THE TRANSITION FROM DENOMINATIONAL TO LINGUISTIC SCHOOL BOARDS IN QUEBEC

by

David C. Young

B.A., University of New Brunswick, 1993
M.A., Acadia University, 1997
B.Ed., University of New Brunswick, 1999

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the Graduate Academic Unit of

Education

Supervisor: Lawrence Bezeau, B.Sc., M.Ed., M.A., Ph.D.

Examining Board: Barbara Gill, B.Ed., M.Mus., M.Ed., Ph.D. (Chair)
Alan Sears, B.Ed., M.Ed., Ph.D.
Daniel Coleman, B.A., Ph.D.(Administration)

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

October, 2000

Dedication

For my family, who offered me unconditional love and support throughout the course of this thesis.

Abstract

In April of 1997, the government of Quebec, through a constitutional amendment, eliminated all denominational rights and privileges respecting schools in the province, and consequently, abolished denominational school boards, replacing them with English and French linguistic boards. This thesis, grounded in pattern theory, and employing a descriptive design, examines the nature of this transition with emphasis on what is now the Eastern Shores School Board, an English-language board serving the Gaspe peninsula, the Magdalen Islands and the North Shore.

Through interviewing members of the board hierarchy and examining texts, articles, government documents and newspaper accounts, it was determined that the transition was successfully implemented in spite of the magnitude of the reform, and extremely tight government-imposed deadlines. In fact, the most difficult and controversial changes to the education system were those which were ancillary to the actual replacement of denominational school boards with linguistic ones. These were unrelated changes that the Province of Quebec chose to implement concurrently, and included the amalgamation of same-language school boards serving adjacent geographic areas, and the imposition of severe budgetary constraints on boards. The move to a linguistic system, and the consequent elimination of denominational divisions in teacher organizations were relatively non-controversial, both among politicians and the general public. What little controversy that did exist concerned not the protection of religious rights, but the protection of language rights.

Several issues remain to be dealt with by the provincial government, including

what was a denominationally divided Superior Council of Education, and the local property tax for education, now stripped of its denominational protection.

Acknowledgments

From the formative stages of this thesis, to the final draft, I owe an immense debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Lawrence Bezeau. His sound advice and careful guidance were invaluable as I attempted to examine the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards.

I would also like to thank those who agreed to be interviewed, for, without your time and cooperation, this project would not have been possible.

For their efforts and assistance, a special thanks as well to the Director-General of the Eastern Shores School Board, Cyrus Journeau, and, the *Spec* newspaper.

Finally, I would be remiss without mentioning Dr. and Mrs. Gary Whiteford, whose extreme generosity will be remembered always.

To each of the above, I extend my deepest appreciation.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Page

Figures

Chapter 1:

Denominational to Linguistic School Boards in Perspective

Introduction

In April of 1997, the Quebec government, through a constitutional amendment, eliminated all denominational rights and privileges in the province, including denominational school boards, and, replaced them with linguistic boards. This thesis examined the nature of this transition from denominational to linguistic boards, with emphasis on the Eastern Shores School Board, formerly Gaspesia and the Islands School Board.

Certainly, the history of the former denominational system is extensive; its genesis is found in the 1846 *Education Act* for Canada East, which guaranteed Catholic and Protestant school boards in both Montreal and Quebec City, while providing for a mechanism whereby the religious majority in each county or district of the province would determine the religion of the public schools, yet permitting the religious minority to establish a dissentient board. Essentially, section 93 entrenched these denominational rights and privileges established "by law" before the date of Confederation, in *The Constitution Act, 1867* (Stevenson, 1999: 29), and, unequivocally and exclusively assigned responsibility for education to the provinces (Bezeau, 1995: 18).

As a result, successive provincial governments in Quebec, with the consent of the Roman Catholic Church, assumed the sacrosanct role as guardian of this denominational arrangement. However, with the impetus of The Quiet Revolution

ushered in by the Lesage government in the 1960s, once venerated institutions came under attack with unrelenting recalcitrance, chief among them certain aspects of the provincial education system, particularly control by the Catholic Church. Despite the laudable efforts made by bureaucrats at modernization, the "archaic" religious cleavage in Quebec, which had been supplanted by an emerging linguistic cleavage, remained a most pervasive force; and, for over thirty years, Liberal, Union Nationale and Parti Québécois (PQ) administrations attempted to reorganize school boards along linguistic, rather than denominational lines. However, it was not until 1997 that this radical abolition of the anachronistic confessional system was achieved by the PQ government of Premier Lucien Bouchard. A certain irony exists in that this reorganization was achieved through an amendment to *The Constitution Act, 1982*, a compact which the province refuses to accept, since it is not a signatory to the act itself (Stevenson, 1999: 239-242).

Owing perhaps to the fact that these new linguistic school boards have been in existence for less than three years, there does not exist a veritable plethora of scholarly work devoted to this subject. Through an examination of the transition from denominational to linguistic boards in Quebec, with particular reference to the Eastern Shores School Board this thesis represented an attempt to fill an obvious gap within the literature.

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this thesis was to describe the nature of the 1997 change from denominational to linguistic school boards in the province of Quebec, with

particular reference to the Eastern Shores School Board. In this examination, a descriptive design was employed.

Research Questions

As Anderson (1998: 57) posits, the endeavors of a researcher develop from organized inquiry. That is, the questions which any study asks are not merely haphazard formulations, but, rather, are concerted approaches which help the investigator to undertake significant analysis, and, which are readily and easily comprehensible to the reader. In essence, these research questions provide a more specific restatement and clarification of the purpose.

In regards to this thesis, the central, or "grand tour" question to be answered was what was the nature of the 1997 transition from denominational to linguistic school boards in Quebec, with particular reference to the Eastern Shores School Board?

Certainly, this query served as the locus upon which all subsequent analysis would be directed. Yet, this is not to suggest that it is the sole issue which this thesis addressed, since, there were four secondary questions which were considered as well:

1. What was the historical basis of the education system in the province of Quebec?
2. What was the justification for the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges?
3. What were the essential differences between denominational and linguistic school boards? and;
4. How did the transition unfold?

These questions, apart from facilitating in the clarification of the initial findings,

ensured that the examination remain focused throughout.

Theoretical Perspective

There is general consensus that "...if a question or problem cannot be related to theory or concepts, research is not likely to make a contribution" (Davis and Parker, 1997: 56). In fact, if no theoretical base can be readily identified, such research should be rejected unequivocally. Ultimately, in approaching a topic as complex as the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards in Quebec, it is obvious that this study was not immune to these central tendencies. Thus, was left with the troubling issue of ascertaining which theoretical model would be most amenable to this particular inquiry.

Upon completion of an exploratory analysis of the various competing approaches, I opted to employ a pattern theory, which Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to as an explanation that develops during a naturalistic inquiry. As a result, this quest for knowledge was to be formulated upon a construction of dominant themes or patterns which emerged inductively through a comprehensive examination of all the existing data. Of course, "[j]ust naming or classifying what is out there is usually not enough. We need to understand the patterns, the recurrences, the whys" (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 67). As Kaplan (1964) remarks, the bedrock of inquiry is the researcher's quest for "repeatable regularities." In a qualitative study such as this, pattern theory was an excellent vehicle in that it served to reduce large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytical units, thereby disentangling a pattern of interconnected thoughts or parts linked to a whole (Neuman, 1991: 38). As well, it

provided for a means of continuous analysis during the collection of data, thereby ensuring that the study remain focused, and, furthermore, pattern theory assisted in the construction of a cognitive map, "...an evolving schema for understanding what [was] happening..." (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 68).

To facilitate the manifestation of these patterns, a descriptive design was also used. While this is the most basic form of research, it was an invaluable tool in ameliorating an understanding into rather multifarious phenomena. Essentially, a descriptive design has both an historical as well as contemporary dimension. While the former considers what was, the latter deals with what is happening at present.

Since there is an inextricable link between the establishment of denominational rights and privileges in Quebec in 1846, and, the elimination of these rights 151 years later through the creation of linguistic school boards, a descriptive design appeared to be the most cogent model to utilize in unveiling emerging patterns. Unquestionably, an examination of the historical record yielded a rich pool of data which provided further elucidation into the prevailing trends unfolding within the provincial education system.

In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to state that an investigation of this nature which failed to provide for even a superficial consideration of the legacy of the past would be an imperfect account. In striving to ensure that all potential theoretical pitfalls which might plague this thesis were eradicated, contemporary circumstances could not be assessed without inclusion of all antecedent occurrences, be they direct or indirect, which may have impacted on the current course of events. As a result, by

employing a descriptive design, the past and the present could both be taken into account, thus allowing for a complete disclosure of patterns which might exist.

Definition of Terms

In reading this work, it is necessary if not imperative, to provide a rudimentary description of the basic terms used throughout the duration of this thesis.

