from the secondary school. What actually exists are disguised sectors for more or less defined categories of students. Examples are the short vocational sector and sector for the training of apprentices. These students are integrated to some extent, but at what a price!

Because students with special needs and their activities are considered part of the general education sector, no provision is made for supplementary resources to support the teachers of these students. The most urgent requirement would obviously be to classify the different categories of disabled students according to their specific needs.

Are these disguised sectors to serve as models for integration? Then we had better beware for not only are the incredible skills and special commitment of the teachers working there starting to deteriorate from fatigue but, furthermore, the students are not obtaining the services they should expect because the necessary resources and pedagogical support are not there.

As there are serious problems associated with the integration of students with special needs, special measures are required to counter reactions in favour of keeping them isolated for lack of means or positive attitudes.

Greater coordination must also be established in the plans society has in mind for these students and the means found to establish consistency between the ministère de l'Education and ministère des Affaires sociales. In the final analysis, it is the children who must pay for the squabbling among the professionals of the above ministries.

The fatigue of teachers

This, then, highlights the need for increasing the necessary support to achieve all that is expected of the school. What one generally encounters in visits to secondary schools are a large number of tired and worn out directors, teachers in need of a rest, an overworked staff. And the prevailing situation cannot be attributed to poor working methods. It is the day-to-day life of the school that is so highly demanding and in need of constant attention. Particularly in the case of large polyvalent schools, the number of students and teachers grouped under the same roof magnifies the problems and discourages even the most stouthearted.

How then can we in all simplicity ask school directors and teachers to design educational projects, to improve their

consultation and evaluation methods when every minute of their time is already taken up?

In addition to increased powers and means, also required are changes in the norms as to the number of available posts for school management personnel and support personnel. A sufficient number of non-teaching professionals must also be available to schools and something should be done to see that this personnel is not always the victim of budget cuts in the school system.

The question that also arises is why cuts in resources occur only under reducible budget items. At present, these cuts are made in a blind and automatic way to the detriment of the needs of the students.

The educational project

The very idea of the educational project is beginning to appeal to the public at large and to educators. But there is considerable question as to how, in practical terms, does an educational project take shape and develop. The concept is not totally clear and in spite of the explanations provided in various documents, school sectors are looking for practical suggestions and even for a few models to help guide their action. The Ministry is in the midst of an information campaign to stimulate local schools, which should help to clarify many situations.

Educators therefore tend to be critical of the educational project. It presents itself as the key to the hoped for renewal of the secondary school and as an instrument for motivating the community to take an active part in education. Nevertheless, the partners in the educational project still lack decisionary powers that are instrumental to its implementation, which therefore leaves them often with a sense of frustration. A given educational project may be accepted most enthusiastically by the teachers; unfortunately the means at their disposal for putting it into operation are extremely limited.

*The school's
agents*

It should be added that the educational project satisfies the need for a societal project. The school and its various agents must work together for a considerably long time before they are prepared to agree on a societal project that appears reasonably feasible.

The school is no longer withdrawn and self-contained like in the past. Today, it is a place where numerous actors converge whose action is added to what is conventionally known as educational activity. The student's training and education now call for necessary integrated action that is requested by society - television sets, computers, calculating machines now form an integral part of the school environment. New people are also present carrying out a secondary role in relation to the school but complementary to the educational work requested by the population. Thus, the social worker, school nurse, policeman, Red-cross worker, child protection officer, school attendance counsellor, probation officer, immigration officer, news reporter --- all these paraprofessionals, in addition obviously to the other non-teaching professionals to which the school is already accustomed, have a part to play in the educational process.

Educators are obliged to take these new influences into account and they are expected to take the lead in integrating what are, to all intents and purposes, society's expectations from the school. Unfortunately, school administrators see their supervisory functions increased, educators are more or less prepared to enter into contact at the professional level and share their autonomy with these other school agents who have now made consultation with, information to and action among parents and students alike a much more demanding process.

It is therefore proving difficult for the school to integrate all of these new influences into its activity, which no doubt explains some of its insecurity. Though it is aware of the need for these other agents, it has to learn how to live with them and coordinate their respective activities without losing sight of its own basic role. These new dimensions of educational activity include these means which the school has not yet fully discovered but which represent a new challenge to be met, a new kind of leadership to be assumed.

3. PASSING FROM DEPENDENCE TO AUTONOMOUS ACTION

To produce a concise and rather brief outline of a comprehensive situation is a difficult undertaking when one does not wish to risk remaining on a superficial plane. Yet, by highlighting certain features of the past year, background material may be woven for reflecting the views of the Commission on the current school situation.

A concern of the rich

The school and all its agents are at this moment experiencing real apprehension and insecurity. In the eyes of the Commission, this is the dominant feature of the past school year. Nevertheless, it is the kind of apprehension that is characteristic of the rich and spoiled who are afraid of losing what they have begun to take for granted for some time. The bustle and confusion, and efforts to consolidate which have occurred at all education levels in Québec, the decline in the student population, the considerable increase in costs --- everything has helped to create a certain malaise that even the most optimistic projections cannot appease.

The school, in that respect, is participating in the same movement by which society is being swept in the face of the future.

This climate cannot be attributed to a crisis in the school system. The schools are like society and can be nothing but concerned about the damage caused by unemployment, the rise in the credit rate, inflation, pollution, the energy crisis and drop in the birth rate.

On the other hand, it seems that the young do not reflect the same sentiments. Adults, much more affected by change, put up a certain resistance and lack serenity in the new attitudes and behaviour that ought now to emerge.

*An irreversible
situation*

To put it bluntly, we can no longer cling to past practices. Their time is over and they must now be discarded for new models that reflect the fundamental positions of society.

The school system has in a very short time passed from an era of affluency to, if not an era of austerity, at least one of restricted resources. Prior to this, the school milieux were able to benefit from rather large subsidies from society. On the other hand, they found themselves dependent to a large extent, with a narrow margin of self-autonomy. But these days are gone forever and should best be forgotten if we want to be in a position to cope with the future.

*An occasion
to be grasped*

Today, decreased resources, coupled with a political will for decentralization, obliges the school milieux to learn how to be autonomous and to develop their creative imagination so that they can provide quality services to their clients within fixed limits and despite reduced resources.

This new situation leads to certain understandable malaises, but it is also conducive to a change in mental outlook and presents a good occasion for instituting new educational practices throughout the province as a whole. Moreover, local and regional administrations have for a long time been calling for greater freedom of action and local responsibility and most of them have the necessary competence to provide quality education to their respective milieux. The Ministry is therefore not merely taking advantage of more difficult circumstances to delegate more responsibility to the regional authorities. When it informs them of its intention to give them its support and the necessary instrumentation to permit them to exercise their autonomy more effectively, the Ministry is also trying to take advantage of situations conducive to such changes.

And if some appear hesitant in the face of the interventions announced in different quarters, it is because they are conscious of what is at stake in the new situation and are aware of the need to know how to proceed properly in order to protect the quality of education.

*Planning under
restricted
conditions*

The local milieux will not be able to exercise their autonomy effectively unless they are willing to adopt a new style of management to which they are unaccustomed. Efficient management of the school system within a context of significant budgetary restrictions demands better overall planning supported by the necessary techniques for demonstrating the priority needs of every community.

In parallel fashion, planning under restricted conditions demands important changes in the Ministry's methods of subsidizing local administrations. Our present per capita method of financing must be replaced by a less regulated system that takes special needs and situations into account. With some

imagination, we should be able to devise a new perhaps more complex but also more flexible technique that would allow each milieu to obtain the finances it needs within the perspective of equality of opportunity.

What might be called overall planning under restricted conditions is too often neglected by the Minister of Revenue in his exhortations for a better use of resources and for increased productivity in general. The time has come, and the necessary attitudes must be developed, to begin questioning certain reputedly untouchable budget items that are automatically reinstated year after year.

Therefore, only by reassigning human and financial resources in new ways can we continue to meet the educational objectives of our society. The fact is that our educational enterprise is more demanding. Thus progressive and innovative action must continue to be supported. What must be suppressed are expenditures for luxury items, diffuse or flagrant abuse, if we want better returns on our investments in education.

This calls for honesty and realism on the part of the school milieux in defining their needs and in distributing their resources among different services deemed essential. This entails negotiating as well because services cannot be reasonably reduced in proportion to the decline in enrolments. There exists a certain level beyond which services can no longer be reduced.

This will also require more cooperation between the school sector and local community for a better use of the facilities, equipment and human resources of a given region so that they can truly belong to the community. Such action has already been successfully initiated in a number of regions and deserves to be encouraged.

To support efforts at the local level, the Ministry must transform itself into a veritable service centre which supplies the multiple means required to fill not only the operational but the educational needs of the school milieu. Course programs, measurement and evaluation instruments, teaching material --- demand too much in human investments that could be put to better use by the milieu in the practice of education itself. The *Policy Statement and Plan of Action* seems to indicate that the Ministry is agreeable to this and which must now become a reality.

*Attitudes
to be changed*

There is nothing very special these days about calling for a change in attitudes. To do so is even relatively easy because of the general consensus on this need. But how does one foster a change in mentalities? Change generally occurs when different contemplated practices are introduced gradually and are evaluated at once. New attitudes are also developed when efforts are recognized and rewarded. Unfortunately these methods are sorely lacking.

On the other hand, because of the sombre disposition of society right now and the unstable character of the future, the school, which is also going through a profound period of transition, must change its fatalistic attitude for a more serene one that displays greater inner security. It must adopt a positive attitude that will permit it to cope with change by foreseeing the future and planning for it, without restricting it, in a critical spirit seeking harmony and balance.

Is this not part of the educative mission of society as a whole at this moment?

Thus, well-planned changes in favour of necessary and constant progress, but also aimed at maintaining a basic stability, may be introduced progressively. The security we seek can only come from within the system itself.

It can be strengthened by more flexible administrative procedures and by collective agreements which reflect change, and by adequate support from the Ministry.

We must now pass from a state of dependency to action.

B. HOPE

It is a pity to have to conclude that in this overall climate of uncertainty the subjects of concern outweigh our reasons for hope or encouragement. Again, we may observe that financial considerations are at the top of our problems, as if individual achievements, noteworthy local initiatives or renewed motivation on the part of educators were not important factors in our hopes for the future.

It is therefore reassuring to see that the Policy Statement and Plan of Action *The Schools of Québec* centres its focus on this latter level of education. It displays confidence in education aimed at creativity, dedication and autonomy on the part of its agents. In this, the governmental document reflects hope. Of course, everything cannot be expected to change overnight just because new orientations are indicated. But *The Schools of Québec* was at least based on a widespread consultation and contains new approaches that can lead to realistic and desired changes. Hope, therefore, now resides in action.

1. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON "THE SCHOOLS OF QUEBEC"

Most of the observations of the Commission de l'enseignement secondaire on *The School of Québec* are favourable and in some cases in total agreement with the contents of this governmental document.

The Commission recognizes that the basic arguments were already debated during the consultation on the *Green Paper*, therefore it only wishes to discuss certain orientations as they present themselves and to comment upon their implications and implementation as well as on new proposed regulations or amendments to existing legislation scheduled by the Ministry.

*Some causes
for satisfaction*

There are some who believe a consultation as mobilizing as the one conducted around the *Green Paper* will not be too productive because of certain signs that prove the orientations had already been taken. In this sense *The Schools of Québec* is not disappointing. The document emits confidence because of a certain courage. Therefore, it was with great satisfaction that the Commission witnessed the rapid release of this governmental document. The Minister of Education, Jacques-Yvan Morin, should be congratulated for his determination to complete this important operation on time. Because of the basic options that were at stake, one would have expected it to take more time than it did to complete the various stages involved in the formulation and approval of the policy statement on primary and secondary education. The result is a positive impact created by the vitality and drive characterizing this undertaking as a whole.

Furthermore, the spirit of the text coincides on more than one occasion with concepts that have been dear to the Commission for a long time and that it now finds stated clearly in this official document. All this has obviously helped to create a favourable reaction, despite certain reservations, and has also helped to support many contemplated undertakings that are centred on the child or the student with due regard for individual growth and development.

The document also represents another step in the improvement of the school system and, as such, provides an answer to many movements and calls for greater common sense or a more realistic approach.

*Some unsatisfied
expectations*

On the other hand, a certain number of considerations in the document elicit our reservations. We shall, later on, comment more specifically on certain articles of the text but would like to state immediately

- . that some of the proposed measures are not reasonably consistent with parts of the policy statement to which they should correspond. Let us mention, for instance, the subject period schedules and the maintenance of the general and vocational education sectors with a view to the objectives of a sound basic education;
- . that parents are offered so many possibilities to participate they seem almost trapped;
- . that the teachers, the non-teaching professionals and the principals do not seem to be equal partners in consultation because of the mandates they are given to carry out;
- . that teachers are strongly urged to act as educators but the means to help them to do so are not defined;
- . that many important sections are still missing: the policies respecting vocational education and education in disadvantaged districts; the principles for reform in the certification of studies; a definition of the role and status of the school principal; support measures for the evaluation of personnel and the setting up of the orientation councils...

*The merits of
the document*

One of the main characteristics of the document, however, is its call to the imagination and creativity of people. On

reading it, we see that the Ministry insists upon the major orientations and does not seem impelled to make any sweeping changes. Its purpose, rather, is to serve to inspire the milieux for the time being, and to permit them to organize themselves by acting as a resource centre for implementing the corrective measures envisaged.

Because of the obvious fact that administrators, teachers, professionals and students need time, preparation and especially measures for a gradual transition, we can only approve of the Ministry's attitude.

We can never stress sufficiently the need that exists for forward planning and sensitization to the practical problems bound to emerge during the implementation process. To hope for a change in a particular area is not enough, we must expect to encounter certain difficulties too, especially when speaking about final goals, objectives, evaluation --- subjects that represent more than superficial correctives.

We must therefore insist more strongly on the way in which the changes are to be brought about than on the administrative directives on which they are to be based. Certain milieux, let us repeat, already possess the necessary competence and imagination for implementing successfully the desired correctives, provided they are not forced to operate in a predetermined way.

Finally, the Commission feels that *The Schools of Québec* has the merit of establishing a new and long desired order, and of clarifying certain objectives and orientations in keeping with the expectations of all sectors. The Policy Statement and Plan of Action conveys the desire to negotiate and to coordinate, which represents its merit but also its greatest challenge.

A few constructive reflections

Following these few comments of an overall nature, the Commission would now like to comment in greater detail on certain specific chapters. Reflected below are some of its concerns and certain constructive opinions.

- . Chapter 1 of *The Schools of Québec* logically recognizes the fact of diversity and the right to be different in a public school system, which can generate only positive reactions. But in the mind of population, these rights must be sustained by the right to due respect for diversity and difference. These basic requirements are not always properly understood, for even today we may regularly observe signs of intolerance with respect to religious instruction or the language of instruction.
- . It is interesting to find in a government policy document an enumeration of the values of education, such as in Chapter 2, accompanied by general goals and specific objectives for compulsory education. This presents a clear and solid basis on which the school sector can count for orientating its action. More particularly, it is necessary to underline the importance of statements that wish to make education not only accessible to all but adapted to each person (2.2.5), to confirm the essential purpose of the school is not merely instruction but also education and socio-cultural integration (2.2.7), to ensure the school provides a certain coherence of learning, and the integration of knowledge and experience by the young (2.2.8).

The general goals assigned to education are promising and give students a chance to realize their full potential. Yet, further on, is not too much attention devoted to organization, education and instruction? It is difficult to see how the student's preparation

for life, for example, his values education and social development are to be effected. It is true one counts strongly on the educational project to fulfill these roles but, unfortunately, it is not good to always define functions and roles in education since educational activity must be considered as a whole.

Finally, the Commission notes with satisfaction that among the final goals assigned to secondary education, is that of preparing a certain number of students for a professional life (2.3.8), a factor neglected by the *Green Paper*.

Must we be reminded that this is realistic and necessary when we know, for example, the drop out rate between secondary I and V is 50% and almost 60% of students do not go on to college?

It is also good that a real comprehensiveness is demonstrated in the objectives of the second cycle, which means the decompartmentalization of subject matters. (1) There is a need for greater flexibility in the organization of the secondary course if we are to achieve its goals and objectives. We shall return to this subject later in the text.

(1) See COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE, *The Proposed Institution of a Secondary VI*, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Québec, February 1979.

- . Chapter 3 places the educational project at the centre of every school and school community. Basically, it describes what every educator should be or do.

The individual teacher is still, today, motivated and dedicated to his work. Unfortunately, the work of teachers is hampered by too many restrictions. Those who are strongly committed to their task run the risk of wearing themselves out, because to become strongly involved in a school demands unsuspected efforts.

The educational project, however, calls for a strong degree of personal commitment, motivation and dedication which the conditions of life in the schools and the clauses of the collective agreements tend to dampen or cool.

If the educational project is to bear any fruit, first of all, it must not be treated as a myth. Then, if we are to be realistic, educators must be given the support they need to carry out their work with a desire to achieve something worthwhile so that their suppressed professional sense may be given a chance to emerge (3.6.7).

But we may expect some resistance in this area. It should be remembered the personnel is ageing and also stationary and it is not easy to change the attitudes of people who have already been compelled to cope with countless changes.

Neither should we count too much on the active involvement of parents. This is a variable factor for attitudes differ according to milieux and representativeness poses itself as a constant problem. It will take more than a piece of legislation to draw parents to school!

In the description of the educational project, one wonders to what extent students, especially senior secondary students, will be involved in this process, which does in fact concern them to the highest degree. Similarly, one wonders what will be expected of the non-teaching professionals who have an increasingly larger role to play at school and who are already experiencing problems in integrating into the teaching team.

As may be seen, the educational project involves individuals more than it does groups. Only those called upon to experience it are capable of defining it adequately, and in this sense, the educational project will always be able to be improved. It cannot be set up by any special structure or directive. That is why, if resources are to be made available for this purpose, they should be assigned to particular dedicated teachers to encourage worthwhile initiatives that may serve as examples and catalyzers for other teachers or schools.

Though the Commission endorses the concept of the educational project as an ideal way of giving a new vigour and identity to the school (1), it notes that the school board is absent for the time being from Chapter 3 and there is still too much speculation concerning its role.

The ways and means committee and the advisory committee (p. 41, no 6) are ambiguous with respect to pedagogical decentralization, the autonomy of the school boards and schools, budgeting, the management of human resources...

(1) See part 3 *"The Educational Projects"*.

This ambiguity, which is paralyzing certain milieux, should be cleared up without delay. Even though the Ministry has already set up a service to guide those seeking help, it must not slacken its efforts at providing practical information to the milieux.

- . Chapter 4 on participation is fundamentally important. Many methods are suggested for fostering more systematic and coherent action.

The *Plan of Action* shows ample concern for the wishes and grievances of parents. The "average" parent will in future be assisted more fully by the school to understand what is going on, for instance with respect to discipline, educational supervision, course outlines and report cards. Where structured participation is concerned, however, the words, here, must be accompanied by action. We repeat, once more, the school and parents committees need guidance and supervision to ensure continuity and consistency in their work. If their participation is considered desirable, we must be prepared to pay the price for it.

If the government is partial to the needs of more experienced parents committees and school committees, it nevertheless embarrasses a large number of other committees that have no desire for increased powers. This could be considered a wise tactic on its part to support some committees and motivate others but it is most obvious that there will be certain problems for some period of time.

Yet, one has to be realistic and concede that certain subjects elected for compulsory consultation such as the distribution of subjects and the time allocated to each (4.5.14) constitutes a subject of endless discussion because of the mass of factors involved.

As to the possibility of ensuring the representation of parents on both the school board and its executive committee (4.5.16), what parent, may we ask, would agree to accepting such a monumental task and the added responsibility of speaking for parents as a whole.

- . In *Chapter 6*, the government recognizes its responsibility with respect to education in disadvantaged districts. This is excellent on condition the comprehensive policy proposed (6.4.16) respects its prior commitment that "the measures concerning underprivileged areas will not be imposed upon the school boards and the schools" (6.1.8).

It is wise for the Ministry to state that the "guidelines... could be modified or adjusted in the overall statement of policy which will come later" (6.1.5), because modifications will, in effect, be required, for the description in the chapter of underprivileged areas is paternalistic in addition to being restrictive. The underprivileged areas are not solely the nests of economic problems, poverty is not necessarily a disgrace, the environment can also constitute a discredit, it is not fully a matter of social elements that must be fought. One can find values in these areas; such as solidarity, a large capacity for adaptation, optimism upon which one must count when considering their place... which the chapter fails to do.

The Ministry should also guard against universal solutions and standard models of intervention because each milieu and school present divergencies that demand different measures. The experience of educators working in such areas proves clearly that when a given form of intervention is suggested, it is generally rejected because its objectives are not shared by the parents. On the other hand, when parents are given room to make decisions, the projects operate better. They have to learn how to work together and this is beneficial to

the project. The Ministry must resolutely remain the facilitator of measures, with the school board providing support and inspiration to the milieu. The active involvement of the target population is the key to success.

At any rate, all school boards have not waited for the Ministry to implement special measures for their less favoured sectors. What they have done must be respected and above all exploited.

It should be noted in passing it is a bit pretentious to want to include this chapter "within the overall framework of the war on poverty" (6.1.6) without contemplating some form of collaboration or cooperation with the ministère des Affaires sociales! In this field the school system is but one agent among others and a minimum of favourable socio-economic conditions must obtain prior to thinking about achieving the social advancement of the young disadvantaged. Which leads us to say, in particular, that experiments towards the prevention of absenteeism and dropping-out as well as battles against the use of drugs (6.6) cannot be waged effectively by the school alone, these phenomena being symptoms of problems often having their roots elsewhere.

- . In the reading of *Chapter 8*, members were pleased to note the Ministry intends to withdraw itself gradually from the domain of measurement and evaluation and to play solely a supportive role in future.

This doubtlessly corresponds best to what is expected - evaluation closer to day-to-day experience. Let us remember the main goal of evaluation is to help the student to locate himself in his development and the best way to do so is on a continuing basis in the classroom itself. Evaluation, then, must be significant

for the student and the least disincarnate possible. It is also one of the basic means that must be fostered to enable students to exercise their autonomy as mentioned among the general objectives of secondary education. And if we want to achieve the objectives of the full growth and development of individual students, the mere evaluation of a body of knowledge does not suffice.

That is why it would be appreciated if the Ministry were to furnish teachers with measurement and evaluation instruments to facilitate such delicate tasks that require time and personalized contacts with students.

Let us add it is most important and highly positive that all courses taken by the student will count for purposes of certification (8.1.17).

Finally, it may be said the question of evaluation of the personnel still draws little attention from both the Ministry and the government. Once again, we find only cursory and mild comments on the subject.

- . In *Chapter 9* on teaching materials, we are most pleased with the policy with respect to school textbooks to be soon implemented by the Ministry. It contains supportive measures and criteria concerning content which are stimulating to both teachers and parents because of the realistic precautions taken by the Ministry to safeguard against certain pitfalls.

In effect, if it is promised that at least one textbook will be authorized for each course (9.3.2), we should not be compelled to cling to a single text. Diversified material is needed, subject to healthy competition, to prevent the text from substituting

itself for the course and also from becoming a consumer object for parents. The perfect textbook does not exist. It is a tool placed at the disposal of the teacher and must be regarded as one element among a series of teaching materials that support a given course.

The Ministry appears to have understood this, but not necessarily the population in general.

- . Several aspects of *Chapter* 13 on the organization of the secondary school are agreeable to the members of the Commission because they find within them some of their own recommendations:
 - the progression of objectives between the two cycles of secondary school (2.3.8 to 2.3.14);
 - certification after Secondary V giving access to a higher level of education (13.8);
 - the automatic transfer of 13-year old students to secondary school (13.2);
 - the six principles of organization for respecting the characteristics of adolescents: continuity, specificity of purposes, respect for individuality, freedom, motivation, accessibility (13.1.1);
 - abolition of streams (13.3.2);
 - basic proposals concerning vocational education to make it conform better to reality (13.8);

- a calendar for the progressive implementation of changes to the secondary program (13.9.1);
- the concept of student support (13.10.3);
- the principle of a re-allocation of the funds available to foster educational support or supervision (13.10.12);
- the consideration given to "new" categories of students (13.10.14 to 16)

Other aspects, nevertheless, merit further discussion. For example, under 13.2.2, the Ministry announces changes to article 26 of Regulation No. 7 for ensuring a closer relation between the school staff and parents at the primary and secondary levels above and beyond the existing liaison committees. This is saying very little on a subject that is fraught with problems, as contemplated by a joint committee composed of members of the Commissions of elementary and secondary education now studying "the passage of students from primary to secondary school". We know that impervious barriers sometimes exist between both levels along with a mutual attempt on both sides to snatch students within the context of the decline in enrolments. Measures based solely on regulations will not necessarily improve the situation. What should be fostered is greater cooperation based, for instance, on an intelligent marketing of the secondary school among primary schools to reassure parents, and in some cases, to prevent a flow of students toward private schools.

The disappearance of "regular, enriched and lightened" streams in secondary schools represents a positive element in the search for greater equality of opportunity because of the elimination of the premature labelling of students. If heterogeneous classes foster life

within stable groups, a stronger feeling of belonging to the school and facilitate educational supervision, it must be recognized they more or less require "multiple divisions" for teaching purposes.

Teachers accustomed to working with homogenous groups will therefore be required to cooperate. Greater remedial and enrichment measures will also be needed to counter the danger of a levelling at the base in respect to quality. Students being what they are, will have to be helped to realize the maximum of their potential.

When streaming first originated, the intention had been to make use of one common program that could be enriched or lightened according to the students. In practice however, teachers soon found themselves with different programs. The original notion of a single program must now be rediscovered - a program that can be enriched or lightened according to individual needs, by means of either catch-up courses or optional courses.

The subject-period schedules presented "as suggestions" consist of a distribution of subjects in blocks of three teaching periods per block (13.5.1). If it is "up to the school board to allocate the time for the teaching of each subject according to local needs", the question is who will dare to attempt it. The revised programs are, in fact, to be designed in conformity with the teaching of a subject over three periods!

It should moreover be said that the blocks of three periods prove considerably awkward in that they oblige teachers to choose between teaching several subjects to the same group or a single subject to several groups. Perhaps a semestrial organization of courses throughout the school year would be an hypothesis worthy of consideration. Furthermore, blocks of three periods (150

minutes) do not reconcile easily with the 1000 minutes required for the teaching task, 1000 not being a multiple of 150! It will be another question subject to negotiation,

The proposals made with respect to vocational education lack consistency (13.5.1, 13.5.6, 13.7.1, 13.8.4). On the one hand, it is not intended that these students be treated apart from others; on the other hand, special measures are contemplated for them. While offering the principle that these students, too, should have all the benefits of polyvalency, we cannot deny the problems this entails. These students may not fit into the category of maladjusted cases but their mental capacities are generally less verbal. This is what creates misunderstandings. The unfortunate part is that these students need support at school and receive the least because of being treated like the others. This category should not be termed "special", but rather, "particular", at the secondary level. To foster an improved integration of the elements of education, it is suggested that the first cycle teacher be made responsible for the school and vocational information periods, and for the personal and social training periods as well (pp. 152-153). It is an interesting proposal on the condition that the teacher is prepared and equipped in consequence, and also leads us to wonder what the document means when we read that "the Ministry and the school boards will provide all necessary assistance to persons undertaking these responsibilities" (13.10.9).

"Special grants will be given to ensure the respect of the right to exemption from religious instruction in the public schools" (13.10.16). In order to justify these grants, we believe steps should be taken to see that exempted students are not marginalized. Instead, the boards, in a spirit of openness, must search for new operating methods for their schools and subsidize them to cover the increased costs entailed in such a way as to avoid making these expenditures non admissible.

Increasing the number of school reports per year to six (13.10,17) is a direct answer to the demands of parents and the school. Nevertheless, we must be realistic. In the present system, it is impossible to provide an adequate report prior to October 15th, unless it be a local report designed by the school itself. Furthermore, we must not create an absolute with the report card. The school must not give in to the temptation of always wanting to pass on to parents the responsibility for problems in seeing there a miracle solution. There are many other systematic methods not yet exploited for entering into contact with parents.

These too brief comments on the importance of the movement created by *The Schools of Québec* would like to end on an optimistic note. This document is open; it leaves a great deal of room for local initiative that all teachers who want to progress in their profession will surely not fail to take.

2. TO PROFIT OF THE OCCASION FOR RETHINKING THE ORGANIZATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

The *Schools of Québec* foresees many improvements to secondary school education. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how the barriers between the educational sectors may be eliminated, a condition, in effect, regarded as a principle in the effectively integrated education of the student, the basic objective of secondary education. Let us trace here some of the approaches.

Vocational training

We are pleased to note that secondary vocational training holds an important place in Chapter 13 of *The Schools of Québec* (13.6, 13.7, 13.8) because of the more or less realistic proposal sometimes heard that it should be completely eliminated

from the secondary program. This is not the case in the governmental document which, on the contrary, lucidly examines the main aspects of the problem and announces "a vocational training policy which will have as its objective the revitalization of this sector, which is essential to the future development of Québec" (13.7.1).

It is interesting to note the main principles of the policy - the elimination of barriers in vocational training, closer ties between education and labour, a clarification of the responsibilities of all those concerned.

Moreover, among the necessary changes, article 13.8.3 states that "the proposal of an extension of "long" vocational education is retained". This proposal has already been studied by the Commission in all of its various aspects. (1)

The institution of a secondary VI

In its study, the Commission starts with the proposal of the *Green Paper* on primary and secondary education which suggests the institution of a secondary VI for long vocational training as a means of remedying the shortcomings of secondary education. In particular, it consists of the elimination of premature choices and educational streams so as to provide the student with a better preparation for life and the labour market.

Thus, the *Green Paper* wishes to postpone the start of textbook learning, to increase the general education of the students, and as a result, to increase the schooling of the long vocational students by one year.

(1) See previously mentioned document, *The Proposed Institution of a Secondary VI*.

Though the Commission regards this proposal as interesting, it rejects its mode of application. A deeper analysis of the question does in fact reveal certain major inconveniences such as increasing the drop out rate, the fact that there would be no increase in technical studies, the unfairness of obliging certain students to complete six years of schooling for a diploma worth only five and the fact this additional diploma would only help to increase the barriers between general and vocational studies. In brief, the *Green Paper's* proposal has more drawbacks than the advantages envisaged.

*The true nature
of polyvalency*

Such reflexions would have led to a dead-end had the Commission, in its study, not traced the concept of polyvalency to its source. As long as the secondary school operates with study programs which prevent its courses from being either exchangeable or equivalent in some form or way, it maintains the existence of parallel streams. In reality, any given course constitutes a "reason" for learning or a learning situation, therefore all courses are of equal educational value or complementary, pursuing the same goal of providing students with a sound basic education. It was necessary to rediscover this basic ideal of polyvalency and the notion of equivalency which assures a flexible organization of teaching and the school's attention to the individual differences of its students.

*A new
approach*

This return to the source then led the Commission to consider the problem of segregation in its totality, meaning within the secondary course as a whole, for it is just as manifest in the general sector as in the vocational sector. The study streams that are found to exist as much in science, literature, arts as in technology are contrary to the spirit of general education that should be the aim of the secondary school. The Commission, therefore, lays down as a principle that what must be promoted

are course selections that do not require the student to become fatally locked in a given stream.

This does not necessarily imply, as proposed in the *Green Paper*, postponing vocational training one year under the pretext of increasing the general education of the students who are not allowed sufficient time to examine other fields of learning, so it is said! This view is based on the fact that we still refuse to accept technical education as an integral part of school education, on a par with the human sciences, physical sciences or language courses.

At any rate, we must not run the risk of losing many young people along the way, young people who have little use for academic subjects and who find the real answer to their needs in technical "know how". Without counting the students who will drop out of school for one reason or another prior to the end of their course with no training whatsoever for the labour market.

A proposed organization

For all of the above reasons based on the student's own reality, the Commission proposes an organization for the desegregation of the secondary school and integration of different subject matters for a balanced basic education for all students, with training for the labour market for students who wish such training.

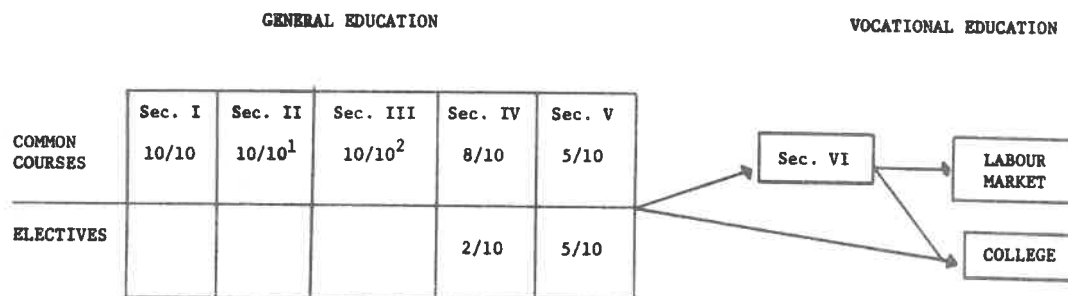
With the Commission's proposal, as illustrated in the following tables, it would now be possible:

TABLE 1 - SUBJECT SCHEDULE AS PROPOSED BY THE
COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE

Grade	General Education	Long Vocational Course	Short Vocational Course
I			
II	Introduction to technology 1/10	Introduction to technology 1/10	Technical exploration 1/10 Introduction to technology 1/10
III	Technical exploration 1/10	Technical exploration 1/10	General education 8/10 Vocational education 2/10
IV	General education 8/10 Electives 2/10	General education 8/10 Vocational education 2/10	General education 5/10 Vocational education 5/10
V	General education 5/10 Electives 5/10	General education 5/10 Vocational education 5/10	General education 2/10 Vocational education 8/10
VI		Vocational courses 10/10	

- Notes: 1) This schedule differs slightly from that of *The Schools of Québec*. It has no pretentions and wishes only to demonstrate possible proportions.
- 2) The fraction denotes 10 blocks of 3 courses per week for the secondary timetable (30 periods a week).
- 3) The distinction between general and long vocational education is retained in order to identify the proposed changes although the distinction is eliminated in the actual program which introduces a desegregated secondary course.
- 4) The short vocational course appears for information purposes only since it is not included in the present proposal.

TABLE 2 - ORGANIZATION OF GENERAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACCORDING TO THE PROPOSED SUBJECT SCHEDULE



- (1) Includes one Introduction to technology course.
- (2) Includes one Technical Exploration course.

- . to not only delay an introduction to technology, but to make it compulsory in cycle one, given that it forms an integral part of basic education;
- . to consider the "vocational" options on the same footing as the "general" options in secondary cycle two;
- . to award the secondary school certificate to any student who has successfully completed the equivalent of five years of studies, thereby firmly establishing polyvalency and desegregation in secondary school education;
- . to focus the secondary VI directly on training for the labour market and to have it officially recognized as such by a separate certificate consecutive to that of the secondary school course, and giving access eventually to college education.

By means of this approach, the Commission protects the envisaged advantages of an eventual institution of a secondary VI in the long professional course and at the same time reduces the inherent disadvantages considerably.

The chief merit of the discussion initiated on the subject nevertheless resides in the occasion it has provided for rethinking the whole organization of the secondary course. This undertaking has led to a proposal that makes the objective of a sound basic training applicable to all students, fosters improved vocational education, simplifies the conditions of certification and facilitates access to college education for all students.

3. THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

We have already mentioned how the movement concerning the educational projects as now initiated can offer and is already offering an interesting form of motivation to educators seeking a way to finally establish coherency in the educational action they envisage. The *Plan of Action* is not foreign to these orientations which are even stimulated for the Plan sees the edu-

cational projects as the rallying point of all decentralized and autonomous educational activity. It is even prepared to supply resources for facilitating their inception and development, for it is no easy matter to carry out an educational project successfully as will be shown later.

*A movement
to inspire*

The expression "educational project" advanced in the *Green Paper* on Primary and Secondary education and later in the *Policy Statement and Plan of Action* of the ministère de l'Education was borrowed from the vocabulary of the private schools which took it from the Comité catholique's *Voies et impasses* (1) to characterize the action of their establishments. It demonstrates the intention of the government to associate education with its users, to arouse adhesion to objectives, to promote more community participation in the definition of the educational projects in order to replace what has become an unjustifiably excessive centralization. The educational project is regarded by the government as the cornerstone of educational renewal in the coming years.

*Problems of
comprehension*

In the mind of both the population and educators however, we are forced to observe that the educational project is not perceived in a uniform way and that the concept calls for clarification.

(1) COMITE CATHOLIQUE, Voies et impasses, 1. Dimension religieuse et projet scolaire, Québec 1974.

For some, it is a "pedagogical" illustration of a management technique that starts from an inventory of needs up to the evaluation of measures taken in order to achieve objectives. For others, it is an effort to rationalize the customary educational practices of a milieu. For others again, it is a text of fine statements, a new gimmick, a slogan...

Yet, some teachers have seen within it a possibility to give their school its own colours and identity. Others see the educational project only at the level of a larger system. Thus, an educational project exists only for a given community or region because school districts or local schools see no interest in being different. The notion of milieu would also have to be clarified.

Opinions are therefore strongly divided, as also demonstrated in the synthesis of the consultation on the *Green Paper*. We note that "the relative indifference manifested in regard to this chapter is already highly significant", and observe that "over half of the respondents (54%) believe that it is not important for schools to develop an identity of their own" and furthermore "a growing majority of citizens do not generally accept major differences among schools". (1)

In spite of everything, considering the definition retained by the government in *The Schools of Québec*, we see that its aim is to insert it in the school itself: "the educational project is the dynamic initiative by which a school, through the concerted will of the parents, students, administrators and staff, undertakes to implement a general plan of action". (2)

(1) QUEBEC. MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, Consultation sur le Livre vert de l'enseignement primaire et secondaire. Synthèse des résultats, Québec 1978, p. 93.

(2) QUEBEC. MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, *The Schools of Québec, Policy Statement and Plan of Action*, Québec 1979, p. 35.

A working document of the Service de la recherche du ministère de l'Education identifies in the same vein the object of the educational project as "the overall planning, realization and evaluation of the school's action in the development of the child". (1)

For its part, the Commission de l'enseignement secondaire is inclined to believe that there cannot be one single conception or master plan. The educational project will be what each school wants it to be, regardless of its level or size, for as long as it is the result of the honest participation of its agents and includes the values and general objectives that Québec society has already established for its school system.

*Practical
observations*

The theoretical considerations or description of the basis of the educational project are easily accessible and the Commission has no intention to paraphrase them. Neither can it provide a systematic analysis of the educational projects now in force because it is not equipped to do so. Besides, at the Direction générale des réseaux, a research team is in the process of doing this work with a view to abstracting the major lines of especially interesting projects that can be suggested to the milieux as measures or concepts for facilitating the effective implementation of feasible projects.

The Commission considered it more within its competence to study, on the basis of the experience and observations of its members, a number of educational projects of secondary schools

(1) REGENT FORTIN, Les fondements du projet éducatif, Service de la recherche, Ministère de l'Education, Québec 1978, p. 10.

or school boards that could permit it to submit practical observations and reports on the way in which projects are designed, because this practice can reveal the steps taken which are worthy of note.

- . The origin, background, source of inspiration or process which led to the design of an educational project are as important as the project itself for they are part of it.

There are many publications that exist which describe how educational projects were designed, what kinds of need they wished to fill and the person or small group, in particular, which assumed the leadership. The local colour of the project, its roots within the local community and among the people involved are all revealed. The project is seldom the fruit of a spontaneous generation. It is the result of an analytical investigation, of a pedagogical day devoted to the study of problems, of a sudden awareness of the competition of the private school sector, of a need for coherency in an excessively large school, of a need to rebuild the school's image, of participation in the questionnaire on the *Vécu scolaire*, of a regional discussion group.

With regard to sources of inspiration, one notes that the project is often based on literature that has left a profound mark on education in Québec. The references to the *Parent Report*, the *Faure Report*, *Educational Activity* of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Voies et impasses* of the Comité catholique, the *Green Paper*, *The Schools of Québec* ... all serve as preambles to the objectives aimed at.

There is much talk about the development of the whole person, responsibility for one's own development, about a sense of responsibility and autonomy, the quality of human relationships, self-fulfillment through work, respect for the young, individual attention... It must unfortunately be said that this is generally the most impersonal and least original part of the project.

- . The educational project is worth the participation it demands.

As a rule, the educational project must obtain the agreement of the parents, students, administration and staff on common objectives and means of action. It is reasonably believed that healthy participation develops motivation and commitment on the part of all the agents of education involved. This idea is dominant in most of the publications and returns like a leitmotiv. One does not conceive an educational project without seeking a community spirit.

In practice however, we find that as regards parents, what is mainly sought is an agreement in principle. Concerning the staff, each one is expected to be involved in one aspect pertaining to his function. Leadership and evaluation of the project are left to the administration. But what is expected of the students? That they obey the rules and regulations or conform to a code of ethics which describes their "rights and obligations".

This is a sad truth that must be emphasized. The student does not appear as one of the prime agents in the educational project. All of the projects examined in the various publications present the needs of the students, describe their reality, think for them...and then forget about them. In most cases, the educational project is the business of "grown ups"; the student is absent except at the level of principles. Yet, an involved student would be a motivated one.

Now that supervisory procedures, curricular and extra-curricular activities are taking up a great deal of attention at school, very little account is taken of the suggestions of the students in the planning of these activities and procedures, which are selected much more in terms of the teachers' preferences and skills than in terms of the students' preferences and needs. Yet, it is said that a great deal of effort goes into their organization.

Of course, to operationalize the active involvement of students is one problem more. It calls for teachers who are prepared to animate or facilitate a process whereby students can have a say in their own education. Thus, the necessary mechanisms should be put into place because the game matching the "organizers" against the "organized" seems to be growing more and more prominent.

Yes, active resistance and aggression among the students is on the decline and is being replaced by indifference on the part of a large proportion of secondary school students. The psychological drop-in phenomenon is much too prevalent today to not want to do something about it.

As long as the student ignores why he is at school, what objectives are being pursued, why one method takes precedence over another, how he is expected to participate in the whole process, he will remain a spectator.

It is up to the secondary school, therefore, to develop a process for participation rather than authoritarianism. This does not mean to say students should impose their wills, but rather, should be introduced into the design and realization of the project that affects them. Each student is important at school and the International Year of the Child should give birth to practices that are more attentive to and respectful of young persons.

Senior secondary students have something to say but adults think too much in their place. As in most domains, it will not be the mass of students but only a handful of particularly motivated ones who will accept to become involved. They should be guided by an attentive teaching team and serve as multiplicative agents among the students as a whole.

Is it totally unrealistic to solicit the participation of students in the definition of the school's objectives? Student

councils, class councils, the student press and radio, the presence of students on the school committee and pedagogical committees, activity organization committees...are practices to be promoted and multiplied.

- . Putting the educational project down on paper is a worthwhile practice.

For many, to have to list needs, objectives, procedures...on paper can be a tedious and time consuming practice.

Nevertheless, a written text has the advantage of being official and can serve as background material for discussion, action and evaluation. It also allows one to check the coherency of the operation at all times.

Too many school projects lack consistency simply because they contain too many implicit elements. Some teams find it difficult to write, others are too voluble. Sometimes a text may be clumsy or awkward but can kindle a desire for a plan of action and ideals, whereas another may be of an easy flowing style, richly presented, but its content has a hollow ring to it. There can be no fixed rules, however. It is merely necessary to emphasize the need for an instrument that specifies the school's intentions and identifies its colours.

To assist their schools, certain school boards take the lead by providing the framework of an educational project into which their schools must fit. In such cases, schools tend to remain passive while the principal traces his school's project on that of the school board. The process is hardly conducive to autonomy.

Only when a project springs from real needs can it develop realistically and gain greater support. The way in which it is presented is therefore of the utmost importance. It cannot be ordered nor can it be simply administrative.

- . The educational project must be conceived as a whole and not bound by time.

As the Commission was able to observe, the educational project as a rule is born of a special problem or identified need at a given moment. Some milieux focus their entire project on the resolution of this problem and forget about the overall nature of their mission. What happens once the problem has been resolved?

Other milieux view their projects solely in terms of instruction per se. Course schedules, lists of options... represent their projects. But such a procedure satisfies only one aspect of the school. The educational supervision of the students, their cultural insertion, social development... are also as much a part.

It must be remembered that the educational project must situate the school within the community. We have already referred to the number of "new" agents acting among the students. The school must try to integrate these various often scattered or fragmentary services into a coherent whole serving the same cause.

It is certain that the educational project cannot become comprehensive overnight, that the teaching teams must be able to work together beforehand and count on a certain tradition and stability before the project can be totally coherent and complete. The project is therefore progressive and does not have to be resumed every year. Rather, it should grow and develop from year to year, focussing on one aspect or another throughout the different stages of its development. This is what the most interesting educational projects reveal.

A comprehensive educational project furthermore establishes its own priorities and further stages each year. By an evaluation of both the means exploited and the evolving situation, the

agents of the project are always adequately aware of the state and needs of their educational activity.

- . Educational supervision has an important place in the educational project.

Though many texts present in precise fashion the institutional program of the school, many others describe in detail the procedures used for ensuring the educational supervision of the students. This is indicative of what is taking place within the schools at this precise moment. They depend a great deal on educational supervision for giving concrete shape to the project and for uniting the teaching and non-teaching staff under the same cause.

It is interesting to note the original initiatives taken to ensure the productive use of the time allocated in the collective agreements for supervision, as well as the availability time of the teachers. Many application problems nevertheless exist and there are great disparities between school boards because these procedures are negotiated at the local level.

In some places, teachers are willing to discharge some of their colleagues from their common workload for special functions pertaining to organization, supervision, project design. In other places, each member of the staff is assigned the task of home room teacher, or animator of an educational cell. Again, teachers may sometimes divide their time between teaching and supervision while others continue to teach full time...

There are many possible variables, and forms of supervision are only beginning to emerge through creative imagination. Educators are seriously starting to realize it is the supervisory activities that will ensure the desired individual characteristics of the schools, beginning with the classroom itself which is the most basic area of all.

The most outstanding repercussion, moreover, that affects teachers individually, is the satisfaction and personal enrichment they find in supervisory activities. It is now being discovered, despite a few cases of official boycotting, that these activities are the source of renewed human relationships indispensable to all education and make the practice of teaching more productive and interesting.

Certain conditions must nevertheless be modified to permit greater flexibility and possibilities in the supervisory activities. The teacher's workload should be more diversified and recognized as such. Current teacher training practices are not too favorable to this diversification and even if many teachers have been won over to the cause, concrete clauses are needed for upgrading the function of educational supervision and modifying the principle of specialization in the training and improvement of teachers.

- . The educational project requires that we speak about it, demands to be diffused and known, and that we take the time to adjust to it.

At the present time, too many examples of educational projects are administrative documents regulating relations between persons without supplying the spirit of these relations. Many may say the milieu does not ask for more.

But the educational project must contain more than simple and materialistic aspirations. It should present a whole line of thought as a common basis for the pedagogical or other action to be carried out in the milieu. In this way will it become a privileged instrument for discussing pedagogy and the philosophy of education and for arousing reflection among the various agents involved at a level above that of day-to-day teaching.

The educational project should to some extent be an instrument for change, an inspiration for improvements not only in regard

to the children, but also the parents, educators and society in general.

The basic advantage of this discussion of final goals before dwelling on methods resides in its return to a logic that has been too often neglected because it descended from above: the principles and values that are proclaimed, the teaching philosophies adhered to should be the subject of open discussion to give a solid basis to the project and to gain a minimum of consensus from the people who are involved and called on to work together.

- . To build an educational project represents a difficult endeavour fraught with constraints.

Many publications refer to the problems encountered in the formulation of a project or describe how a particular measure was retained because it could not avoid a certain constraint that had to be taken into account.

These impediments derive from different sources: the availability of the principals, the lack of autonomy in budgetary resources, the impossibility of selecting the personnel, certain restrictive clauses on educational supervision in the local collective agreements, the disparity in the student population, school transportation, a bad experience in the past, attitudes of mistrust or indifference on the part of parents or educators, the lack of a minimum consensus...

That is why the educational project often derives from the persistence of one person more convinced than the rest or from a small especially motivated group which, despite the obstacles, will push the idea and little by little win the support of the other agents. Most often, it is the school principal with the help of a few supporters who stand by and hope the project will take hold and succeed.

The educational project movement is here to stay. It has enough convinced followers to permit this favoured measure of the government to trace its beneficial way and produce the fruit expected of it.

If we may not expect to find all the virtues attributed to it because of the difficulties and constraints associated with it, the educational project movement is nevertheless inherently capable of progressively transforming mental outlooks and educational practices. Educators, at present, lack an educational philosophy and the educational project is capable of restoring one.

Some milieux will always be refractory: others will advance provided they receive some encouragement. The latter must be assisted and supported because they will be the innovators and initiators serving as models to the other milieux. Has not progress always depended upon the obstinate, the firm believers and the zealots?

And if the Ministry continues to maintain its desire to support progressive milieux in a concrete way, it should be reminded that its aid should be directed to those educators and teaching teams that form the nucleus.

For here again, it should be remembered that, in education, successful results are achieved by people far more than by structures or severely negotiated solutions.

CONCLUSION

The year 1978-1979 offered little originality in regard to the previous year. It was characterized, to some extent, by the climate of insecurity in the face of the future and the desire for educational renewal that marked the past year. It was also characterized by the release of certain important governmental policy statements that were rooted in a widespread consultation of the population and that will now serve to inspire educators for the next decade.

It should be noted that certain problems we have enumerated continue to persist and therefore call urgently for solutions. There have also been some efforts made to improve the quality of the services offered to the public and these efforts must be promoted and supported.

We have unfortunately remarked that it is too often a question of money and budgets when one is prepared to assess the situation of education in Québec. Does the quality of education always have to be calculated in terms of the funds that are invested in it?

We believe that the quality of education resides, rather, within people. And if the problem with education in Québec today can be briefly defined as a lack of commitment on the part of too many of its agents, then more dedicated people is obviously the answer.

The Schools of Québec now paves the way for a widescale pedagogical reform, following the era of "brick and mortar". It is imperative that every educator, each in his own way, assume responsibility for his individual contribution to education in response to the invitation of the Minister of Education.

"This is how the educational, administrative and financial aspects of the long awaited renewal fit together. Much remains to be done, however, if we are to transform our schools into places of close and warm relationships among students, parents, teachers and administrators. Unless we are able to accomplish this they will remain mere information factories." (1)

This present year is therefore once again returning with renewed concentration to the basic question of the place of the human being within the school system. The question must be retained as the inspiring force behind all further action to be taken:

- . to effect the necessary changes with restricted means;
- . to involve, articulate and exploit more fully all human and financial resources;
- . to provide even greater attention to the students by associating them in the determination of the ways and means of their own education.

It is precisely this child or young person who must be the centre of our concern because he represents the future of Québec society.

(1) J, Y, M, "Introduction" to *The Schools of Québec. Policy Statement and Plan of Action*, Québec 1979, p. 13.

5. COLLEGE EDUCATION

The publication of the document *Colleges in Québec* was the most outstanding event of the year 1978-1979. (1) In making known its intents and purposes with respect to the colleges, the Government finally succeeded in carrying out what had been a too often postponed project.

Another event worthy of note because of its implications was the conflict over grants and bursaries originated at the CEGEP of Rimouski. This protest movement was quick to mobilize the college students but also to lead them to an exhaustion of their militant spirit because of their disillusionment with their feeble gains.

Apart from the two foregoing events which left their mark on college education, one might say that it was a good year in general, except for certain problems associated with student strikes. A sometimes surprising tranquility permitted some to pursue their education successfully and others to attend freely to their respective functions. A reasonably improved climate, however, does not signify that all is well in the best of possible worlds. The following review of the situation of college education by the Commission de l'enseignement collégial is indicative of various pressing needs in this area of education as shall be illustrated below.

(1) MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION, *Colleges in Québec. A New Phase. Government Projects in the Area of the CEGEPs*, Québec 1979.

GOVERNMENTAL PLANS CONCERNING THE CEGEPs

The publication of the Government's proposals with respect to the colleges was received with a sigh of relief by the college network because of the end it put to a long period of suspense. The document may be reassuring because of its lack of radical changes but nevertheless elicits certain reservations. Inconsistency between the major ideals expressed and the measures proposed has left the college milieu in a state of perplexity. The perception of a rather rare quality on the part of the Government that attacks nobody with its most positive assessment of college education is inclined to lead to a certain skepticism on the part of some people and perhaps explain why they have been more or less hesitant to accept the college situation in terms of what the document conveys.

Since the start of classes in January 1979, the public colleges and their federation, and the private colleges and their association have all taken a serious look at this analytical investigation, and more particularly the teachers who have shown the greatest concern in focussing on matters respecting the course of studies and subject evaluation. Students, for their part, emerging from the conflict over grants and bursaries, were more concerned about resolving the internal problems of their own unsettled organization and making up for lost courses than about studying a document poorly received because of its governmental origins.

Owing to the generous participation of its sub-groups and the colleges themselves, the Federation of CEGEPs has already

presented its views on some questions of particular interest to its membership.

For its part, the Association des collèges du Québec, with the participation of member establishments, has submitted recommendations on all of the government's proposals.

The boards of governors, for their part, do not appear to have felt a need for a special study of this governmental project. Very few studies have been made outside the sub-groups of the Federation of CEGEPs.

The Commission de l'enseignement collégial of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation has devoted most of its work to the study of the document and the drafting of a lengthy commentary covering all of its major aspects. (1) The main views of the Commission are presented below.

The governmental survey

We believe that in the chapter on the survey carried out by the government, certain points must be emphasized and several factors not specifically dealt with in the document also brought to light.

(1) See COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT COLLEGIAL, Rapport d'étude du projet du Gouvernement à l'endroit des collèges, avril 1979.

The objectives of democratization and greater access to post-secondary education have been attained. But these objectives must be pursued with greater vigour by, first, eliminating the barriers created by prerequisites in certain programs and by keeping quotas down to a minimum, and secondly, by making college studies more accessible to the economically and culturally deprived through more adequate academic and professional information services.

We have succeeded in developing and making available to students quality professional training but many career programs call for too much specialization to the detriment of the basic educational objectives selected by the government as the principles on which college education is to be organized.

Where teaching is concerned, the colleges must be given a new impetus for improvement: improved teaching methods to take individual development better into account; production of quality teaching material; more concerted action among teachers to provide for greater coherency in college education; better teacher education programs for future teachers.

The human and material resources allocated to the college system have been enormous but these resources should now be made to operate at full capacity; first, with respect to the primary function of teaching and secondly, concerning the services the colleges are expected to provide to the community.

In conclusion of this survey, the Commission, along with the government, believes that the main problems requiring special attention are the following three: better quality education for the students; a clarification of the responsibilities of college agents; improved relations between the schools and the unions of college teachers.

*The necessity for and
principles of renewal*

The second section of the document Colleges in Québec examines the necessity for and the principles of renewal in college education. The government offers a new challenge to the colleges. To the Commission, this challenge consists in learning to adjust to an increasingly diversified student body, gaining popular support, improving management conditions through greater participation, acquiring greater returns on investments, and improving the quality of education.

Beyond this challenge, the Commission believes that clarification of the objectives of college education is something that belongs to the Ministry and to the colleges. It is the main condition for ensuring due respect for the specific character of this new level of instruction.

Where the guidelines for renewal are concerned, they are acceptable to the Commission with certain additional thoughts on the following subjects: evaluation, basic education and continuing education, greater local responsibility and community services.

As to evaluation, every department within the college must be firmly intent on improving the quality of education and the management of the college. The priorities and objectives of each establishment must constitute the basis of any serious evaluation. After having established in principle why evaluation is necessary, the government and the colleges should find the instruments needed and specify what is to be evaluated, who is to be responsible for the evaluation and how it is to be conducted. In the face of these necessary controls, all attitudes should be guided by a firm desire for improvement.

Basic education, the continuation of secondary general education aimed at the objectives of continuing education, has as its goal "the mastering of the principles, process and laws which permit one to grasp the essence of a subject matter...". As aptly stated in the White Paper on a Cultural Policy for Québec, the school, in the face of the socio-cultural explosion, must return to the basics, which means it must offer to everyone a general education in order to facilitate all further education. The Commission feels the desired changes should be determined in the light of a better understanding of the concept of a general education but the governmental text appears to be lacking in this respect.

The problems encountered in the taking over of local responsibilities stem first of all from a lack of clarification of the mandates of the boards of governors, which has led to a constant polarization in the debates on a series of matters

that may have well been outside the competence of the boards. A clearer definition of the mandate of the board of governors, a delimitation of the areas of competence of college officials, more organized consultation, and especially a profound change in attitudes would help to improve the operations of the colleges and their administration.

More attention must be paid to the social function of the colleges. The first move required is to make the resources of the colleges available to the community. Coordinated activity is also required in order to economize on resources and provide for consistency in the services offered.

*Concrete measures for
the new stage*

The third part of the governmental document is devoted to an explanation of the "concrete measures for the new stage". The Commission made a serious study of the proposed measures in the light of the guidelines set forth by the government and its comments are expressed below.

With respect to the pedagogical aspects of college education (*régime pédagogique**), it must be said the Commission found

* *Translator's Note:* The "*régime pédagogique*" is the body of departmental regulations that prescribes the pedagogical structures and curriculum requirements of the colleges. It is published annually in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial*.

little consistency between some of the contemplated measures and one of the major guidelines of the project which is to provide students with a sound basic education. The deletion of complementary courses, addition of compulsory courses, the lack of concern about second and foreign language learning are matters that do not reconcile easily with the government's above major guideline.

For reasons other than stated, the Commission agrees with the insertion of a course in Québec civilization but emphasizes the need for minimal norms for quality instruction, norms to be considered basic in the process of evaluation. The Commission also emphasizes that the objectives of each educational level must also be determined in order to provide for the necessary coordination and complementarity between levels of education.

In the section on student life, the Commission feels that reception, counselling and animation services are still necessary even if the college no longer takes up all of a student's life. Academic and professional counselling should be considered one of the primary functions of the CEGEPs. The rights of students should be precisely defined in order to allow for a clearer distinction between their jurisdiction and that of the college.

Where teachers are concerned, there is an urgent need for coherent teacher education and improvement policies capable of enhancing the professional satisfaction of teachers. Any support

given to them should be reinforced by a clarification of the roles of the different agents.

The professional education teachers should be recruited as much as possible among candidates with a wide experience in the work world. The classification rules should also be reviewed to facilitate recruitment and make teaching competitive.

While expressing its agreement with the project of the government, the Commission hopes the creation of specialized centres for the teaching of certain professional options will be limited to a strict minimum and carried out within the frame of an overall professional education policy, a policy strongly desired by all working in this field of education.

The measures announced relative to adult education constitute an important step but further measures of a pedagogical and financial nature are needed to foster access to the colleges. We are now looking forward to an overall policy of adult education that will give operational definition to the concept of continuing education.

In view of the problems experienced in the administration of the colleges, it is now necessary to redefine more precisely the mandate of the board of governors. The criteria that should preside in the determination of the composition of the board are those recommended by the Parent Commission: a

delegation of the administrative powers and responsibilities of the State; a thorough integration of the institute in the region; adequate freedom of the institute in the face of the State and the regional set up.

With a view to improving the quality of education, administration and participation in the colleges, the Commission recommends to the government the creation of a council of colleges in order to advise the ministère de l'Education on the needs of college education, the development of programs, evaluation of the institutional practices of the colleges and their financing.

The council should be advisory and independent of the Ministry and the colleges so that it may act with full freedom.

Local reactions

These are the principal comments of the Commission. Certain aspects of the document which are still a subject of local concern include the model of the board of governors of the CEGEPs, the course of studies, evaluation and the council of colleges. It is an obvious fact that the board of governors has fallen short of all expectations. The fact the Ministry wishes to retain it by banking upon a change of attitudes for settling participation problems is a cause for anxiety, and opposition to the government's proposal is more or less unanimous.

The proposals concerning the course of studies that evoke disagreement or reservations deal mainly with compulsory courses, complementary courses, second language and foreign language instruction. The concept of a general or basic education calls for a requestioning of the course of studies as a whole but there is still no consensus on what the document has to say on the subject.

There is very little unanimity with respect to the proposals concerning evaluation. There is much opposition to the fact that the council of colleges would be responsible for evaluating the colleges, their administrations and teaching processes. What this might possibly result in is the subject of much concern. What sort of guidelines would be used in such evaluations? Guidelines oriented toward controls, analyses or value judgments? And there are questions about ways and means. Who does what? For whom? By what means?

There may be general agreement as to the creation of a council of colleges but it is far from being the structure proposed by the government. The local view is that the council should do more towards clarifying the respective roles of the Ministry, the Federation and the individual colleges.

A crucial phase in the renewal and strengthening of college education has thus been inaugurated. Courage is now needed to carry it through successfully, and success depends much upon close cooperation between the colleges and the community the colleges are called on to serve.

THE CONFLICT OVER LOANS AND BURSARIES

The conflict over loans and bursaries has already been mentioned as one of the major events of the past year. The conflict is indicative of a growing discontent and situations fraught with questionable consequences.

In its 1976-1977 report on access to college studies (1), the Commission had called the Minister's attention to a number of questions concerning loans and bursaries. During the year 1977, the system underwent certain improvements which were, however, well within the recommendations of the Commission and the Conseil supérieur. Last year several adjustments were also made to help to ameliorate the system.

Yet, as demonstrated by the students in 1978, a number of past problems continue to persist. In spite of the commendable efforts made to inform students about loans and bursaries, such information is still sorely lacking. The misunderstanding shown by the students in their protests is full proof of it. Some students feel the criteria applying to the granting of bursaries are unfair.

Above and beyond this conflict whose goal, for all practical purposes, is to protest a salary for students, or at least an increased revenue for those already possessing one, is another serious situation that deserves to be noted.

(1) CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education, Report 1976-1977, Québec 1978, pp. 166-195.

Many young people do not go on to college because the loans and bursaries do not permit them to take care of their needs without recourse to family assistance. And many economically deprived young people must help to provide for their family if it is to be able to live with some amount of decency. But it is not only up to the ministère de l'Education to try to improve the situation of this segment of the population. To our knowledge this question has never been raised by the Association nationale des étudiants or the local student associations. Yet, the ideologies dominating these bodies should have logically aroused some concern about the concept of sharing. But logic does not always prevail in such situations.

Another malaise is that the young are becoming increasingly aware of how they are manipulated by their elders. The conflict began with a protest for free schooling. And yet, education is free at the college level. Could it be that some college students are planning to take university degrees and want to be guaranteed free education following their college diploma? Recent events are indicative of a new awareness among students of which the ANEQ will be the first to feel the brunt.

The initial effects of the conflict were most obvious: all college courses and activities ceased for varying periods of time, unfortunately towards the end of what had been an excellent session. Although make-up activity was satisfactory, it could not be equated with a normally conducted session. Once again were we to witness a session of debatable quality.

In brief, the prolongation of the school year could have serious consequences for students who may either lose their chance of finding summer employment or at the very least, a few weeks of salary that will have to be reimbursed out of public funds.

Another effect of the unsuccessful student protest movement became more and more visible throughout the course of the year. The setbacks experienced by the student associations have generated isolation and insecurity among these groups. Many have lost their enthusiasm and have disassociated themselves from the provincial body.

The conflict over loans and bursaries and confusion within the student associations does not suffice to explain this move toward their disintegration. Other factors were involved - ideological factors, often abstract and remote from the daily concerns of the student body; for example, the lack of local and provincial representation on the ANEQ, the lack of student solidarity and support in general.

The members of the Commission have come to conclude that student protests are closely associated to the constant doubt and hesitation that lies at the source of the major problems affecting our politic-economic-cultural system. The main questions now calling for short term and comprehensive answers are how are young adults supposed to be treated by society? What are their rights? What are their responsibilities? How are we training them to be responsible citizens?

ACCESSIBILITY

Considerable progress has been made with respect to accessibility to college education and we are pleased to note the document Colleges in Québec adopts accessibility as a continuing goal. The Ministry's college admission requirements are more generally respected, and it might be added, are now more rational. The prospect of a smaller student population has undoubtedly had some part to play. However, there are still rejections and reorientations in the career program sector because of the constant presence of prerequisite courses. The pre-university science programs present the same situation. The abusive use of science and mathematics scores as indicators of success still operate in a discriminatory selection process in the career programs and in the pre-university and university courses.

The quota system, severely criticized in the past, has also become more logical in the year 1978-1979, to the great satisfaction of the colleges but there is still room for improvement. There could be greater coordination among the colleges with the support of the Direction générale de l'enseignement collégiale and its statistics.

And there could also be a more rational use of resources while providing to every region the best educational services possible.

The past two years have demonstrated improvements in academic and vocational counselling. Information centres have been

instituted in most colleges and comprehensive secondary schools, providing up-to-date statistics on labour market conditions in cooperation with the federal and provincial manpower centres.

But something must still be done to improve the quality of the information that is available to students. The question is whether the best sources of information are being exploited to the full, such as the college educational consultants and department heads, particularly those of the vocational sector. The secondary school guidance counsellors and teachers who provide academic and vocational information to students are often inadequately informed about college programs and the exigencies of various sectors of employment.

Despite the major efforts being carried out at the Ministry and in the colleges in a spirit of true cooperation, the quality of the information given to college students destined for university studies is clearly less than adequate. This matter deserves more attention and greater cooperation on the part of the universities.

Student guidance and counselling are factors of accessibility that continue to be important once the student has registered at college. A large number of students arrive at college with new doubts about their orientation and their stay at college is often prolonged by at least one session because of reorientations. This phenomenon calls for special attention to the progress of individual students and militates in favour of the existence of more general study programs dealing more with

the basics of different specialties in the first year. The grouping of programs by families would foster a more gradual orientation, without doing away with the introduction to the specialty or lengthening the course of studies. The creation of modules would also facilitate educational supervision and more individual attention to students.

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is still the subject of considerable discussion and its component parts are being analytically investigated. Commendable efforts have been made to improve the process of education but students are subjected too much to the free action of individuals or small groups. Five components of quality are examined in the following paragraphs: support to education, the student body, the teaching staff, first language instruction and the arts.

Support to education

The support to education that we are trying to organize with much hardship is generally inadequate, if not inexistent. Teacher improvement activities, research and experimentation, the collaboration among the different educational agents are still isolated and poorly coordinated undertakings. Budgetary restrictions do not permit all colleges, especially the smaller ones, to provide themselves with a professional staff for guiding and assisting teachers. And this latter staff will

probably be further reduced with the budgerary cuts announced for the year 1979-1980. The only existing post of pedagogical researcher and consultant to teachers may, in some cases, have to be eliminated completely. Such a situation does not conform to the objectives of Colleges in Québec for improving the quality of education.

Institutional analyses are being conducted in many of the colleges. Some of them are being subsidized by the Ministry. These practices that were initiated three years ago and have been encouraged to continue do not appear to have modified the operations of the colleges in any significant way. It appears that the reports of these analyses are generally tucked away on some ministerial shelf and the utility of what are sometimes an imposing number of statistics not fully understood. What appears to suffice is merely a clear conscience for having carried out the analysis, if nothing more.

Because of the importance the document *Colleges in Québec* attaches to evaluation in all of its forms, one might have expected more research in this domain for developing instruments that are still sorely lacking despite the valuable work already done by the colleges and CADRE. (1)

(1) Centre d'animation, de développement et de recherche en éducation

If the ministry seriously intends to set up a special process of evaluation, as already indicated, then it must provide the colleges with research support.

The student body is growing more demanding with respect to the teachers and to the quality of their teaching. This practice initiated in the United States a few years ago has already reached Québec. The practice involves taking legal action both against the colleges and teachers. Student pressure has also compelled departments and administrations to evaluate their personnel.

The student body

Student enrolments in the public colleges are comparable to those of 1977-1978. There is however a slight decline in enrolments in the private sector. Many programs that have been or are still subject to quotas, especially nursing, show a large reduction in admission requests for September 1979. Some colleges are even unable to fill the vacancies in these programs. This is one more reason for exercising caution with the quota system, though it is reasonable to believe that better information to secondary students would have been a determining factor in the students' decisions.

Secondary graduates register at college at a younger age than in the past. Many secondary graduates who do not go on to college immediately request to be admitted as regular students

at some later point in time. Many students who have dropped out of college will return to resume their education. More and more adults are also enrolling in the colleges. A diversified student body such as this demands major adjustments on the part of all working in the field of college education, at the level of college programs, teaching, the educational supervision of the students, general organization and administrative practices. This new factor calls for significant modifications to college education as a whole.

*The teaching
staff*

Teachers, in recent months, have proved to be critical of a position that had hardened considerably over the past ten years. The stands now taken are more subtle, or less global. The militant ideologies have lost their grip on the syndical movement. At the same time the college teachers' unions have been taken over by the local level which has decided to see to its own affairs, thereby constituting an important phase in the development of the syndical movement.

The visits of the Commission and the Conseil supérieur during the course of the year under review permitted them to make certain observations. There is very little liaison among the teachers of the same department or among the teachers of the same group of students. It was observed that various groups within the same establishment are pursuing the same goals and interests without actually being aware of one another. There

is absolutely no dialogue among the teachers. This helps to show why departments lack control over the quality of teaching, a responsibility they themselves had once fought to assume. It must furthermore be admitted the pedagogical administrations of the colleges have also given up on the function of control. It is therefore not surprising to find that nobody seems seriously concerned about it.

Within the context of the rise in the average age of the teaching staff, teacher retraining and upgrading programs are another subject of concern. Everyone seems to be aware of the need for a coherent policy in this area but at the same time feel such a policy is impossible. That is why all that has been done to date is to urge teachers to participate in the existing programs. The Performa program offers interesting and worthwhile activities for improving the performance of teachers but reaches only a limited number or low percentage of Québec's 8,000 college teachers.

The recent establishment of a college teacher improvement service at the Direction générale de l'enseignement collégiale should lead to the development of provincial upgrading policies and facilitate the task of the colleges but whatever is undertaken by this new service should be done in close cooperation with the former.

*First language
instruction*

French and English first language instruction is still an important question at the college level but much good work has been done by the colleges at large to improve the situation in the form of special research studies and various experiments in the teaching of language and literature courses. The Direction générale de l'enseignement collégiale is now working on a new and comprehensive program for first language instruction.

Everyone is aware of the necessity of identifying the language and literature needs of the students on the basis of a set of realistic criteria. Any new program should take into account the more immediate and utilitarian needs of students without neglecting those of a cultural kind to be satisfied mainly at the college level.

This is another area fraught with problems. University research on college education is still in its earliest stages. It is still impossible to obtain an exact evaluation of a student's oral and written performance. Problems of motivation among students and teaching methods among teachers have yet to be resolved. We also know that problems relating to first language instruction are not the exclusive preserve of the franco-phone sector nor of the public college sector as well.

We believe the solution resides in research towards the development of a systematic instruction process for both the French and English languages at the college level and in the designing of comprehensive first language instruction programs for all levels of education.

*The teaching
of the arts*

There are a certain number of colleges offering courses in plastic and graphic arts, applied arts and music. Certain other activities provided by the services to students are perceived more as recreational activities and are not truly accessible to the majority of students. There are a variety of problems associated with the teaching of music as well.