Denominational school boards: those boards which existed in Quebec prior to 1997, and, which were organized along either Roman Catholic or Protestant religious lines.

Linguistic school boards: those boards which came into effect in 1997, and are organized along either French or English first language lines, with the possibility of the other language being taught as a second language.

Confessional: refers to the profession of a religious belief, specifically, Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, and, is used inter-changeably with the word *denominational* in Quebec.

Director-general: the principal administrative position within a school board.

Provisional councils: those institutions, composed of elected representatives, established to facilitate in the transition from the denominational to the linguistic system, and, which operated until June 30, 1998.

School governing boards: composed of parents, school staff, senior secondary students, and community members, these institutions, established as a result of the creation of linguistic boards, act in a largely advisory capacity, making recommendations to the school board about such issues as school budgets and student

rules.

Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA): an advocacy group established to promote the rights of Anglophone Gaspesians.

Spec: a weekly English-language newspaper published in New Carlisle, and serving the Gaspe peninsula.

Assumptions, Delimitations and Limitations

In approaching this study, I must readily admit that as an Anglophone born and raised within the province of Quebec, I have always been extremely cognizant of the fragile status of the English fact within the province; and, subsequently, I have continually regarded government action or inaction as a potential threat to the English minority, or as it has often been termed, the "vanishing minority." My previously written Master of Arts thesis, which dealt with Quebec nationalism, has also served to elevate my critical ire with regards to any provincial public policy which impacts upon Anglophone rights. Thus, my background inevitably exerted a tremendous pressure upon this academic pursuit and, invariably colored my thoughts and perceptions on the topic.

In a similar fashion, it must be noted that there is a commonality of thought which asserts that only those of French extraction can adequately study Quebec society. Perhaps this may be attributed to the fact that unlike the rest of the country, Quebec emerged initially as a colony of the French empire. This colonial relationship established within the province a distinctive community unlike that found anywhere else in North America because of the language and culture of its inhabitants. As one

Francophone academic now employed by the Quebec justice department stated, "...Quebecers are reluctant to accept the findings of those who do not meet the criteria for being a Québécois....[That is], in order to profess an understanding of Quebec politics, culture, society in general, you must be a member of the group. The group is of course those whose mother tongue is French" (as quoted in Young, 1997: 3).

Thus, as Diane Francis points out in *Fighting for Canada*, there is a stigma attached to those non-Quebecers who strive to gain an understanding of affairs in Canada's French homeland. According to her, many English Canadians are frightened away from Quebec studies because "the issues are complicated, rooted in history, subtle and comprehensible only to persons who speak and understand French" (Francis, 1996: 7).

As a result, it is clear that for those English Canadians zealous enough to undertake an analysis which deals with Quebec, one is confounded by the baggage which invariably accompanies such a study.

In examining this thesis, it must be noted that in terms of delimitations, this academic pursuit was confined in focus in that particular reference was devoted to the Eastern Shores School Board, a former Protestant denominational board now reorganized along linguistic lines. As such, the vast majority of individuals interviewed were associated with this board, and, were predominantly English speaking. The rationale for this decision to concentrate my efforts on the Eastern Shores School Board, at the expense of other boards, many of which were French, is

due, in large measure, to my familiarity with this particular board. I was a student within the Eastern Shores School Board, and as a result of a thirteen year association with this institution, the experience and knowledge base upon which I could draw was more expansive than would otherwise have been the case with other boards. Thus, in my unrelenting interest in unraveling the intricacies of how this transition impacted English language boards, by focusing on the aforementioned board, the *terra firma* upon which the study was to be constructed was justifiable from the vantage point of availability of data.

Certainly, this delimitation may have produced certain inherent limitations within my study. By curtailing the scope to one board, a vast number of other boards remained untapped; and, it is impossible to state with utmost certainty if, in fact, the experience of the Eastern Shores School Board was typical or atypical of the transition from denominational to linguistic. Thus, the generalizability of this study is not beyond reproach; and in terms of extrapolating from this particular academic work to the whole of the province, such a leap may be regarded as suspect.

Significance of the Study

In examining this thesis, it appears that in terms of articulating a vindication of the significance of this academic pursuit, there was a concerted effort, as was pointed out previously, at filling an obvious gap within the literature. Since linguistic school boards in Quebec are still, essentially, in their infancy, this lack of academic inquiry is not entirely unexpected.

However, the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges within the

province is an issue of particular significance, since, through an amendment to *The Constitution Act, 1982*, the organization of education in Canada's largest geographic province was radically reformed. Therefore, this thesis is of particular pertinence for those within the fields of education, politics, history, law or any other of several disciplines. This is not to imply, however, that the audience to which this work is directed is confined to the aforementioned domains, as, it is anticipated that this inquiry will resonate with a divergent spectrum of readers, thus providing a valuable reference for edification.

This thesis is also of particular significance in that it delves into the complexities of this transition from denominational to linguistic in relation to one particular board. As such, the findings of this work may be of particular benefit to the administrative hierarchy of the Eastern Shores School Board, since no study of comparable magnitude has been undertaken.

Besides this, the data obtained from this examination will add to research conducted by the Quebec department of education, as they continue to monitor and appraise these new linguistic school boards. Thus, my thesis may or may not add credence to the conclusions reached by Quebec bureaucrats, but, regardless, it provides further clarification into an area seriously lacking in scholarly pursuit.

Design of the Study

In attempting to interpret the perplexities of the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards in Quebec, with particular emphasis devoted to the Eastern Shores School Board, a descriptive design, as was pointed out previously, was

employed in this examination. Without question, rote description is a major purpose of numerous social scientific studies regarding situations and events (Babbie, 1989: 81). In its most simplistic form, a descriptive design entails a researcher carefully and deliberately observing and analyzing the topic under scrutiny, both from a contemporary as well as historical perspective, and, then, drawing conclusions based upon the discernible evidence.

Certainly, any examination of the 1997 abolishment of all confessional rights and privileges within the province must be predicated on the antecedent events and circumstances which predated this re-organization of the provincial education system. As such, a descriptive design provided an excellent means whereby the various emergent "patterns" could be teased out from the data.

Two methods were employed to arrive at this descriptive analysis. First, "bibliographic control" was used (Admundson, as quoted in Davis and Parker, 1997: 75). Essentially, bibliographic control refers to the "...various means by which a researcher locates the published and unpublished material related to an area of investigation" (Davis and Parker, 1997: 75). This entailed a methodical, deliberate review of the entire base of literature within the field, including books and manuscripts, journal articles, dissertations and theses, government documents, newspaper articles and, any other source of information which might prove advantageous towards advancing the cause of the argument. The second method involved interviews with select individuals. As Anderson (1998: 48) points out, "[e]ven in this technological age, the best overall source of information continues to

be people." Pre-arranged question and answer sessions were conducted, to add detail to the written word and to garner new insights into the issue.

The Research Population and Sample

In examining the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards, essentially, the population was composed of all school boards. The case of the Eastern Shores School Board served as a sample selected to represent this population, for both convenience, and, because I had access to it. Within the selected case, a sample of knowledgeable persons, overwhelmingly drawn from the administrative hierarchy of the Eastern Shores School Board, were selected for interviewing. As members of the bureaucratic apparatus squarely responsible for the management and direction of the school board, many of the senior educational administrators had experienced, first-hand, the turbulence and unrelenting compulsion towards modernization so very prevalent since the 1960s. Thus, they were in a rather unique position in that, individually and en masse, they were a potential pool of untapped knowledge not readily available through an examination of the various texts or government documents which dealt with this matter.

In terms of limiting the sample in both dimension as well as scope, interviews were conducted with those individuals who possessed the requisite knowledge and experience which would add credence and credibility to this academic pursuit; put quite simply, among the obvious persons interviewed were the current director-general of the board, the former director-general, and other members of the administrative apparatus.

As was pointed out, having been a student within the Eastern Shores School Board, my personal familiarity with this board was rather extensive. Thus, gaining access to the various individuals with whom interviews were to be conducted were not, at least, superficially, a major hurdle to overcome. The various individuals were contacted, mostly by phone, at the Eastern Shores office situated in the municipality of New Carlisle, Quebec, to ascertain if, in fact, they were willing to be interviewed for this thesis, and, once this was been completed, the study progressed virtually unencumbered.

Data Collection Methods and Ethical Concerns

As was pointed out, in terms of data collection for this thesis, two distinct procedures were undertaken in a rather concurrent fashion. First, of course, the vast expanse of literature had to be surveyed in an effort to unwrap the subtleties and nuances so prevalent within the spectrum of Quebec educational policy. All of the available texts, journal articles, theses, dissertations, and newspaper articles relevant to my analysis were scrutinized. Besides this, information was drawn from government documents, to which public access was generally unrestricted. Contained within these sources was an invaluable wealth of material documenting the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards. While for many the thought of perusing endless, rather dry publications by the provincial government might seem like a fate worth than death itself, I reveled in the opportunity to access this utter wealth of documentation.

The second prong of my data collection focused on conducting interviews with

members of the Eastern Shores School Board administration (refer to Appendix A). The participants in this study were selected based upon their position within the educational system - a position which provided them with expertise and experience which was absolutely invaluable. Once the pre-selected individuals to be interviewed had been contacted in person regarding the feasibility of their collaboration, a question and answer session, which was tape recorded, was conducted at various locales convenient to these persons. During these sessions, I, as the interviewer, assumed the role of simply facilitating discussion by asking a set of established questions (refer to Appendix B), for, as Creswell (1998: 125) points out, a good interviewer is a listener rather than a speaker during an interview. Therefore, throughout, active listening, as well as openness and empathy on my part were the cornerstones of the interview process. Also, as the interviews progressed, sub-questions which were previously not envisaged, arose, and, certainly, these were also entertained for their exculpatory value.

Undoubtedly, all behavior must be guided by ethical principles which differentiate what is socially acceptable from that which is unacceptable, and, certainly, educational research is not above such conventions (Anderson, 1998: 16). Thus, specific attention was devoted to the planning and implementation of this pursuit, for, as Mirvis and Seashore (1982: 100) warn, "naivete [about ethics] itself is unethical." Since human participants were an integral component in this academic pursuit, the issue of informed consent had to be taken into account. As such, it was imperative that all persons interviewed be informed about the study, their role within the

investigation, and how the information they provided would be used. While it may be argued that truly informed consent is impossible in qualitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 291), this issue could not be ignored, and, subsequently, all those involved were briefed prior to their participation. Since anonymity was difficult if not impossible to maintain, all interviewees were asked if they objected to quotes being attributed to them. As well, once all the interviews had been transcribed, participants were provided with a copy of the transcription, to ensure that they agreed with the written analysis.

This thesis was examined by the Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee, and, it was their conclusion that, in all respects, the proposed project met appropriate standards of ethical acceptability.

Data Analysis Methods

In examining this thesis from a holistic perspective, it is abundantly clear that, as a strictly qualitative study, the primary method of data examination was that of text-based analyses. That is, once the literature had been reviewed, and, the interviews conducted, it was necessary if not imperative to scrutinize the available data, and, in a manner consistent with the theoretical model employed in this thesis, undertake a concerted inquiry into the various patterns which emerged.

Essentially, these patterns were grouped into thematic classifications which enabled a more cogent treatment of the data. Among the various categories that were of particular relevance were those associated with the inter-related issues of how this transition from a denominational to linguistic system impacted the Eastern Shores

School Board, and, conversely, was this new arrangement preferable to the former. Without question, within each of these rather broad rubrics would fall numerous secondary classifications, and, each of these were independently grouped as well, allowing for all inherent patterns to reach fruition.

In conducting the data analysis, it was imperative that a concerted effort at guarding against personal bias be maintained. As such, a number of different techniques were employed concurrently to validate the trustworthiness of my findings. One important manner was through the use of triangulation, "...or the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena or programs" (Patton, 1990: 187). By relying on both the literature on the topic under scrutiny, as well as insights gleaned through interviews, a form of data triangulation, in which a variety of data sources were employed, was achieved. This provided for a means of involving corroborating evidence from different extractions to shed light on the topic (Creswell, 1998: 202).

As well, by means of a strategy known as analytic induction, or negative case analysis, all theoretical hypotheses were continually refined, as instances which did not match the original hypothesis, were uncovered. Eventually, a hypothesis evolved which explained the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards in Quebec, thus resulting in a symmetry between the hypothesis and the data (Merriam, 1988: 143).

This study also relied upon the use of what is termed an audit trail. That is, all methods in this study were described in such detail "that other researchers [could] use

the original report as an operating manual by which to replicate the study" (Goetz and LeCompte, as quoted in Merriam, 1988: 172-173).

And, finally, through peer review or debriefing with my thesis supervisor, an external check of the research was conducted. This peer reviewer, often referred to as a "devil's advocate," served to ask the difficult questions about this study, its methods, meanings and interpretations. By always providing a sympathetic yet critical ear, my advisor allowed for me to engage in contemplation, and provoked a sober second thought on my research. This forced me to raise my level of academic rigor, and, in so doing, the final product is more substantive, and provides a more cogent and copious account of the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards than would otherwise have been possible.

Essentially, since the term reliability is not typically used to classify qualitative research, a more appropriate idiom would be dependability. "That is, rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, one wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense - they are consistent and dependable" (Merriam, 1988: 172). Consequently, through employing the above strategies, it can be concluded that appropriate measures were taken to safeguard against personal bias.

Conclusion

Since the 1997 abolishment of all denominational rights and privileges in the province of Quebec through means of a constitutional amendment, little, if any scholarly inquiry into this issue has been conducted. This thesis, grounded in pattern

theory, and, relying on both an expansive review of the literature, as well as interviews with pre-selected individuals, examined the nature of the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards in the province, with particular reference to the Eastern Shores School Board.

However, to set the stage for the subsequent discussion, chapter 2 will deal with the historical evolution of education in the province of Quebec from 1608 to present. With the historical backdrop having been rendered, the next two chapters will examine the transition from denominational to linguistic, with chapter 3 dealing with the prelude to the reform, while chapter 4 will address the aftermath of the reform. Chapter 5 will summarize the arguments, and offer a prognosis for the future.

Chapter 2:

The Evolution of the Quebec Education System

Introduction

In his work *The Long Road to Reform: Restructuring Public Education in Quebec*, Henry Milner (1986: 10) cogently asserts that "[i]t would be foolish to attempt any kind of comprehensive historical survey of 200 years of Quebec education in one short chapter, nor would it serve any useful purpose." As a result, building upon the caveat offered by Milner, I have opted to simply highlight those events and circumstances which are particularly relevant to providing a rather terse overview of the evolution of the Quebec education system up to, but not including, the transformation of the system to a linguistic one.

As such, for purposes of both simplicity and clarity, the following account will be divided into three distinct phases, based primarily upon the chronological delineations offered by Smith and Donahue (1999: 2-4). The first phase, which dates from 1608 to 1960, may be termed "From New France to the Quiet Revolution;" the second phase, simply referred to as "The Quiet Revolution," dates from 1960 until 1970, and, the final phase, "From the Quiet Revolution to the Present" deals with the post-1970 period to the present.

Of course, it must be noted that the various time periods examined are perhaps not as easily demarcated as is indicated. However, by dividing the evolution of Quebec education into various epochs, it provides a more logically coherent and comprehensible overview than would otherwise have been possible. Thus, it is this

evolution which this thesis will now address (Young, 1997: 21).

From New France to the Quiet Revolution

Without question, the education system in Quebec is similar to arrangements found elsewhere. Education in the province has evolved from a predominantly elementary-level system controlled by church and family, to a multi-level system governed by the state. However, Quebec is different than other Canadian jurisdictions in that it has different roots from which it has evolved. First, there is a French dimension influenced by the Roman Catholic Church, and, a British dimension inspired by various Protestant denominations. In essence, these religious and cultural differences led to the manifestation of different languages, resulting in the evolution of a dual system of education, one Catholic and predominantly French, and the other Protestant and predominantly English (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 1).

Historically, Quebec society was and is an outgrowth of the French efforts to colonize North America in the 17th century. From the outset of the French régime, education was characterized by the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, as religious orders of both men and women such as the Jesuits, Recollects, Sulpicians, Brothers Hospitallers of the Cross, Ursulines, Grey Nuns, and Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame were responsible for the formal education in New France, as Quebec was then known (Boudreau, 1999: 9). While the original intent of these various orders was to spread Christianity to the native Indians, the priests, brothers, and nuns were successful in establishing a number of elementary schools scattered over the rural regions of the territory (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 21).

Despite the laudable efforts of the Catholic Church, general conditions in the colony inspired little interest in education and schooling. As Henchey and Burgess (1987: 22) point out:

> The early preoccupation with the fur trade, the harsh environment and the lack of significant numbers of settlers caused the Catholic colony of New France to grow far more slowly than Protestant colonies....The French were numerically incapable of either monopolizing the fur trade or of holding on to the vast tracts of territory in North America to which they had laid claim. This situation eventually led to the military defeat of the French in the Seven Years' war in 1759 and then to the eventual disappearance of France as a major colonizing power in North America.