Since music instruction is available in only a small number of colleges, it has never been integrated into college life. Continuity between the secondary and college levels is impossible except for a few minor activities offered by the student services. Colleges authorized to teach music must accept certain compromises detrimental to the students at the contracting of the agreements with the conservatories or schools of music, or refuse to teach music at all. This situation must come to an end. The ministère de l'Education and the ministère des Affaires culturelles must now take concerted action to see that more students with an interest in and talent for music have access to such instruction.

The teaching of the arts at college should be able to contribute to the attainment of cultural and career objectives. Because artistic activity is a means that leads to self-fulfillment, general culture and an appreciation of various cultural achievements, it should be present in all colleges and aim toward excellence.

In brief, quality education is not an accomplished fact even if commendable efforts are now under way. Greater professional support must be given to teachers and more account taken of the needs of an increasingly diversified student body. Teachers, for their part, should aim for greater coordination at the teaching level and attempt to improve their performance through retraining and improvement programs. There could also be more teaching of the arts within the colleges and we are also looking forward to an improvement in the situation of music instruction within the colleges.

THE SITUATION OF WOMEN

The situation of women at college has been a subject of concern to the Commission de l'enseignement collégiale for the past two years. A study done by the Council on the Status of Women in 1976 describing the female student population of the colleges (1) examined in conjunction with the Council's report

(1) CONSEIL DU STATUT DE LA FEMME, L'accès à l'éducation pour les femmes du Québec, Editeur officiel, Québec 1977, 43 pages.

for 1978 (1) revealed a situation almost identical to the previous inventory where school attendance among females was concerned. The female students also continued to opt for the same career programs. The Council on the Status of Women concluded that "the choices of young persons of both sexes are still based on conventional stereotypes". (2) The Council also claims that many women are confined to work sectors that are more or less degrading.

In spite of the efforts made to provide better services to women (special courses to adults for increasing or upgrading their skills), few major changes have been realized in recent years. The education of the public at large to the problems of sexism should also be stressed. And the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation itself has felt the need for submitting a commentary to the Minister on the report of the Council on the Status of Women. (3) In the view of the Conseil supérieur, many elements that affect the earlier education levels where their influence is more determining are also found in the

(1) CONSEIL DU STATUT DE LA FEMME, Pour les québécoises: égalité et indépendance, Editeur officiel, Québec 1978, 335 pages.

(2) IBID., p. 56.

(3) Le Conseil supérieur de l'éducation et la condition féminine. Commentary to the Minister of Education, March 1979.

college environment. Without discussing these elements, let it suffice to draw attention to all that is capable of contributing to the elimination of sexism among educators and students. This one objective already calls for much concrete action and changes in daily attitudes.

It is hoped that every effort will be made to see that all college career options are made more available to candidates of both sexes by means of more adequate career information services, that sexist stereotyping is deleted from all course content and the many cases where women find themselves under-rated also barred from education.

It is also hoped that there will be a more equitable representation of women in college administrations and in the professional and teaching staffs. The restoration of a certain balance would offer students better models of professional life in both sexes.

THE EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

A survey on the expectations of parents was published at the start of the school year. (1) The formulation of a series of proposals permitted these persons strongly concerned with the college situation to express their wishes, to arouse the

(1) FEDERATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DE PARENTS DES CEGEP, Les attentes des parents en regard du niveau collégial, juillet 1978.

attention of the Ministry and the milieu and to make known their presence.

Greater involvement on the part of parents and a better participation in college affairs may be noted. During the year under review, the Fédération des associations de parents des CEGEP succeeded in gathering representatives of different local associations to formulate observations on the document *Colleges in Québec*. New associations were also created in many colleges. The existing ones are active and more consideration is being given to their work or activities.

As pointed out in our 1977-1978 report, these associations just as the student associations require the support of the Ministry and the colleges in order to function fully. Without neglecting the importance of voluntary service, it seems to us that greater financial assistance would permit closer relations between these groups, more solidarity and active participation in the mechanisms of consultation.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLEGES

Because the number of college students is expected to decline in the forthcoming years, or at least to grow more diversified and stable, new developments will now be centred on improving the process of college administration and obtaining greater results on investments in all areas rather than on expanding this level of education. The ceiling on resources and on research on the quality of the education dispensed will require

certain readjustments. It will therefore have to be decided whether some costly programs with limited enrolments should continue to be offered in certain colleges, in order to satisfy the growing need for making the distribution of college options throughout the network more rational.

Following an unduly extensive decisive operation, the deregionalization of the regional colleges is now underway, with exception to Champlain regional college: The Direction générale de l'enseignement collégiale has issued the guidelines covering this operation now well in progress which has every chance of satisfying the establishments concerned.

There has been a development in the use of electronic technical equipment in recent years, some parts of which are still under investigation and other parts being seriously applied to education. A reasonably widespread use of the computer now exists for learning purposes. A new experiment in distance teaching calling for special attention and showing much promise for the future is the MF radio educational station of the CEGEP de Trois-Rivières. The contribution made by some of the large urban colleges of Québec and other interested groups constitutes a first within the college network and an area of development that should be explored more fully. Might these means not also be applied to the area of continuing education?

As to the development of new school constructions or the restructuring of existing facilities, the past year was marked

by much futile and petty quarrelling. The cases of Dawson CEGEP and the Campus de Sorel were all the more surprising in that they were supposed to have been settled prior to the start of the new school year. In any event, there is still room for improvement and it is to be hoped that polemics will no more unduly delay work that must be undertaken.

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COLLEGES

The administration and management of the colleges were examined by the Commission during the year under review. Study of the document *Colleges in Québec* provided it with an occasion to take a special look at the managerial and administrative model suggested in the mandates of the board of governors of the colleges. Other questions relative to management personnel were also studied by the Commission and a number of existing and possibly questionable situations deserve to be examined more deeply.

The administration problems of the colleges demand to be studied more fully as well as problems relating to the college staff. To the Commission, the powers of management must be reviewed in conjunction with the budgetary norms and collective agreements. In the eyes of the Commission, the situation of senior personnel and their working conditions should be subjected to serious investigation.

CONCLUSION

The past year was an important one in the growth and development of Québec's public college network. The measures announced in *Colleges in Québec* were of prime concern to all interested in college education. The Commission has been particularly interested in examining the new orientations destined for college education. It has also sought to contribute to the public perception of college education and to offer suggestions for improving the system and college education in general.

In the present report, the Commission has attempted to review the past school year now drawing to a close and to emphasize certain problems with which we are still preoccupied despite the efforts made to resolve them and the few approaches presented by the Commission toward their resolution. The past year is noteworthy for its new impetus to college education. It is our hope that all future measures may be directed to an in-depth renewal of this level of education.

6. UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: THE FIRST DEGREE STUDENT AND BASIC EDUCATION

Recent developments in knowledge, society and the university itself are causing us to question the nature and value of the education acquired by the student at the first university degree level. This question is obviously a many-sided one that involves, among other things, the earlier levels of the school system, the objectives of the university, its relations with society and the pedagogy that is practised within it. This issue was selected by the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur as a subject of major concern and examined subsequently within the context of the work of the Study Commission on the Universities (Commission Angers), the studies conducted by several Québec universities on the objectives of university undergraduate education and pedagogy, the american studies on the "core curriculum", the White Paper on a Cultural Development Policy for Quebec, etc.

It was not the Commission's intention to define a basic education program, nor to emphasize certain disciplines, courses or specific instruments to be retained for this level of education.

Its purpose was to situate its reflection much more at the level of some key questions. What is the major problem today? What do we precisely want? Of what does a basic education consist? What are the constraints imposed on the student? What may be said about his needs? What approaches should be explored to better satisfy his immediate and future requirements and those of society as well?

These are all difficult questions which the Commission does not expect to answer in any complete or definite way. Nevertheless, it hopes to be able to contribute to a better understanding of the problems involved, to offer certain guidelines, to point out areas for research and tentative solutions.

1. A SUBJECT OF WIDESPREAD CONCERN

The present research of the Commission is situated within a very precise and continuous context. For the past twenty years, just as today, studies have been done here and in other countries on the undergraduate programs offered to university students. This is therefore not an entirely new concern peculiar to our own milieu.

Studies conducted in other Canadian provinces, the United States and Europe testify to a widespread interest in the subject of liberal or basic education. (1) One need only mention the recent and important studies and reforms carried out at Harvard University (2) and the writings of Martin Kaplan and A. Chase. (3)

Without going into all the research done in Québec over the past 10 or 20 years on the general, liberal or basic education that should be provided to students, let us at least refer to a few outstanding landmarks.

- Volume 2 of the Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, which devoted special attention to this question.

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- (1) See bibliography at end of chapter. See also report of the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur by Lawrence RAMSAY, *Limites et difficultés de la renaissance de la formation fondamentale au 1er cycle universitaire*, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, June 1979.
 - (2) See *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 6, 1978.
 - (3) KAPLAN, Martin, "The Most Important Questions" in *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1977; CHASE, A., "Skipping Through College. Reflections on the Decline of Liberal Arts Education" in *The Atlantic*, September 1978.

- Cahier II of the report of the Conseil des universités on the general objectives and major goals of higher education and its discussion of first degree objectives and undergraduate education (Québec 1973, especially pp. 15, 16 and 17).
- The more recent 1974 report of the Université du Québec entitled *Philosophie et objectifs généraux du premier cycle* containing a vivid and explicit discussion of undergraduate education.
- The Commission d'étude sur les universités (Commission Angers) and its examination of this question in January 1978 in its Document de consultation. (1)
- The even more recent Québec government's White Paper on a cultural policy for Québec and its CEGEP project entitled *Colleges in Québec*.

Finally, the reports of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation on Educational Activity (1970), the Colleges (1975) and the Synthesis of the consultation that preceded the latter report all refer to the question of a basic or general education for students.

For its part, the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur has for many years been invariably led to question the issue of student training in one way or another when required to speak out on the state and needs of university education, particularly in the following reports:

- Educational activity and higher education (1972)
- The educational consultant at university (1973)
- Professor-student relations at university (1974)
- The objectives of first degree university education (1976)
- Two aspects of the social function of the university (1978)

(1) Particulary p. 21. This text was completed prior to publication of the Angers Commission's report.

2. WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE STUDENT'S BASIC TRAINING AT THE UNIVERSITY FIRST DEGREE LEVEL?

Basic training seems to be a question that occupies much place in the current thinking on the future of higher education. Concern or apprehension is often expressed in Québec and elsewhere about the kind of training that is provided to undergraduate university students.

But what form does this concern take? What actually is the existing malaise? What are the needs to be satisfied when we speak about basic training? In brief, what does the problem consist of at this very moment?

For one thing, the problems identified relate to factors that are applicable to a large number of undergraduate students:

- difficulties with written and oral expression;
- lack of intellectual autonomy;
- lack of rigour, consistency and perseverance in work habits;
- shortcomings in regard to methodology and mastering of the elementary tools of research;
- limited ability to make new syntheses, and to select the proper material when faced with new problems;
- difficulty in understanding the essential steps in a given discipline, its basic concepts, and in situating the discipline in a wider perspective and understanding its role;
- shortcomings in knowledge of certain basic subjects (mother tongue, basic mathematics, natural and human sciences, etc.);
- for many students, an inability to formulate their own basic questions or to understand those raised by others;
- lack of references in space and time (knowledge transmitted, for example, by history and geography);

- poor motivation for work and study;
- lack of interest in and understanding of certain important human areas of activity, areas not immediately connected with the student's chosen field;
- distrust of organized knowledge;
- shortcomings with respect to social development (inability to appreciate the importance of knowledge in our society);
- etc.

An analysis of the briefs submitted to the Study Commission on the Universities in recent months confirms the existence of these troubling factors and other new ones as well.

- Excessive specialization in certain disciplinary fields at the undergraduate level is mentioned and condemned for the stress created by the exigencies of the professional corporations, labour market or various governmental agencies.
- Some briefs mention the lack of a certain framework for facilitating the integration of all that is learned by the student; a principle for the coordination of education is now being sought.
- It is requested that more attention be paid to the student, to his training and personal development, which calls for the formulation of clear objectives that are equally clear to the students.

At any rate, these factors or observations reveal that first degree studies do not correspond adequately to the needs of students. But who is to say what the needs of the students are? The students themselves? Their professors? Their future employers on the labour market? Society at large? And how are we to distinguish between real or imaginary needs, conscious or unconscious needs, basic or accessory needs, permanent or temporary needs?

There are certain needs inexperienced by the students but which educators claim entirely real. On the other hand, there are certain needs experienced by the students which are classified as imaginary, temporary or secondary by educators. How are such questions resolved?

Furthermore, when we speak of the student, who actually is this student of whom we are speaking? Current statistics show that, at the undergraduate level, there are more adult students than in the past (1) and a greater number of part-time students. The young college graduate probably does not experience the same needs as the student in his thirties having had work experience in industry or other sectors. And today's young student is not the student of twenty-five or thirty years ago living in a social context that does not lend itself easily to comparison.

Moreover, when we speak of the shortcomings of undergraduate education, the excessive specialization of the Québec curriculum is often mentioned. In the last twenty years our programs have become more and more specialized. (2) There are those who even say that in certain fields our undergraduate programs are the most specialized in North America. But the situation is difficult to assess because the structure and nomenclature of Québec programs do not always correspond to what is found in the rest of North America. (3) Is specialization in itself contrary to the objective of a general education? Would the problem be located at another level? For example, may it exist in the kind of process in which we involve the student, in the relations between theory and practice, between what takes place in society and is experienced in the university milieu? University structures have changed much in the last fifteen or twenty years but

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- (1) As a rule, an adult is defined as a person of 23 years of age or more with a few years of experience on the labour market.
 - (2) See Yves MARTIN, *"Une formation universitaire polyvalente face à la mouvance du marché du travail"*, Le Devoir, March 8, 1979.
 - (3) See *"Au fil des événements"*, Journal de l'Université Laval, March 8, 1979.

have the courses offered to students changed at a corresponding pace?

Apart from these concerns, there is another one for a new humanism, for what it consists of and how it can be conveyed at the first degree level. "The fragmentation of knowledge into a multitude of disciplines and sub-disciplines totally sealed off from one another is a threat to the universitas scientiarum". (1) It is also added that one must "see in this inability to integrate and synthesize different subject matters and to arrive at an overall synthesis one of the major causes of the "crisis in knowledge" and of the downgrading of scientific activity". Our society is also increasingly concerned about the

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- (1) Brief by Laval University to the Study Commission on the Universities, p. 39. On the multiplication of disciplines and sub-disciplines, Daniel Bell writes as follows in *The Coming of Post-Industrialized Society*: "One can find some indicators of the extraordinary proliferation of fields in the breakdown of specializations listed in the National Register of Scientific and Technical Personnel, a government-sponsored inventory of all persons with competence in scientific work (...). The Register began shortly after World War II, with about 54 specializations in the sciences; 20 years later there were over 900 distinct scientific and technical specializations listed. To a considerable extent, the proliferation of fields arises out of a system of reclassifications, as more and more fine distinctions are made; but in many instances, the increase is due to the creation of new specializations and branchings. In physics, for example, the 1954 roster listed 10 distinct subfields with 74 specializations; in 1968, there were 12 fields with 154 specializations. In 1954, for example, Theoretical Physics (Quantum) was listed as a distinct field; in 1968 the field was no longer listed as such and a more differentiated classification had appeared. In 1954, however, solid-state physics was broken down into 8 subspecializations; in 1968 there were 27 subspecializations under the solid-state classification, a proliferation which was the consequence of the additional "branching" of the field" (p. 187).

way knowledge is being diffused, and the direction the development and application of knowledge are taking.

At the problematical level, here, then, are a group of elements that appear fundamental to the Commission. In the face of the various issues and shortcomings described in the foregoing pages, let us now examine the nature of the general or liberal education that should be provided to first degree undergraduate students.

3. EXIGENCIES AND CONSTRAINTS THAT AFFECT THE STUDENT'S EDUCATION

The student's training or education is subject to various exigencies dictated by circumstances or considered essential to satisfying the basic needs of individuals. On the other hand, we also find constraints presenting themselves as obstacles to freedom of action or in the form of compulsory restrictions.

External constraints and exigencies

General or liberal education is subject to a wide variety of pressures. It is often a matter of normal requirements, or in other cases, of constraints that can be justified or not and it is not always easy to distinguish between the two.

These exigencies and constraints may be located under the following categories:

Labour market

Career selections and program content are often conditioned by the requirements of the work world, in the broad sense of the term: industry, professional corporations, governments, etc. There is also the value attributed to the diploma and its social status.

University milieu

The university itself is a source of exigencies and constraints residing in its program of education, administrative system, the qualifications of its faculty members, their fields of research or excellence, the availability of resources of all kinds. In brief, the university milieu imposes a whole range of constraints on the person pursuing an education.

Organization of knowledge

The student is also faced with pressures associated with the organization of knowledge and its development. There are more and more specializations, a constantly increasing fragmentation or breakdown of course content. Courses and teaching are conceived in terms of the rationale underlying the theoretical and practical organization of knowledge. In order to succeed, a student must submit to a process consistent with the above rationale.

Civilization

Today's civilization is in the midst of a profound crisis. Today's values, political and economic institutions, technological relationship with nature, the force of the diploma vis-à-vis the labour market are all in a state of crisis. The individual and society are both confronted by doubts on many fronts.

This, then, is a brief description of the external constraints and exigencies that help to shape the education process.

Internal exigencies

It is without doubt important to arrive at the best possible definition of the concept of a general education, but it is essential to go beyond the task of defining it. In the final analysis, general education will depend entirely upon the student himself.

It is the student who commits himself to the educational process and who acquires an education.

It is therefore necessary to speak about the internal exigencies of the student: his values, ambitions, motivation, reasons for living, his mental ability, emotions, etc.

Many students live in a permanent state of contradiction: contradiction between their ideals, values and the reality of their lives; between theory and practice; between what they would like to be and what they must be, etc.

How can these contradictions be resolved? How can a relation be established between the student's external exigencies and constraints on the one hand, and his internal exigencies, on the other? How can a student be motivated if the conditions set have no meaning for him?

We may well resolve the problems of content but what is more essential is to motivate a student, to reach his needs and interests. This therefore raises the problem of what the educational environment should be, in the broad sense of the term. Thus we must talk about pedagogy, about conditions pertaining to educational development, professor/student relationships, activities that affect the person as a whole.

4. WHAT IS MEANT BY BASIC EDUCATION?

*A comprehensive
concept*

In its report *The College*, the Conseil supérieur states that "we still have not succeeded in defining what should be a basic education for today". (1) The Conseil nevertheless believes

(1) The College. *Report on the State and Needs of College Education*, Québec 1975, p. 39.

that one of Henle's proposals which seems worth retaining, is "to aim at an understanding of the principles and process of a discipline or a technology rather than accumulating bits of knowledge in a field of study." (1)

Thus, the goal of basic education is to help one "to discover the basic concepts and laws which allow one to grasp the essentials of a subject, to understand it, assimilate it and situate it within a culture". At the post-secondary level, pursues the report of the Conseil, this formation "is basic because, in the acquisition of knowledge, it concentrates on the foundations, the directing principles, the basic concepts and the specific methods of a discipline". (2)

In its *White Paper* on cultural development, the Québec government also refers to this concept of "basic education" and associates it with a widespread wish for a "return to the basics". In the case of university instruction, a "return to the basics" is "to provide the university student with basic knowledge in one discipline or another, and the essential tools and techniques of research." (3)

In the *Government Projects in the Area of the CEGEPs*, the concept of "basic education" is also used. Let us merely recall that in the frame of this document, the concept alludes to teachings of an intellectual order, emotional and social order, or of a physical order that promote the integral development of the person and which are indispensable for anyone who wishes to live his life to the fullest. (4)

On the other hand, at Harvard University a new "core curriculum" has been developed aimed at providing students with knowledge

(1) *Ibid.*, p. 39.

(2) *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

(3) *A Cultural Development Policy for Québec*, 1978, Vol. 2, p. 420.

(4) *Colleges in Quebec. A New Phase*. Québec 1979, p. 39.

and skills in the major fields of academic activity. Minimal requirements are set for each of the following five major fields: art and literature, history, philosophy and social science, science and mathematics, languages and foreign cultures. (1)

There are two tendencies that emerge from these studies and reforms, and others are also examined by the Commission. The first is to exceed the limited field of a given discipline or study sector to move into other related or complementary fields. New subjects are therefore inserted in the program. And it seems that the priority is now being given to this "horizontal" dimension of training. The other tendency places the accent on the "vertical" dimension. It is not so much variety in the knowledge acquired that counts as the development of attitudes, a capacity for critical analysis and synthesis, the mastering of working methods, and an ability to seek out what is specific and basic.

*To distinguish
levels of education*

Where basic education is concerned, one of the difficulties that emerges is to determine what appears to be common to the different levels of education and what is characteristic or specific to the undergraduate or first degree level.

First of all, it is important to realize that the objectives of each level are neither absolute nor limited to a single level. There is always a certain degree of overlapping. Education is a continuous process for everybody.

There are no partitions or barriers between the different phases involved. Furthermore, the attainment of certain skills or abilities can sometimes take a longer time for some individuals in the course of their personal development which, within the perspective of continuing education, consists of a lifelong process.

(1) See *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 6 March 1978.

With this said, it is understood, in terms of basic education, that at the undergraduate level the accent must now be placed on certain specific aspects, because of what has already been previously acquired by the student in his personal development. Therefore, in our view, basic education for the undergraduate student is concentration on the basics of the disciplines of a given field, the discovery of their basic concepts and laws, an understanding of the relationships between the essential elements of different disciplines as well as their progressive development. The focuss must be centred on the ground level - a fundamentalist approach to a given field, so to speak - and on a search for coherency.

While recognizing the importance of the "horizontal" dimension of education, the Commission also insists here on its "vertical" dimension.

*Giving priority to
the internal exigencies of
students*

Nevertheless, the Commission also believes that the above perspective does not suffice. The priority must above all be given to the internal needs of the students. Beyond the fundamental content of a specific discipline and how it is progressively developed, it is essential to come to grips with the learning situation, with the totality of the person engaged in the learning activity (individual and social dimensions), the person's needs, aspirations, understanding of his situation, that of his society and generation. To quote from a brief contributed by the Télé-Université, is not it now time "to redefine basic culture (...) essentially in terms of an individual's need to situate himself in relation to the basic components of existence - time, space, his neighbour and himself". (1)

(1) Brief presented to the Study Commission on the Universities, June 1978.

While taking into account the exigencies of organized knowledge, the Commission is no less led to declare that a basic, liberal or general education is first of all contingent upon the development of the whole person in all of his dimensions. The priority must therefore be placed on satisfying what we have previously called the "internal" exigencies of students.

These exigencies, which do not exclude the "external" exigencies set by course programs and society, add in our view various dimensions to the objective of a basic education which are described below.

Components of basic education

What are the components of a basic education? What are the dimensions to be taken into account? What should be fostered to fulfil the above objective where the student is concerned?

We have already spoken about the need for focussing upon the foundations of given fields of study (fundamentalist approach), for a search for coherency and consistency. At the same time, we have dwelt upon the need to retain and to exceed this approach in order to first meet the internal exigencies of the student.

In taking into consideration the exigencies and needs of the student, the student is then perceived both as an individual and a person integrated into a social group with all that is implied in the form of constraints, interdependence, responsibility and solidarity.

In the foregoing paragraphs, the Commission refers to certain difficulties associated with needs in general. On the other hand, there are also pitfalls when trying to distinguish between the needs of the individual and those of society. In brief, the question is where to place the priority. This seems up to a certain point to contain a false dichotomy. To the Commission, it is only sound practice that the exigencies and constraints of society be subjected to individual critical assessments, but at

the same time social needs cannot obviously be ignored.

However, the point the Commission would like to make here is that the objective of a general or basic education cannot be pursued to the exclusion of the needs or internal exigencies of the student.

In view of the above crucial dimension, the objective of basic education must be based on the following essential factors.

Self-knowledge

It is important that the first degree level should help an undergraduate student to gain a better understanding of his or her capacities, limitations, potential or lack of potential in a varied number of fields. The learning process should provide the student with an accurate as possible image of himself in order to develop confidence in his abilities and grasp his present limitations, because his future growth and development and the choices he will ultimately make depend much upon it.

Autonomy

The objective of basic education involves the acquisition and development of skills, abilities, qualities that foster individual autonomy, namely:

- . a working knowledge of the basic languages,
- . a working knowledge of the methods of individual research,
- . a capacity for analysis and synthesis,
- . a capacity for questioning constructively knowledge acquired and for acquiring techniques for self-directed learning on a continuing basis.

Social commitment

The acquisition of basic education presupposes the development of a sense of belonging to a social group and of all that this entails in the form of responsibilities, interdependence, duties and advantages. The first degree program provides an occasion for expanding and strengthening the social conscience of individuals and groups. This phase of education can help to generate greater individual and group responsiveness and a sense of obligation toward others. It can also help to develop the necessary solidarities and prepare for the challenges that await society in the future.

Community service

Basic education involves the development of skills that can make a greater contribution to the community in professional or other capacities. It essentially means leading the student to a way of constantly translating his or her training and knowledge into a worthwhile contribution to society.

Mastering of basic skills

If, in the course of its analysis, the Commission has refrained from placing the accent on the acquisition of knowledge in itself, it still remains that one cannot speak about basic or general education without the mastering of certain basic skills. In keeping with the format of its present reflections, it has not undertaken to identify them precisely but it should nevertheless be emphasized that self-autonomy and self-fulfillment depend much upon a student's acquisition of certain basic skills or knowledge.

Development of wider perspectives

The entire school career of the student within the school system is much too conditioned by an ever-growing tendency toward greater specialization. As the situation now stands, students are urged at an early age to concentrate on a specific field of knowledge to the detriment of wider perspectives.

So that students may be in a better position to understand the world that surrounds them and the work of their fellow citizens and groups occupied in other areas of activity than their own, the Commission believes it normal and sound that one of the goals of basic undergraduate education should be to develop an openness among students to other fields outside their areas of concentration.

An integrated view of transmitted knowledge

An objective of basic education includes a search for an integrated view of all transmitted knowledge, even if the extreme difficulty of such an undertaking is widely recognized. The purpose, in brief, is to counterbalance the current trend toward excessive specialization and the partitioning of branches of knowledge. We believe that a search for an integrated vision answers a deep personal and collective need.

A sense of history

A first degree graduate student should be able to situate the development of the culture and society to which he belongs in its historical perspective. Some acquaintance with past and present developments in his own chosen field of knowledge is also essential.

A capacity for critical judgment and perspective

The Commission believes it impossible to discuss basic education without the development of a capacity for critical judgment and perspective. The rapid evolution of all branches of knowledge and society at large calls for a capacity to take a certain distance in the face of new discoveries and to submit them to a methodical and personal investigation, for this capacity for constructive questioning and perspective has much to contribute to self-autonomy and intellectual development.

Values education

An objective of basic education should be to promote a greater awareness of the values that can be found in the learning activities and applied to daily life, values conducive to the total growth of the person, including his emotional and social development, etc.

But here again it should be emphasized that within a pluralist cultural context, values cannot be imposed in undergraduate programs, at least what could be termed values associated with "a way of life" in contrast to values associated with "learning". The programs should nevertheless help to foster a search for personal identity and an assessment of different values.

An understanding of the technological world

Finally, owing to the characteristics of contemporary civilization, basic education should enable students to understand, master or "domesticate" the reality of the technological and changeable world in which we live in order to safeguard themselves from manipulation or alienation.

These, then, in brief, are some of the components of first degree basic education. But our list is far from exhaustive. Yet the Commission is convinced that if greater attention is paid to the above components, we may perhaps find it easier to meet the students' deeper internal needs and to hope that we are doing more to provide them with a sound basic education.

5. CONDITIONS TO BE RESPECTED AND MEASURES TO BE ADOPTED

In order to help students to acquire what has just been described above, certain conditions must be respected and certain measures adopted.

Getting to know the students better

It is important that the characteristics and needs of different categories of students be understood more fully.

A glance at the current statistics shows that the student body at the undergraduate level is now extremely diversified. On the one hand, there is that relatively young category of students fresh from college level studies, and on the other hand, there are those who have enrolled in the university after a certain period of time spent on the labour market and who do not necessarily possess a college degree.

It is frequently heard that the young undergraduate, as opposed to his counterpart of fifteen or twenty years ago, is weaker in such areas as general knowledge, intellectual rigour and working methods. On the other hand, his creative powers are better developed and his human experience vaster. At any rate, it is recognized that he enters university at a younger age and that his physical and psychological development or conditioning are different.

Where the so-called "adult" students are concerned, the picture is extremely diversified.

- Some attend university to increase their education.
- Some are only seeking to follow particular courses to increase their qualifications.
- Others are interested in refresher programs.
- Others with specialist training are seeking to up-date their skills.
- Finally, many are simply looking for a diploma in order to retain their job, obtain a higher salary or special promotion.

The main motives of many adults are therefore closely linked to their employment situation. On first sight, these are the reasons that are generally expressed. Yet experience proves that hidden among the reasons given are often deeper needs for other

forms of knowledge and development which these students are more or less conscious of.

In brief, to speak about the first degree level student is to speak about a reality composed of a multitude of characteristics. It is a reality the university and faculty must make every effort to understand more completely. (1)

Affirming exigencies

In the first part of its survey, the Commission mentioned the range of problems linked to distinguishing between real and imaginary needs, basic needs and artificial needs. With respect to this question, it is important that we not give in to a form of demagoguery. It is our opinion that the agents of education must impose certain exigencies, express their convictions and the views they entertain with respect to the real needs of students.

Taking the whole person into account

An objective of basic education consists in taking the total personality of the student into account - his intellectual, emotional, physical and social dimensions, in other words, all the basic dimensions of his personality which are interrelated and cannot be neglected.

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- (1) Recent and ongoing Québec studies are attempting to gain a better understanding of the characteristics and real needs of students. One such study is the A.S.O.P.E. project (Aspirations scolaires et orientation professionnelle des étudiants) being conducted at Laval University and the University of Montreal. Our purpose is not to call for further studies, although more research is still required. The aim of the Commission is to urge the faculty and other agents of education in the university sector to develop an active awareness of this new reality and the proper corresponding attitudes.

A greater focus on values

More attention must be directed to a more or less expressed need for a clarification of values, for an identification of the meaning of the behaviours and activities in which students are engaged at the undergraduate level. As a rule, these questions remain implicit and never expressed or developed. But the university must now pay greater attention to the above factors in order to respond to new realities at the undergraduate level.

Placing the accent on the social dimension

We have already mentioned that the aim of basic education includes the development of social responsibility among students and an ability for each one to translate his or her acquired knowledge into a meaningful contribution to society. Therefore much more must be done than in the past to emphasize the social function of university education, which, as a result, requires a rethinking of the relationship between what is taught and true social realities.

Identifying the basic skills

It was mentioned in the foregoing pages that basic education entails the mastering of a certain number of basic skills. What are these skills? Attempts have been made to identify them in some already quoted studies. We merely wish to point out here that a greater effort to define more precisely these exigencies must be made in the ongoing research pertaining to these objectives.

Concentrating on basic aspects

Every discipline, if not every course, can be an occasion for examining basic issues, whether they be of an individual or social kind. Thus, in the teaching process the instructor should be urged to move beyond the technical aspects of a discipline into its fundamentals in the way of, for example, what

theories, conceptions of man, society, progress, etc. may be involved, and to also see them in their historical perspective.

Dwelling more on the logic of the learning process

Besides taking into account the logic of a branch of knowledge, it is also important to dwell on the logic of the learning process and understand "how one learns" as opposed to "what is learned". In other words, it is essential to pay greater attention to the educative operation and the effects achieved by it. This then affords the possibility of educating someone "through" a given discipline as well as "in" this same discipline.

Pedagogical development

We then see it is necessary to promote greater interest in the pedagogics of university education as well as more research on the subject. In the same vein, one should not neglect the importance of interpersonal relations within learning situations. Studies show that even at the undergraduate level student/teacher relations are an important factor in all educational activity.

A questioning of specialization

A questioning of the perspective of ever-increasing specialization in undergraduate programs is indicated. An evaluation of this growing phenomenon is no easy task. It may even be that specialization, in itself, is not always directly opposed to general education. Yet many are of the opinion that thought must be given to the limits that must be set where specialization in Québec is concerned.

A questioning of program content

An objective of basic education means more than contenting ourselves with replacing some courses by newly created

ones. In our view, there is reason to question the belief that a juxtapositioning of a multitude of different courses is conducive to quality education even though it may be true that contact with a variety of disciplines and teachers with widely differing teaching approaches constitutes an enriching experience. But it is equally true that it is the student's responsibility to produce his own syntheses and take charge of his own orientation. Nevertheless, it is up to the university and faculty to see that the content of all programs contributes to the aims of a general education.

Coordinating means and efforts

Many different kinds of human and material resources are used by the university to assist in the learning process of each individual. A coordination of these human efforts and material means is also essential to better quality education.

Avoiding overly rigid classifications

It is important to avoid too rigid distinctions between general education, specialized training, personal development, social development. As already pointed out earlier, it is the total person who engages himself in educational activity and the different aspects of his education cannot be placed into separate compartments.

Of course, this is a far from exhaustive list of the conditions and measures that must obtain for a better realization of the goals of basic education.

CONCLUSION

Any study on general education directed to the university undergraduate student is a difficult and complex undertaking. In the final analysis, such a study entails certain problems of civilization. It is necessary, among other things, to speak about the crisis in values, the questioning of the possibilities of science,

about specialization, the fragmentation and compartmentalization of knowledge, the social role of science and technology.

As already mentioned, general education has become a topic of much concern and discussion today not only in Québec but within and outside Canada as a whole. It is not a question of feeling nostalgic about the programs or structures of the past, but of finding the proper formulas and approaches for coping with the complex and rapid transformations in today's civilization or if one prefers, in our present culture.

The Commission de l'enseignement supérieur has attempted to bring to light a certain number of factors and areas for research and reflection. It is the Commission's hope that its insistence upon the "internal exigencies" of the student will contribute to further studies and eventual reforms. Within the ever-growing context of continuing education, a context implying the rapid obsolescence of much received knowledge, the focus should now be on the individual potentialities of the students in order to help them to develop a better capacity for continuous learning, greater personal autonomy and a stronger sense of social commitment.

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7. THE UNIVERSITY. TOWARDS A RENEWAL OF THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Society has and continues to invest considerably in its universities. (1) In return, society legitimately expects certain services from these establishments. These services may be said to be of two kinds, namely (a) the reproduction and maintenance of the existing social order; (b) the creative transformation and renewal of society.

But to speak of important investments entails at the same time constraints and controls that, in reality, weigh heavily upon the universities. Suffice it to mention the norms of governments, the exigencies of the professional corporations and those of the labour market in general. And today there is also a growing tendency among certain groups of society to want to question the university and to demand that it be held accountable for its operations.

On the other hand, if it is the basic task of the university to render a "creative" service to the community, to contribute to its progress and development, this institution must possess the necessary distance or objectivity to examine with a critical eye, for continual reassessments at all levels (knowledge and practices) form an integral part of its contribution to society.

This also, in our view, leads to the premises underlying the kinds of service that can legitimately be expected by society from its universities.

(1) See table "Total Investments in Québec Universities for 1972-1973 to 1976-1977" in COMMISSION D'ETUDE SUR LES UNIVERSITES, *Document de consultation*, January 1978, p. 60. Social investments, however, include more than those of a financial order.

1. THE TRADITIONAL SOCIAL FUNCTION OF THE QUEBEC UNIVERSITY (2)

Quebec's universities have rendered important services to society, mainly through the communication of advanced knowledge, research, the training of qualified executives and skilled personnel.

Within the past perspective of a relatively stable society, the university was the main centre for training the élite of the nation. On the one hand, it contributed to the maintenance of a given social order by perpetuating certain values and standards of behaviour. It could perhaps be said the traditional university was a conservative body that did not play the creative role some might have expected of it. On the other hand, it must be recognized that countless ideas, projects and skills were developed within its walls that have in a variety of ways contributed to the growth and progress of our society.