With the ascent of the British régime in 1760, the French-speaking and Catholic settlers had to face a new power that was both English-speaking and Protestant. Fearing that their very existence and survival were in jeopardy of disappearing, French-Canadians began to turn for guidance and support to the Roman Catholic Church, which was in essence one of the few institutions of the French régime which the British permitted to remain in the colony. In the years immediately following the Conquest, the Church assumed the role of providing educational services to the French population (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 22-23). Of course, the Catholic Church was concurrently faced with the threat imposed by the religious body of the conquerors - the Anglican Church, and, as a result, a dualism between Catholicism and Protestantism emerged which would characterize education in Quebec for over two centuries (Giles and Proudfoot, 1994: 10). While numerous attempts were made to develop a centralized education system common to all, all efforts resulted in failure,

largely due to the lack of support from Catholics, who feared that such a system, controlled by English-speaking and Protestant authorities would signal the assimilation and "Protestantization" of the French Catholic population. (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 22-23).

However, despite the resistance of the Catholic population, with the massive influx of English-speaking settlers in the late eighteenth century into Lower Canada, as Quebec was then known, the demand for a public system of education became more rancourous. In 1789, a commission of inquiry on education headed by William Smith recommended the establishment of a system of non-denominational public schools, but, because of opposition within the colony to such a scheme, the proposal failed to reach fruition (Milner, 1986: 11). Despite the efforts to reform education in Lower Canada:

> ...the Church in Quebec resisted all attempts to place the authority for education in the hands of the state - whether the initiative came from Anglo-Protestants when an attempt was made to create a public system of education with the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning created in 1801, or...from French-Canadian nationalists such as Louis Joseph Papineau, who advocated the separation of Church and state. The Catholic Church in Quebec, following Rome's directives, was uncompromising about the supremacy of the Church over the state in educational matters (Boudreau, 1999: 10).

Despite the refusal of the Catholic Church to accept any governmental involvement in the realm of education, the state did not remain entirely docile. Through the passage of the 1824 *Act Respecting Fabrique Schools*, which authorized

the fabriques (Catholic parish corporations or vestries) to establish and maintain schools in each parish, and the 1829 *Syndics Act*, which provided for an elected board of commissioners which would manage and administer the schools within a town or parish (Milner, 1986: 11), real substantive progress was made . As Henchey and Burgess (1987: 23) point out, the board of commissioners was the forerunner of present-day school boards, where schools are placed under the control of locally elected lay persons rather than religious authorities. However, the expansion of the school system in Lower Canada was interrupted by a political crisis in 1836, and the subsequent "Patriotes" revolt in 1837-1838, which resulted in the legislation of 1829 not being extended, a suspension of all educational subsidies, and a subsequent closure of numerous schools (Milner, 1986: 11).

With the crisis of the late 1830s over, Quebec was eventually united in 1841 with Ontario (Upper Canada). In spite of the passage of an *Education Act* in 1841 to serve both Quebec and Ontario, it was apparent that any act would be incompatible and incapable of meeting the divergent interests of the two areas. As a result, Quebec was granted its own school law in 1845, and, through a series of subsequent revisions, the *Education Act, 1846* emerged, an act upon which all educational laws were to be built (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 23-24).

As Milner (1986: 11) asserts, the acts of 1841, 1845 and 1846 represented a "...working compromise between the clergy who wanted church-controlled schools and those who sought common public schools." According to the 1846 *Education Act*, referred to at that time as "Quebec's magna carta of education," (Johnson, 1968:

34), the principle of dichotomy based upon religion was accepted (Sissons, 1959: 135). In Montreal and Quebec City, there would be two elected boards of school commissioners, one Catholic and the other Protestant, with both types serving its own religious community. Throughout the rest of Quebec, the arrangement was different, as segregation was voluntary, with only one set of "common" schools run by elected Catholic and Protestant school boards, but, if the "common" school proved unacceptable to the minority denomination (usually Protestant), the religious minority could withdraw from the "common" school, and establish a school of its own religious preference (Cornell, 1993: 81-82). As section 26 of the 1846 *Education Act* stated:

> That when in any municipality, the regulations and arrangements made by the School Commissioners for the conduct of any school, shall not be agreeable to any number whatever of the inhabitants professing a religious faith different from that of the majority of the inhabitants of such Municipality, the inhabitants so dissentient may collectively signify such dissent in writing.... (in Sissons, 1959: 135).

This right of the Catholic or Protestant minority to dissent from the system of "common" schools to establish separate denominational school boards led to the creation of what are referred to in Quebec as dissentient boards (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 24). "Effectively, this meant that the common and dissentient schools served different religious communities and were confessionally identifiable (Cornell, 1993: 82).

As it became evident that the two provinces of Canada were to become part of a

larger union in 1867, Protestants, recognizing that they were about to become a minority in a Lower Canada separated from Upper Canada, strove to maintain the autonomy of their schools. At the same time, Catholics sought to preserve the supremacy of the Church in educational matters. As a result, the concurrent aspirations of both groups effectively led to the protection of the confessional aspects of the system (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 19).

In essence, the rights and privileges afforded to Catholics and Protestants by the existing laws, essentially those found in the 1846 *Education Act*, were written into the Canadian Constitution as section 93 of the *British North America Act, 1867*. As Section 93 states:

> 93. In and for each Province the Legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to Education, subject and according to the following Provisions:-
>
> (1)Nothing in any such Law shall prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any Class of Persons have by Law in the Province at the Union:
>
> (2)All the Powers, Privileges, and Duties at the Union by Law conferred and imposed in Upper Canada on the Separate Schools and School Trustees of the Queen's Roman Catholic Subjects shall be and the same are hereby extended to the Dissentient Schools of the Queen's Protestant and Roman Catholic Subjects in Quebec:
>
> (3)Where in any Province a System of Separate or Dissentient Schools exists by Law at the Union or is thereafter established by the Legislature of the Province, an Appeal shall lie

> to the Governor General in Council from any Act or Decision of any Provincial Authority affecting any Right or Privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic Minority of the Queen's Subjects in relation to Education:
>
> (4)In case any such Provincial Law as from Time to Time seems to the Governor General in Council requisite for the due Execution of the Provisions of this Section is not made, or in case any Decision of the Governor General in Council on any Appeal under this Section is not duly executed by the proper Provincial Authority in that behalf, then and in every such Case, and as far only as the Circumstances of each Case require, the Parliament of Canada may make remedial laws for the due Execution of the
> Provisions of this Section and of any Decision of the Governor General in Council under this Section.

As Bezeau (1995: 18) points out in regards to section 93, as a result of the preamble, responsibility for education was a provincial responsibility, with some protection afforded to denominational minorities by virtue of the four subsections. Thus, "...denominational boards were placed out of the provincial legislators' reach," (Milner, 1986: 13) and, the "...confessional basis of public schooling in Quebec was constitutionally protected" (Cornell, 1993: 82). Therefore it is abundantly clear that "Quebec entered Confederation educationally established" (Magnuson, 1980: 38).

During the period following 1867, there was little if any state involvement in education in Quebec, which of course stood in direct contrast to affairs throughout the rest of the country. In fact, both the Catholic and Protestant religious communities favored a dual denominational system free of governmental interference

(Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 24-25). It is not an exaggeration to state that from 1867 until 1960, there was a constant and continuous movement towards specific religious affiliation in the educational realm, with the two major religious groups becoming more deeply separated and entrenched. By 1869, building upon an already established *de facto* principle, legislation drafted in the name of "confessional autonomy" dictated that in regards to property-based school taxes, taxes from Catholics would go to Catholic boards, and from Protestants to Protestant boards, As well, in 1869, the Council of Public Instruction that had been set up in 1856 was reformed for the same purpose. The Council would now be divided up into both a Catholic and Protestant committee, composed of both clergy and lay people (Milner, 1986: 12-13).

The 1875 *Education Act* went even further in emphasizing religious differences, by abolishing the short-lived Ministry of Public Instruction (1867-1875), and vesting authority for education in the Council of Public Instruction, or, more particularly, its Catholic and Protestant committees, which would oversee the entire administration of their respective systems, including both the preparation of the curriculum, and, the certification of teachers. "This definitely removed education from the political sphere and gave to Quebec education [a] distinctly confessional character..." (Percival, 1946: 24). As Henchey and Burgess (1987: 25) put it, without question, the 1875 *Education Act* reaffirmed the dual religious nature of Quebec education, while increasing the separation between Catholics and Protestants.

By the late nineteenth century, Quebec public education

> had achieved its final form, namely, two denominational systems functioning side by side but rarely touching, each governed by its own administrative apparatus and distinct philosophy, and each serving a different clientele (Magnuson, 1980: 49).

Of course, it is important to note that besides their isolation, the two systems exhibited several fundamental differences. Without question, both in terms of its overall organization, as well as its curriculum, the Protestant system was clearly less denominational, and, more secular than the Catholic. In regards to organization, only the Catholic system had clerical representation at every level, while the Protestant system lacked such homogeneity. As well, the religious thrust of the Catholic schools was reflected in the religiously oriented curriculum, and the vast number of nonlay teachers. On the other hand, the Protestant system, staffed by lay teachers, was committed more to the teaching of morality as opposed to the doctrinal tenets of Christianity (Magnuson, 1980: 49-51).

As well, in terms of structural differences between the two denominational systems, secondary education was provided in public schools in the Protestant system, whereas Catholic secondary education was provided by the private sector in the classical colleges operated by various religious orders (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 25).

Until the 1930s, this dual system, endorsed by Protestants and Catholics alike, began to exhibit serious shortcomings in its efficiency and ability to adapt to modern realities. Unlike the late 1800s, when almost the entire population could be classified as being either French Catholic or English Protestant, Quebec society was now

experiencing a newfound pluralism. Certainly, this was chiefly a result of a massive influx of immigrants, mainly English-speaking Catholics from Ireland, and Jews from central Europe. Undoubtedly, the system was not designed to accommodate these new arrivals, and, as a result, both groups found it extremely difficult to assume a place within the existing confines. After some struggle, however, the English Catholics did succeed in being permitted to send their children to English Catholic schools, which were administered by Catholic school boards. At the same, and with equal difficulty, the Jews eventually found accommodation within the Protestant system. However, it was abundantly clear that the Quebec education system, with some 1500 school boards, all of which were either Catholic or Protestant, was not easily malleable to the emerging pluralistic society that Quebec was becoming. As a result of increasing pressure from numerous sources, "...during the 1960s, following many years of benign neglect, the government eventually acted to modernize and reform the province's educational system" (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 27), and, as a result, Quebec was to embark upon a new era referred to as the Quiet Revolution.

The Quiet Revolution

Writing in 1978, Marcel Rioux (74), in his book, *Quebec in Question*, described the 1960 electoral victory of Jean Lesage as a watershed in Quebec politics, and, although the Liberal government was voted out of office in 1966, the ideology of reform advocated by Lesage prevailed until 1970. Certainly, there is general agreement that Quebec during the 1960s was far from a quiet place, as the measures introduced had a rumbling effect throughout the province. In fact, "Quebec was in an

uproar" (Bothwell, 1995: 79-80). Yet, this revolution was quiet in the sense that it did not produce any type of turmoil or hostility, as is often associated with revolutions. "Quebec's Quiet Revolution was revolution of ideas. As a result of shifting values spurred on by the inter-related factors of increasing industrialization, urbanization, and modernization, French Canadians declared war on their belief system, which resulted in numerous changes to many aspects of their society" (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 31).

Unlike the dominantly held view that the only way for the French people to survive was to remain traditional, this new administration, increasingly nationalistic in orientation, asserted that survival depended upon a "rattrapage," or catching up. According to William Johnson (1994: 19):

> [t]he Quiet Revolution, when it came at last, began as an outbreak of hope. Suddenly after a century of withdrawal and retreat into the past, Quebec decided to join the modern world. Everything seemed possible. Quebec began to change its institutions rapidly and deeply. The attitudes and values of the people changed even more rapidly. History quickened its pace. Long-standing walls crumbled.

For Lesage and his new government, precious time had been lost in Quebec's social development, and, as a result, the state would have to assume full responsibility for the services previously directed by the Church (Gingras and Nevitte, 1984: 8). Accordingly, "...the state replaced the Church as the defender of Quebec's primary interests" (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 27).

In no one area was the state's role more active than in regards to education.

"Educational changes thought unthinkable a decade earlier were carried out with little respect for tradition" (Magnuson, 1980: 105). The first major step undertaken by Lesage and the principal architect for reform, Paul Gérin-Lajoie, was the 1961 passage of a series of laws collectively known as the Grande Chartre de l'Éducation, or Magna Charta of Education. Stemming from the recommendations of the 1961 Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec (the Parent Commission), in 1964 the government succeeded in passing Bill 60, which created, for the first time in almost a century, a Ministry of Education responsible for all educational policy in the province, thus replacing the Catholic and Protestant Committees of the Council of Public Instruction (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 27). As well, the Act of 1964 created a new body, the Superior Council of Education, which would provide advice to the Minister. Of course, the real purpose of the Council was "to combat any claim that Bill 60 [bill creating both the Ministry of Education and the CSE] would produce a state-managed educational system insensitive to the interests of the population" (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 40).

Despite the initial hostile reaction to this reform, especially from the Catholic Church, its leaders reluctantly accepted the idea of an education ministry, although they feared its impact on clerical education. In spite of their fears, it was now clear that power for education in the province had been centralized within the ministry, and, reform continued with unfettered force. Beginning in 1966 the Ministry of Education reduced the number of years of elementary school from seven to six years, while increasing the number of years of secondary school from four to five. As well, with

the creation of new two-year colleges, and the re-adjustment of university undergraduate programs from four to three years, a 6-5-2-3 pattern of education had emerged, with these numbers corresponding to the number of years of elementary, secondary, college and university education respectively (Magnuson, 1980: 109).

At the same time, in response to recommendations of the Parent report, the Ministry "...regrouped the small local boards in the province into 55 regional Roman Catholic school boards and 9 Protestant regional boards; reduced the number of school boards off the Island of Montreal from 1252 to 189 and the number of boards on the Island of Montreal from 33 to 8..." (Cornell, 1993: 84). The government also legislated that each denominational system would now maintain secondary schools offering both generalized and specialized courses. These new secondary schools under the Catholic system emerged as a major threat to the viability of the private classical colleges, who, prior to the 1960s, were solely responsible for secondary education. In fact, the policy of expanding and promoting public secondary education dealt a near fatal blow to the cause of private education, as evidenced by the substantial decline in enrolment in these institutions from 40,000 pupils in 1965-1966, to only 16,000 students in 1968-1969. However, the 1968 *Private Education Act* reversed this alarming trend, largely through guaranteeing that any school declared in the public interest would be eligible to receive a grant of up to 80 per cent of the cost of instruction in a public school. As a result, many of these schools survived, although the numbers enrolled within them never equalled their pre-1968 numbers (Magnuson, 1980: 110).

Despite the scope of reform clearly evident during the 1960s within the realm of education, the dual denominational system remained essentially intact. However, among the major proposals of the Parent Report was Recommendation 55, released in 1966, which asserted that the dual confessional system be replaced with neutral or nonconfessional school boards, which would exist alongside existing Catholic and Protestant ones (Cornell, 1993: 83). As with the Parent Commission, the Mouvement Laïque de Langue Français (MLF) supported this creation of a third or neutral school system. The Committee for Neutral Schools, an English counterpart of the MLF, went even further, openly advocating the abolition of the Catholic and Protestant system, and, the creation of school boards divided along linguistic lines (Magnuson, 1980: 119).

However, despite these recommendations, the proposals never reached fruition, mainly due to lack of consensus, particularly among those members of the Superior Council of Education (Boudreau, 1999: 56-57). Yet, despite the fact that the confessional structure remained, the Catholic schools in particular underwent a secular transformation, bringing them more in line with the Protestant schools. For instance, by 1965, 80 per cent of all teaching staff in Catholic public schools were lay persons, and, in terms of curriculum, religious instruction was now given less priority. "The declining importance of religion seemed to disprove the old adage that you go to Catholic schools to learn to pray and to Protestant schools to learn to count" (Magnuson, 1980: 121).

As the 1960s drew to a close, and, despite the fact that the major reforms of the

provincial education system were complete, the rumblings so prevalent during the Quiet Revolution continued. "With the falling away of Roman Catholicism as an institutional and moral force in Quebec, the French language assumed a new and critical importance..." (Magnuson, 1980: 124). This new reality was brought to the forefront in 1968, in the Montreal suburb of St. Leonard, when the local Catholic school board decided to phase out its English-language schools. Despite vociferous protest, especially from immigrant families, the Quebec Superior Court refused to intervene on the grounds that there were no laws in the province which guaranteed that students would receive instruction in English. As Henchey and Burgess point (1987: 28) out, the position of the judiciary was justifiable, in that educational rights for the minority were founded upon tradition, and on the rights granted to Protestants and enshrined in section 93 of the *British North America Act* - rights that were clearly denominational, and not linguistic.

With Francophone nationalists demanding that the government compel immigrant children to attend French schools, and Anglophone and immigrant groups arguing for assurances of English-language school rights, the Union Nationale government of Jean-Jacques Bertrand responded to this language crisis by convening a Royal Commission on linguistics rights, named the Gendron Commission. Amid increasing demands for action, the government in 1969 introduced in the National Assembly Bill 63, "An Act to Promote the French Language in Quebec." This law, which granted all parents the right to have their children educated in the language of their choice was met with applause from the immigrant community, but, drew scorn from French

nationalists (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 28).