Since 1960 in particular, Quebec's universities have taken measures to reach greater numbers of the population. Their services have effectively become accessible to a larger segment of society as illustrated in the table on the following page.

The university has also fostered the advent of a new "middle class" - the persons occupying strategic posts in **the economic**, political, social and cultural decision-making centres of our society. The sociologist Guy Rocher claims that, to some extent "the university has become the hothouse for a new dominant social class, the meritocratic class composed of technocrats,

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- (2) The concepts "social role" and "social function" are closely related to each other. The expression "social function" has been retained here in order to emphasize more firmly the insertion of the university in society as a whole. A supplementary note at the end of this chapter attempts to define certain concepts, including that of "social function".

UNIVERSITY RATE OF ATTENDANCE (1st degree level)

Year	Full time					Part time				
	French univ.			English univ.		French univ.			English univ.	
	French	Clients	Rate %	English	Clients	Rate %	Clients	Rate % (2)	Clients	Rate % (2)
18-24 years (1)				18-24 years (1)						
1967	615 801	19 748	3,21	107 220	15 279	14,3	5 276	0,86	11 259	10,5
1974	711 624	38 008	5,3	131 961	21 935	16,6	34 671	4,9	16 041	12,2
1975	632 363	41 641	6,6	136 655	23 151	16,9	37 193	5,9	15 851	11,6

(1) Source: Robitillard, Michel, *Les clientèles universitaires au Québec. Évolution du passé et perspective d'avenir*, 1966-1990, vice-présidence à la planification, Université du Québec, novembre 1976.

(2) Rates calculated on the basis of the 18-24 age group. In COMMISSION D'ETUDE SUR LES UNIVERSITES, *Document de consultation*, January 1978, p. 57.

bureaucrats and technicians of all sorts". (1)

These people play a major role in the conception, setting up and operations of a very large number of our institutions.

Yet, in the opinion of many, the university has especially served and continues to serve a particular class of society. The consultation conducted by the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur in 1977-1978 (2) and numerous briefs submitted to the Study Commission on the Universities testify to the above affirmation. The university was, and remains accessible mainly to those of a certain socioeconomic level who are able to meet certain academic standards. It is also more readily accessible to those possessing expertise in a certain field or belonging to groups that have traditionally entertained close ties with the university. Finally, it is more accessible to persons or entities possessing the financial means for obtaining the services of specialists or for commissioning largescale research projects.

Without going into the debate on individual advancement versus collective advancement (3), it may at least be said that within this traditional context, the university has served to promote the social advancement of the individual person much more than the collective advancement of society as a whole. It has afforded persons of different social backgrounds an opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge for a higher place on the social ladder. This, in itself, could be called a valuable social contribution, but collective advancement, that of various social groups or strata as such, has to a large extent been seriously neglected.

(1) *L'université québécoise du proche avenir*, Montréal 1973, p. 348.

(2) See *Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université*, Report presented to the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, June 1978, pp. 8-24.

(3) For a definition of these expressions, see supplementary note at end of chapter.

The two consequences of the logic of this promotion of individual advancement are as follows:

- The emphasis has been placed on university professional training.
- This, then, has contributed to a "disappropriation" of knowledge for society as a whole. Large segments of the population are ignorant of many basic facts concerning their environment and also lack confidence in their own resources. They are convinced they must rely on university graduated specialists for the settling of most of their problems.

In the face of these facts, a new emerging desire for reform may now be observed among many university and non-university groups or associations.

2. TODAY'S PROBLEMS

"Change society, change the school" says the introduction to the report *The college* published in 1975 by the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. In the past twenty or twenty-five years, Québec society has evolved considerably, like many aspects of North American and Western life of which it is a part. Has the university, for its part, actually changed? If yes, has it modified itself sufficiently? Does it know how to be at the forefront of social progress and to provoke it where necessary? Is there a possible crisis pertaining to its insertion and place in society?

Crisis in the university/ society relationship

Up to the end of the first half of the twentieth century, the Québec university corresponded to a largely rural, relatively stable society much less complicated than that of today. Its values and social structures were rarely questioned. Its job was to prepare the élite of the society of the times, thereby answering a more or less universally accepted need.

Today the context, to a vast extent, is no longer the same. The dominant values of the past are being challenged and we live in increasingly pluralist surroundings. The majority of the population now dwells in an urban centre. Our traditional power structures have also been shaken. New social relations have been created and pressure groups exert their special influence. The State has infiltrated itself into all areas of activity and all aspects of our lives are conditioned by science and technology. Communications have also been transformed in both qualitative and administrative terms.

Developments over the past twenty or thirty years have presented society with a whole new range of problems. Ecological challenges to be met, new forms of social problems, health problems, urban development and transportation problems to be dealt with. And here, just as elsewhere, we are faced with the same problem of the integration of existing knowledge and its democratization as well.

Within the context of the above developments, it would be unreasonable to say that the university world has not changed. The university has become more accessible, student enrolments have risen considerably, education has become decentralized, new pedagogical methods have been developed, and there is also greater diversity among the programs and student population.

But has the university evolved sufficiently? It appears not. The way in which its social function has been traditionnally discharged has not changed sufficiently to meet the needs of contemporary society.

In our view, there are many factors pointing to a crisis in the place of the university within society - a phenomenon, futhermore, not necessarily peculiar to Québec. However, the creation here of a Study Commission on the Universities with a mandate centred mainly on "the university and Québec society" is highly symptomatic. The existence of such a crisis has also been revealed in various publications and articles in recent years, in briefs submitted to the Angers Commission and in the consultation con-

ducted last year by the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur.

Included among the above factors is that the university, as an educative resource, is integrating today into society on a much greater scale. This raises the need for an adequate definition of what is specific to it and for coordinating its action with that of the other educative resources of the milieu: colleges, associations, etc.

On the other hand, because knowledge, in general, is a substantial source of power in the current world, the university must now give more thought to the use that is made of its research findings. It must also give serious consideration to the social training of its students and be acutely aware of the power and responsibility the acquisition of higher education confers upon them.

Finally, is the university at the service of our dominating ideologies and classes? Does it play some part in reproducing social inequalities? Such questions are now being directed to it from a variety of sources.

These, then, are some of the characteristics of our current context and the university cannot avoid the problems they entail. The same problems may also be said to exist in several areas briefly described below.

Relative democratization

As demonstrated in the foregoing table, there has been a considerable rise in the rate of university attendance. But "accessibility" and "democratization" are not necessarily synonymous. Greater accessibility does not automatically imply greater democratization to an equal degree. This has been well emphasized in the government document *Colleges in Quebec* which illustrates how greater access to a college education has not resulted in

achieving the objective of democratized education as much as had been anticipated. (1)

Access to university education therefore remains mainly the prerogative of certain financially, socially and culturally advantaged classes. Many obstacles have of course been obliterated by a series of important measures: the creation of new establishments in outlying districts, recourse to telecommunications, loans and bursaries, etc. But the objective of democratization implies more. The university must change and adapt itself so that course content, approaches and methods correspond better to personal and group needs. To talk of relative democratization is no longer acceptable today.

*The demands of
various groups*

The traditional custom of the university was to maintain virtually exclusive ties with certain social groups only. But new demands are now being placed upon it from what had been up to now totally isolated groups, such as for example, popular education groups, consumers and agricultural producers associations, trade unions- groups increasingly addressing themselves to the university and starting to question its customary practices of serving society. In their capacity as ratepayers and in the name of simple justice, they demand access to its human and physical resources, access to knowledge and to certain research services. Within the same capacity, they are calling on the university to become more involved in what is being undertaken towards the advancement of local communities,

(1) MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, *Colleges in Québec. A new phase*, Québec 1978, pp. 35-38.

especially in working class districts. (1)

*The new situation of the
development and integration
of knowledge*

The university is not the only contributor to the progress and development of knowledge. That era when it was the monopolizer of the essentials of available knowledge in certain fields is now gone for ever. Industry, the military and the government in particular, all work today towards the discovery of new knowledge and the communication of it.

On the other hand, our civilization must cope with the constant expansion of knowledge in all fields and a continuous multiplication of disciplines. All fields are being continually broken down and isolated. An unceasingly growing number of specialties tend to operate independently, which raises another challenge for the university, that of contributing to the integration of knowledge with a view to finding a solution to the complex problems now facing society in such areas as nutrition, housing, protection of the environment ... problems requiring the combined efforts of different fields of knowledge and "know-how".

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- (1) The following extract of a brief presented to the Angers Commission by La Fédération des travailleurs du Québec in June 1978 is especially significant: "never have we heard within the precinct of the university the cries of the workers and lower classes about their needs and special problems. We speak of poverty, minimum wage levels, guaranteed annual incomes, dangerous and unhealthy working conditions, slums, etc. ... but we have yet to obtain any significant contribution from the university in defining scientifically these problems for those who must live with them. For example, more than ten years ago we asked that a department of physiology and medicine for labour be set up and we are still waiting. The university never offers us anything. It is always necessary to beg for it. It is no exaggeration to say the university is not attuned to the working classes, is always insensitive to their social problems and yet it still subsists partly because of the working classes." (p. 3) (free translation)

An evaluation of teaching and research

Many believe that professional education now occupies too large a place at the university and see in it a danger for the institution. (1) A deterioration in other important university functions is also feared, for instance, in the discovery and diffusion of basic knowledge and the training of researchers.

There is no question that the university must answer society's needs for trained executives and qualified professionals. Nevertheless, on a general and long term scale, the university's social contribution could diminish considerably by aligning itself too closely on the immediate concerns of the labour market.

Furthermore, the situation of university research is another cause for alarm. Beyond the official statement of principles, one is inclined to question the real place of research at the university level, the real possibility a professor has to conduct or complete a particular project.

One of the first questions raised is that of knowing whether a professor, mainly at the undergraduate level should be both an instructor and researcher. Other questions concern conditions pertaining to the day-to-day life of the university - are these conditions conducive to research? Are the necessary environmental structures in place (organized teams, coordination) and the supportive substructures (laboratories, secretarial services, libraries, etc)? The recent Green Paper *Pour une politique québécoise de la recherche scientifique* now recommends a common study of the objectives, priorities, and present and future facilities for research in our university establishments. (2)

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- (1) See brief presented to the Study Commission on the Universities by the Fédération des associations de professeurs des universités du Québec.
 - (2) See CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, *Pour une politique québécoise de la recherche scientifique*. Commentaires du Livre vert, July 1979.

Student education problems

The task of educating and training students lies at the heart of the university's mission. There are, however, many questions and problems related to this purpose.

To begin with is the quantitative factor. Too many students are enrolled in some sectors to the detriment of others because of the standing issue of labour market needs and employment opportunities. And the quota system constitutes another problem. But it is more than a question of satisfying labour market demands. In a larger sense, society's needs as a whole must be taken into consideration. The question that arises is whether the university is supplying a sufficient number of persons capable of assuming the tasks required for social progress and the solution of the collective problems that constantly face us. In other words, a balance must be struck between satisfying our social needs and training personnel in certain specific fields.

There are also further questions dealing with the quality of education. On the one hand, the professional competence acquired in certain fields is sometimes said to be inadequate. On the other hand, the basic or liberal education of most students is generally questioned. Are they being provided with the knowledge, methods, skills and abilities for research and self-autonomy within our present university context?

Finally, another subject of contention is the social training of the student. Mention has been previously made of the power and responsibilities higher education confers on those who have acquired it. The interdependent nature of individual and group relations within our present society requires that the social dimension be present in one degree or another in all branches of learning.

The diffusion of knowledge: new challenges

Knowledge, today, can generate extensive power, power that permeates all spheres of individual and collective life. Those able to master theoretical and practical knowledge have the best chance of achieving their objectives, of exercising influence and entering into command positions, of understanding and mastering their physical environment. Within a society besieged with extremely serious problems (the nuclear issue, for instance), where science and technology control our daily lives, it is of vital importance that knowledge be available to the greatest number of persons through a wide range of means that includes access to the latest developments in research.

This leads to a requirement for the democratization of all established knowledge, to the duty of making it accessible to the greatest possible numbers. This, of course, is not meant to mean diluting knowledge nor emptying it of its essential content in an exaggerated sense under the pretext of making it more accessible. Rather, it consists in making use of a whole range of means for helping more citizens to avail themselves of knowledge and to assimilate it adequately.

It is obvious that this kind of responsibility does not belong to the university alone. But these are new challenges and new responsibilities it is now called on to meet.

The above factors mentioned by the Commission remind us that society has changed and, as a result, a renewal of the university's role in society is strongly indicated. Of course, there has been some progress but there is still a gap that must be filled, so the university might do well to consider various approaches that are described below.

3. THE DIMENSIONS OF RENEWAL

In the light of the above discussion, what do we mean by a renewal of the social function of the university? What objectives, tasks, courses of action must be adopted in order to satisfy new needs and aspirations while remaining faithful to what is specific to the university's essential nature.

To contribute to the discussion, we submit certain considerations grouped around the following themes:

- correspondence with the needs of society
- values promotion
- cultural promotion
- collective advancement
- social responsibility
- renewal of traditional functions

Correspondence with the needs of society

Eric Jantsch has called the university the "strategic centre of society" and defines its ultimate purpose as follows:

"In very broad terms, the ultimate purpose of the university rests in the decisive part it plays in reinforcing society's inherent possibilities for self-renewal on a continuing basis".(1)

In keeping with the accelerated pace of our own history over the past decades and in the face of the new challenges now confronting society, the university's role in helping it to renew itself

(1) Eric JANTSCH, *Buts et fonctions des universités*, O.C.D.E., Paris, pp. 45-46. (free translation)

constantly has become crucial. Some even say it must help the world to find "a new soul".

This role may apply to shedding more light on the ongoing debates relative to fundamental collective choices; to preserving the pluralist character of society by recognizing pluralism as a source of enrichment; to helping to promote communication within society; to the exercise of leadership in such sectors as research towards innovation in education.

It seems rather difficult, then, to accept the definition based on the Humboldtian formula which envisages the university as "the place where intellectual experiences may be pursued without constraints".(1) There is a great deal of idealism behind such a statement. But we are obliged to concede, like the Commission de l'enseignement superieur's report of June 1978, that "the work of the university always fits into the frame of given society. It is related to a collective will, a socio-cultural context, the constraints of the times. There is osmotic action between the university and society with both exercising a reciprocal influence". (2) Nowadays, the development and orientations of university life are strongly subjected to governmental, economic, corporational, syndical pressures and controls. In a general sense, the values crisis and conflicts in our culture nourish and condition its progress and development. Does the answer lie in deploring these constraints and trying to suppress them? No doubt, the ideals of independence and critical detachment are essential to university life but the university cannot live in a disincarnate fashion withdrawn completely from the here and now. It would be sound and realistic for the university to accept its own constraints, seek to understand them, modify them and to transcend them.

(1) Voir COMMISSION D'ETUDE SUR LES UNIVERSITES, *Document de consultation*, janvier 1978, p. 12.

(2) Op. cit, p. 27.

While continuing to preserve a place for independent research and critical detachment, some of its goals must be geared to the needs and exigencies of the times to which it belongs. The universities are already much involved in many of the problems that affect society (energy, ecology, etc.) and it is only normal they should become increasingly involved. This means that the social relevancy of their teaching and research must be evaluated at regular intervals.

When speaking of the needs of society, it is important to understand we mean the whole of society or all categories or segments of the population. Every category is directly or indirectly touched by the university so its goals and action must be oriented towards the advancement of all citizens. The introduction to the Commission's report *Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université* states "that university activity must remain in contact with the essential realities of its surrounding social environment. It's activity must be at the service of society at large, contribute to generating responsiveness where necessary, and foster the fulfillment of individuals or groups with which it is directly or indirectly associated (...). The university cannot be at the exclusive service of an élite or the powers that be." (1)

Promotion of values

If Québec has become a much more pluralist society, there are certain values still being defended by the community at large and the role of the university in the protection and promotion of these values can take on a new strength. Some of these values include:

- the protection and concrete realization of the democratic ideal;

(1) Op. cit., p. 1. (free translation)

- due recognition and respect for basic human rights;
- the right to research and to the pursuit of truth as a basic human right that is not the exclusive preserve of an oligarchic group, whatever it be;
- the right to critical and free expression, to privacy and dissidence, etc.

In a world where the expression of these ideals and free exercise of these rights seem to be growing more precarious, it cannot be denied that the agents of higher education have a vital part to play in their protection and promotion.

Cultural promotion

The concept of cultural promotion (1) is closely linked to that of the "democratization of knowledge", though the latter may be considered a special factor in cultural promotion.

Within our present context with its visible tendency towards a cultural levelling, with even the disappearance of certain cultures, the university has the power to exert a decisive influence and contribute to the preservation, development and enrichment of what could be termed a body of distinctive traits that characterize a given community: language, intellectual life, traditions, values. This community can be either the nation, different social strata, a regional group, ethnic groups, confessional groups. In turn, all of these groups or social strata are able to contribute each in their own way to enriching the cultural life of society as a whole.

Another objective of cultural promotion is to do something to satisfy the major aspirations experienced by individual people in the conduct of their daily lives.

(1) See supplementary note at end of chapter.

Collective advancement

The Commission has already referred to the distinction between individual and collective advancement. It has also pointed out that if individual advancement constitutes an important social contribution, it has not yet been able to improve the relative situation of certain social classes nor, what is more important, to contribute to their overall autonomy.

The university is now being solicited from a variety of quarters to become more involved in the growth and progress of the community as a whole. Most Québec universities have, in fact, developed special projects to this end leading to enriching teaching experiences and worthwhile results. In its June 1978 report, the Commission wrote:

"It is important that every university act as an agent for collective advancement. This means that in addition to its services of teaching and research, which might deserve to be reappraised, the university should accept to serve certain citizens' movements, especially those of 'ordinary citizens', to promote their interests and answer their common needs".(1)

When speaking about a new social function for the university, the dimension of collective advancement, especially in less advantaged districts, should be an important feature of the future.

Social responsibility

The *Document de consultation* of January 1978 of the Study Commission on the Universities notes that "the university, like the whole of the educational system, has now reached a critical point where social responsibility is concerned (...).

(1) *Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université*, p. 43

A new relationship is developing between the university and society, obliging the former to submit reports, to render accounts, and to reappraise, explain or justify its outcomes in terms of its fixed objectives on the one hand, and invested resources or inputs on the other". (1)

This sums up adequately what could be considered the social function of the university. Many briefs submitted to the Angers Commission also agree that universities will have to become increasingly accountable to society and justify the relevancy of their actions because of the considerable resources invested in higher education.

This is and shall continue to be one of the outstanding features of present and the future trends. How can the university reflect greater concern about the need for its services? We shall return to this subject later in the text.

The renewal of traditional functions

The traditional functions of the university include teaching, research, and service to the community. Another one of its vital functions concerns its critical function. In keeping with the previously expressed views of the Commission, these functions must be further expanded, not only through the medium of increased subsidies or new structures, but through that of changed attitudes, approaches, ways of reflecting and acting, which are all of equal importance.

Teaching

Teaching, in other words the communication of knowledge, is at the heart of the university's mission. It is a question

(1) p. 17

here of advanced knowledge, that situated at the point of a breakthrough in a fixed body of knowledge, by necessity implying a permanent interrelationship between teaching and research.

What should university education then be within the above perspective?

- a) It must be of high quality, in other words, correspond to the most recent and complete findings in a given field and meet the standards of intellectual rigour and clarity set for this field.
- b) It must foster the acquisition of a basic education, meaning the knowledge, tools, methods and skills for self-autonomy and intellectual maturity, enabling the learner to better understand his particular environment, the present generation and his place in society.
- c) It must contribute to the social development of the learner, sensitizing him to the social implications of the position he hopes to occupy in his area of competence.
- d) It must not neglect the social realities of the times, develop the learner's responsiveness to certain basic issues and events.
- e) It should be carried out within the perspective of continuing education, and as a result, "teach how to learn", emphasize the provisional nature of all knowledge and technology.
- f) To meet the requirements of quality instruction, a wide range of teaching methods are required in the communication of knowledge. To begin with, the conventional credit system could be applied in a variety of ways, but within a wider perspective beyond the limits of credited instruction, university education must attempt to reach the public at large in the interests of democratized education, collective advancement and cultural promotion.

- g) University education should aim at the unification of knowledge to counter the existing trend towards fragmentation and compartmentalization. One of the vital tasks of higher education today is to break down barriers between disciplines and to ensure that the curriculum corresponds to present realities.

Research

Another major dimension of university activity concerns research. But research into what? By whom? For whom? By what means? In relation to what special problems? For the use of whom?

The purpose of research is to expand the boundaries of theoretical and practical knowledge. That is why it is such an essential element in the definition of the real meaning of the university. But within our own special context, certain factors warrent further discussion.

- a) The Green Paper Towards a Scientific Research Policy for Québec underlines "the importance of orienting science towards man who needs it to better understand himself, to find a purpose to life, to embrace the universe, to evolve, and to improve his condition." (1) This is a good description of what should be the primary motivation behind all research: the growth, development and fulfillment of all individuals and groups through the expansion of knowledge and a higher standard of life on all planes - physical, intellectual, moral, social and spiritual.
- b) Research should be at the service of society as a whole. In other words, it must not be at the exclusive service of certain powers or élites. Several conditions are therefore essential.

(1) p. 2

- Research should not be totally limited to certain current issues or problem areas. On the whole, it must seek to answer the questions raised and the needs experienced by different sectors of society.
 - The elements of the problems should not be exclusively decided by a handful of persons or groups.
 - Research results should generally be available and communicated to the public at large, either through various forms of education or a series of other means.
 - Research objectives, priorities and methods should be established by society with as large a consensus as possible.
- c) It nevertheless remains there must always be a place for "independent" research, while bearing in mind that those involved in this kind of research are still accountable to the public for the quality or results of their work.

Service to the community

The university, in itself, constitutes a service to the community. Traditionally and as always, its teaching and research have rendered important services to society. Its supportive and counselling activities to governments, industry, groups and associations are also social contributions to the growth and development of society.

However, the question is whether we may still cling to these traditional approaches. In the Commission's view, the answer is no. The reassessments, questioning and criticisms to which the university has been recently subjected are an eloquent confirmation of the above view.

One major criticism is the concept that the university is tied or restricted to a special culture, that it is primarily at the service of governments, industry and the professional

corporations. All its approaches, priorities and programmes, as some say, are defined in terms of the above groups which control it. Considering, furthermore, that the university is financed by the population as a whole and should be a factor in collective advancement, more and more voices are calling for a more democratic approach from the university and a greater concern about the living conditions of the population as a whole and about the quality of life of all segments of society.

More precisely, it means that teaching and research must be more in tune with social realities. Again, in the exercise of both these functions, the university and faculty have a responsibility to develop new relationships with certain social classes with which they have had very little contact in the past.

The critical function

This function overlaps those already mentioned above. In all areas of university activity, it is essential for the university to exercise a critical function not only in regard to its own self but in regard to everything surrounding it - knowledge in general, our institutions, conceptions of progress ...

What are the implications of this urgent and vital function for the university and society in general? "Criticism supposes assessments, radical investigations, the meaning of the relative and provisional. It is diametrically opposed to dogmatism. To be critical is to refuse any assertion without examining its foundations as completely as possible. In principle, it is recognizing that all knowledge is incomplete and subject to revision ... However, the critical function of the university does not concern a search for new knowledge alone. It also involves final goals, those of the university, its objectives and activities as a whole, its place in a given society

and finally, this very society itself". (1)

We see, then, that it is a twofold function. First, it is the duty of the university and faculty to stand aside as much as possible to assess their goals and practices with a view to rectifying them where necessary. Second, they must keep a watchful eye on the society that surrounds them. To simply content themselves with answering the demands placed upon them without questioning their full implications is no longer acceptable.

At a time when certain major aspects of our cultural life are being questioned and serious decisions must be taken, the renewal of the social role of the university calls for the implementation of measures reaffirming and guaranteeing this critical dimension.

4. COURSES OF ACTION

The Commission believes that certain courses of action must be adopted if the university is to evolve in the desired direction. It would prefer a "step by step policy" to a revamping of structures, which in itself has nothing magical to offer. Rather, specific courses of action should be taken to help the university and faculty to move into new and experimental areas.

Before discussing these courses of action, let us examine a few general principles.

- Society, on the one hand, has to recognize the university's right to some degree of autonomy, and in particular, the right to independent research. On the other hand, the university must accept to place its resources at the service of certain social priorities.

(1) *Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université*, p. 29.
(free translation)

- To speak of the renewal of the social function of the university is not simply a matter of expanding its existing functions, activities and structures. It is much more a question of modifying the existing situation, adding new dimensions to teaching, research and social progress, so that university practices are more in tune with developing needs.
- The university as a major resource centre should be readily available to different groups or associations through various methods or formulas. That some groups in need of its resources are denied access to them is unacceptable.
- It is therefore essential that methods other than individual access to university resources be taken into greater account by the university and that its resources are no longer almost exclusively available to only certain categories of society. Moreover, in contrast to its present practices with governmental and parapublic agencies, large and medium private enterprises and professional organizations, the university should see to it that access to new scientific information can be gained through other means than the academic medium.

Among the courses of action to be adopted, the Commission recommends the following.

Towards a change in attitudes and outlook

A renewal of the social function of the university calls for a reappraisal of attitudes, approaches, ways of perceiving and doing. Again, everything cannot be reduced to structures and budgets, as important as both may be. There is an interacting relation between "structures" and "attitudes" in the sense that a certain structure can foster a particular approach or mode of behaviour. Similarly, the ordering of budgetary priorities can influence the development of an institution and the approaches it favours. But larger budgets or different structures per se have not the magic power to achieve totally what we are seeking.

The Commission therefore feels that those in charge of university education must try to foster a change in attitudes or mental outlook so that the institution as such, its administration and faculty can take social realities into greater account, define new problem areas and develop a greater range of possible approaches.

In practical terms, this change in outlook could be fostered by new recruitment and professional improvement policies, by criteria for evaluating assignments or performances with a view to promotion, by the establishment of greater contact with all sectors of society, with those, in particular, who have traditionally remained isolated from higher education, by public information and exchange programs.

Towards increased social relevance

A renewal of the social function of the university presupposes a questioning by the institution and faculty of the social relevance of their major objectives, educational and research activities. This should be done with the purpose in mind of servicing citizens of all classes since, in the final analysis, the university has a direct or indirect bearing on the lives of everyone.

And how is the social relevance of the objectives and activities of the university to be measured? To begin with, we believe some pertinent questions deserve to be answered. For whom does the university exist? Whom is it meant to serve? To what social classes is it available? What are the resulting effects? Who are denied access to its resources? Why? In what way is knowledge communicated? What kind of research should be emphasized? Who defines the priorities in research? To whom are the results directed? In what language and by what means? What are the university's special priorities? What can it do to inform the public about the major decisions society is required to take?

Towards the integration of knowledge

We have already mentioned how the expansion of knowledge leads to a multiplication of disciplines, to the fragmentation and isolation of learning. How can the necessary liaisons or integration be achieved to the fullest possible extent? This is the important challenge facing the university and its faculty today.

It seems to the Commission the way in which problem areas are defined could also be reviewed. It is becoming increasingly impossible to define the elements of a problem in terms of a single discipline. Program structures, methods and content should have something to contribute in eliminating barriers to a certain extent. It is also necessary to promote interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary exchanges and projects, such as practised in many other locals. New structures, methods and opportunities for discussion and exchange should be explored to this end.

Towards greater democratization

Though much has been accomplished in the past twenty years where accessibility is concerned, yet, in terms of the democratization of higher education, or the possibility for certain social levels or classes to accede to studies corresponding to their needs and respectful of their academic standing demand that further steps be taken.

How can greater democratization be achieved? The first step obviously consists in reflecting upon the questions previously raised with respect to attitudes and the social relevance of university activity. But also in pursuing the efforts already undertaken for decentralizing instruction and implanting it more firmly in the social and regional realities of the times, in

providing for more diversified guidance and orientation methods, effective procedures and pedagogical techniques in cooperation with other groups, and in ensuring a wider communication of knowledge.

Contributing to cultural development

As previously mentioned, the university must contribute to cultural development on a group and individual basis. It goes without saying that the university, through its teaching and research, makes a vital contribution here but can do more by making knowledge available to the greatest possible numbers through a wide range of measures such as television, radio, various periodicals and publications, special conferences or meetings designed for the general public. But throughout all of its endeavours, it is important that the language of communication used is accurate and at the level of all.

Some recent experiments in this area worthy of note include those of Télé-université, the Faculty of Continuing Education at the Université de Montréal and UQAM, etc.

A new approach towards collective advancement

In its 1977-1978 report, the Conseil des universités states that "in the future, making university resources more accessible to the public and special services for specific groups should be subjects of greater concern to the universities and special financing on the part of the ministère de l'Éducation".(1)

(1) CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS, *Neuvième rapport annuel 1977-1978*, Québec 1979, p. 5.

In its June 1978 report, the Commission had placed special emphasis on collective advancement and service to society. Its views were furthermore adopted by the Conseil supérieur in its annual report for 1977-1978.

As previously mentioned, the university, in itself, constitutes an important service to the community and contributes to collective advancement, especially to that of groups or bodies in constant contact with it. However, the point that concerns the Commission here is the advancement of those groups of society that have traditionally had little contact with the university, little access to knowledge and very limited involvement in society's major decision centres. To aim at the collective advancement of these segments of society, generally known as popular groups, is to help them to achieve self-determination and a capacity to see to their own economic, social and cultural interests.

The Commission believes that the renewal of the social function of the university is an issue that concerns the university as a whole - the institution as such, faculty and non-teaching staff. To its mind, it is not a question of endowing each establishment with some kind of parallel structure in charge of the function of "service to the community", thereby allowing the remaining parties to more or less take it for granted this function is basically none of their business. Insofar as possible, all faculties and departments must be concerned about serving all classes of society where both teaching and research are concerned.

Some of the practical measures suggested by the Commission are described below.

- If we do not agree with a parallel structure exclusively in charge of the "service to the community" dimension, then we should set up or establish a "port of entry" or reception service for groups desirous of benefitting of university resources. The main objectives of such a mechanism acting as a liaison with different sectors of society would be;

- i) to facilitate access to the university's resources for all groups;
 - ii) to help the university to establish relations with various sectors and support them in their undertakings.
- Where financing is concerned, we must first remember that in the allocation of funds, service to the community is partly financed from the public purse. Therefore, were certain priorities and practices to be revised, more could be done by the universities to see that their activities correspond better to the needs of groups that have been generally neglected. Nevertheless, owing to the fact this consists of a new experiment calling for special studies and new mechanisms, in brief, of departing from the beaten track, temporary financial assistance may be in order. This has already been recognized by the Conseil des universités in its statement that "the Ministry, beginning this year, should examine the advisability of granting special financial assistance on an experimental basis to institutions willing to work actively within the frame of "service to the community at large". (1) It has been suggested that the ministère de l'Education should allot an amount equal to at least 1% of the total operating budgets of the universities to this end. (2)

Promoting new practices among the faculty

It goes without saying that there can be no renewal of the university's social function without the participation of the teaching staff. Below are some suggested means and measures for consideration.

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- (1) CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITES, *Rapport sur la visite du Conseil à l'UQUAM*, 18 janvier 1979, p. 12.
 - (2) See brief presented by the Syndicat des professeurs de l'UQUAM to the Commission d'étude sur les universités, p. 20.

- That all community service activity, especially that in connection with what has been emphasized above, be recognized as an integral component of the workload of the faculty. In particular, activities relating to research and the communication of knowledge (non-credited instruction) carried out within a program of service to the community, be taken into account in the evaluation of an instructor's overall performance.
- That special assistance be formally accorded to instructors engaged in programs for groups traditionally isolated from university influence.
- That the criteria applying to the engagement, promotion and professional improvement opportunities for the faculty give greater consideration to the factor of maintaining closer ties with all sectors of society.

Among the benefits to be derived for the university from these renewed contacts with society include stimulation of its critical function, expansion of fields of knowledge to be explored, the enhancement of the credibility of the university and faculty, greater opportunities for reexamining more profoundly its essential purposes and relating its activity to the reality that surrounds it.

A reassessment of university education

In the foregoing pages, the Commission pointed out a number of challenges facing the universities with respect to the education of the students. What are the approaches for meeting such challenges?

The previous chapter dealt with the student's general or basic education. Again, last year some of the Commission's reflection focussed on social education at university. Points mentioned included:

- the necessity of examining the manner in which students experience the learning and educative process;
- the need for a more articulated relationship between theory and practice, and for programs better related to existing social problems;
- the need for persuasive measures in order to render teaching and research more in alignment with social realities (measures relating to staff promotion, financing of certain kinds of projects, etc.);
- the requirement of a type of university training that fosters a set of collective and social moral principles and values.

The perspectives of continuing education and the updating of an education that must set the pace in the communication of knowledge must also be subjects of constant preoccupation with the university. What are the means for attaining these ends? They vary from one local to another. Some establishments have a faculty of continuing education and others a service for continuing education. Some of the measures to be adopted for the effective operation of this area of education include the organization of special congresses, exchanges of information, study leaves, closer contacts with governmental and industrial sectors and with the so-called popular groups. There is a whole range of possibilities to be explored and evaluated.

Where quantitative aspects are concerned, or in other words, the student quotas to be set for various fields, many factors are involved. Up to what point should employment opportunities be taken into consideration by the university? Rather, should greater stress be placed on the individual's right to obtain a general education? To what extent is it legitimate for professional corporations to impose their constraints on the university? And beyond the immediate requirements of the labour market, the university must assess the answers it provides to the present and projected needs of society in general. Is it producing a

sufficient number of people able to resolve our ecological, social and economic problems affecting society at an ever-increasing pace? For instance, is higher education in Québec preparing a sufficient number of administrators in relation to other categories such as economists or accountants?

The Commission is not in a position to offer any precise solutions here, but feels it important to raise such questions that will have to be answered sooner or later.

A rethinking of the financing process

At the moment, the financing of current expenditures is essentially based on the number of full-time university student enrolments. For many years there has been much questioning of this method of financing. More recently, however, due to inflation, the decline in enrollments, governmental policies... the financing process has been placed under greater fire. The budgetary cuts of recent months and the prospect of a declining student population are matters of serious concern to the universities.

What, then, in the above context, are the implications for a renewal of the social purpose of the university?

First of all, as already stated by the Commission, progress in this area does not reside in increased budgets alone but in a reordering of priorities and a different and more rational use of available resources. The Carnegie Commission, in its final report, also confirmed this requirement and listed among its most important recommendations that of aiming towards the most

effective use of resources at all levels. (1)

Another dimension resides in the criteria governing the distribution of funds within individual establishments. Seriously debatable inequalities may be found among certain faculties and categories of students - the human sciences as compared to the health sciences or pure sciences; full-time students as compared to adult part-time students. The latter, in particular, are more or less in a disadvantaged position. Their instructors do not have sufficient time to devote to their progress, are involved in very little university research and have difficult access to the educational services and other resources of the university. In short, some sectors and categories of students are unfavourably treated by some existing practices and norms in the distribution of university resources. (2)

These few factors indicate that a renewal of the social function of the university calls for a rethinking of the process of financial allocations so that all categories may be served more equitably and overlooked needs taken into account.

The coordination of educational resources

To provide a satisfactory answer to various demands and avoid duplication, some type of coordination must be established in the use of the educational resources of a given region. Both physical and human resources are included here. The setting up of coordinating mechanisms would also allow for the implementation

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- (1) *Priorities for Action: Final Report of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973. "Recommendation deserving special attention... More attention at all levels to the most effective use of resources, pp. 91-91.*
 - (2) See Guy BOURGEAULT "Le financement des universités: une stratégie "anti-innovation" in la revue de l'AUPELF, octobre 1978.

and administration of new projects for serving the community. This coordination could be fostered at various levels:

- on the one hand, the policies of the ministère de l'Education and other ministries might be directed towards a greater coordination of and greater access to all the educational resources of a given region;
- on the other hand, the universities through their own policies, could foster regional coordination and take the initiative in many cases.