Thus, as Quebec entered the 1970s, with religion having been firmly supplanted by a linguistic cleavage, and mass demonstrations raging against the government and its language policies, it was inevitable that steps would be taken to both expand and promote the French language in every sphere of society, including the educational arena.

From the Quiet Revolution to the Present

In the examining the decade of the 1970s, it is easily discernible that this period was characterized by an ever-increasing linguistic nationalism, with the question of who should have access to English-language schools dominating the educational agenda. With the 1972 Gendron Commission, as well as the 1968-1969 federal government report on Bilingualism and Biculturalism drawing attention to the fragile state of the French language in Quebec and Canada, coupled with the fact that more than 85% of all immigrant children, as well as some 75,000 Francophone children were attending English schools created tremendous pressure for governmental action to curb these disturbing trends (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 28-29).

Responding to pressure to introduce legislation that would go beyond the measures included within Bill 63, the Liberal government of Robert Bourassa introduced the *Official Language Act, 1974*, or Bill 22 as it was commonly referred to. In declaring French to be the sole official language in Quebec, this act in effect eliminated the province's traditional policy of bilingualism. Besides this:

> [a]t the heart of Bill 22 was a controversial education

> section which redefined the school population. The principle of language choice in education was replaced by a provision restricting entrance to English schools to those possessing a working knowledge of English. At the same time, the act charged school boards with the responsibility of setting English-language proficiency tests for those applicants whose mother tongue was other than English. The new regulations governing admission to English schools were directed against immigrants in the first instance and Francophones in the second (Magnuson, 1980: 127).

Unquestionably, this law served to appease the interests of neither Anglophones nor Francophones. The English community viewed the law as discriminatory against immigrants, and a violation of fundamental human rights. In fact, the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards went as far as to petition the federal government to disallow the law, or, at the very minimum, refer the case to the Supreme Court of Canada. On the other hand, the French community believed that the law had not gone far enough in restricting access to English schools, and, cited examples of the ease in which immigrant children were circumventing the intention of the law (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 29).

However, despite the utter failure of Bill 22, the record of the Liberal government in the field of education was not entirely ineffective. For instance, in 1971 and 1972, by two separate pieces of legislation, the 1100 school boards in the province were reduced to 8 on the Island of Montreal, and 226 throughout the rest of the province - a reform which confirmed separate confessional structures in Quebec, and, which was supported by Catholics and Protestants alike (Boudreau, 1999: 59-60).

Yet, regardless, the crisis surrounding Bill 22 "...finished off a government already

beset with scandal and dissension" (Milner, 1986: 39). In the provincial election of 1976, the separatist Parti Québécois, led by René Lévesque, registered a landslide victory. The first major piece of legislation passed by the new government was Bill 101, known as the *Charter of the French Language*. In repealing Bill 22, this new language act was committed to making French the only language of Quebec in all areas of social, economic, cultural and administrative life. In terms of education, Bill 101 was, much like its predecessor, designed to restrict admission to English schools. However, unlike Bill 22, with its reliance on language tests to determine English school eligibility, the *Charter of the French Language* based this admission decision on family educational roots in Quebec (Magnuson, 1980: 128-129). Accordingly, it limited access to those who had at least one parent who attended English-language elementary school in the province. Thus, it ensured that all others, regardless of language or place of origin, would receive their instruction in French schools. Not surprisingly, the English-speaking community was outraged by the government's action, lamenting that the Parti Québécois was violating fundamental educational rights. Unquestionably, Bill 101 had a devastating effect on English-language schools. In fact, "[t]he law cut enrollment drastically, since 35 per cent of all students in English language schools were either francophones or the children of immigrants" (Boudreau, 1999: 58). By the end of the 1970s, "...deprived of new immigrants and suffering the effects of a depressed birth rate, Quebec's English schools were showing severely reduced enrolments..." (Magnuson, 1980: 129).

As the 1980s began, despite the fact that school boards were still divided along

denominational lines, because of the declining importance of religion, and the emergence of a linguistic nationalism, the development of a *de facto* language-based system had begun. Through Bill 101, language, rather than religion was now the determining factor in defining the province's school population (Magnuson, 1980: 129).

"Obviously, something did not fit. In a secular society a confessionally based educational system struck a discordant chord" (Milner, 1986: 42). However, as Bezeau (1989: 52) points out, despite the fact that a majority of Quebecers would have been pleased to see an elimination of the denominational rights contained within section 93 of the *British North America Act, 1867*, the degree of protection provided by this very section had assumed mythical proportions. "Section 93 was viewed by most observers as circumscribing what could or could not happen in terms of school board reform, be it as a 'stumbling block' to reform, or as the 'last line of defence' of minority rights" (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 45). The ability of section 93 in preventing school board reform was given credence by the passage of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Included within the "Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms" was a clause which gave "...denominational rights and privileges established when the provinces entered Canada precedence over any provisions of the Charter" (Bezeau, 1995: 23).

Despite the "mythology" surrounding section 93, in 1982, Dr. Camille Laurin, the father of Bill 101, and, by now Minister of Education, did attempt to reform the confessional system. A government White Paper entitled *The Quebec School: a*

responsible force in the community, outlined the government's intentions.

> First, new school boards would be created: de-confessionalized, linguistic, and territorially aligned with regional county municipalities. In Montreal and Quebec City, the historic Catholic and Protestant school boards would remain confessional, but operate only within their 1867 boundaries. The dissentient boards, and the principle of dissent, would remain in existence. The new boards would be linguistically divided on the Island of Montreal but linguistically homogeneous off-Island (Cornell, 1993: 86).

In 1983, after a year of heated public debate, the government introduced Bill 40, an *Act Respecting Public Elementary and Secondary Education*, which was designed to implement the reforms proposed in the white paper, through the creation of linguistic school boards. However, as a result of public outcry, which resulted in a cabinet shuffle, the bill was withdrawn, and new legislation, Bill 3, containing further revisions to the government's education policy, was tabled in the fall of 1984. This act, which became law in December of the same year, proposed replacing all common denominationally based boards with common linguistic boards, while maintaining the confessional boards in Montreal and Quebec City and the 5 remaining dissentient boards, with the boundaries they had in 1867 (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 64). This would have created the unique situation where these boards would now administer areas with few or no schools remaining within them.

Almost immediately, Bill 3 was challenged in Quebec Superior Court by the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards, the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal and other of its member boards in Montreal, Quebec City, and Trois

Rivières, along with the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, and La Commission des Écoles Catholiques de Montréal. The petitioners claimed the law denied to Protestants and Catholics as a "class of persons" the rights and privileges granted them according to section 93 of the *British North America Act, 1867*. Mr. Justice André Brassard agreed that in fact, Bill 3 was *ultra vires*, and that the school board boundaries were constitutionally protected, as was the right to dissent. Thus, the Court issued a permanent injunction which prevented the law from being implemented (Cornell, 1993: 87). As a result, "...the structural reform movement was brought to a sudden and dramatic halt" (Henchey and Burgess, 1987: 31).

It was not until 1987 that the newly-elected Liberal government of Robert Bourassa opted to re-open the debate surrounding education in Quebec. With the passage of Bill 107 in December of 1988, Education Minister Claude Ryan stated unequivocally that the objective of this Act was to "reorganize the school boards along linguistic rather than religious lines..." (in Boudreau, 1999: 65), with the exception of three multi-confessional boards, the Commission Scolaire du Littoral, the Cree School Board and the Kativik School Board. Bill 107 also proposed to retain the four confessional boards in Montreal and Quebec City, as well as the five dissentient boards, including the right to dissent, thus conforming with the earlier decision rendered by the Quebec Superior Court in regards to Bill 3 (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 65).

Since the government realized that a legal challenge from those who wished to preserve the existing denominational system was inevitable, the Liberals preempted

such a move by referring a series of constitutional questions to the Quebec Court of Appeal. According to the Court, Bill 107 did not violate constitutionally protected rights. This decision was subsequently appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada by the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards, its related boards, and La Commission des Écoles Catholiques de Montréal (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 68). In June of 1993, in "Reference Re Education Act, Quebec," the Court determined that the province was free to create linguistic school boards, but, denominational guarantees had to be maintained for both Montreal and Quebec City, including the right of dissentient school boards outside these territories (Boudreau, 1999: 67).

Yet, by maintaining the confessional boards in Montreal and Quebec City, as well as the dissentient boards, "...some level of coexistence between the old and the new systems would continue, a situation that many saw as very problematic..." (Smith and Donahue, 1999: 68-69). Even though no studies were ever conducted, it was commonly held that such an arrangement would be too costly to undertake, and as a result, the implementation of linguistic school boards gradually disappeared from the policy landscape.