*New ways of being
accountable to society*

In a brief presented to the Study Commission on the Universities, Mr. Gilles Boulet, rector of the Université du Québec (Trois-Rivières) wrote as follows: "It is extremely disturbing to note that the University has not yet succeeded in developing a form of accountability that would enable the society from which it originates or the community in which it is located to understand its role, to examine its undertakings, appreciate its true worth and access the impact of its presence and social contributions."

In its ninth annual report, the Conseil des universités, for its part, states that "the universities, no more than other publicly financed establishments, cannot be allowed to escape from a justification of their activities." (1)

The foregoing pages refer to the ever-growing importance of this factor within the context now in the process of development. Rather than remaining passive, what can the universities do? The Commission suggests the following courses:

(1) *Neuvième rapport annuel, 1977-1978, p. 5.*

- It is essential that the universities define their objectives clearly and publicize them as extensively as possible.
- If the university is to fulfill its social role, its teaching and research functions must be evaluated constantly. Evaluation requires a systematic, rigorous and scientific reading of both society's needs and the services it offers. Such work cannot be limited to sporadic investigations, such as for example, the creation of study commissions every ten or twelve years. Instead, this must be regarded as a new dimension in the life of the institution. Therefore, it is essential that each establishment endow itself with the necessary mechanisms for evaluating its operations and the services it renders to society.
- The annual report of each university could serve to illustrate how it uses the resources granted to it by society. Not only might fiscal details be included but also a quantitative and qualitative description of its activities.
- Finally, the universities could agree to the setting up of an independent body having as a mandate this dimension of social responsibility. In its brief to the Study Commission on the universities, Mc Gill university spoke of "a body through which the universities could be accountable to both the public and the government. This could be accomplished through special evaluations every five years (...) or through the organization of touring committees (...). Such means would help to ensure a greater respect for the principle of responsibility".
(1)

5. CONCLUSION

Here, just as elsewhere, the university institution is at a crossroads. It is also likely that much of its future will be determined outside its own walls. This almost sacred institution of the past is now under fire, at the mercy of governments where

(1) p. 4.

resources are concerned and subject to the pressures of increasingly diversified groups.

In these pages the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur attempts to point out the changes in outlook and social changes Québec has experienced over the past two or three decades, changes that have given rise to new challenges and exigencies for the ministère de l'Education, the university and its teaching staff. Our purpose here has been to emphasize the need for pursuing an analytical investigation of these challenges in order to understand more fully how the social function of the university must be renewed. While reaffirming the university's need for a margin of autonomy, for independent research and the practice of its critical function, we have also stated how its activity must be in tune with the basic social realities of our times. And despite the considerable progress made where accessibility is concerned, the objective of democratized higher education, as previously mentioned by the Commission, has still to be achieved.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

A TENTATIVE DEFINITION OF CERTAIN CONCEPTS

1. DEMOCRATIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

1.1 "Democratization" means the act of making more democratic. "To democratize" according to le *Petit Larousse illustré* (1973), is "to render something accessible to all classes of society".

1.2 In its report *Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université* (June 1978), the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur states:

"The democratization of higher education presuppose it is perceived as a service to the population as a whole and is based on the ideal of social equality, that it must be within the reach of all who have the necessary talent, irrespective of religious belief, race, culture, social class, age or sex" (p. 31).

1.3 Several further dimensions may be added to the concept of democratization which also supposes

- that institutions of higher education develop an assortment of means for establishing relations with all those in need of their human, technical and physical resources (use of the mass-media, different teaching processes, instruction outside normal facilities and time schedules, etc.);
- that insofar as possible, knowledge is communicated in a language comprehensible to all to whom it is addressed;
- that university teaching and research take into account the social realities of the day and the problems of citizens in general (pollution, housing, transportation, health care, etc.), thereby making its activity more relevant and timely.

2. COMMITMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY VERSUS COMMITMENT OF THE FACULTY

2.1 One could say that the commitment belongs to the university when the institution, as such, takes a position, enters into a contract, etc.

For example - University "X" signs a contract with industrial firm "Y";

- UQAM signs an agreement with the CSN or the FTQ.

As a rule it is the university's board of directors (or its equivalent) that is responsible for entering into agreements. For instance, the *Annuaire général* 1978-1979 of the Université de Montréal states "Le Conseil de l'Université exerce tous les droits de l'Université et tous les pouvoirs nécessaires à son administration et à son développement".

- 2.2 Commitment of the faculty. At this moment, it is an individual or group that enters into an agreement, takes a position, etc.

For example - Two professors of the Department of "X" provide expertise to an association;
- The professors of a given Department enter into a contract to ...

At this moment, the university, as such, is not bound officially by such agreements.

3. SOCIAL FUNCTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

- 3.1 The *Pluridictionnaire Larousse* (1977) defines the word "function" as follows: useful purpose, role of an element within a given whole.

- 3.2 The *Dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la langue française* de Robert defines the word "function" as such:

- the action or special role of an element or organism within a given whole;
- the characteristic action of a living thing contributing to a larger action.

3.3 In its June 1978 report, the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur affirms:

- "To speak of the social function of the university is to speak of its place within society, of the services it renders or should render to society" (p. 1).
- "The concept "social function" refers to the position of the university in relation to the society of which it forms a part and its contribution to this society" (p. 28).

4. CRITICAL FUNCTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

4.1 In the *Pluridictionnaire Larousse*, the word "critical" implies an effort to evaluate, an attitude that seeks to detect the qualities and defects of a given project, the accuracy or authenticity of a statement, of a fact.

4.2 The *Dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la langue française de Robert* defines "critique" as follows: a critical estimate of a principle or object with a view to expressing an opinion involving a judgment, in particular of its artistic or philosophical value.

4.3 In its June 1978 report, the Commission writes:

"The Commission supposes a questioning, a critical examination, a sense of the relative and the provisional. It is situated at the extreme opposite of dogmatism. To be a critic is to accept no assertion without questioning its foundations as fully as possible. It is the recognition, in principle, that all knowledge is incomplete and amenable to modification.

"When one speaks of the critical function of the university, it does not mean a search for new knowledge alone. This

function must also apply to the final goals of the university, to its objectives, the whole of its activities, its place within a given society, and finally, to the whole of that society itself" (p. 29).

5. SOCIAL EDUCATION OF THE STUDENT

The report *Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université* contains the following definition by the Commission:

"The concept "social education" of the student refers here to a concern for a kind of education that seeks, in addition to the pursuance of the objective of excellence in a given field, to provide students with a new dimension and to sensitize them to broader realities linked to social concerns".

"The aim of the social education of students is a desire to help them to understand the social implications or consequences of the activities they will be called on to perform within their chosen fields. It also means preparing them to evaluate and to exert an influence on these implications" (p. 6).

6. POPULAR MILIEUX, POPULAR GROUPS

6.1 The expression "popular milieu" designates a relatively specific class of society.

"popular group" implies a group of persons belonging to a popular or working district.

6.2 The *Dictionnaire Beauchemin Canadien* (1968) defines the term "popular" as follows: That which is of the people, concerns the people, belongs to the people.

- 6.3 In its June 1978 report, the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur quotes Michel Pichette who describes the working or popular class as follows:

"This social class embodies individuals and social practices characterized by various forms of inequality within the economic organization and the structures for control and decision-making. It is often not represented or under-represented politically and its situation makes it inaccessible to scientific and technological innovations. The effect of these characteristics is to produce interests and needs determined by the working and living conditions of this social class" (p. 4).

And the Commission adds:

"As may be seen, though the economic factor is important, it is not the only one affecting the situation of the popular milieux. Their situation also generates dependence and a sense of inadequacy before society's economic, political and cultural powers, and scientific and technical knowledge in general. What is involved here is an entire social situation with its particular cultural life. A precise definition of the categories of persons covered by the expression "popular milieux" would include the low income workers, welfare recipients and the unemployed" (p. 5).

7. INDIVIDUAL PROMOTION

- 7.1 "Promotion" stems from "to promote" which derives from the latin "promovere": to help to move ahead, to make progress.

Thus, *Robert* defines "promotion" as follows: the appointment of one or more persons to a higher state, rank or position.

- 7.2 To speak of individual promotion is to speak of advancement, of an improvement in the socio-economic situation of a person.

In his work entitled *L'université pour qui?* Michel Pichette writes "Individual promotion defines the practice (...) of the university in terms of responding to the needs of initial professional training, professional improvement and upgrading for tasks determined by the labour market. It generally leads to the awarding of a diploma, certificate and/or an equivalent social attestation" (p. 187).

In its report *Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université*, the Commission states:

"The university is centred primarily on individual promotion: it permits an individual to acquire knowledge and skills that allow him to retain his present status or to find a higher place on the social ladder" (p. 36).

8. COLLECTIVE ADVANCEMENT

- 8.1 This concerns the advancement of a group *as such* and the enhancement of its socio-economic condition. For example, the improvement of working conditions (working hours, health conditions, salary, etc.) of a group of professional or non-professional workers, women, etc.

- 8.2 In its report of last year, the Commission de l'enseignement supérieur wrote:

- "The dimension of collective advancement (...), without neglecting that of individual promotion, would permit the university to contribute to the efforts of organizations committed to the collective progress and development of popular groups and the groups' take over of responsibility for their own welfare" (pp. 36-37).

- "It is important that every university become an agent in collective advancement. This means that, in addition to its normal activities of teaching and research (which can be reviewed), the university must agree to help groups representing the people (in particular "ordinary people") in order to encourage their development" (p. 43).
- "The main goal of collective advancement is the self-determination of the popular classes, the promotion of their economic, political and cultural interests, and also of their ability to assume responsibility for their own advancement" (p. 59).

8.3 In addition to the latter quotation, it should be noted that "collective advancement" may involve any organized group as such, for instance businessmen's, professionals', farmers', women's or workers' movements.

In brief, to contribute to the advancement of the collectivity is to help to enhance the socio-economic situation of all groups.

9. CULTURAL PROMOTION

9.1 The term "culture" is not an easy concept to define. One author has stated that "a totally satisfactory definition of culture does not exist, though it is possible to count over 250 different definitions". (1)

The *Petit Larousse* defines "culture" as follows: all of the social, religious, structural, intellectual, artistic, etc... traits and experience characteristic of a given society.

(1) Madeleine GRAWITZ, *Méthodes des sciences sociales*, Paris 1976, p. 186.

The report of the Task Force on Canadian Unity (Pépin-Robarts) entitled *Coming to Terms - The Words of the Debate* has this to say:

"Culture may be defined as the sum of the characteristics of a community acquired through education, training and social experience. It includes language, knowledge in all fields, traditions and values. It adds up to a collective way of thinking, feeling, and doing, a collective way of being".

"Culture draws individuals together, supports thought, judgment and action, gives a community its character and personality, differentiates it from other communities and encourages its members to seek common objectives" (p. 4).

- 9.2 What does one mean by "cultural promotion"? Using the above-cited quotation, one might say it concerns the growth, development, and enrichment of "all of the distinctive traits of a given community" (language, intellectual life, traditions, values and ideals).

And within this same society, one should perhaps speak of culture and sub-cultures in terms of social classes and groups.

- 9.3 Michel Pichette has written as follows:

"In contrast to individual advancement, cultural advancement or promotion applies to a much vaster area and is less differentiated as to its immediate objectives. If cultural promotion may be an educative activity addressed to needs associated with or leading to collective action, its main characteristic, nevertheless, is having as its only reference point the collective needs of people, their day-to-day conduct and the needs that emerge from it. Thus, cultural

promotion answers general needs for knowledge and information experienced by the population in its everyday life".

"Cultural promotion consists of an active educational intervention on the part of the university and faculty outside of the institution itself. Its object is the communication of knowledge, skills and information to the general public within the perspective of enhancing the quality of life and active involvement of the people in different areas of personal and social life. Cultural promotion has as its main principle and objective that the production of knowledge is a public possession. The ways and means whereby those far removed from the centres of intellectual and scientific life can take possession of it must therefore be thought out". (*L'université pour qui?*, pp. 189-190). (1)

10. SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

The notion of "service" implies that of help given, or a contribution made.

When speaking of "service to the community" in the case of the university, certain distinctions must be made.

10.1 To begin with, the university itself is a service to the community. It produces and transmits knowledge for the benefit of society. Moreover, it trains competent persons for various posts in society through its education and teaching services.

In its report *Deux aspects ...* (June 1978), the Commission states "The university in itself constitutes a service to the community. Through the conservation, creation and communication of advanced knowledge it renders essential services to society" (p. 39).

(1) Free translation

- 10.2 "Service to the community" may be interpreted in another way when it is said the three principal functions of the university are teaching, research and service to the general public.

In the latter case, "service to the general public" refers to supportive and/or counselling activities the university supplies (through its faculties and departments) to various governments, industries or associations. Reference might also be made to the university's presence in the major public issues of our society.

In a somewhat analogous way, one could also speak of the three dimensions of the university professor's task - teaching, research, personal guidance and influence.

- 10.3 "Service to the community or general public" may also designate an administrative and pedagogical entity or structure within the university called "Community Services", as already exists in a number of institutions.

As a rule, the object of this administrative and pedagogical structure is to develop contacts with different groups of society, in particular groups traditionally cut off from the university (farmers' groups, popular groups, etc.), **that** would like to benefit of its resources through other channels than those of credited courses and formal instruction.

8. ADULT EDUCATION

This year the Commission de l'enseignement des adultes adopted a new format for its 1978-1979 annual report for submission to the Minister of Education, National Assembly and people of Québec. It was its intention to present it as a progress report and instrument for exchange and discussion.

Three factors are involved in the formulation of this report which begins with a review of the activities of the Commission since its inception, followed by a statement of the orientations the Commission intends to pursue from now on and finally, it concludes with a description of the state and needs of adult education in 1978-1979.

In its 1977-1978 report, the Commission attempted to systematize its fact-finding efforts through a better organized presence in the adult education sector, an analysis of its findings, and a clearer description of some of the basic elements of its frame of reference. It proved a worthwhile operation so the Commission decided to resume it again this year, expanding it to include all of the work undertaken by the Commission as a whole.

The Commission's search for clearer orientations and a more efficient organization led it to an assessment of its consultative function, to a review of its experience in the exercise of this function, and to a definition of the main conditions for carrying out its consultative task effectively.

While the Commission was engaged in reassessing and redefining its present position, the ministère de l'Éducation announced the creation of a council of colleges and its intention to transform the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation into a school council.

No consideration whatever was given to the level of adult education which covers all the above levels and largely extends beyond them into the realm of many human and social endeavours. This decision and omission helped to accelerate the reflection already begun by the Commission on the nature, orientation and organization of its activity and on its own future as well.

The combined preceding factors led the Commission to devote considerable study to an evaluation of its present position. Only its conclusions were retained, which are discussed in the first two sections of this report that deal with an inventory of the Commission's major accomplishments since its inception and the orientations it intends to pursue in the future. Its orientations demand that its consultative role with the Minister of Education and National Assembly be coupled with information and animation action among the population. (1) Without the balancing influence of this latter action, it risks having its role reduced to a justification of a semblance of democracy, and its organization, to an impotent structure.

The final section of the report deals with the Commission's first efforts to apply its new orientations. It begins by discussing the guidelines selected for investigating the reality of adult education, guidelines also used in its analysis of problems it chose to study during the course of the year under review.

This progress report concludes with a summary of the recommendations that were presented this year by the Commission and its reflections on two major themes in the adult education field. It would like to submit the results of its work to

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- (1) Animation is limited by the consultative function and defined by the ways and means used by the Commission to consult the public and to obtain a critical assessment of the results of its work.

serious consultation with a view to a further synthesis-report on the state and needs of adult education in Québec.

1. THE NEW ORIENTATIONS OF THE COMMISSION DE
L'ÉDUCATION DES ADULTES

The Commission de l'éducation des adultes, through the medium of the Conseil supérieur, is essentially an advisory body to the Minister of Education, and through the medium of the latter, to the National Assembly.

After having carried out this role for several years, the Commission decided this year to take stock of its activities and accomplishments.

It has taken a new look at its advisory role and the conditions within the democratic process that are essential to its effective implementation. Following its stocktaking and reassessment, the Commission decided to apply certain correctives to some of its past practices. These correctives refer to two factors that tend to hinder the efficiency of advisory bodies mandated by governments and pluralistically composed out of respect for representivity. The danger for such bodies is dependency and inertia to the extent they submit to the exigencies and conditions of their mandator and avoid the problems created by their pluralist composition reflecting the society they represent.

In order to counter the effects of these inhibiting factors, the Commission envisaged a dual course of action — permanent consultation through an organized presence, and an open approach to the challenge of pluralism.

*Permanent consultation through
an organized presence*

In order to be effective and dynamic, the consultative function must be exercised with as much interest or concern on the part of those consulted as on the part of those who consult. The government, through the Conseil supérieur from whom it seeks advice, should always be able to feel the pulse and weight of the population. And the Conseil, through the government which it advises, must always have respect for this same population. Without this wider perspective, the consultative function is reduced to a mere tool at the government's service.

In the future, the Commission de l'éducation des adultes, for its part, intends to carry out its consultative role by covering every step in the democratic process that starts with the population, its particular situation, problems and needs, with the latter, in turn, reporting back to the Commission on the solutions proposed.

The Commission's intention is to arrange for its systematic presence among all sectors involved in adult education — in school and out-of-school organized activities and those of various community groups.

Within the limits of its competence which is solely advisory, the Commission also plans to organize animation and information services for these sectors and groups.

There is no need here to describe in detail the measures it intends to adopt towards these ends. Suffice to say this report is one means whereby the Commission can maintain a permanent and dynamic relationship with the people, particularly with the organizations set up by the latter to attain their objectives. The main purpose of the present report,

which consists of a progress report, is above all to inform and to raise certain questions whose answers will be used in a forthcoming synthesis report to be produced periodically, approximately every three years, presenting a synthesis of the situation, educational needs and wants of the adult population of Québec.

*An open approach to the challenge
of pluralism*

A constant and systematic presence of the Commission in the world of adult education may not help to solve the problems associated with its pluralist membership. On the contrary, its presence may only help to intensify them by emphasizing divergencies and existing hostilities.

And yet, it is not enough for the Commission to merely reflect the existing situation — the opposition, critical observations, agreement or disagreement of various groups or milieux. Its purpose is to analyze the situation, pass judgments, establish priorities where needs and measures are concerned. To avoid the risk of drifting into total incoherency, it must see to it that its frame of reference is made precisely clear.

The Commission not only intends to develop the elements of its frame of reference progressively, but to see that they are permanently submitted to the critical appraisal of the adult education sector in general.

To this end, the third section of this report is devoted to several elements of a common conception which are referred to constantly by the Commission members in their selection and study of adult education questions.

Though this open approach cannot guarantee in any absolute sense a lasting and universal consensus within both the

Commission and population, in our view it is the only way to avoid a number of useless and costly conflicts that are generally traceable to a lack of communication.

2. STOCKTAKING FOR A CONTINUING PROCESS

Prior to the Minister of Education's announced intention to modify the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, the Commission de l'éducation des adultes had decided to include in its annual report an inventory of all advice and recommendations submitted since its inception and the results obtained from its interventions.

The Commission felt a need to take stock of its past recommendations and their relevancy today before entering into a new phase of activity characterized by an organized presence in the adult education world in general and an open and better articulated approach.

The object of the Commission's personal assessment was to identify the essential factors of its history and continuity, while recalling to the government and the general public some of its former recommendations which are just as relevant today as in the past.

The Minister's decision now adds a new dimension to the Commission's undertaking. It requires a verification of the need to pursue its above-mentioned history, and if so, on what terms.

STOCKTAKING

It is not easy to measure the impact of an advisory body such as this Commission, and of its advice and recommendations in particular.

Many factors are involved in the shaping of governmental policies, which makes it impossible to isolate and measure the weight of any single one.

Impacts cannot be measured in terms of governmental reactions and policies alone. Certain interventions on the part of the Conseil supérieur urgently calling for serious collective reflection were not necessarily reflected in political action.

Some of its recommendations repeated over the past ten years have yet to produce any tangible results, even though their validity is always outstandingly clear. Nor can the validity of these recommendations be questioned by the mere fact of never having even been formally acknowledged.

Our purpose will therefore be limited to recalling the major recommendations of the Commission since its inception (1), to assessing their current relevance and to describing their impact when the necessary information is made available.

The active intervention of the Commission may be grouped around the five following themes: the policy and organization of adult education in Québec, the clients reached or to be reached, training programs, methods and resources, evaluation and research.

(1) See list at end of chapter.

The policy and organization of adult education in Québec

Since its creation, the Commission has never ceased calling for the establishment of an overall and coherent policy of adult education for Québec. If it once recommended that such a policy be developed by the Ministère de l'éducation, today it asks that it be formulated by the government as a whole and administered by an agency attached to the Conseil exécutif, for adult education cannot be reduced to the single dimension of teaching or instruction and the narrow framework of the school.

Organizational problems have always been the major reason behind the pressing demand for an overall policy in this field. To the Commission, the administrative jungle in this sector has always been one of the main causes of the problems governing Québec's adult education sector, in particular where the disadvantaged classes are concerned.

It has always appeared abnormal that the Québec government refuses to exercise full authority in the field of adult education and is content to leave all initiative and leadership to the Federal government, especially in the area of financing.

In Québec, the absence of overall planning and coordination between the concerned ministries, educational levels and various non-academic adult education organizations have promoted the development of a complex and competitive system.

The incoherency of the system cannot be eliminated without the active intervention of the government as a whole and the close cooperation of the general public.

The present government has announced its intention to design a comprehensive adult education policy. For the time being, we can only rejoice and remind the government that this task is largely beyond the expertise of the Ministère de l'éducation alone, that it involves the government at large, requires wider consultation of the population, and a special agency responsible for the administration of the policy that is not subject to ministerial controls.

Present or prospective clients

The advice and recommendations of the Commission deal with three categories of clients in this sector of education: the clients already benefitting of adult education services, the disadvantaged districts, and the neglected segment of the population.

The Commission's initiatives in the case of the category who profit of adult education's services concern the quality and special nature of the services offered by school organizations for adult students. Its interventions deal with various types of training programs, methods and resources used, and define what is mainly objectionable about an adult education process embedded in a system conceived for younger people.

The Commission became involved at a very early stage with the situation of those who did not feel at home in the regular system even when adapted to adults. The education of adults from disadvantaged districts also raised the problem of inequality of opportunity and its socio-economic and cultural causes that could not be uprooted through simple adjustments to the school system.

This, therefore, was to sensitize the Commission to two major factors:

The school system, even when adapted to adults, continued to discriminate against certain less privileged segments of the population — the physical and sensorial handicapped, senior citizens, some classes of immigrants, women, the economically deprived;

The school system, even adapted to adults, has limits as to its capacity to satisfy the educational needs of some milieux and segments of society. In addition to helping to reproduce social inequalities, it proves incapable of respecting and supporting educational alternatives devised by different groups, mainly those of disadvantaged districts, in the collective taking over of the responsibility of their own growth and development.

A comprehensive and coherent policy of adult education should therefore:

- . take into account the special status and needs of the school system's adult student population where formal education is concerned;
- . accord a certain priority to society's most deprived classes within a school system not only adapted to, but also designed for adults;
- . recognize and support, out of respect for their autonomy and special status, groups having developed educational organizations and practices outside the regular education system.

Types of training programs

If the Commission de l'éducation des adultes has always demonstrated concern about recognition and due respect

for the diversity of groups, milieux and categories of adults, its advice has also reflected a constant concern about the kind of training that is made available to adults.

The action of the Commission has persistently dealt with four major problem areas, to which satisfactory solutions have yet to be found: the integration of general and professional training; the jurisdictional conflict between the ministries of education and labour; socio-cultural training and community animation in school establishments; the tension between independent organizations and the adult education services in the popular education field.

. *The integration of general education with professional training*

The integration of general with professional training has never been the subject of specific advice or recommendations. Yet, as often stressed in various publications, general education, in adult education, must not only return to a study of the basics, but equip an adult with the tools needed to understand and cope with his life and environment. That is why professional training, especially for adults, cannot be divorced from general training without turning the school into a training plant at the service of purely economic interests. At the other end of the scale, especially for undereducated adults, too much emphasis on general training removed from technical studies and economic imperatives would only serve to maintain social inequalities or to occupy the free time of persons who are, so to speak, prematurely inactive.

This principle of integration, easier felt than defined, stems from the conviction that the human person is a being in search of unity and integration within a dynamic process. The divorce between general training and professional training has much more to do with administrative imperatives than with requirements for personal development.

- . *The jurisdictional conflict between the ministries of education and labour*

The advice of the Commission on the jurisdictional conflict between the ministries of education and labour, between the teaching establishments and the Professional Training Commissions is essentially based on the same unifying principle.

If the training program must show due regard for unity and continuity in the learning process of the adult student, the training program must also avoid dissociating the steps involved in the process of individual assistance to students.

The Commission is opposed to a fragmented-type of training process whereby education or training in the strict sense is separated from the steps previous and subsequent to the student's learning activities. Registration, academic and professional information and guidance, the determination of the student's orientation and its pedagogical objectives, course selections, reorientation problems along the way, evaluation of performance are all steps that must exhibit continuity throughout the entire learning period in a unified process of education.

The Commission's advice has always dwelt on the following needs: to avoid reducing professional education to the acquiring of technical and mechanical skills alone, to avoid reducing school establishments to vending machines displaying a selection of courses, to clear up the administrative red tape characterizing the present organization and to economize on the use of Québec's educational resources.

The Commission has constantly recommended the reinstitution of the personal aid services to students; that the Professional Training Commissions be so equipped as to carry out

their originally assigned post-training research and evaluation tasks effectively; that efficient coordination mechanisms be designed to permit the schools providing professional training to respect the expertise of the Professional Training Commissions in terms of needs and training results.

- . *Socio-cultural training and community animation in school establishments*

The Commission de l'éducation des adultes has never formulated any precise plan of action with respect to socio-cultural training and community animation in school establishments. Throughout the past years, it has limited itself to demanding more freedom for the school boards' adult education services in the distribution of their budgets concerning socio-cultural training. Another of its aims was to permit these services to orient their operations in terms of local needs.

In disadvantage areas, the Commission sought to direct these services towards a dynamic integration of the cultural elements of communities that are poorly reflected in the values conveyed by the school system.

Within a perspective of socio-cultural education that exceeds considerably the concept of individualized cultural diversions — referred to as the "macramization" of popular education — the Commission recommended that the community animation services of school organizations be not only retained, but intensified and committed to collective advancement.

- . *The tension between independent organizations and adult education services in popular education*

In 1973-1974, the Commission recommended that the Minister of Education formulate, in consultation with the school boards and popular education groups, a policy that could foster the

operations of popular education groups and give articulated and coherent attention to the following points:

- the special elements that establish the identity of popular education;
- methods for accrediting and financing popular education groups;
- popular education's place in a coordinated school system.

The Commission urged the voluntary popular education groups to become accredited, to collaborate with the school system's services and establish coordination between the latter's services and their own activities.

The Direction générale de l'éducation des adultes at the ministère de l'Education later set up a program of financial aid to the voluntary groups.

Experience shows that the special status and educative action of the groups has yet to be recognized and that financial assistance does not correspond to their growth rate and needs. It is also often engulfed in administrative and bureaucratic red tape and special norms.

Neither has the tension between in-school and out-of-school adult education services been fully dissipated. The influence and resources of school institutions render voluntary groups reticent and even hostile to collaboration with a system that represents such an imbalance of power, and an almost irresistible force for taking the groups over.

Though attentive to this whole situation, the Commission has not, as yet, taken a position even a temporary one. However, certain new elements in its investigation are reflected in recent advice on this situation.

The multiplicity and diversity of autonomous adult education groups and their contrasting approaches to training and education call for a governmental policy of support assigned by the ministère de l'Education to a higher agency in order to provide for coordination among the various ministries involved.

The school system's socio-cultural and community animation services, as well as those of out-of-school organizations must avoid the pitfall of unduly prolonging the adult's period of schooling. In addition to the existing tensions between regular institutions and voluntary groups, more thought must be given to achieving an equilibrium between the educative forces emanating from all sectors of society and not only from the school system's specific services.

More particularly, it now seems that more and more groups, including those of the industrial sector, intend to base their educational activity on their own areas of concern in defense of their respective interests and in an effort to contribute to individual and collective advancement. This growing phenomenon demands that the role of the school system and ministère de l'Education in adult education be seriously reconsidered.

Solutions to these four major problems should be taken into account in any projected comprehensive policy of adult education for Québec.

The advice and recommendations of the Commission have generally been drafted in a somewhat sober and timorous tone, except in the case of professional training and partly in that of socio-school training. Nevertheless, the Commission has already assembled the key elements of a possible policy of adult education for Québec. In the course of next year it intends to speed up its work of reflection and consultation so that it may have a worthwhile contribution to make in the formulation of this policy.

Training methods and resources

Considering the various forms of training and categories of persons involved in adult education, the Commission presented advice and recommendations on the quality and quantity of the means needed to satisfy the educational needs of Québec's adult population.

. Training methods

Where methods are concerned and the range of means required in the adult education field (programs, learning activities and techniques, evaluation devices), the Commission, with the agreement of the majority of the field's agents, recommended recognition of an adult's work experience, situation teaching, the use of varied learning techniques, adult participation in all phases of the training process, including that of evaluation.

These kinds of recommendation, generally resisted by a school system conceived for the young, also found little support from out-of-school groups and organizations which automatically associate their training with the action of their members,

i.e. their active and collective participation in assuming responsibility for their own training and development.

It would be essential to study the educational practices, approaches, methods, techniques and tools developed by the autonomous adult education groups and to compare them with those of the school system.

It would also be difficult for a truly comprehensive adult education policy to ignore the findings of such a study.

. Training resources

The 1974-1975 annual report of the Conseil supérieur devoted many pages to adult education. Its recommendations were unquestionably situated within the school framework and in favour of the professionalization of the adult education level.

In view of the expansion of the conception of adult education into all areas of activity in our society; in view of the recognition given to extra-academic educative practices; in view of the decline in the student population and its implications for adult education such as the need to provide job security to practising teachers; in view of the danger of an abusive institutionalization of the educational process, the Commission considers it necessary to revise some of its former positions pertaining to the contents of a comprehensive policy for adult education in Québec prior to recommending this policy anew. The first steps in this revision have already been taken in the Conseil's report for last year. (1)

(1) CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education Report 1977-1978.

The Commission would now like to consult the autonomous adult education groups, and in the case of school institutions, to re-evaluate their situation by meeting with, among others, the teachers' unions that have been articulating their views on adult education for the past ten years.

Research and evaluation

The Commission has on several occasions recommended the need for evaluating systematically adult education policies and the results of these policies, and the need for more basic research on the various dimensions of this field.

Since human and financial resources are somewhat lacking in Québec for these purposes, it goes without saying they must be increased. However, it is more important that they be coordinated in an overall project that only a comprehensive and coherent policy can ensure.

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This brief review of the Commission's recommendations demonstrates over and over again the urgent need for an overall policy.

Though there has already been considerable progress made in this field, it must be admitted it has been mostly empirical in nature. If incoherency and competition stimulate the imagination, they are also a source of wasted energy.

We are obliged to say that the recently proposed plans of the ministère de l'Éducation offer few correctives to the whole situation. The *Green Paper* on Primary and Secondary Education simply ignores adult education and the document *Colleges in Québec* considers it solely in terms of institutionalized education.

In spite of the immensity of the task obviously indicated in the Commission's present assessment, it is time for Québec to take a thorough look at what has been done or achieved in adult education. On the strength of our accomplishments and what they have taught us, we should be in a better position to formulate a comprehensive policy of adult education. Yet, this policy must not be conceived as an isolated appendage to an educational system always characterized by piecemeal reforms in terms of its different levels.

A purpose to be pursued

It is not up to the Commission to decide its own future. Nor is it up to it, within the frame of such a decision, to form an opinion on the positive or negative value of its present assessment.

The reasons, in its view, for retaining, not the Commission, but the consultative function by improving its operating conditions and eventually modifying its overall structure, largely surpass the strengths and weaknesses of any given undertaking.

More than ever, in Québec, must the consultative function in adult education be preserved by means of a special body that is totally independent of links or bonds with any government, any sector of society, or any educational organization.

No government, by virtue of its primarily administrative concerns, no particular group, by virtue of its defense of its own interests, limited objectives and philosophy, can hope to assume this consultative function with a minimum of objectivity among the varied components of our society.

It may reasonably be questioned whether a special body, as impartial as it may be, is truly able, at one and the same time, to hear the viewpoints of all, pick out new areas for reflection, initiate meaningful debate, achieve new consensus and adopt a position of its own while continuing to preserve its credibility among the population.

And yet, to refuse such a challenge is to admit that democracy is a periodic reality manifested once every four years, that the Welfare State is the best solution or that the anarchic struggle of conflicting interests will see to it that the strongest win.

On the basis of the Commission's individual and collective experience, we recommend that the consultative function continue to be retained according to the conditions prescribed in part one of this report.

3. THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF A FRAME OF REFERENCE

The two main conditions for the successful operation of the consultative function are dictated by the democratic process itself.

An advisory body must be accountable both to the people whose interests are served in its advice, and to the authority from whom it has received the mandate to submit such advice. This responsibility must be translated into a continuous presence among all sectors of the population, a permanent exchange of views and opinions on all major issues and efficient information services.

The open interactive relationship of an advisory body with its consulted population must be based on a gradually articulated position that is widely circulated and submitted to systematic discussion and debate. For the time being, we are

unable to come up with a better solution for guaranteeing the efficiency and credibility of a pluralist advisory body operating within an equally pluralist society.

It was thus necessary, in our view, to present the stocktaking contained in the first section of this report if only to identify the main elements of the frame of reference used by the Commission in its assessments of the situation of adult education in Québec.

For greater coherency and for facilitating exchange and debate, we shall now attempt to systematically outline the elements normally referred to by the members of the Commission in the formulation of advice and recommendations.

On October 13, 1978, the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation adopted a paper drawn up by a special work group composed in part of members of the Commission. The paper presents several elements of a policy of adult education within the context of continuing education. This paper, which contains the main elements of the Commission's frame of reference, shall be summarized below. To these elements will be added certain conditions considered essential by the Commission in the formulation and implementation of a system of continuing education.

*Elements of a policy of adult education
within the scope of continuing education (1)*

All of the Commission's work and reflection are basically focussed on the concept of continuing education.

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- (1) CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Eléments d'une politique d'éducation des adultes dans le contexte de l'éducation permanente, Report to the Minister of Education, Québec, October 1978.

Within this broad and liberal concept are numerous ambiguities that must be cleared up if it is not to be reduced to mere speculation in justification of the status quo or the wildest of utopias.

Certain ambiguities

Continuing education is not adult education.

"This uninterrupted process in a person's education from childhood to old age and covering the course of a lifetime of activity is, in strict terms, what is meant by continuing education."

Continuing education is not permanent school education or "a process of uninterrupted or repeated schooling extending over the entire life span of a given individual". It includes all alternate forms of learning and educational experiences that occur outside conventional schooling.

Continuing education cannot be merely reduced to continuous professional improvement for adults, with general education reserved for the young alone in a normal institutionalized school setting. The concept of continuing education as conceived by the Conseil supérieur, contests the reducing of education to a process for adapting individuals and groups to a socio-economic system that the school system itself is ever-increasingly incapable of questioning constructively".

Beyond the customary distinctions between regular education and adult education, between general education and professional education, between school, para-school and extra-school education, continuing education calls upon individuals and groups to take over the responsibility and gradual direction of their own full growth and development. It calls upon all agencies of society, governments, institutions and voluntary associations to orient all their educative resources to this end.