In fact, it was not until the release in October of 1996 of the Commission for the Estates General on Education that the idea of linguistic boards resurfaced. This particular study called for the implementing of linguistic school boards throughout the province, including Montreal and Quebec City. According to the report, "confessionality must be unlocked at all levels of the system, so that all students can be taught the shared values that we as a society wish to embrace" (in Boudreau,

1999: 80). The Parti Québécois government of Lucien Bouchard recognized that such a plan could only be achieved through a constitutional amendment, even though the separatist administration indicated that in no way did this decision represent an acceptance of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. As a result, Education Minister Pauline Marois announced the government's intention through Bill 109 to seek the abrogation of section 93 of the *British North America Act, 1867*. According to the provincial position:

> WHEREAS the Government intends to institute linguistic school boards as soon as possible;
>
> WHEREAS it is desirable, for that purpose, to amend the Constitution Act, 1867, so that Quebec may recover its full capacity to act in matters of education;
>
> WHEREAS such amendment in no way constitutes recognition by the National Assembly of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, which was adopted without its consent;
>
> WHEREAS undertakings were given by the Federal Government to proceed rapidly with such amendment, through bilateral action and with the agreement of the National Assembly and of the Federal Parliament;
>
> THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED
>
> THAT the National Assembly authorizes the amendment to the Constitution of Canada by proclamation of His Excellency the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada....

Despite the condemnation from various religious groups, the Quebec National Assembly on April 15, 1997 gave the proposal a unanimous vote of approval. After public hearings in Ottawa, on November 18th of that same year, the House of

commons voted 204-59 in favor of Quebec's resolution, with but one Quebec Member of Parliament, Clifford Lincoln, voting against the amendment (Boudreau, 1999: 82). With the Senate also voting in the affirmative one month later by a vote of 51-17, the last stumbling blocks to removing the right to denominational education in Quebec had been cleared, and, on December 31, 1997, the *Constitution Act, 1867* was amended, by inserting the following after section 93 (Smith and Donahue, 1999). "93A. Paragraphs (1) to (4) of section 93 do not apply to Quebec." As such, all denominational rights and privileges would no longer apply to Quebec. At the same time, the Protestant and Catholic committees of the Superior Council of Education were reformed to include English and French language advisory boards.

Provisional councils were established to assist in the transition from a denominational to linguistic structure, and, on June 30, 1998, these councils ceased to operate. On July 1, 1998, the province's 137 Roman Catholic and 18 Protestant school boards were replaced by 60 French language and 9 English language school boards (Smith, Foster and Donahue, 1999: 2), boards which guaranteed free choice between moral education and Catholic or Protestant religious education.

Conclusion

In 1934, George M. Weir, in *The Separate School Question in Canada* wrote that "educational evolution in the province of Quebec has been unique in Canada. This evolution has been neither neutral nor Godless, but of a distinctly ecclesiastical nature" (176). As the preceding discussion has demonstrated, Weir's assertions are certainly justifiable. From its genesis in New France, to the 1990s, the

denominational character of Quebec education was unmistakable. In fact, it was not until the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s that serious demands for reform began to surface, and, it took four decades for Quebec to rid itself of the vestiges of an anachronistic system unattuned with the modern realities of a secular society.

Despite the long road to reform, the province has succeeded in creating a linguistically based system of education which reflects the French and English duality of the society. With these new school boards still in their infancy, it is impossible to speculate whether they will in fact achieve their mandated expectations. Yet, it is clear that the transition from denominational to linguistic was an arduous and interesting progression, and it is this progression, and the manner in which it impacted upon the Eastern Shores School Board, which this thesis will now address.

Chapter 3:

The Prelude to Linguistic School Boards

Introduction

Without question, Quebec, which is the largest of Canada's ten provinces geographically, is an area steeped in both history and culture. First settled by inhabitants from France, Quebec today is an amalgam of the country's two solitudes - English and French. Nowhere is this linguistic and cultural duality more prevalent than on the Gaspe Peninsula, which extends east into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, between the St. Lawrence River and the Bay of Chaleur. From the arrival of the Frenchman, Jacques Cartier, in what is now Gaspe City in 1534, to the influx of English United Empire Loyalists in 1784, it is interesting, from a sociological perspective, to observe this duality which still exists today. Scattered along the sparsely populated Gaspe are communities with names symbolic of their ancestral roots, such as Avignon, Grande Rivière, New Richmond and New Carlisle, with each generally characterized by the predominance of quaint Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, symbolic of earlier patterns of settlement.

Economically, the Gaspe Peninsula remains an area heavily dependant on such primary industries as fishing, logging, and, to a lesser extent, agriculture and mineral extraction. Generally speaking, the region is economically disadvantaged, and, each year witnesses an outflux of inhabitants to other areas of the province and the country in search of employment. As such, the population on the peninsula is declining, and, for those that remain, the future appears to offer very little promise of improvement.

Despite the numerous ills which afflict the Gaspe, it remains one of the most picturesque parts of the entire province, and thousands of Quebecers, the vast majority of whom are French-speaking, are proud to call themselves Gaspesians.

A Brief History of Denominational Education on the Gaspe Peninsula

In examining the traditional roots of Protestant public education on the Gaspe, it is necessary to realize that in the vast number of cases, the region can be delineated into two discernible groups of inhabitants: English-speaking Protestants, and French-speaking Roman Catholics. Of course, there are segments of the population who do not fit into this schema, such as English-speaking Catholics, but, generally, most citizens can be classified as belonging to one of the two aforementioned groups. Thus, this makes the peninsula somewhat unique in that unlike other areas of the province, such as Montreal or the Eastern Townships, where the degree of cultural diversity remains great, the Gaspe is a relatively homogeneous area, which makes this particular study, to a certain extent, *sui generis*.

Historically, as was the case in the rest of the province, education for Protestants as well as Roman Catholics on the peninsula was, for the most part, under the auspices of church control. As such, education was provided in schools established by various religious orders of both faiths. As a result, by the late 1800s, two separate systems of education emerged, one which was Protestant, and the other Roman Catholic. As Percival (1940: 9) noted:

> It must not be thought that either Protestant or Roman Catholic schools [were] in any sense "separate" in that they [were] conducted by religious organizations apart

> from the state. They [were], in truth, state schools, established and subsidized by the Provincial legislature, governed by school law and by regulations that [had] the force of law. However, the basis of school enrolment [was] religious belief.

Until the 1940s, these schools were essentially administered by a Protestant Board of school commissioners or trustees within each of the municipalities in which these educational institutions were located. Under this decentralized system, each municipality maintained the type of school it so desired, and, in the case of the Gaspe Peninsula, schools such as those at Point Navarre and Gaspe Bay South were classified by government inspectors as primitive, as compared to those at New Carlisle and St-Laurent de Matepedia, which were rated as being excellent facilities. As such, great discrepancy existed between the level of education provided within this structure, and, as a result, by early 1940, The Protestant Committee of the Council of Education was recommending the creation of county central school boards in areas of the province with a significant Protestant population, and, by 1944, a bill was passed in the National Assembly to this effect.

> The objects of the act [were] to provide superior teachers, better school buildings, better use of existing schools, more adequate equipment, superior transportation, better health education, a wider curriculum in central schools, and to gather more pupils together in few buildings so that they [could] obtain the advantages of a broader education than [could] be obtained in the smaller schools that [contained] few pupils, with teachers who [had] been only moderately trained. In such schools pupils [would] be encouraged to remain longer than they [would] in the present small rural schools, and educational advantages [would] thus be brought to rural children that city

children...[possessed] (Percival, 1946: 83).

Thus, by the late 1940s, the peninsula was administered by the Bonaventure County Board, with responsibility for Protestant education within Bonaventure County, and the Gaspe County Board, with similar responsibility in the county of Gaspe. This arrangement remained virtually intact until 1967, when, in response to recommendations contained within the Parent report, the ministry of education regrouped all of the small local boards into larger regional Roman Catholic and Protestant boards. As a result of this movement, the Regional School of Gaspesia was formed, and charged with the responsibility of providing secondary education throughout the coast, as well as being delegated control over all staffing and related issues. The Bonaventure and Gaspe county boards were relegated to the status of sector boards, in charge of buildings and elementary education.

By 1992, after a quarter of a century in operation, the two sector boards and the Regional School Board of Gaspesia amalgamated to become Gaspesia and the Islands School Board. It should be pointed out that this board, which provided educational services for the Protestant community along the south shore of the peninsula, as well as the Magdalen Islands (for a graphic depiction of the territory served, refer to Appendix C), was the denominational board in place immediately prior to the transition to linguistic boards. In examining the Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, it is obvious that the schools under its control were dispersed throughout a vast geographic area, with a relatively sparse Protestant population. When this board ceased to exist on June 30, 1998, it enroled some 1100 students, in 10 schools: Gaspe

Elementary, Gaspe Polyvalent, Belle Anse Elementary, Shigawake-Port Daniel School, New Carlisle High School, Bonaventure Polyvalent, New Richmond High School, Escuminac Intermediate School, all located on the peninsula, and Grosse Ile High School and Entry Island School on the Magdalen Islands.