Two principles

"More comprehensive than a new pedagogical orientation, continuing education involves, by necessity, political, philosophical, and ethical options". More akin to a learning process that operates throughout every stage of life, continuing education rests upon a general conception of man, society and education.

To the Conseil, there are two guiding principles that should serve to inspire the process of continuing education.

"The basic attitude of continuing education towards the individual and society involves active faith in the ability and willingness of individuals to exercise their intelligence, creative powers, critical judgment in a constant desire to improve themselves."

"The political system should help to promote the awakening and stimulation of every individual's mind, at every age of life and in all areas of activity."

Major dimensions of the continuing education project

Translated in terms of the project, the above two guiding principles may be broken down into fourteen propositions in an effort to define more precisely what is, to some extent, a rather fuzzy concept.

- . "People can truly develop themselves and learn at any age in every area of human activity." Education pervades the entire time and space of every individual.

- . "Some persons learn and develop better in other times and settings unrelated to organized schooling." The educative influence of other environments outside that of regular school must be recognized and supported. The deschooling of education is now a necessary alternative. The special social and cultural function of the school must be carefully redefined.
- . Education can no longer be cut off from work and life. It must be associated and integrated with both. A conception such as this supposes a revision in the social function of science along with its methods of production and distribution."
- . If some types of learning can be accomplished better outside the school setting, the school curricula at all levels should henceforth be revised or redesigned.
- . "Some types of learning can be accomplished better or exclusively in adulthood because they correspond to the needs of this age-group or require working and living experience." They should be removed from the regular education of the young and postponed till later, while facilitating access to such programs for adults in recognition of their experience and maturity.
- . Continuing education "must aim at instilling in everyone a capacity and desire to continue developing all of their talents autonomously by selecting the academic or non-academic means that suit them best." This implies that the student who has completed compulsory schooling is truly able to choose between pursuing his academic education or entering the labour market.
- . The democratization of education ranks with equality not merely of opportunity but of chances to succeed. If equality of chances to succeed largely exceeds the responsibility and capabilities of education, it still

remains that we must work to reduce educational disparities. This is the aim of the continuing education project which sets forth six conditions that must be respected.

- "Recognition in the selection or certification process of learning acquired either in school or out-of-school."
- "Recognition of individual differences in interests and rates of development."
- "The desegregation of school levels and of the general and professional sectors."
- "Access to and participation in all the collective resources of education (not only of the school) at all times and places, without the condition of officially recognized former schooling."
- "Admission to educational programs should be based on the candidate's motivation and capacities, not on his former schooling."
- "The implementation of a new system of access to trades and professions based on an effective evaluation of competence as opposed to special training and the diploma it provides."
- . Education in disadvantaged areas has led to educative practices closely linked to activities for collective advancement. This other kind of education, different from that designed and organized exclusively in terms of individual advancement, must also be recognized and supported.

- . Continuing education "that wishes to promote the taking over by individuals and groups of the responsibility of their own education", supposes that participation in all stages of the educational process be not only recognized but especially fostered.
- . The aims of continuing education within the perspective of individual and collective development call for a coordinated pooling of society's educational resources as a whole. "To this end, industry and organized labour have an important role to play, in cooperation with the above resources, that should be translated into appropriate legislative measures."
- . "It is also important to develop the means for making education available to remote areas."
- . "Teachers will have a decisive role to play in the implementation of continuing education. They will be required to reassess their teaching practices and participate in a search for new approaches to an education that is open to all."
- . To the extent continuing education is based on individual or group dynamism and autonomy, it is impossible to foresee the wide variety of forms it may eventually assume. Furthermore, this sort of education can be implemented only with the consent and active participation of the general population.
- . Finally the State should take some action in the implementation of this project. "This project exceeds the responsibilities and competence of the ministère de l'Éducation alone." It requires the coordinated participation of all governmental ministries.

In conclusion, the Conseil supérieur emphasizes that "the prime instigator of the project (the realization of the serious shortcomings of an education virtually identified with schooling) and its final goals (the promotion of autonomous individuals and groups able to take charge of their own education and development) make continuing education an extremely crucial undertaking.

*Some essential conditions for the development
and implementation of continuing education*

As stated in the Conseil's conclusion, the whole concept and project of continuing education originated from the condemnation of certain shortcomings of a system of prolonged schooling and the tendency to want to extend it over a lifetime and into all areas of human activity.

Continuing education is opposed to continuous schooling. Rather, its aim is the taking over by autonomous individuals or groups of the responsibility of their own education and advancement.

Within the above perspective, the development and implementation of a continuing education project not only requires a more thorough study of the previously mentioned guiding principles and their major propositions, but also an analysis of the key factors that led to the idea of continuing education.

What are the problems and their causes?

Above and beyond statements of principles, there are problems any project involved with major transformations must attempt to resolve. What stands out behind most of the discussion on continuing education is a censuring of different manifestations of man's alienation, inequality of opportunity, the lack in educative activity of integration with other human activities, and in the educational system, with other systems of society.

So that continuing education may not be reduced to a justification of a few simple reforms that would do no more than conceal problems or postpone their real solution, the problems must be identified and their underlying causes analyzed and recalled constantly. This permanent critical effort will prevent attributing to education more responsibilities and powers than it already possesses. Mainly, it should enable us to discover the areas and limits within which a form of education may be organized that is conducive to both personal and collective development.

Education centred on the development of individual and collective autonomy and the taking over by individuals or communities of the responsibility of their own situation.

A statement of the major goals of continuing education supposes that conclusions have been derived from the former analysis. Here again this analysis could be further developed to pinpoint conditions that are vital to an education based on autonomous individual and collective development.

For the past several years, educational sectors and community development groups have been indulging in such expressions as the taking over of responsibility, active participation, self-determination. It would be necessary to extract from the achievements these expressions have served to inspire the conditions that are vital to a project of continuing education in order to prevent individual advancement from being reduced to the mere level of an enlightened consumer or collective advancement to the economic progress of a minority group through voluntary contributions.

4. *CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE STATE AND NEEDS OF ADULT EDUCATION STUDIED BY THE COMMISSION IN 1978-1979.*

In addition to the Commission's work of reassessing, redefining and reorganizing its role and activities, time was devoted to

renewing its consultations and reflection on certain problem situations pertaining to adult education in Québec.

The main results of its work directly dictated by its mandate consisted of two submissions of advice and an in-depth study of two major themes in the field of adult education. (1)

These studies not only fit into the Commission's frame of reference referred to earlier but provide an opportunity to verify and add to the elements of a concept the Commission would like to continue to develop and then make public.

Two submissions of advice

Two advice papers were submitted to the Conseil for its approval and for transmission to the Minister of Education. The first dealt with "the administrative jungle of the professional training program for adults", and the second constituted a follow-up to former recommendations of the Commission on the financing of voluntary popular education groups, focussing again on the difficulties of "volunteer groups dispensing popular education."

The text of both papers appears in the appendix. We shall merely recall the main elements of the argumentation presented and the ensuing recommendations as illustrations of the Commission's frame of reference and its contribution to the formulation of an adult education policy for Québec.

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- (1) The Commission also participated in the work of other Commissions or of the Conseil, such as the study on the Governmental Project concerning the CEGEPS and the study on Educational Leave with Pay.

The administrative jungle of the professional training program for adults

Without returning to all of the previously developed arguments on this subject (1), three precise and practical recommendations were formulated. Though the reasoning is still the same, the time for lengthy discussion is over. It is now necessary to simplify a situation where too many workers must bear the cost of a complex governmental bureaucratic machine.

Where the Adult Professional Training Program is concerned, the Conseil supérieur recommends:

- 1) that all so-called pre-training activities connected with the reception and evaluation of candidates, assessment of their needs, school and professional information or guidance counselling be under the exclusive control of the school establishments;
- 2) that all activities entrusted to the school establishments within the framework of this program be subject to evaluation;
- 3) that the Professional Training Commissions be vested with the powers of research and analysis of needs in the field of adult professional training and also with the power to evaluate activities in this field in terms of manpower needs.

(1) See advice paper entitled "The Administrative Jungle of the Professional Training Program for Adults" in appendix.

In support of its recommendations, the Conseil describes several case histories of adults submitted to the exigencies of a process seldom equalled in complexity. This is followed by a background of the events and factors that led to the present situation. Finally, a brief argument redefines the position of both this Commission and the Conseil, in particular their strong conviction of the need to respect unity and continuity in the learning and training process of adult students.

"Under such circumstances, it may first of all be reasonably questioned why the Professional Training Commission is imposed a task from which it could easily be discharged without any inconvenience since its pre-training functions are often assigned to school establishments through its service contracts. On the other hand, when the Professional Training Commission itself handles these pre-training functions, it is embarking on a course it has not yet fully mastered as revealed in the cases depicted (...) Even when it is occasionally successful in handling this task, it is done according to its own objectives and in keeping with labour market needs with small concern for the development of the whole person through adequate education. The candidates of the Canadian Manpower Training Program are thus placed in a separate category, isolated from the objectives of adult education, and in the long term, from those of continuing education".

"That is why the ministère de l'Education and the organizations commissioned by it to provide adult education services should be responsible for all pre-training activity, regardless of the programs in which candidates wish to enrol. They must nevertheless guarantee they are able to cope with these responsibilities and accept to be evaluated periodically."

"On the other hand, it is essential that research and analysis of manpower needs be assigned to a special agency, and also the task of appraising the training activities of school establishments. Such data is vital to school establishments which cannot ignore the socio-economic context in the pursuance of their main objective — the growth and development of the whole person."

The problems of the volunteer popular education groups

In follow up to its 1973-1974 recommendations on the recognition and financing of popular education groups, the Commission drew the Conseil's attention to some of the financial problems of voluntary popular education groups, and mainly to the conditions and methods pertaining to the allocation of subsidies.

In its advice to the Minister of Education, the Conseil reaffirms the need for an overall policy in extra-school education and for adequate financial assistance to groups engaged in this important dimension of education.

The Conseil acknowledges the efforts made by the Ministry's program of assistance to come to the aid of the popular education groups. "But due to the lack of an overall policy in this field, the program is resumed every year with all the inconveniences such a practice entails."

The Conseil's advisory statement contained a double objective. "First of all, it is the hope of the Conseil that voluntary groups in popular education will be given a chance to plan their educational activities under more continuous, coherent and secure conditions. Their irreplaceable role in the education of the community and in helping it to take charge of its own affairs must be given due consideration. And if their role is to be effective, it should not be subjected to revised and discontinuous policies every new year."

"Second, the subsidies that are granted for group projects should be sufficiently adequate and distributed in time to permit the voluntary groups to subsist and operate."

"In the light of the above comments, the Conseil requests that the timing of the operations of the program of assistance to

voluntary groups be revised so that voluntary groups are permitted to learn of the program and to plan their activities at a more suitable time of the year. This would, furthermore, allow the groups to start their activities at a more favourable time without undue rush or haste. Finally, it would also eliminate the undue effects of a prolonged and sterile waiting period."

Reflections on two major adult education themes

During the course of the year under review, the Commission was able to initiate or pursue reflection on two major themes in adult education: popular education inside and outside the conventional school setting; recognition of acquired learning and skills.

Because of the evolution of adult education in Québec and the need for a new comprehensive policy in this particular field, the above two themes are especially important.

They are so in that they point out the inconsistencies and inconsistencies of a system that should be able to conciliate the interests and aspirations of individuals and groups organized by the latter.

The Commission has not yet completed its study of both these questions, therefore it is unable, at this precise moment, to submit specific recommendations. Let us discuss what has been accomplished to date and mainly the direction our studies have taken.

Popular education inside and outside the conventional school setting

Following its recommendation on the funding of voluntary

popular education groups, the Commission was led to reflect more deeply on what an overall policy in this field of education should consist of.

Before beginning a systematic study of popular education within and outside the school system, the Commission thought it best to make a survey of the whole situation across the province at large and to classify the results of its undertaking. Two regions, Sherbrooke and Rimouski, were visited by the Commission itself while first-hand information on the following regions of origin of certain Commission member's was obtained from the members themselves — Chicoutimi, Côte-Nord, Québec, Montréal, Beauce, Cantons de l'Est.

Though other dimensions were not overlooked, priority was given to the following approach. The use popular education groups make of the resources of the school system and its impact on the operations and development of these groups.

. Elements of the situation

Our main findings are being submitted here in the form of a few brief comments for consideration. There will always be time for redeveloping this preliminary analysis by means of additional studies and meetings.

A considerable gap exists between the school institutions and the extra-school organizations. Once in a while, a certain complementarity may result in harmonious cooperation but most situations lead to tension, conflict and even at times to certain radical positions.

The extra-school groups do not form a homogeneous whole. There are strongly different categories involved and the groups in these categories also view the use of school resources and their effectiveness in varying lights.

The groups essentially committed to collective advancement perceive their educational activity much in terms of the special imperatives and conditions of a collective project. Concerned about their autonomy and freedom of action, they fear the takeover power of the school system which, because of the force of its resources and institutional norms, always succeeds in modifying the groups' educational projects to fit its own school models. The groups do not reject the need for overall planning and regional coordination but refuse to sit on a planning committee unless they can do so on an equal footing. In the meantime, in addition to implementing their program of action, their priorities consist in ensuring their survival, calling for the means and resources they need, regrouping themselves, planning their organization and development.

A second category of groups widely different in their objective but united in their criticism of school institutions, focusses mainly on individual development. Whether it be a question of defending the interests of group members, fostering individual growth and development or even directing their educational activity to the promotion of individual or collective social commitments, the groups in this category explain their recourse to the services of the regular system in the same terms. Either they are seeking to obtain access to formal education adapted to the needs of their members, or are looking for the resources they need to organize their own educational activities for their members.

Though these groups make use of the system's resources and continue to wait for better cooperation and answers able to satisfy their expectations, they can still be rather scathing in their criticism of the regular system.

School institutions are accused of using the popular groups for building up their student populations. Another accusation is that they are too aloof from local or regional concerns and needs. Again, the human resources at the disposal of the groups, when not simply incompetent, are unable to adapt

to the special situation of the popular groups. They are further accused of imposing their programs, teaching methods and administrative norms without taking the special needs of the groups into account as well as the meaning or value of their educational efforts.

A third category consists of groups dedicated to solving the crucial problems and needs of an individual person or disadvantaged class: senior citizens, unwed mothers, welfare recipients. These groups expect nothing from education or school institutions. Yet, some of their members are of a different opinion. Education, for them, is a luxury they have dreamt about to the point of considering it the miracle solution to all their problems. Their socioeconomic situation will never permit them to realize their dream. In spite of the numbers of programs implemented by a series of governments, they do not have real access to education.

School institutions, on their side, refuse to be reduced to mechanical distributors of resources. The imperialist and paternalist approach that marked the first years of governmental funding in the public system's adult education sector has given way to a better clarification of the true role and purpose of the schools. The priority is now placed on individual advancement and the coordination and development of appropriate educational activities and services. Sometimes one may even detect a sign of a modest involvement in community affairs sparked by a concern for collective growth and development.

Schools generally resent the criticisms of the extra-school groups movements, especially those dedicated to collective advancement. The latter, in turn, are criticized for their lack of stability, lack of advanced planning and for their sometimes utopian or even irrational goals.

Direct governmental funding of the voluntary popular education groups does not help to improve the situation. In fact, it is

an obstacle to regional cooperation. And the schools are not too enthusiastic about the government's customary habit of referring the groups to the resources of the school every time its funds for its program of assistance to popular groups are exhausted.

Finally, the schools conclude they must continue to define their role and priorities though they not be to the complete satisfaction of the popular groups. The current situation is far from conducive to regional cooperation and risks paralyzing the schools faced with a series of demands that may eventually reduce their role to one of simply administering subsidies and allocating resources.

The conclusions arrived at on both sides must be carefully considered before steps are taken to formulate a global policy for this field of education.

. Some tentative explanations and solutions

The following are a few assumptions of a provisional nature that arose out of the Commission's discussion meetings and that are presented here merely as subjects for further discussion.

Education and the schools cannot do everything. They cannot supply medication and decent housing to our senior citizens no more than they can provide jobs to the unemployed or to those on welfare. Neither can they guarantee the survival of the small business community against the threat of the multinationals.

It's time we stop expecting everything from the school. And the school, or its adult education services in particular, must refrain from promising all things to all people. The role of these institutions, especially in relation to popular

education, must now be reduced and above all clarified.

The school has a historical tradition that cannot be ignored. First of all, it favours a psycho-pedagogical approach based on the growth and development of the individual person who is taught how to struggle and cope with our world of rivalry and competition.

If adult education has introduced the school to other preoccupations by attempting to have it accept the objective of collective advancement and development, it still remains only a minor concern of institutions conceived in terms of individual development, and what is more, the development of young individuals.

The school must resolve its inner conflict that makes it both receptive and opposed to some of the projects and demands of the popular groups.

It's attitude towards the learning and skills acquired outside the conventional system, and the way in which they were acquired, must be clarified.

It must also clarify its position with respect to the educational needs of increasingly better organized groups more and more conscious of their originality and necessary autonomy. Again, it must examine the needs of unorganized or poorly organized groups and develop a program of support that does not seek to integrate the groups or rob them of their autonomy.

For the time being, it is more important to recognize the distance that separates conventional schooling from education outside schooling than to try to fill in the gap with temporary improvised solutions. This distance should even be appreciated, not for the purpose of fostering more conflict and

opposition, but for clearing up a number of ambiguities that make communication between both sides difficult. This would help to highlight the complementary aspects of these different entities and to provide a positive background for regional cooperation.

Let us consider the hypothesis of autonomous development guaranteed to voluntary popular education groups in the light of the adult education services of school institutions.

If the main purposes of the school system's services and those of the extra-school groups differ considerably, it is futile to submit the latter to the decisions of the former and risky to oblige them to participate in a cooperative effort that can only lead to their take over and loss of their identity.

The situation calls for a policy of education that involves all groups of society dedicated in their respective ways to education. It calls for a coordinated and well-planned effort from all levels of government, and governmental agencies, and not merely from a ministry of schools or education.

It is impossible to think about achieving a coordinated grouping of Quebec's educative forces under a regime that fosters submission on the part of some and paternalism on the part of others.

The recognition of acquired learning and skills

The multiplication and diversification of school programs in both the young and adult sectors have resulted in a proliferation of diplomas, certificates or attestations that still remain the key to further education or access to the labour market. To this already complex assortment may be added the permits to practice awarded by the professional corporations

and competency cards in the case of regulated trades or occupations.

This sea of accreditations and authorizations is tangible evidence of the ties that exist between education and the imperatives of society, between the personal freedom of the individual in his learning process and the decisive factors on the outside that determine what he is supposed to learn in order to obtain recognition.

A policy of adult education cannot avoid this central issue which is the pivot on which the whole organization of education turns. The norms, criteria and official sanctions governing the recognition of acquired learning condition the school's methods of operation in the learning process of individuals. They affect its selection and admission standards, the choice and content of its programs, the techniques and tools used in teaching and evaluation. Outside the school, they contribute to social selection and the regulation of the employment market.

It was one of the Commission's aims this past year to take a thorough look into this vast question of the recognition of acquired learning.

As a first step, it sought to identify the main problems in the present system affecting the individual, school institutions, the work world, and Québec society in general. And beyond these problems of a routine nature, it also sought to retrace the ultimate purposes of such a system and the hidden reasons for its existence.

Before going off to campaign in favour of translating all adult experience into academic terms, the question is what would be the consequences of such a venture? Would such action only succeed in extending the monopoly of schooling over all of an individual's learning experience, would it

help to increase and refine forms of social control, would it provoke a hardening of the criteria governing the awarding of diplomas or the norms governing the right to practise, would we have actually improved the situation and resolved the problems whose major causes have probably little to do with education?

Recognition of experience in academic terms is but one example of a demand that deserves to be examined carefully. In investigating the main problems associated with recognition, the Commission attempted to identify not only the functions but especially the main goals behind the system of recognizing acquired learning and skills. After having synthesized the results of some major research studies on the subject, it was led to a clear detection of the relationship that exists between the world of diplomas, practise permits, competency cards and the world of education and society as a whole.

In Québec as in most Western societies, educational systems have been the constant subject of serious analyses and criticisms for the past twenty years. Many reforms have been designed and implemented. These reforms were carried out everywhere within the liberal perspective of individual self-determination and personal growth and development, equality of opportunity, a dynamic integration of the educative dimension with all areas of human activity, a coordinated and planned articulation of the education system with other social systems. Everywhere, in the application of these reforms, one had to cope with obstacles and resistance from the system for the recognition of learning. If this system is directly or indirectly conducive to the alienation of man, inequality of opportunity, incoherency in both the education system and overall social system, then of what use are other kinds of reform? In what way must this system be modified in order to give real value and effectiveness to our past reforms?

These were the sort of considerations examined by the Commission in the hope of discovering the major lines of a long-term perspective for a question that cannot tolerate to be treated lightly since it is a crucial dimension of all future societies.

Our intention in the forthcoming year is to continue reflecting along these lines and to give an important place to consultation that was excluded from the first phase of this study.

5. CONCLUSION

The 1978-1979 progress report of the Commission de l'enseignement des adultes had as its primary goal to initiate discussion and exchange for use in the preparation of a future synthesis-report on the state and needs of adult education in Québec.

This report presents the new orientations adopted by the Commission on the basis of a review of its past experience and consultative function. In future, the latter function shall be exercised through an organized and continuous presence of the Commission in the different sectors of adult education and through an open process, which implies that the main elements of its frame of reference must be eventually clarified and made public.

The reflection on the nature and role of a consultative agency, the prospect of defining a comprehensive policy for adult education in Québec and the Education Minister's intention to modify the Conseil supérieur are factors that have led the Commission to take stock of its past efforts.

An analysis of its past recommendations and their continued relevancy lead to the five following points.

- . The formulation of a comprehensive and consistent policy for adult education in Québec is largely beyond the competence of the ministère de l'Education alone. It involves the government as a whole. It also requires that all sectors working in the field of adult education be consulted on this policy. And the administration of such a policy should be assigned to an independant governmental agency.

- This policy should respect the special characteristics and needs of the adult student population within the school system and its institutionalized education. It should give priority to society's disadvantaged classes. It should give equal recognition and support to groups that have developed alternative forms of education corresponding to their own needs.

- This policy should resolve four major problems revealed in the analysis of different kinds of education or training. It should try to eliminate the gap between general and professional education. Out of regard for the principle of unity between the learning process and learning assistance services, it should restore the personal aid services to the ministère de l'Education, while providing the ministère du Travail with the means for identifying needs and carrying out post-training evaluations. It should clarify the role of the school system in socio-cultural development and community animation service. Where community service is concerned, it should be situated within the perspective of collective advancement and supported through adequate subsidization. In the same vein, it should recognize and promote the organization of extra-school groups with due regard for their autonomy and individuality.

- Where educational methods and resources are concerned, a coherent adult education policy should ensure recognition of an adult's working experience, give consideration to situation teaching, the use of alternative learning techniques, permit adults to participate in all phases of the learning process. These few factors reflect some of the qualifications required of an adult education teacher. The Commission is also thinking about revising its former positions with respect to the question of the professionalization of adult education teachers.

- . It is essential that this policy allot greater resources to research, and first of all, begin by coordinating and supervising all ongoing research projects.

Whatever its form, the consultative function in adult education must be conducted according to the conditions laid down by the Commission based on a study of its own experience. If it is not to become stagnant or futile, the consultative function must be reinforced by a continuous process of animation and flow of information among all sectors involved in adult education, which includes in-school and out-of-school services.

To help to meet its previously defined conditions, the Commission is submitting the major elements of its frame of reference to discussion and critical appraisal. It insists on the need for more study and discussion of the concept of continuing education which must, however, consist of far more than simply reducing this liberal concept to the level of speculation.

The basic causes of the problems continuing education is seeking to resolve must be examined in depth. The Commission recommends that we must discover the conditions that can make continuing education a real factor in both individual and collective autonomous development.

The 1978-1979 progress report takes a final look at certain elements of the state and needs of adult education in Québec; the funding of the voluntary popular education groups and the administrative jungle in professional adult training services.

It concludes by offering key points for further reflection: i.e. popular education within and outside the school system, and the recognition of acquired learning. The adult education sector at large as well as the governmental agencies

involved are invited by the Commission to pool their efforts in the study of the above-mentioned subjects.

Supplement

List of documents containing the recommendations of the Commission de l'enseignement des adultes from 1973-1974 to 1977-1978.

"The Education of Disadvantaged Adults", CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Annual Report 1973-1974, Québec 1975, pp. 103-148.

"The Adult Education Teacher", CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Annual Report 1974-1975, Québec 1976, pp. 85-94.

"Adult Education", CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Annual Report 1974-1975, Québec 1976, pp. 38-40.

"The International System of Units and Adult Education", CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education, Report 1975-1976, Québec 1976, pp. 173-179.

"Adult Education", CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education, Report 1975-1976, Québec 1976, pp. 161-166.

"Access to Education for the Physically or Sensorially Handicapped Adult", CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education, Report 1976-1977, Québec 1976, pp. 236-249.

COMMISSION DE L'EDUCATION DES ADULTES, Quelques jalons pour une politique de l'éducation des adultes, Québec 1977, 32p.

"Adult Education", CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education, Report 1977-1978, Québec 1978, pp. 97-126.

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Appendix I

Advice and Recommendations
to the Minister of Education
1978 - 1979

3. THE PROPOSED CREATION OF A COUNCIL OF COLLEGES AND ITS IMPACT ON ADVISORY BODIES IN EDUCATION

Memorandum to the Ministre de l'Education, adopted at the 215th meeting, November 10th, 1978

The following position was unanimously adopted by the members of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation at the regular meeting of the Conseil held November 9th and 10th, 1978.

1. The Conseil supérieur was surprised at the recent public statement of the ministre de l'Education to the effect that the Conseil is to be profoundly modified within the near future, and its area of competence reduced to the levels of primary and secondary education.
2. When the CSE itself recommended the creation of a Council of Colleges in 1975, it had been fully aware that such action would entail amendments to its own mandat. This measure has now been incorporated into the government's new plan concerning the colleges, and the text of the plan explicitly states that the Conseil supérieur is to be consulted to this end. However, the recent statement by the Minister conveys the impression that the issue has already been decided.
3. The CSE deplores the lack of participation of the deputy ministers, who are ex officio members of the CSE, at its regular meetings, particularly in the case of its latter meetings where the creation of a council of colleges and its impact on existing advisory bodies in education were the main items of study and discussion.
4. The Conseil supérieur, instituted as a forum for the expression and coordination of public opinion, sees itself, in matters of educational policy, as a counterweight to the heavy technocratic machinery of an education department and its policies conceived primarily in terms of separate levels of instruction.

5. The members of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation declare themselves prepared to resign if the scope of their mandate is reduced to the levels of primary and secondary instruction, which would transform the present CSE into a School Council.
6. The Conseil supérieur is not opposed to the creation of a school council, similar to the Conseil des universités or a council of colleges, but it strongly believes in the need for a special body, irrespective of its name or structures, to act as a consultant to the government on its overall policies in education, both within and outside the established school system. The proposed creation of councils correspondent to levels of instruction, as well as the predominantly scholastic and sectorial nature of recent or current projects affecting our schools, colleges or universities makes the need for such a body an even greater priority.

In the Québec of today, education greatly exceeds the boundaries of the schools. The White Paper on Cultural Development, aimed at the development of general culture in all aspects of life: health, leisure, work, communications, etc., explicitly defines the role of a Conseil supérieur de l'éducation within this wide perspective (p. 305). This same White Paper also stresses the urgency of giving a new and more vigorous dimension to continuing education, interpreted as the combined educative resources of the community as a whole, both school and out-of-school education and training (p. 454). The report on Québec's colleges also recognizes the need for "a thorough program of continuing education" as well as "the creation of a true learning society" (p. 43). Both governmental documents also call upon school establishments at all levels to perform a community service in addition to their conventional teaching function.

Such undertakings, which the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation fully endorses, are beyond the scope of the mandates of councils organized on the basis of educational levels.

What is required is an advisory body immune from the fluctuations of politics or the administrative needs of the system at large, whose mandate and membership are both conceived in terms of the formulation of comprehensive policies for education, in the broadest sense of the term.

7. The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation has therefore resolved to request that a meeting with the Minister of Education be arranged without delay.

4. THE PROBLEMS OF VOLUNTARY POPULAR EDUCATION GROUPS

Memo to the Minister of Education adopted at the 216th meeting of the CSE, December 7, 1978.

Recognition of the organismes volontaires d'éducation populaire (OVEP)⁽¹⁾ is today taken for granted at the ministère de l'Éducation. This network is readily attributed "a role complementary to that of the established public network for the development of popular education". That is why a program of assistance was set up by the Ministère some years ago to come to the aid of the popular education groups. But due to the lack of an overall policy in this field, the program is resumed each year with all the inconveniences such a practice entails: variations in the program's publication dates, unforeseen changes in its standards and criteria, insufficient time for the groups to assimilate its contents, and too long a waiting period between requests and replies.

I. THE SITUATION

The Conseil appreciates the constant efforts made by the Ministère to take into account in its program the special conditions and the objectives of the OVEP. This is what explains the annual modifications to its program. When such modifications are progressive, we can only rejoice, but when volunteer groups lack sufficient time to assimilate the modifications and to formulate their demands for subsidies accordingly, it should not be too surprising if criticism is sometimes levelled at the Ministère. For example, in 1976-77, the projects submitted by the trade union agencies were cancelled from the program. The following year they were accepted. This year they have again been cancelled. This haphazard situation is serious for the groups concerned, because of the repercussions on the hiring of resource persons and planning of training projects.

(1) Volunteer groups dispensing popular education.

Group planning may also be affected by variations in the standards governing the distribution and allocation of subsidies. For instance, prior to this year, resource persons and teaching material were listed under the same budget item, but this year they have been divided into two separate items. This modification is significant in that it obliges the groups to change their accounting system and reduces their former margin of leeway which permitted them to place the accent on either resource persons or teaching material, depending on the nature of their projects.

New and unexpected conditions require extra planning and readjustments from the groups, especially from those who have already been receiving financial assistance in the past. This is asking a great deal because, in most cases, the administration of the OVEP is not founded on a permanent basis. The time span between the reception of the latest edition of the program and the deadline for submitting projects to the Ministère must therefore be sufficiently long to permit voluntary groups to study and readjust their requirements.

On the other hand, the interval between the submission of a request and the ministerial response is often excessively long. During this waiting period, groups may lose many weeks that could be well spent on the pursuit of their activities. Some more self-confident groups, of course, dare to take the risk of starting their activities without the green light from the Ministère. But such action could have unfortunate consequences. Even under the best of assumptions, the calculated risk should not be systematized. Because of the possibility of unforeseeable obstacles, groups might find themselves in an even more intolerable situation than before.

II. PROPOSALS

This intervention on the part of the Conseil has a double objective. First of all, it is the hope of the Conseil that voluntary groups in popular education will be given a chance to plan their educational activities under more continuous, coherent and secure conditions. Their irreplaceable role in the education of the community and in helping it to take charge of its own affairs must be given due consideration. And if their role is to be effective, it should not be subjected to revised and discontinuous policies every new year.

Second, the subsidies that are granted for group projects should be sufficiently adequate and distributed in time to permit the voluntary groups to subsist and operate.

In the light of the above comments, the Conseil requests that the timing of the operations of the program of assistance to voluntary groups be revised so that voluntary groups are permitted to learn of the program and to plan their activities at a more suitable time of the year. This would, furthermore, allow the groups to start their activities at a more favourable time without undue rush or haste. Finally, it would also eliminate the undue effects of a prolonged and sterile waiting period.

The Conseil therefore suggests:

- 1^o that the assistance program of the Ministère be sent to the OVEP groups at the start of the month of April;
- 2^o that group projects be submitted prior to the end of May;
- 3^o that the response of the Ministère be received no later than mid-June.

Mr. President,

In your letter of December 18, 1978, you convey the recommendations of the Conseil supérieur concerning the programme of assistance to the voluntary popular education groups.

The ministère de l'Éducation recognizes that administrative delays and programme changes sometimes have unfortunate consequences for the implementation of the plans made by these organizations. It is our intention to find a remedy for this situation by consolidating our programme and improving the present administrative process.

More precisely, I intend to publish the 1979-80 programme as early as the beginning of April, and the organizations will have until the end of May to present their projects. However, the Ministry wants to reserve the month of June for the analysis of the requests.

As for the financial resources allocated for the programme, I am well aware of the fact that they do not satisfy the demand. For two years, I have multiplied efforts to provide this programme with a more adequate budget, while taking the Ministry's other priorities into account. I intend to go on considering this programme as a priority.

I hope that these arrangements will come up to your expectations and to those of the voluntary organizations.

Yours sincerely,

The Minister of Education

Jacques-Yvan Morin

5. THE ADMINISTRATIVE JUNGLE OF THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM FOR ADULTS

Recommendation to the Minister of Education adopted at the 216th meeting, December 7, 1978.

In order to participate in the Professional Training Program for Adults, a Québec citizen has to subject himself to a long and remarkably complicated series of operations. He soon discovers that between himself and the purveyor of the funds - the Federal Government - there are two ministries of the Government of Québec that also have a share of responsibility in this particular field: the ministère de l'Education with its educational institutions, and the ministère du Travail et de la Main-d'oeuvre with its professional training commissions. Despite the mechanisms for cooperation that have been set up, or possibly owing to them, when these two ministerial parties insist on sticking to the letter of their administrative agreements, it is the candidate for training who suffers, especially in the preliminary process of obtaining information and guidance, and finally registering, all prior to his active participation in a given program.

What steps must be taken by the adult candidate who wishes to benefit of the Canadian Manpower Training Program? He must first present himself to the Canadian Employment and Immigration Center (formerly called Manpower Centre). Next, he is directed to the Professional Training Commission, the service responsible for evaluating candidates, assessing their needs, and for providing academic and professional information and guidance. If and when the candidate has finally registered, he is assigned to an educational institution for training, either to a school of a regional school board in most cases, or to a general and vocational college (CEGEP). And the various steps in the process, it should be added, are not necessarily in logical order. As a rule the candidates are driven from pillar to post which can be a most unpleasant experience.

To the Conseil, the whole process must be simplified. All so-called pre-training activities should be entrusted to the school establishments exclusively. The way in which these activities are to be conducted should

be examined and established by the professional training commissions. Such functions as research and the analysis of needs in the field of professional training for adults should be entrusted to the Commissions, as well as the evaluation of the training that is provided by the school establishments. The scope of these provisions is undoubtedly limited and does not extend to the basis of the problem of defining the areas of responsibility in adult education but the above provisions at least offer a practical solution to the problem and may be applied immediately.

Therefore, where the Professional Training Program for Adults is concerned, the Conseil recommends:

- 1^o that all so-called pre-training activities connected with the reception and evaluation of candidates, assessment of their needs, school and professional information or guidance counselling be under the exclusive control of the school establishments;
- 2^o that all activities entrusted to the school establishments within the framework of this program be subject to evaluation;
- 3^o that the Professional Training Commissions be vested with the powers of research and analysis of needs in the field of adult professional training and also with the power to evaluate activities in this field in terms of manpower needs.

Dissidence of Mr. Alexandre Beaulieu

I officially dissent from the third statement of the recommendation. Attached to the ministère du Travail et de la Main-d'oeuvre, the professional training commissions have failed to produce the expected results, owing mainly to their lack of necessary instruments for research and analysis. Although they do to some extent fall within the jurisdiction of the ministère du Travail et de la Main-d'oeuvre, the prevailing situation is not necessarily the best one for the accomplishment of their present functions nor the further functions advocated for them in the recommendation. In my opinion, the professional training commissions should in future be

attached to the ministère de l'Education. This does not imply that these bodies should remain intact. Their objectives could be pursued through different and more effective approaches.

Dissidence of Mr. Linus Cassidy

I agree with the diagnosis presented but not with the conclusions of the recommendation. I believe, first, that a candidate for professional training should be able to find in one specific place all of the information and counselling he needs with respect to both the analysis of his dossier and the selection of his training activities, whether it be in a school board, a college or in industry; secondly, that this place should be the one that possesses the most up-to-date information on labour market needs and job opportunities, and that is also able to induce the school system and industry to offer training activities that correspond to needs.

6. THE PROPOSED CREATION OF A COUNCIL OF COLLEGES AND ITS
IMPACT ON THE CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION (CSE)

*Recommendation to the Minister of Education, adopted at the
219th meeting, February 9th, 1979*

A. INTRODUCTION

As part of its new CEGEP project, the Government intends to create a Council of Colleges whose principle function will be "to advise the Minister of Education on the conditions and needs of college education and to make recommendations on the measures to satisfy these needs"(1). It cites as an example the role accomplished by the Conseil des universités during the period of university expansion (2), and furthermore states that its proposed decision "obviously calls into question the mandate of the Superior Council of Education relative to college education"(3).

The ministre de l'Education has requested the opinion of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation on the above subject. Last November, a memorandum was sent to the Minister advising him of the CSE's initial reaction to a statement issued by the latter at the Congrès de la Fédération des CEGEPS(4). The following pages provide a fuller description of the position taken by the Conseil supérieur with respect to the Minister's proposed decision.

(1) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, Colleges in Québec, A new Phase, Government Projects in the Area of CEGEPS, Québec 1978, p. 76.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 77.

(4) CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The Proposed Creation of a Council of Colleges. Memorandum to the Minister of Education, Novembre 1978, 3 pp.

First of all, in the light of the experience of the CSE, there are two levels of questions in education which require the intervention of advisory bodies operating in totally different spheres of activity. While recognizing the utility of a Council of Colleges, the Conseil supérieur asserts the need for a Council of Education. Secondly, the mandates and membership of the advisory bodies envisaged above are defined by the CSE and it recommends that any legislation pertaining to such bodies ensure that flexible and functional ties are established between them.

B. PRINCIPLES

1. Two Spheres of Consultation

DIFFERENT KINDS OF EDUCATIONAL QUESTION CALL FOR TWO DISTINCT SPHERES OF CONSULTATION.

1.1 That there exist significantly different problems in education situated at different levels of consultation had been foreseen by the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in its recommendations for the establishment of specialized commissions within the structures of the Conseil supérieur. Various expectations of the MEQ with respect to the Conseil supérieur as well as the latter's own experience over the years also bear testimony to this fact:

- consultation on questions concerning specific sectors or levels of education, often technical or administrative in nature and demanding immediate solutions;
- consultation on general education questions transcending particular sectors or levels or even the school system as a whole, situated more within an overall context of cultural development and long-term educational planning.

- 1.2 Both of the above orders of question had been anticipated, at least implicitly, by the Royal Commission of Inquiry when it recommended that the Conseil supérieur be assisted by specialized commissions. In the exercise of its mandate, the CSE has often the feeling of being torn between two extremes. This has caused many problems that might perhaps have been evaded more easily had certain conditions prevailed - greater resources, a clearer distinction between the responsibilities of the CSE and its Commissions, and a better understanding, from the very start, of the different orders of issues in education such as now demonstrated by experience. It would be worthwhile, here, to take a brief look at the global evolution of education since the reform of 1964.
- 1.3 Following its inception, the MEQ began to expand rapidly in a variety of directions. Numerous services were organized within its different departmental divisions, many of which attached to separate levels or sectors of education. Costs relating to personnel and internal budgets rose dramatically. Regional branches were set up under the name of "Regional Bureaus". To date, the MEQ has carried out a vast range of consultation and animation projects throughout the province. Nevertheless, greater cooperation would have certainly permitted the Conseil supérieur to fulfill more adequately one function that specifically belongs to it - that of keeping itself constantly attuned to the educational needs of the public.
- 1.4 To quote from the Parent Report, in the exercise of its mandate, *"the Council should collaborate closely with the Divisions and services of the MEQ. The MEQ, constantly in contact with specific institutions and local authorities, should furnish the Council with all information that can be of use to it. The Council should always have the right to require of the Ministry any needed information, research or study. More specifically, it should count on the cooperation of the Division of Planning for anything that involves provision for future needs and development"*(1). *"The constant and positive"* cooperation desired by

(1) Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in Quebec
Vol. I, Quebec 1965, No. 202.

the Royal Commission between the MEQ and the CSE has not always existed as was intended (2). Also conceived to act as a counter-weight to any too encroaching tendencies on the part of the party in power or the bureaucracy, the CSE has not been given all of the administrative autonomy and means needed to accomplish this function.

- 1.5 Through various circumstances, including the very activities of its own commissions, the CSE has over the years been more or less led to devote itself to countless questions related to specific levels of instruction, as may well be seen by the quantity of published advice produced on these subjects. Studies of a more global and reflective nature such as "Educational Activity", for example, were also produced by the CSE. On its side, the MEQ, frequently involved with urgent and solely administrative issues, often turned to the CSE for its advice on these matters, in conformity, moreover, with the Superior Council of Education Act. In time, the MEQ felt the need for a Council of Universities, and now a Council of Colleges, similar in a sense to what the CSE itself had actually developed into.

2. Advisory bodies in terms of levels

THE CSE RECOGNIZES THE USE OF ADVISORY BODIES ATTACHED TO LEVELS TO ADVISE ON QUESTIONS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE

The first of the two previously defined spheres of consultation might call for advisory bodies corresponding to different education levels. In addition to a Council of Universities, there might be a place for a Council of Colleges. However, the autonomy needed by these bodies in their respective areas of competence carries with it a risk of partitioning that must be carefully avoided. That is why it is crucial that flexible and functional ties be established between the MEQ's various advisory bodies, as explained later in the present position paper of the CSE.

(2) Ibid., No 185.

3. A Council of Education

A NEED EXISTS FOR A BODY, IRRESPECTIVE OF NAME OR STRUCTURE , TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES APPLYING TO FORMAL SCHOOLING AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATION

- 3.1 There must be a body concerned with education as a whole, as opposed to its constituent parts. And such a body might simply be called a "Council of Education". Where the traditionally organized system is concerned, it is necessary to make sure through constant supervision that the policies adopted at each level of education display continuity and are consistent with an overall policy of cultural development. With respect to education in its broadest sense, the focus must be on the relationship between education and culture and on the promotion of a thorough plan of continuing education. On the one hand, the White Paper on Cultural Development defines the role of education and that of a Council of Education as well (1). On the other hand, the Government's document on the colleges confirms the need for seeing to "the thorough implementation of a program of continuing education" and to "the development of an authentic learning society"(2). In an effort to solve immediate problems, it may be tempting to establish councils corresponding to education levels, but giving in to the temptation will only result in the need, a few years hence, for the restoration of some kind of consultative body to oversee education in its comprehensive sense.
- 3.2 Many of the reasons which prompted the creation in 1964 of a Conseil supérieur de l'éducation at the same time as the ministère de l'Education are just as valid today, if present conditions require that the CSE be situated in a more general perspective rather than confined to the traditional school system(3).

- (1) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, La politique québécoise du développement culturel, Québec 1978, p. 305.
(2) Colleges in Quebec, p. 43.
(3) Op. cit., Chapters IV - VI.

The primary reason was to maintain a balance among three kinds of authority or power identified by the Royal Commission of Inquiry as the advisory power vested in this special council, the political power duly belonging to the ministre de l'Education and the power resting with the technocrats. This balance is just as important today as it was in the past.

- 3.3 The moment we agree that the main function of a Council of Education is to focus on basic questions and orientations in education, we automatically assign to it a role of basic reflection and forward planning in education - a role, however, always to be exercised in close consultation with the public. One of the various functions assigned to the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation by the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education was to act as a liaison between the general public and the government.

"The Council will help to interpret to the government the demands of the public by making sure that all points of view are presented and that they receive the attention they deserve. In some sense it will exercise permanently the role temporarily filled by a commission of inquiry."(1).

- 3.4 A further reason presented by the Royal Commission for the creation of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation worth recalling today for the preservation of such a body, applies to exchanges of ideas in the field of education.

"By means of what might be called a continuous discourse within the democratic process, the Council will contribute to a broader diffusion of information about education and to decentralizing responsibilities down to the local level. The constant contact of the Council with all elements

(1) Ibid., No. 178.

in society, in return, will lead the Council itself to make sure that education does not serve the State, or a single political party as it might under a totalitarian regime, but the people as a whole. This interchange of ideas, which the Council can so easily promote, will be further stimulated by its annual report to the legislature. While the annual report of a Minister tends to be overburdened with administrative detail, that of the Council can supply an analysis in depth and in breadth of all the problems of education". (2)

C. STRUCTURES

4. Mandate and membership of a Council of Education

4.1 What has been previously said about the need for and functions of a Council of Education describes the substance of its mandate, which is redefined below. This mandate, in effect, should deal with:

- a) all basic questions pertaining to education as a whole, both in-school and out-of-school training and education;
- b) ties to be established between education and other activities aimed at the cultural development of Quebecers;
- c) coordination between all levels of the regular school system.

4.2 The advice of this Council should therefore:

- a) contribute to the definition of the guiding principles for

(2) Ibid., No. 179.

an educational policy for Quebec, and to the establishment of the government's priorities in education;

- b) help to define educational objectives which contribute to the full growth and development of the individual and society;
- c) recommend measures for ensuring coordination between all levels of instruction and for directing the evolution of education towards an overall policy of continuing education conceived for the cultural development of the population as a whole.

4.3 The scope of this mandate, concordant with the scope of education as a whole, calls for a Council that is sufficiently representative of the different segments of the population and of the various sectors that contribute to the vast field of education. Not only should there be considerable variety in the backgrounds and qualifications of its members, but individual members must be capable of situating personal knowledge and expertise within a general perspective of education. They must also know how to keep a certain distance between their professional interests they have to defend daily and the business that is before the Council, to allow for the greatest possible objectivity, always conscious that the public interest takes precedence over private interests.

4.4 The size of the Council's membership should be equal to the mandate assigned to it. The Council should also be entitled to the services of experts and researchers for the analyses and syntheses that are needed to make enlightened judgments on any subject up for review.

5. Mandate and membership of advisory bodies attached to levels

5.1 The mandates of special advisory bodies might differ according to their corresponding levels or sectors. The administrative structure, the type and number of establishments, the "régime pédagogique"* and associated questions, the student body itself are all distinguishing factors to be taken into account. Since the present advice is primarily concerned with the eventual creation of a Council of Colleges, one should therefore begin by one tracing the broad lines of the mandate of this body.

5.2 A COUNCIL OF COLLEGES SHOULD BE SOLELY AN ADVISORY BODY, WITH NO ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS. MORE PRECISELY, ITS MANDATE SHOULD BE:

- a) to identify the needs of college education, "taking into account the cultural, scientific, social and economic needs of Québec, as well as human and material resources and student numbers" as suggested in the Government's proposed project(1);
- b) to recommend appropriate measures for ensuring:
 - . that the basic learning objectives, courses of study and educational activities of the CEGEPS are all situated within the context of continuing education;
 - . that CEGEPS are set up and operated in keeping with their social function and responsibility to promote greater equality of educational opportunity;
 - . that learning or subject areas lending themselves to new teaching approaches can be readily identified;
 - . that coordination exists within the whole college network and between the latter and all sectors or levels of education, and with the educational resources of the community as a whole;

* MEQ regulations prescribing the pedagogical structures and curriculum requirements of the CEGEPS.

(1) Colleges in Québec, p. 76.

- c) to recommend suitable evaluation measures for helping colleges to attain the objectives pertaining to quality education and to the pursuit of their social role in their respective milieux, though it is agreed that the function of evaluation would not be directly assumed by a body of a primarily advisory capacity such as a Council of Colleges, nor, as opposed to what has been foreseen by the Government, would it be responsible for offering an evaluation service;
- d) to recommend appropriate measures to the ministère de l'Éducation for ensuring an equitable distribution of resources among the CEGEPS and the implementation of sound financial management practices within the network as a whole.

5.3 Despite its scope, the above mandate is still restricted to only one level of education, therefore the membership required to carry it out does not have to be as large or heterogeneous as that applying to a Council of Education. Moreover, to cope with the kind of questions it would be required to examine calls more for the expertise of persons particularly familiar with the state of the CEGEPS and attuned to the public's expectations with respect to college education. But here again, it is necessary to avoid concentrating solely on subject specialists or professional college personnel. While a few specialists might be included among its ranks, the proposed Council needs the judgment and expertise of persons not involved in the daily affairs of the colleges, who can take an objective stand in the face of current issues and see them in their wider perspective, persons more sensitive to the coordination of the educational system as a whole and to the responsibilities of the colleges with respect to their social function.

6. Relationship between a Council of Education and separate advisory bodies in terms of levels

- 6.1 Where content is concerned, the coordination required between levels of instruction and also between the regular system and outside facilities for educational purposes supposes that

advisory bodies for levels or sectors are kept constantly informed of one another's respective activities and those of the Council of Education. The Council, in return, must be kept fully informed of the work of these advisory bodies if it wishes, on the one hand, to foster coordination by means of its advice within the total field of education and, on the other hand, to know that its work is based on a true understanding of the real school situation which cannot be neglected, even if its study or reflection is situated within a wider perspective.

- 6.2 While asserting the need for different councils with separate mandates fully autonomous in the expression of their advice within their respective areas of competence, the CSE BELIEVES IT IS JUST AS ESSENTIAL FOR FUNCTIONAL AND FLEXIBLE TIES TO BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT COUNCILS. This is also a prerequisite to a rational use of resources. But how are such ties to be translated into reality? What kind of structures would be most conducive to the maximal use of resources, the individual autonomy of the councils, and to some amount of joint cooperation? In keeping with the scope of this advice, it was not the CSE's intention to try to answer unilaterally questions requiring the concerted reflection of several parties. Therefore, the CSE recommends to the Minister:

- . THAT A WORK GROUP BE CREATED, COMPOSED, AMONG OTHERS, OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEQ, THE CSE, CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITES, AND ANY OTHER DIRECTLY INVOLVED SECTOR, WHOSE MANDATE WOULD BE TO FORMALIZE IN ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES AND LEGISLATIVE MEASURES THE TIES THAT SHOULD EXIST BETWEEN DIFFERENT ADVISORY BODIES.

D. CONCLUSION

The Conseil supérieur does not pretend to have said the last word in this advice on how one might improve on the actual consultative structures in education. Contemplated changes must proceed from an

evaluation such as provided by the present reassessment. Our evaluation demonstrates the need for maintaining a dynamic and well-organized system of consultation, which would first consist of a Council of Education, and of advisory bodies attached to levels or sectors of instruction or education. The Conseil supérieur will continue to reflect upon its own structures and operating methods, and will certainly want to devote special attention to a number of immediate questions, such as the process of nominating its members, their status, its relationship with the MEQ and other advisory bodies in education.

The major proposals it would therefore like to stress in its advice are as follows:

- a) the recognition of two separate spheres of consultation corresponding to two different orders of educational questions;
- b) the creation of councils attached to levels, such as a Council of Colleges;
- c) the maintenance of a Council of Education to oversee education in the fullest sense which transcends particular levels of education or the school system as a whole;
- d) the implementation of flexible and functional ties between different advisory bodies;
- e) the creation of a work group charged with formalizing such ties in administrative mechanisms and legislative measures.

APPENDIX

ABSTENTIONS, RESERVATIONS AND DISSENTS

1. *Mrs. Lucile Bérubé asked that her abstention be duly recorded.*
2. *Mrs. Hélène Pelletier Baillargeon voted in favour of the advice with the following reservation:*

My dissent concerns article 5.2(c). I cannot accept the statement "though agreed that the function of evaluation would not be directly assumed by (the proposed Council of Colleges), nor, as opposed to what has been foreseen by the Government, that it would be responsible for offering an evaluation service." (sic)

In my opinion, the Commission of College Education of the CSE already fulfils the function of an advisory body and I can see no valid reason for creating a Council of Colleges if its role is to also be strictly confined to an advisory one. We already have a number of bodies at our disposal whose purpose is to recommend persuasive measures for improving the quality of education (e.g. CADRE). However, it is also apparent that persuasive measures do not suffice, for it is becoming increasingly alarming to see the MEQ blindly awarding college diplomas to graduates who are far from possessing college educations of equal quality.

What I would mainly expect from a Council of Colleges is precisely to see someone finally made responsible for guaranteeing that the education received by each college student of Quebec is virtually of the same quality, thus putting an end to the secret hierarchy that has developed among the different colleges of Quebec in direct opposition to our search for equality of educational opportunity. If we fail to pursue this truly democratic ideal, then the term national education is a mockery and the signature of Education Minister at the bottom of the college diploma should be replaced by that of individual college directors - a procedure, that might prove most damaging to the credibility of our college diplomas outside Quebec.

There are other educational institutions in this province which must submit to a variety of evaluation and accreditation norms, which does not necessarily cause them to disregard their individual identity, the needs of the community they serve, or their unique approach to teaching. A case in point is the university hospitals of Quebec which must submit (1) to the rules laid down by the medical faculties governing course content; (2) to the exams of the Professional Corporation of Physicians for the right to practice or to obtain a specialist certificate; (3) to the accreditation regulations of organizations such as the American Medical Association.

3. *Messrs. Gaëtan Daoust and Marcel Pépin voted against the adoption of the advice, having recorded their reasons for dissent in the following statements.*

Mr. Gaëtan Daoust

In view of the overall situation of education at this moment, I consider this advice untimely for the following reasons:

1. The White Paper on the colleges reports that the creation of a Council of Colleges will entail amendments to the Superior Council of Education Act, "to which end the Conseil supérieur will be consulted" (p. 77). Since then, the Minister of Education, without consulting with the Conseil, has publicly announced his intention to reduce the role of the Conseil supérieur to that of a school council. I believe the Minister's statement was ill-advised and, in the face of such a threat and within a context that smacks of polemics, that the Conseil supérieur must now reflect upon the exigencies of the consultative function in Quebec education is, to my mind, an unhealthy situation. I cannot endorse an opinion on a question of this nature which was not formulated under conditions conducive to calm and impartial critical judgment on the part of both the Conseil supérieur and the MEQ.

2. I believe that it is now necessary to define a clearer and more consistent policy for the whole of post-compulsory education in Quebec and its relations with the work world - trades and professions - and training systems outside the established school system. I am afraid that the creation of a Council of Colleges will only help to increase the barriers between the college and university levels at the very moment when we should be attempting to abolish them. Moreover, if things are left to themselves, Quebec, which has paid for the luxury of four education levels instead of the normal three that exist elsewhere, may soon have six councils of education: a council of universities, council of colleges, council of secondary education, council of primary education, council of adult education and to crown everything, a superior council of education. Just how far will technocratic logic succeed in overriding plain common sense?
3. The proposed Council of Colleges is described on the last page of the White Paper on the colleges, as it should be. The Conseil supérieur, asked for its opinion on the creation of this Council, neglected to study either the White Paper or its proposed policies beforehand - policies which doubtlessly have their merits but some serious shortcomings as well. I do not consider it advisable to submit an opinion on the creation of a council of colleges under the present conditions.
4. The Government has just recently published two White Papers within an interval of only a few weeks apart - the first on cultural development, and the second on the college system. Both Papers deal with the question here under consideration, and if one will take the time, there are a number of troubling disparities, if not contradictions, to be found in these two papers. Since I must be brief, I shall point out only three of the most outstanding.

- a) The White Paper on Cultural Development insists upon the necessity of establishing a coherency between various cultural sectors, including education, a coherency that has been sorely lacking up to now. Where college education is concerned, the White Paper on the Colleges presents us with a whole new policy without telling us how it fits into an overall or general educational policy. We are given the creation of a council of colleges, for example, modelled on the Conseil des Universités, at the very time that a Study Commission on the Universities is in session and in all probability working on modifications to the Conseil des Universités' Act itself. While the White Paper on Cultural Development regards its concern for coherency as an absolute imperative (pp. 132-134), the MEQ offers us a piecemeal policy, with very little indication of the links that must exist between the system of education per se and the education and training that must be made available outside the formal system, according to the White Paper on Cultural Development.
- b) This White Paper insists upon the Government's duty in education to return to "the basic questions" and "to open up and explain the principles upon which its policies are founded". A State that refuses to do so consents to act as "an enormous bureaucratic machine enforcing its rules and regulations in all sectors without ever revealing its guiding principles" (pp. 464-465). The MEQ, on the other hand, explicitly tells us (p. 37) that the "guidelines for the reorganization of college education" are not all to be found in the White Paper on the Colleges. This bears a striking resemblance to the philosophy of education meant to inspire reform at the primary and secondary levels, which according to the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education, is "to be found somewhere in between the lines, perhaps even where one might not expect to find it" (p. 11).

I believe that in Quebec today education is on its way to being taken over by the technocrats, and that the State, under the pretext of a preoccupation with more "practical matters", can no longer avoid its duty to "express itself openly" on the "basic questions" in education and on the philosophy behind its policies.

- c) The White Paper on Cultural Development proposes to liberate schools from the accidental functions they were required to assume in the past and to direct them back to their "primary" purpose (pp. 448-454). It also believes that it is essential from now on to view education within the perspective of continuing education, which demands a "restructuration of the existing school system" (p. 457). More specifically, it believes that at the college level "changes, even radical ones, will have to be effected in study programs and teaching methods" (p. 431). There is no mention in the White Paper on the Colleges of the principle of continuing education and its implications for a restructuration of college education. The only reference to it is that it is "an important aspect of the educational system" which is presently under study (p. 37). Nor is there any indication of a desire for reform, even of the mildest kind, in college programs and teaching concepts: "the CEGEP is to remain what it was originally conceived to be" (p. 35).

It is not a matter for me to decide between either of these perspectives which I consider to be diametrically opposed. Nevertheless, until the present government decides to establish its own coherencies, it would be unwise to create a Council of Colleges.

Mr. Marcel Pénin

The establishment of so-called sectorial councils in the field of education will only lead to greater confusion in an area of activity where we should be precisely exerting ourselves to establish as much coherency as possible.

The proposed decision of the ministre de l'Education to amputate a part of the jurisdiction of the Conseil supérieur should not have influenced the Conseil or caused it to situate its reflection within the same line of reasoning. Otherwise, it is not allowing itself to exercise fully its role of consultant. That the strength of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation be weakened in any way whatever is totally unacceptable to me. The

Conseil supérieur de l'éducation must be united, strong and autonomous.
In that respect, the present advice is ambiguous, to say the least, by its reference to the establishment of flexible and functional ties among various councils.

Finally, I do not agree that any future council of colleges should have a part to play in the evaluation of education.

7. COMMENTS ON THE POLICY OF THE MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH ADJUSTMENT AND LEARNING DISABILITIES

Report to the Minister of Education adopted at the 219th meeting, February 9th, 1979

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation welcomes the firm decision taken by the government last November to integrate children with adjustment and learning disabilities into as normal a school setting as possible (1) - a decision that was largely influenced by the work of the Comité provincial de l'enfance inadaptée (COPEX) (2) and by advice and recommendations for integration submitted by the Conseil itself. (3) The Conseil also endorses the movement that has already been initiated in certain sectors.

1.2 The Conseil is pleased to note that the policy statement takes a number of firm positions, particularly with respect to the goals of education, to the regular school

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- (1) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, L'école québécoise. L'enfance en difficulté d'adaptation et d'apprentissage. Enoncé de politique et plan d'action, 1978, 53 pages.
- (2) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, L'éducation de l'enfance en difficulté d'adaptation et d'apprentissage au Québec. Rapport du COPEX, September 1976, 693 pages.
- (3) "Opinion concerning Ill-adapted Children" in Educational Activity. Annual Report 1969-1970, pp. 190-208; "The Education of Children Suffering from Emotional or Learning Disorders", in The State and Needs of Education. Report 1977-1978, pp. 291-304; Advice on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education, June 1978.

system as the most normal school setting possible, and to the necessity for cooperation between the ministère de l'Education and the ministère des Affaires sociales.

- 1.3 The Conseil believes that the next most important step to be undertaken in relation to the new policy of school integration must be a concerted effort to change the mentalities and attitudes of all who work in education and of all who make use of its services.
- 1.4 The Conseil also believes that the concrete measures set forth in the policy, though ample in number, are not sufficient to permit the realization of the generous intentions expressed, particularly in the following areas: prevention, staff preparation, and the required change in attitudes. Why this is so will be explained later in the text.
- 1.5 It should be noted that the present comments do not pretend to cover every aspect of the government's policy, thus the silence of the Conseil on one point or another is not to be interpreted as approval or dissent.
- 1.6 The Conseil notes with satisfaction the special importance that is accorded by the Ministère to the primary school level and to its classroom teachers, who are given the basic responsibility for all of their students. It is the hope of the Conseil that all future funds allocated to education may reflect a real will to recognize the primary level as a very crucial period in the education of the young.

2. STRUCTURES

- 2.1 One word, to begin with, about the overall organization to be implemented. The structures that are to be reinforced, and in some cases imposed, are unfortunately inconsistent with the main purposes of integration as defined in the policy. As to the administration of educational services, it seems that the parallel operation of a regular sector and sector for children with special

needs shall be maintained at both the ministerial and school board levels, a fact all the more surprising in that the administrative unit closest to the child - the school - is now required in terms of the new policy to transform its system of parallel services into an integrated one. But it should not only be up to schools to modify their structures. To our mind, the Ministère and the school boards must also adapt their services to what will hereafter be a heterogeneous student body, and abandon their parallel sectors for children with special needs, as a concrete example of true concern and commitment on the part of all educators for the student population as a whole. On the other hand, this merging of structures by no means implies any withdrawal of special services or elimination of professional support personnel for special children.

- 2.2 A good example of integration may be provided by the school boards themselves where all activities pertaining to education, animation, information and consultation are under the direction of the head of educational services. The overall restructuration effected at the ministère itself also serves as an example and can help to influence the establishment of new ties between the services of different school boards.
- 2.3 The Conseil believes that the Ministère is assuming too much control when it more or less obliges school boards to place the services for pupils with difficulties (1) under the supervision of a coordinator. This is only one means, among others, for ensuring the necessary professional assistance and supervision to both the pupils and staff. To maintain or to create such a post should not be imposed on a school board. As long as its services to children with difficulties are adequate and its management system coherent, a school board that elects an alternative method of administration should qualify for grants.

(1) Op. cit., pp. 42-43

- 2.4 At the Ministère, the operation of two parallel sectors, if maintained, risks leading once again to study programs ill-adapted to children with difficulties and to the policy of integration until they have been examined by the services responsible for these children. In the school boards, the presence of a person responsible for children with difficulties risks maintaining barriers between sectors. Another danger involved might be the development and growth of a feeling or conviction among other board educators that they have no real business with a body of students under the charge of an appointed head.
- 2.5 The fact that pupils are permitted to remain in their own environment is an important aspect of the "as normal a school setting as possible". That is why the Conseil fully endorses the concrete measures for regionalizing the services for physically handicapped children.(1) To return the handicapped child located in Montreal or Québec City to his or her home region is beyond doubt a wise objective but it is necessary to go even farther. Whenever possible, these children must be welcomed into the common school rather than isolated in separate regional schools, even under the pretext of better services to them.
- 2.6 School organization at the secondary level makes the integration of pupils with difficulties especially difficult - a factor which the government's policy has chosen to ignore.

The situation is such at the secondary level that one rarely speaks of children with difficulties in the conventional sense. Instead, there are "streams" at this level, "introductory work classes" for slow learners, a "short vocational" course for pupils generally found to be lagging behind in their studies or presenting behavioural problems in varying degrees. Special categories of pupils are also housed in separate buildings. All of this

(1) L'école québécoise (...), p. 38

may be said to exist in many secondary schools without any true concern for integration. One would have legitimately expected the Ministère to devote more attention to the secondary level and to some of its truly "segregationist" structures. The Conseil has already recommended that streaming be abolished (1), and that the secondary course be oriented more toward basic education and the growth and development of the whole person. (2) The desire to integrate the young with difficulties into the most normal school context possible appears to the Conseil a confirmation of its recommendations for modifying the secondary program and postponing specialization to a higher grade level.

3. PERSONNEL

- 3.1 The policy statement on children with difficulties contains guidelines relative to school organization that would have to be translated into the next collective agreements of the entire school staff since it is there where their duties and responsibilities are normally listed. The following are different points that might be negotiated pursuant to the integration of children with difficulties into regular schools and classes - the basic qualifications of all concerned personnel, the qualifications of specialist personnel, a new classification system for special children with corresponding teacher / pupil ratios, professional support staff measures, assignments in terms of teaching sectors and fields, etc. If proposals relative to these matters are already being prepared in different sectors so much the better. May we nevertheless suggest that the time-limits for enforcing the provisions applying to personnel not be too stringent in order to avoid undue haste? If we wish the staff to operate as a school team in order to offer better services to what from now on will be a

(1) See Advice on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education, June 1978.

(2) Ibid.

more diversified student population, then the daily, weekly and monthly organization of education must provide some time for staff ad hoc meetings. It so appears that the pedagogical days set aside for other ends (planning and evaluation) are already full. The so-called "availability time" provided for in the teacher's working time should lend itself well to ad hoc meetings for consultation among professionals and the necessary adjustments in the work of each one.

- 3.2 The entire school staff must be "sensitized" and "re-educated" - a subject on which the policy statement has too little to say. It will take more than "suitable documents", "guidebooks", or a promise of adequate evaluation instruments to overcome the misgivings of the school sectors visited by the Conseil. A serious campaign must be conducted to convince school personnel of the merits of integration so that when the time is ripe for integrating children with special needs into the regular system the staff will be in a position to carry out the operation successfully, with the necessary blend of competence and charisma. Once again, professional educators are called upon to update and renew their performance. The program of improvement offered to them must be one that is capable of both developing their enthusiasm and satisfying their needs, for educators will surely be looking for guidance as to how to respond and to cope with integration when conditions pertaining to time and place are favourable or at least suitable for commencing the operation. It should be known whether the Ministère is prepared to invest sufficiently in this area, such as it did, for example, in the case of its Professional Improvement Program for Teachers of French.
- 3.3 As far as basic training programs for future teachers are concerned, steps have fortunately been taken to see that all primary school generalist teachers will hereafter be taught to work with children suffering from

minor learning or behavioural problems. (1) It should be realized that the current movement to integrate children with difficulties into normal classes poses a real challenge to primary classroom teachers from whom a great deal is expected in spite of the specialist support that is to be provided to them. The policy statement speaks of basic training programs in the same terms for all prospective teachers. (2) This should be interpreted as an initial effort aimed at secondary school teachers, for we have yet to find anything specific at the university level for preparing them to work with special students. Apparently, there are still no specialized courses in the education of special children for secondary school teachers-in-training. The role the policy on children with difficulties assigns to the universities will be examined later.

4. FINANCING

- 4.1 The Conseil hopes that the Ministère will accept to reveal the financial implications of its integration project. Does it expect to economize, such as some people think, or will it be obliged to spend more on human and material resources, above and beyond its plan for the suppression of architectural barriers? Will it concentrate the bulk of its financing on administration rather than on the school itself as many people are inclined to fear?
- 4.2 The intention to see to it that school plans are hereafter designed without physical barriers (3) is fully endorsed by the Conseil. However, the Conseil does not totally

(1) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION, DIRECTION GENERALE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR, La Formation des maîtres de l'éducation préscolaire et de l'enseignement primaire. Document d'orientation, octobre 1977, p. 12.

(2) Op. cit., p. 40.

(3) L'école québécoise (...), p. 38.

agree with the "progressive renovation plan" for certain primary and secondary schools (1), considering the exorbitant costs, in many cases, of these "authorized and normalized" renovation projects, and considering the solutions that have already been found to such problems in some school sectors with a bit of imagination, commitment and moderate expenditures. The expression "progressive plan" nevertheless implies some amount of discretion.

- 4.3 In line with the government's desire to decentralize, the school adaptation policy reduces a number of administrative controls. For example, pupils displaying relatively minor learning problems will no longer have to be identified for administrative purposes. (2) There is no real reason to fear that the proper services will not be dispensed or personal records not properly kept. Instead, having to devote less time to administrative matters, the non-teaching professionals will now be able to concentrate more on personal services to the students. Since the number of students with emotional and learning disorders is generally estimated at about 15% of the school population (3), would the Ministère not be well-advised to require from school boards only minimum controls as long as this percentage is not exceeded?

5. PARENTS

- 5.1 After our recent history of over-specialization which has caused us to lose faith in the competence of ordinary teachers and, moreso, in that of parents in so-called

(1) Ibid.

(2) L'école québécoise (...), p. 31.

(3) GOUVERNEMENT DU QUEBEC, MINISTERE DE LA FAMILLE ET DU BIEN-ETRE. Livre blanc. March 1969 p. 11. Quoted in the 1969-1970 Annual Report of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. Opinion on Exceptional Children, page 192.

special education, it is good to see a recognition of the right of the latter to be informed, consulted, and to participate in evaluations and decisions pertaining to the orientation and placement of their children. (1)

We therefore look forward to a new regulation on parental involvement and to a local operational organization which will enable parents to exercise their rights actively. If the legislation on the protection of youth now gives children a say with respect to their own situation, and if the Green Paper also submits the hypothesis that primary school students should take part in their evaluation (2), then educational authorities should be made to see that even children with difficulties are perhaps entitled to participate in their orientation or placement in special classes or institutions.

5.2 As to the requirement for a change in mental outlook or attitude, what is urgently needed is a concerted effort to sensitize the parents of the regular student body to the essential purposes of integration if it is to prove successful. The understanding of parents as well as that of students ought to be developed simultaneously so that normal or non-discriminatory relations may be established among the users of educational services within a relatively short period of time.

5.3 The policy statement deals briefly with the question of volunteers in education in a reference to their work in some schools as a result of the initiative of parent's associations. (3) It is clear that the school system cannot rely totally on the work of volunteers, but it is equally clear that all of the resources at its disposal are not being put to maximum use. The experience of some schools shows that volunteer workers are able to provide

(1) L'école québécoise (...), pp. 34-36

(2) Para. 2.85.

(3) L'école québécoise (...), p. 24.

extra help or occasional services for facilitating the integration of pupils with difficulties into the regular system. But because of the current surplus personnel situation, some opposition would have to be expected from the teachers' unions. However, this case offers us an occasion to examine the possibility of employing human resources on a part-time basis and to examine how volunteer workers, part-time and full-time personnel can all cooperate together in a given school.

6. PLAN OF ACTION

- 6.1 The functional profile seems to be a key-element of the integration policy. (1) It constitutes a new working tool for the professional counsellors who are now called on to concentrate as much on the capabilities of a pupil as on his or her weaknesses, and to work in closer contact with teachers. But because it supposes a rather drastic change in the working techniques of the counsellors, the sceptics are already placing it on the same shelf as such concepts as individualized instruction and continuous progress. We prefer to hope that the promised ad hoc instruments will be forthcoming and that the members of the school team will have the ability to make proper use of them.
- 6.2 The aim of the new policy is apparently to restrict the professional counsellors to a role of evaluation in keeping with the introduction of the new functional profile. Many of them will probably welcome this new measure because of their special training and experience. However, the teachers, it should be emphasized, are increasingly looking forward to working with them in the classroom. And their cooperation will certainly be appreciated in the required transformation of outlooks and attitudes among the school staff and the parents of school students.

(1) L'école québécoise (...), p. 34.

6.3 "Teaching practices better adapted to each child" is another key-concept of the policy. (1) The present exhortation, however, is not enough. Some would have hoped for more than the need to await further corrective measures to be added to the Action Plan in follow up to the consultation on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education. Though a study published under the aegis of the Economic Council of Canada demonstrates the advantages of mixed classes (2), some concrete questions still remain relative to the proper conditions under which children with difficulties may be integrated into regular schools and classes. (3) In all probability, a tolerance point exists, which will be decided by the degree of preparedness of the agents involved and the intentions of the program. Is integration to be implemented in terms of age groups, or in terms of the level of mental development or educational attainment of a child? Why? These are questions that must be answered if the Ministère wants to offer some amount of guidance to the persons responsible for applying the necessary correctives to the present school structure. The "general plan" should as promptly as possible be followed by more detailed and specific measures for each category of children with difficulties, as the Ministère itself has already acknowledged.

(1) L'école québécoise (...), p. 21.

(2) HENDERSON, MIESZKOWSKI ET SAUVAGEAU, L'influence du groupe sur les fonctions de productions du système scolaire, Ottawa 1976, 88 pages.

(3) In the area of recreation, that of vacation camps in particular, the tolerance point is said to range between 6% and 10%. See Dr. PHYLLIS M. Ford, Your Camp and the Handicapped Child, American Camping Association, Martinsville, Indiana, 1966, 16 p. and THOMAS POWER LOWRY, Camping Therapy, Charles Thomas Ed., Springfield, Illinois, 1974, 138 p.

- 6.4 The policy attributes a vital role to the universities in the training and retraining of all participants in education (1), and also in the designing of the measurement and evaluation instruments. (2) Yet, it would have been well to know whether they were consulted on the role they could or would like to assume. The Ministère was of course aware of the major revisions that must be effected by the faculties of education in their teacher training programs, such as the addition of courses in the education of special children for all teachers, and the development of programs for the training and improvement of teachers specializing in this particular education (3), and for school administrators as well. (4)

It consequently sees to provide them with the necessary resources for the implementation of these programs. We nevertheless feel that the grants for these purposes should be allotted to universities only on the condition they are willing to draw nearer to the field of action, that is to the classroom level of the elementary and secondary school.

7. PREVENTION

- 7.1 The policy statement has nothing specific to say on the kind of preventive action that might be taken by parents. The Conseil supérieur believes that well-informed parents can provide much help in the early detection of physical or mental handicaps in their children. The ministère des Affaires sociales has already to its credit a number of symptom recognition and health education programs, such as in the field of nutrition, for example. It would be helpful if parents could be reached through the media and

(1) L'école québécoise (...), p. 42.

(2) Ibid., p. 34,

(3) Ibid., p. 34.

(4) Ibid.

informed of the different stages of development in children in order to permit the early detection of any growth problems in their own child. Where intervention is concerned, here again, appropriate exercises could be taught by the media to parents to teach to their children. Because of the success of the recent and well-conducted P.E.P.P. operation of the Direction générale des communications of the ministère de l'Éducation (1), it might also be desirable for us to make similar use of the media.

Such action appears essential, especially in so-called disadvantaged areas. There are some excellent educational films now available that might be shown to parents in public auditoriums or on television.

- 7.2 The corrective measures of any further chapters of the Action Plan aimed at individualized instruction and continuous progress will obviously do the most to help prevent maladjustment at school. The present chapter on children with difficulties, for its part, speaks of increasing pre-school services for severely handicapped children (2) - a measure that would very likely lead to effective results at the primary school level. Experimental "pupil sponsorship" projects, whereby the more able pupils act as sponsors to those with difficulties have also been tested in certain primary schools with favorable results. Thought should be given to such practices as a means of assisting the school staff and as an enriching experience for the pupils involved.

8. PRIVATE SCHOOLS; SPECIALIZED INSTITUTIONS

8.1 Though the policy statement is clearly aimed at

(1) Programme d'éducation physique au primaire.

(2) L'école québécoise (...), p. 16.

promoting "access to the public system of education"(1), it is to be regretted that the private network of primary and secondary schools was not invited to participate in this major operation for the integration of children with difficulties.

- 8.2 The private institutions are virtually ingored in the policy statement, which contains but a brief reference to schooling agreements for an exchange of services between school boards and specialized institutions. Such agreements, whereby teachers working in specialized institutions are reunited again with their handicapped or disabled students in the regular school system, do already exist, and are to be strongly recommended.
- 8.3 Last of all, the Conseil recognizes that, irrespective of the efforts to integrate children with difficulties into the regular system, the specialized institutions must continue to play their effective and necessary part with children who present special needs that cannot be met by the regular school system.

9. CONCLUSION

In concluding, the Conseil emphasizes two points. First, it is pleased to note that the policy for children with difficulties also takes into account young handicapped adults aged 16 to 21 now allowed to prolong their period of school attendance. (2) Second, as many Amerindians in the regular sector are often numbered among pupils with learning disabilities because of language and cultural differences, the Conseil suggests that, in addition to the so-called reception centres, these pupils should have access to special and sustained support in order to facilitate their integration into normal classes.

(1) L'école québécoise (...), pp. 31-32

(2) L'école québécoise (...), p. 41.

Reply of the Minister of Education
March 27, 1979

Mr. President,

I am deeply grateful for your letter dated February 20, and the enclosed Report of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation prepared by your Commission de l'enseignement primaire entitled: "Comments on the Policy of the M.E.Q. for Children with Adjustment and Learning Disabilities".

You will easily understand that I am delighted with the favourable comments made by the Conseil concerning the basic orientations of the Policy Statement that I published last November. By giving new support to the policy for integrating children with difficulties into the most normal surroundings possible, your Conseil contributes to the change of mentalities and attitudes that it considers, with good reason, to be the most important action needed in relation to this policy.

However, one of the concrete measures indicated in the plan of action seems to create some anxiety among your members that must be dispelled.

It is about the offer of financial assistance made to the school boards for the engagement or retention of somebody responsible for the coordination of special services, an offer that must be put back into its proper context.

In fact, for many school boards, the global planning necessary to the careful, gradual enforcement of the school adaptation policy demands an additional resource they cannot afford with what is provided by the actual budget. It is not a matter of imposing a structure but of facilitating the undertaking of an increased responsibility. Far from sanctioning the existence of a parallel teaching sector, such a measure is intended to provide pupils with difficulties with the best special measures needed, and with a harmonious integration into the most normal school setting possible.

Besides, while expressing its satisfaction about the importance accorded to elementary schools, your Conseil indicates that intervention is also needed to improve the organization of services in secondary schools.

As the Conseil will also note, the document that I published on February 20: "The Schools of Québec. Policy Statement and Plan of Action" provides some remedies in this field as in many others with which it is concerned, notably, parent participation.

To conclude, I want to assure you that I take good note of all the comments that the Conseil considered proper to send me.

Yours sincerely,

The Minister of Education

Jacques-Yvan Morin

10. SCHOOL AND THE CHILDREN OF VARIOUS ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS

*Advice to the Minister of Education adopted at the 222nd meeting,
May 10, 1979*

INTRODUCTION

In its 1977-1978 report on the state and the needs of education, the Conseil took up a two-fold challenge with which the school system has henceforth to cope: to fully recognize the requirements of diversity, and to maintain those of coherence. "The increasing factor of diversity", stated the Conseil, "demands a pluralistic attitude and a search for new ways to achieve coherence". (1) Other texts, such as the pamphlet of the Comité catholique headed *Dans ce pays* and the opinion of the Conseil on the "Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education", have also underlined the need for a more open attitude towards plurality. The present recommendations, while briefly recapitulating certain principles, propose certain concrete solutions to problems of a confessional and cultural order in the school environment. They are the result of a study conducted since 1976 by a special committee of the Conseil, called Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles. (2)

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- (1) Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, The State and Needs of Education. Report 1977-1978, Québec 1978, p. 15.
 - (2) This committee was composed of members of the Conseil, one of whom from the Jewish community and another from the Orthodox community, of one representative from each of the Catholic and Protestant Committees, and of educators, one of whom from the Italian community and another from the Black community.

This Comité had the following mandate:

- a) to study the expectations of various religious groups concerning the moral and religious education of their children in the school environment;
- b) to study means by which various ethnic groups can be integrated into the school system with due respect for their cultural values.

In order to carry out the first facet of its mandate pertaining to confessional matters, the Comité appointed two work-teams: one composed of members of the Jewish community, and the other of members of the Orthodox community. These two communities constitute by far the two largest religious minorities in Québec. (1) A good number of Protestant schools in Montréal receive a high percentage of pupils from both communities.

For a more profound study of the questions of cultural and ethnic content, two further work-teams were created: one related to the Italian community and the other to the Black. (2)

The work-teams consulted their respective communities and transmitted the results of their consultations to the Comité. It is possible that certain conclusions of the Conseil are also applicable to other communities.

During the year 1978-1979, the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles analyzed the reports received from

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- (1) The Canadian census of 1971 lists 110 835 Jews and 59 910 Orthodox. But according to the work-team, these figures fall short of reality. At present, the Orthodox group evaluates its community at about 182 000 members, divided into five nationalities: Greeks, Lebanese-Syrians, Ukrainians, Roumanians and Serbs.
 - (2) The 1971 census lists 170 000 Italians. The Black community group estimates its population at 85 000.

these groups (3) while maintaining, as instructed by the Conseil, a distinction between two types of question, *confessional and cultural* though they be closely related to each other. The Conseil adopted the recommendations that follow for submission to the Minister of Education, and also informed the Minister of the measures it intends to adopt in order to continue its consideration of the above questions.

The work-teams attached to the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles had full liberty in the expression of the expectations of the communities that were consulted. *The references to their demands in the present text must not be interpreted as consent by the Conseil to all the expectations expressed. The Conseil made its analysis and reached its own conclusions and is responsible for the latter only.*

1. THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

The situation of moral and religious instruction

A recognized liberty

Documents such as the préambule des Lois du Conseil supérieur de l'éducation et du ministère de l'Education, the Charte québécoise des droits et libertés de la personne, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights assert the religious liberty of citizens, and consequently, the necessity of due respect for the religious choice of parents and their children where education is concerned. However, between the above assertions and the possibility of advocating moral and religious teaching adapted to each person's beliefs or neutral moral teaching which does not offend any belief, are a whole series of considerations which the present recommendation does not pretend nor even intend to explore fully. The file of the Conseil on the subject contains several documents portraying its complexity and even questioning the confessional basis of our school system itself which the Conseil does not intend to deal with here and which would necessitate a special study.

(3) See list in appendix

Expectations of the Orthodox group

What are the expectations of the Orthodox community with regard to instruction? According to the work-team who consulted it, the community considers moral instruction and religious instruction extremely related to each other. It considers insufficient and even unacceptable a programme of instruction destined to all school pupils, without consideration of their religious beliefs, as it so happens with the programme offered in Protestant schools. The group demands for all orthodox elementary and secondary level pupils, "the application of a new moral and religious programme based on Orthodox faith", a programme which "underlines the religious aspect, rather than the secular, humanistic and philosophic one, such as is the case now". Its application entails the appointment of "duly qualified Orthodox teachers, familiar with Orthodox faith and responsible for the course they teach". Resources ought also to be assigned to the training of such teachers.

Expectations of the Jewish group

As for the Jewish community, according to the work-team who consulted it, this community expressed the wish to have all religious confessional instruction in public schools deferred to the secondary level. But, within the context of elementary confessional teaching, they ask that a programme of moral and religious instruction of Jewish inspiration be offered to Jewish pupils where their parents so desire. For they recognize their members' right of exemption to all confessional teaching, right which they would like to have inserted in law itself, and not only in the confessional committees' regulations as is the case now. According to the opinion of the Jewish group, a specific programme of moral and religious instruction of Jewish inspiration is a must at the secondary level. As for the exempted pupils "a course in human sciences void of religious contents" should be given to them.

In its report on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education, the Jewish community demanded, furthermore, that any programme of moral and religious instruction of Jewish inspiration be given by teachers who have "a high degree of involvement and competence" in this subject-matter and who are "duly qualified".

Some guidelines

Before attempting to provide concrete answers to the above proposals in recommendations directed towards the ministère de l'Éducation, we would like to offer a few guidelines in the search for fair solutions to the problems experienced within our confessional school system.

- a) Wherever moral and religious confessional instruction is offered, as in the case of most schools, parents have the right, on the one hand, to withhold their children from following such instruction if they consider it unacceptable, or on the other hand to obtain non-confessional moral instruction for their children from the school. This right to exemption is recognized in principle, but further measures must be taken so that parents may avail themselves of it without prejudice to their children (1): objective information to parents on this right; adequate supervision by the school of exempted pupils; the application of a programme of moral instruction adapted to exempted pupils.
- b) In the application of the historically recognized right of the Catholic and Protestant communities to moral and religious confessional instruction, the expectations of other important communities cannot be ignored, particularly the Jewish and Orthodox communities.
- c) In an increasingly pluralistic milieu such as Montreal in particular, it would not appear advisable to multiply schools under various labels: Jewish, Orthodox, Moslem, etc. It would be preferable to have public schools offer diversified moral and religious instruction, or again, instruction adapted to a heterogeneous clientele. This latter method is probably the best when taking into account the increasing dispersion of the school population in urban centres, or the preference of parents for the neighbourhood elementary school. But, in a democratic society such as ours, it would be unacceptable for the

(1) Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, op. cit., pp. 105-106.

State to impose a single type of school. Today, a high percentage of parents choose schools whose educational concept corresponds to their religious beliefs; others favour schools either more open to variety, or pluralistic; others prefer neutral public schools. *In the following years, new developments will demand a lot of cautiousness and flexibility on the part of school administrators, otherwise attitudes may crystalize and lead to serious quarrels and conflicts.*

- d) No programmes of moral and religious confessional instruction should be offered in the school environment unless parents and the religious communities to which they belong have something to say on their content and application; which leads to the need for mechanisms that allow the communities to be consulted and to participate.

Understandable expectations

If we consider that several Montreal schools receive a majority or at least a high proportion of Orthodox and Jewish pupils, the expectations expressed by the work-teams are not at all surprising because of the very confessional structure on which our school system is founded. The Conseil, however, is conscious of the fact that programmes of moral and religious instruction cannot be multiplied in the same school without reconsidering the entire school organization. Thus, for the moment, it is not a question of considering the expectations of all communities, but of the two numerically most important religious minorities. *The Conseil therefore suggests that programmes of moral and religious instruction for Jewish or Orthodox pupils be designed in close consultation with the communities concerned.* It also suggests that school circles show more determination and creativity in their search for means of insuring due respect for the religious liberty of both children and parents.

Recommendations

The Conseil recommends:

- I That programmes of moral and religious instruction for children of the Jewish and Orthodox faiths be elaborated in consultation with the communities concerned, while taking into consideration the responsibilities and jurisdiction that are attributed by law to the ministère de l'Education and to both the Comité catholique and Comité protestant of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation.
- II That the ministère de l'Education examine the advisability and the possibility of meeting similar needs that may be expressed by other communities with regard to moral and religious instruction.
- III That such programmes be introduced into schools where conditions allow or favour it.
- IV That the introduction of such programmes be facilitated by measures designed to:
 - a) ensure the training and upgrading of prospective teachers of these particular subjects, and if necessary, the pedagogical help to persons asked to cooperate in the designing of such programmes;
 - b) ensure that administrative provisions permit certain transfers of teachers necessary to the application of these programmes, without prejudice, however, to other established criteria or vested interests;
 - c) ensure that the curriculum is favourable to such instruction.
- V That schools receiving pupils of different religious beliefs present an open educational project receptive to diversity, so that:

- a) teaching in general is always respectful of the beliefs and the religious values of the pupils;
- b) the school calendar takes into consideration the religious holidays of the various communities in the organization of educational activities.

2. SCHOOL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Situation of teaching

Beginning of a study to be continued

The Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles not having been able to examine to its satisfaction the numerous facets of ethnic diversity at school, did not submit to the Conseil as full and final a report as it would have liked. It considers insufficient, in particular, the consultation which took place with two communities only - Black and Italian - even if the Jewish and Orthodox work-teams also expressed their opinions on several questions. The work-team of the Black community indicated that as far as it is concerned, it would like to intensify its consultation and reflection, even if it has already contributed a very substantial report. The Conseil thus submits the results of a study that must be continued.

Contributions of cultural diversity

During these crucial times when Québec is seeking to strengthen its identity, it seems important to reaffirm the part played and the place occupied by its ethnic groups. In its French language and cultural development policies, the Government confirms its position in the following terms:

"A living society must consider the relationship which emanates out of its own diversity as an indispensable enrichment. Let us think what the culture of the first inhabitants of the country, the Amerindians, brought to us and which the Quebecers integrated into their own life, without always realizing it, unfortunately.

We could say the same thing, in varying proportions of course, of the English, Italian, Jewish, Greek and other cultures, which have an impact on the life of all Quebecers. If Québec wants to be a French society, it has never been, nor does it intend to become what some call a tribe. On this point, as on others, Québec must not only be tolerant; it must expect and withdraw from the other cultures which compose it, an indispensable vitality". (1)

Further ahead, the same document continues:

"The necessity of French-speaking Quebecers to be constantly pre-occupied with their own cultural survival, their economic and political inferiority, had as a consequence a neglecting of the efforts made by their Italian, Jewish, Greek and other fellow citizens to preserve their respective mother tongues and cultural values. The "melting pot" model adopted by American society is, nowadays, fortunately more and more questioned. The hasty assimilation of all new immigrants, to the point that in one or two generations they lose all ties with their motherland, is not a desirable goal. A society which allows its minority groups to preserve their language and culture is a wealthier and probably better balanced society. This could be the case of Québec". (2)

Reports of the consulted communities

The communities consulted claim that the efforts made to help them to preserve their cultural heritage are insufficient. The report received from the work-team of the Black community is most explicit on the difficulties it must face on the social plane in general, and on the school one in particular.

(1) Gouvernement du Québec, *La politique québécoise de la langue française*, June 1977, 11. See also *La Politique québécoise du développement culturel*, Québec 1978, vol. 1, chap. 111.

(2) Op. cit.

The situation of the Blacks

As indicated by the work-team, the Black community "is largely composed of relatively new immigrants, and also of Canadians implanted in the country since several centuries". The work-team considers this fact as the source of different difficulties which call for different solutions, despite problems which are otherwise common to both. Its report reminds us that ethnic homogeneity is founded more on a feeling of common ancestry than on the perception of the same cultural identity, perception altered by the effects of slavery in American colonies. A brief review of the implantation of the Black community in America and more precisely in Canada, leads to the identification of difficulties such as "racism, oppression and lack of opportunities". The Blacks represent approximately 1% of the Canadian population; it includes Caribbeans and West Indians, whose attitudes and behaviours vary according to the environment of the adoptive society.

For example, according to the work-team, a number of factors condition the adaptation of West Indians arriving to Canada:

- a) the models of socialization differ in particular as far as the criteria of evaluation of respect and good manners are concerned; a shyness and an honest reserve in the Caribbean islands could be considered as deceitfulness or lack of intelligence in Canada;
- b) the recreational activities - variations in forms of music and dance;
- c) food - variations in the type and the preparation of food-stuffs;
- d) urbanization - the change from a rural environment, more generalized in the Caribbean islands, to an urban environment, impersonal and noisy, accentuates the disorientation of the newcomers;
- e) the climatic conditions equally accentuate the problem, because they are not only new, but they also change drastically the way of life;

- f) the change from a majority to a minority status;
- g) often the change of socio-economic status.

But the Black, even if established in Canada ever since a long time, is under the influence of a "multitude of voices which cry and murmur relentlessly to him that the Black is intellectually, emotionally, physically and morally inferior...". So, the report analyzes extensively the question of "self-concept".

Problems of Blacks in the school environment

According to the work-team, in the school environment the problems vary in importance depending on whether newcomers or citizens of ancient stock are concerned. They are about the same for children of the majority of ethnic groups, although colour is a particularly obvious discriminatory factor. These problems are the following:

- a) isolation of the pupil who finds himself alone or in a very small minority group within the class or even the school;
- b) lack of confidence in oneself and motivation which results in one's depreciation of his ethnic identity, the pupil having in front of him models foreign to his culture specially in text books;
- c) difficulties in learning due to the preceding factors and more particularly to a linguistic barrier, without taking into account, for newcomers, the big differences between the educational system of their country of origin and that of the adoptive country.

A specific request

The report of the Black community work-team contains a main recommendation: the creation of a "Bureau des services ethniques" administratively attached to the ministère de l'Education, although enjoying a certain autonomy. According to the recommendation, a close cooperation must be established between this Bureau and the Comité du Conseil sur les Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles.

The creation of a Bureau des services ethniques can be justified if we take into account the real and serious difficulties which face the children of ethnic minorities in the school environment. This Bureau could be entrusted with the identification of needs and the search for equitable solutions. It would not be able to function effectively without the cooperation of the Bureau des immigrants et des ethnies of the ministère de l'Immigration, and also without the cooperation of the ministère des Affaires culturelles and its Conseil consultatif des ethnies. There should exist strong ties between the Bureau de coordination de l'accueil, which obtains good results, and the Bureau des services ethniques, this latter taking care of the ethnic minorities' pupils during their elementary and secondary course. But the Conseil is conscious of the danger of multiplying services and rendering the already complex administrative structure even heavier. Thus, it invites rather the ministère and the school boards to find the most appropriate means to apply the various measures proposed towards the ethnic minorities, the creation of a special Bureau remaining one of the hypotheses to explore.

Expectations of ethnic minorities

The Jewish work-team has several times underlined the difficulty of separating the confessional question from the cultural issue. Since the beginning of their work, the Jewish and Orthodox work-teams expressed several expectations to the Comité of the Conseil. Furthermore, meetings with persons dedicated to the defense of the ethnic groups have supplied a quantity of information on the ethnic groups and on their principal expectations from the Québec school system.

The ethnic groups intend keeping their cultural identity in some way, without denying their active participation in Québec life or refusing to integrate. They suffer from being ignored in the school environment, while they would like having their customs and values made known and appreciated. If, on the one hand, they feel the need to group themselves, to live the social events which allow them to sustain their cultural life, they do not wish, on the other hand, to be isolated or marginalized in the school environment, even if certain kinds of learning, such as the language of instruction, may necessitate a special help.

The work-team of the Italian community in its report on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education states that it conceives the integration concept in terms of an active participation within the Québec community and therefore would like "one single system of education for all children without any discrimination or prejudice". It submits two tangible proposals on the cultural plane: the teaching of the French and English languages so that students may be fluent in both; the teaching of Canadian history with the emphasis placed on the history of Québec.

Responsibilities of the Québec school

Due to the difficulties experienced by the ethnic groups and to the need, not only to eliminate them, but to favour the cultural development of these same minorities, the Conseil suggests that the Québec school:

- a) give place, in the transmission of Québec's heritage, to the values of the ethnic groups and thus develop receptiveness within the Québec cultural frame;
- b) consider the values of the various ethnic groups as a positive contribution to the development of Québec culture - the teaching of history, geography and languages being particularly conducive to this goal - which means more than simply adopting an attitude of tolerance or compromise;
- c) favour the pursuit of fundamental human values which are common to all, irrespective of ethnic differences;
- d) encourage ethnic groups to maintain their diversity.

A reception which facilitates adaptation

Minimal emergency services are required for newcomers. Reception classes offer these services only in part, but they must do more in order to facilitate the transfer of immigrant children to regular classes. These newly arrived children feel lost, completely overcome in a new group. They need sustained individual help, and often particular pedagogical intervention, otherwise they rapidly experience problems of adaptation and learning from which they

have difficulty to recover. Various measures several of which do not entail any expenditure, such as "sponsorship of pupils" for example, are indicated. Even the teaching of certain subjects, such as language, history and geography of the country of origin of the newcomers could greatly favour their integration. Besides, the difficulties of adaptation are not a particularity of the immigrants only. The pupils from the various ethnic groups born in Québec and often of parents who are Quebecers of ancient stock, may experience the same difficulties. Therefore educators ought to take care of these particular pupils as well. Without such pre-occupations, ethnic minorities' students often find themselves in so-called "decelerated" classes or in special classes.

Primary importance of teachers

The part that teachers play is of primary importance. It is important to sensitize the teachers of the schools which receive children of the ethnic minorities' groups to their special needs. A special teacher/pupil ratio for these schools is also indicated. And wherever ethnic groups are relatively important in numbers, school boards should be allowed to appoint teachers of similar ethnic origin to these schools.

The Université du Québec in Montreal offers training courses for teachers of immigrants. But present employment conditions do not allow the school boards to have recourse to teachers who have followed such courses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Conseil recommends:

- VI That pupils from ethnic groups, particularly newcomers to Québec who must go through "reception classes", may count on sustained help from educators in regular classes, so that their differences may not become a source of inequality of opportunity in the school environment.

- VII That in school multicultural environments, study sessions and practical teaching stages favour exchanges between teachers, so that the latter may be able to help ethnic children to achieve self-fulfillment and social integration.
- VIII That school boards be invited to supply schools which receive children of various ethnic origins with a staff equally diversified on the cultural plane, on condition, however, that staff hiring is not prejudicial to other priority criteria, such as, for example, competence and vested interests.
- IX That a special teacher/pupil ratio be established wherever a culturally diversified school population calls for specific educational measures.
- X That the ministère de l'Education obtain the cooperation, among other things, of members of various ethnic groups in the designing of diversified educational material - slides, tapes and records, illustrated volumes, etc. - for the use of individual schools, in order to acquaint students, even in the most homogeneous cultural environment, with the cultural diversity of our population. (1)
- XI That the school board be urged to associate its schools more closely to the cultural activities of the community it serves, according to the community's will to have its school more firmly implanted in its environment.

A school may often be of particular help to the community it serves, for example, by permitting access to its equipment, premises, and educational material, and even, wherever possible, by lending the services of its staff.

(1) The Conseil believes that the ministère de l'Education already possesses the necessary services for the preparation of this material and does not intend here to propose the creation of new ones.

Local associations and churches contribute considerably to the improvement of the language of origin and to the cultural development of their communities. Children, for example, follow courses after class hours or on week-ends. Various social, cultural and religious activities contribute to the gathering of community members and to the preservation of their culture.

- XII That the ministère de l'Education, in cooperation with the ministère des Affaires culturelles and the ministère de l'Immigration, encourage students, particularly high school students, to carry out extra curricular activities of cultural content - theater, music, visual arts, etc. - which facilitate ethnic expression and favour cultural exchanges between pupils of the same school or schools of different neighbourhoods, or between schools of different towns and regions.

The educational material previously recommended would no doubt be highly useful to students in helping them to carry out such activities. And the ministries responsible for the reception of immigrants and for the cultural development of Québec's ethnic groups can provide help to these milieux even more so in the form of human and material resources than financial resources.

- XIII That in the application of the various measures proposed, the ministère de l'Education ascertain the active participation of the school boards.

3. THE CSE AND RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY: A CONSTANT PREOCCUPATION

Moral and religious aspects

A community responsibility

The Conseil wishes to reaffirm the right that belongs to parents or to their respective communities or ecclesiastical groups to participate in questions of moral and religious education. The very existence of its confessional committees testifies to the recognition of this right for Catholics and Protestants. This

same right, then, should not be denied to other communities, such as the Orthodox and the Jewish communities, since the numbers of their children in many Québec schools is considered sufficient to warrant programmes of moral and religious instruction in keeping with their expectations. We do not see how the State or any other organization can substitute itself for these communities and establish unilaterally confessional education addressed to their children. It is therefore necessary to devise mechanisms for the consultation and participation of the Jewish and Orthodox communities in the elaboration and application of moral and religious instruction programmes addressed to their children.

Presence of the Jewish and Orthodox communities on the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation

Having recognized the responsibility of each community in the conception and application of moral and religious instruction programmes, the tangible implications of such a responsibility must now be taken into account. Both the Jewish and Orthodox work-teams have asked for adjunction to the Conseil of a permanent group which would have approximately the same duties and powers as the Comité catholique and Comité protestant. The Orthodox group, however, is less explicit for it seems to fear that such a request may delay and even compromise expected improvements in the moral and religious education of its young people.

The existence within the Conseil of two confessional committees - Catholic and Protestant - proceeded from a recognized need to institutionalize the participation of both communities into a consultative entity independent of the ministère de l'Éducation. Yet, the Conseil is also responsible for due respect for the rights and liberties of the population as a whole, which includes all religious and ethnic minorities. The Act of the Conseil recognizes this responsibility, at least in the confessional sphere, according to the way its composition is determined. (1)

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- (1) "The Conseil shall consist of twenty-four members. At least sixteen shall be Catholics, at least four shall be Protestants and at least one shall be neither Catholic nor Protestant".
(S.R. 1964, c. 234, a. 2)

Since its inception, the Conseil has shown deep concern for the situation of religious minorities in the school environment, as frequently demonstrated in its activities.

In the last three years, the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles has proved a very valuable place for meeting and dialogue among several religious and ethnic communities, which, according to their testimony, felt themselves to have been completely ignored in the past. Suffice it to recall here the constant refusal to the Canadian Jewish Congress, since the inception of the Conseil, to have a person of Jewish faith named to the Comité protestant. Some years later, the Orthodox community met with the same refusal. But a pluralistic committee cannot substitute itself for the responsibility that rests with each community to participate in the conception of programmes of moral and religious instruction. But no community can be fully autonomous. The rights of one cannot be exercised in the school environment without due respect for the rights of the others. From this point of view, the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles constitutes a good mechanism for exchanges of views, where every community learns to make the necessary compromises within the pluralism of religious options.

Adopted measures

The Conseil has thus decided to maintain the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles for the study of various questions relating to the moral and religious education of the children of minority groups. On one hand, this Comité will number in its ranks members of the numerically most important communities; on the other hand, the Conseil intends to encourage the participation of these communities in work-teams expected to cooperate closely with its Comité of which it will, periodically, revise the mandate.

The cultural aspect

The Italian and Black work-teams, as well as the Jewish and Orthodox work-teams, have expressed the wish to continue their active participation in the Conseil, provided this body is able to devise

a structured and effective means of participation. The Conseil recognizes its responsibilities towards the population as a whole and, consequently, towards its various components. According to available statistics, the four minority communities which are by far the most important in numbers include, on the religious plane, the Jews and the Orthodox and on the cultural plane, the Italians and the Blacks, apart from the Jews and the Greeks. It is therefore advisable that their participation be ascertained in a Comité of the Conseil, responsible for examining religious and cultural questions. As far as the creation of sub-committees or work-teams of ethnic character goes, the Conseil intends maintaining the necessary flexibility in the means used in order to continue communicating with these communities, and perhaps extending consultation to other groups as well.

This, then, signifies that the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles will continue to concern itself with the situation of the children of ethnic groups in the school environment, and that the Jewish and Italian communities will be asked to propose candidates from among their members to represent them on this committee.

APPENDIX

List of the work-teams and their reports:

1. Jewish Work-team

Report to the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles of the CSE, Montréal 1978.

Supplementary document:

Canadian Jewish Congress (Québec region), Brief on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education, Montréal 1978.

2. Orthodox Work-team

Report to the Comité des Affaires interconfessionnelles et interculturelles of the CSE, Montréal 1978.

3. Italian Work-team

Reflections on the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education, Montréal 1978.

4. Black Community Work-team

Report on the aspirations and expectations of the Québec Black Community regarding education, Montréal 1978.

Appendix II
Recommendations of the
Comité catholique in 1978-1979
(See Table of Contents, pages 325-326)

Appendix III
List of Publications
in 1978-1979

1. Reports

- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The State and Needs of Education, 1977-1978 Report, Translated from French, Québec 1979, 146 pages; Supplement, 208 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Rapport des activités 1977-1978, Québec 1978, 108 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Le collège. Extract from the Report 1977-1978 on the State and Needs of Education, Québec 1978, 9 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, L'éducation des adultes. Extract from the Report 1977-1978 on the State and Needs of Education, Québec 1978, 23 pages.
- CSE, COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT ELEMENTAIRE, L'éducation au préscolaire et au primaire, Québec 1978, 29 pages.
- CSE. COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE, L'éducation à l'école secondaire, Québec 1978, 31 pages.
- CSE. COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR, Deux aspects de la fonction sociale de l'université, Québec 1978, 86 pages
- CSE. COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT COLLEGIAL, Rapport d'étude du projet du gouvernement à l'endroit des CEGEP, Québec 1979, 90 pages.
- CSE. COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE, The Proposed Institution of a Secondary VI, Québec 1979, 35 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Rencontre générale de consultation, Report on meeting held in Montreal on 7, 8, 9 March 1979, Québec 1979, 205 pages.

2. Advice and recommendations

- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Eléments d'une politique d'éducation des adultes dans le contexte de l'éducation permanente. 1. L'éducation permanente. 2. Pour une politique de congé éducation rémunéré, Recommendation adopted October 13, 1978, 94 pages.

- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The Proposed Creation of a Council of Colleges and its Impact on Advisory Bodies in Education, Memo adopted November 10, 1978, 3 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The Problems of Voluntary Popular Education Groups, Memo adopted December 7, 1978, 4 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The Administrative Jungle of the Professional Training Program for Adults, Recommendation adopted December 7, 1978, 11 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Comments on the M.E.Q. Policy for Children with Adjustment and Learning Disabilities. Adopted February 9, 1979, 20 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, The Proposed Creation of a Council of Colleges and its Impact on the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. Adopted February 19, 1979, 18 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Le Conseil supérieur et la condition féminine. Adopted March 30, 1979, 4 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, School and the Children of Various Ethnic and Religious Groups, Recommendations adopted May 11, 1979, 26 pages.
- CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DE L'EDUCATION, Pour une politique québécoise de la recherche scientifique. Commentaires du Livre vert, Adopted July 12, 1979, 49 pages.

3. Studies

- CSE. COMITE CATHOLIQUE, Dans ce pays. A l'école catholique, l'accueil des enfants de traditions religieuses et culturelles différentes, Québec 1979, 32 pages.
- NAUD, André and MORIN, Lucien, Values in School Education. Translated from French, Québec 1979, 161 pages.
- GREGOIRE, Réginald, Television and Values in the Educational Project, Translated from French, Québec 1979, 73 pages.

BOUGIE, Jacques, Etudes d'ordre juridique sur les droits des parents et des enfants dans le système scolaire québécois, Presented to the CSE as part of a research project entitled "La participation des parents à la chose scolaire", Québec 1978, 84 pages.

ETHIER, Gérard, Les théories d'administration et la participation des parents, Analytic report presented to the CSE, Québec 1978, 38 pages.

GEORGEAULT, Pierre and SYLVAIN, Louise, La participation des parents dans les Comités d'école.

- Section 1 Présentation de la recherche et méthodologie, Québec 1978, 31 pages
- Section 2 Description des caractéristiques des répondants, Québec 1978, 65 pages
- Section 3 Sondage sur l'école, Québec 1978, 51 pages
- Section 4 Place des parents dans l'éducation de leurs enfants, Québec 1978, 59 pages
- Section 5 Droits des parents et partage des responsabilités en ce qui concerne l'éducation scolaire, Québec 1979, 80 pages
- Section 6 Jusqu'où les parents veulent aller en matière de participation, Québec 1979, 191 pages
- Section 7 Appréciation générale des Comités d'école par les membres, Québec 1979, 71 pages
- Section 8 Composition des Comités d'école, Québec 1979, 102 pages
- Section 9 Fonctionnement des Comités d'école, Québec 1979, 112 pages
- Section 10 Budget et ressources des Comités d'école, Québec 1979, 91 pages
- Section 11 Rôle des Comités d'école, activités au sein de l'école et relations avec l'extérieur, Québec 1979, 108 pages
- Section 12 Objets d'avis, de recommandation et objets d'information des Comités d'école
- Section 13 Vue d'ensemble sur les relations entre les Comités d'école et les autres partenaires
- Section 14 Synthèse du rapport

GINGRAS, Paul-Emile, Les réactions au rapport "Le Collège", Québec 1978, 57 pages

DAOUST, Gaétan, La formation professionnelle continue des travailleurs en France, Québec 1978, 46 pages

LEVESQUE, Mireille, L'égalité des chances en éducation. Considérations théoriques et approches empiriques (to be published).

CONSEIL SUPÉRIEUR DE L'ÉDUCATION



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