Despite the vastness of its territory, and the limited number of students it served, the Gaspesia and the Islands School Board can be classified as providing a very high level of education to its clientele, and, its attempt to serve the Protestant community were well regarded. However, on June 30, 1998, a new linguistic board to serve the Gaspe came into effect, and, it is the transition to this particular board which must now be examined.

The Rumblings Begin

Through an analysis of the various interviews which were conducted, the first point which must be accentuated is the fact that the administrative hierarchy of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board were fully aware of the government's plan to pursue a policy leading to the creation of linguistic boards some five to six years prior to 1998. As a result, when the proposal was announced, it came as no great shock to anyone involved with the board. According to Wade Gifford, who served as Director-General of the board during the transition, the elimination of all denominational right and privileges within the province had been discussed since the 1960s, but, it was not until 1992 that "...the writing was on the wall that there would be linguistic boards." For Gifford, this was a natural road to travel, but, the only question was when would all the pieces fall into place.

The views of Gifford are echoed by a former commissioner of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, who wished to remain anonymous:

> Since the Quiet Revolution, every Quebec government, be they federalists or separatists, have tried to eliminate our denominational boards. However, I knew by 1992 or 1993 that it was just a matter of time before the government would succeed in creating linguistic boards....In fact, when the Regional School Board of Gaspesia became Gaspesia and the Islands School Board in 1992, I was convinced that this newly created board would last only a short time. It was inevitable that either the Liberals or the PQ would get enough support to push through this change.

Thus, it can be concluded that there was a unanimity among all those interviewed that the government's decision to create linguistic boards was not a startling one, and, that the board hierarchy was fully cognizant and aware of the impending proposals. By 1994, the proposed decision to abandon the denominational system was becoming an increasingly volatile issue throughout the peninsula, and, during the school board elections in November of that year, one candidate for commissioner, Burne Gilker, based part of his election platform on the movement towards linguistic boards. According to Gilker, with the creation of language based school boards, there would have to be constitutional guarantees for English language rights, otherwise, the entire system would be placed within a most precarious position (Dow, November 20, 1994: 5). This view had been echoed one year prior by Robert Libman, a member of the Quebec National Assembly for the riding of D'Arcy Mcgee, who stated that "[w]ithout an even stronger constitutional guarentee, English linguistic school boards [could] be here today, and gone tomorrow, totally dependent on the goodwill of the

government in power" (in Dow, June 20, 1993: 7).

As such, the views being expressed on the peninsula were not different from those being voiced throughout the rest of the province. For Cyrus Journeau, the current Director-General of the Eastern Shores School Board, and, the individual who was Assistant Director-General of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, the movement towards linguistic boards was one which took some 30 to 40 years to reach fruition, but, it was a movement which could not be stopped. According to Journeau, by 1996, all school boards had been officially informed by the Quebec Ministry of Education regarding the change to a linguistic arrangement, and, timelines were put in place to achieve this course of action. Therefore, by this point, it was abundantly clear that the province's dual denominational education system would become a legacy of the past, to be replaced by a new system, the details of which were known only by the government in power.

The Government Proposals Surface

In June of 1997, Wade Gifford had planned to retire as Director-General of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board after more than 30 years of service, but, in the face of major changes to school board structures, Gifford delayed his plans in order to help the board meet the special challenges which lay ahead. As he stated in April of that year, "I'm postponing my retirement for an indefinite period. It's not my choice, but I feel I owe it to them. I feel an obligation to see this evolution through. I also want to make sure that everyone can come out of this with something acceptable. I'll feel more comfortable if I leave that way" (in Dow, April 6, 1997: 1).

The evolution which Gifford had referred to was certainly a major reform of the education system, and, details, while tentative, did begin to surface on March 24, 1997 from the province's Education Minister, Pauline Marois, regarding how the province intended to move from religious to linguistic school boards over the next eighteen months. According to the Minister, under the proposal, often referred to as the "Marois reform," French-language boards would be set up according to the administrative regions of the province, but, as a result of the small numbers of Anglophone students, most of the English-language boards would cover more than one administrative region (Dow, March 30, 1997: 1). According to Gifford, this plan was so sweeping that the changes to be implemented in the subsequent months were greater than anything he had seen in the past twenty years of his career.

In the Gaspe peninsula, the six Catholic boards were to be replaced by three French-language boards. However, Gaspesia and the Islands School Board would be amalgamated with six other Protestant boards and part of another, thus creating one large English-language board which would cover approximately 80% of the province, spanning from the North to the Maine border and from Drummondville to the Magdalens, and serving some 6,000 students. According to Gifford, the territory served by the new board could be likened to that of a country.

Among the boards to be merged under the new English language board were Gaspesia and the Islands, Eastern Quebec, Greater Quebec, Baie Comeau Dissentient Protestant, Greater Seven Islands, St. Maurice, Saguenay, and part of the Eastern Townships. While Gaspesia and the Islands students would have made up some 25%

of the new configuration, almost immediately, an ad hoc committee of commissioners and board personnel was established to review the proposed changes, and make recommendations to the board as a whole. Certainly, as Terry Maloney, the educational psychologist for Gaspesia and the Islands School Board expressed it: "the move to linguistic boards was a good idea, since linguistic was more attuned to modern times than religion." Furthermore, as Gifford put it, "...it did not make sense to divide along religious lines. Besides this, bringing all the Anglophones together under one roof had to be a positive, given our declining numbers." Therefore, the change was regarded as advantageous, as English-speaking Catholics not served by Gaspesia and the Islands would come under their jurisdiction, resulting in higher enrolment figures, and therefore increased funding. As such, there was a general consensus that the religious cleavage was no longer a dominant feature of Quebec society, and, as a result, the transition to linguistic boards from a strictly theoretical position was justifiable. As such, the board itself did not object to the elimination of the denominational system, but, rather, supported the creation of linguistic boards throughout the province.

However, this is not to imply that there were not serious reservations to the Marois proposals. Among the major concerns voiced from the board was the sheer geographic size of the proposed board, which would make the administration of such an apparatus most difficult. This could lead to commissioners having to travel great distances to attend meetings, and could possibly lead to a reduction in the quality of service offered at the local level, especially to those students classified as special

needs, since services of this nature would undoubtedly be offered only in the larger centers, in this case, Quebec City. As well, another contentious issue was what type of voice would the peninsula have within this new board. While Gifford speculated that there could possibly have been five or six commissioners from the Gaspe, it would have certainly resulted in a diminished voice, and, furthermore, local control would be essentially lost, with the board office in New Carlisle being closed or down-sized, and, power being vested in a central office most likely situated in Quebec City. Essentially, as most interviewees stated, Gaspesia and the Islands would become a small fish in a big pond.

Also, with the government continually stressing the economic advantages of having linguistic boards in Quebec, there was a fear that this would result in further reductions of operating budgets for school boards, which would have detrimentally affected the already cash-strapped Gaspesia and the Islands School Board. However, as Cyrus Journeau points out, while there could have been savings from having a linguistic system, perhaps, in linking the quest for budgetary constraint with the elimination of denominational rights, it became more facile for the government to pursue this course of action. As such, it would appear that under either a denominational or linguistic system, there would be no great windfall of largesse to the school boards, so, any concern over reduced budgets, were, in effect, premature, and possibly unwarranted.

A final area where the board also expressed concern was in regards to the manner in which English rights would be protected under the new linguistic boards. Would

protection of the English language be safeguarded under the new boards as adequately as it had been under the confessional system? According to Daryl Beebe, a teacher at New Carlisle High School, any action by the government is political in nature, and, more often than not, is an attempt to strengthen the French language, to the detriment of the English language, so, it was a natural reaction on the part of the board to be concerned about the move to linguistic boards. But, as Cyrus Journeau was quick to point out, the government made assurances that the minority language would be protected under the new arrangement. Accordingly, Chapter VIII, section 72 of the *Charter of the French Language* was cited as a provision which would guarantee English instruction.

As this section stated:

> Nothing...shall preclude instruction in English to foster the learning thereof, in accordance with the formalities and on the conditions prescribed in the basic school regulations established by the Government under section 447 of the Education Act.

Like Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, most of the other school boards that would have merged to create this new "mega-board" had serious reservations about the changes. The Eastern Townships School Board, whose territory would have been substantially reduced, stood to lose hundereds of students from Drummondville, Victoriaville, Kingsey, Ulverton, and South Durham, and, as a result, were adamantly opposed to the proposal. William Pennefather, Director-General of the Eastern Quebec School Board, stated unequivocally that with some 3,500 students, 32 schools in 18 buildings, and a vast territory already, the proposed changes were also

simply unacceptable. According to Pennefather: "...what happened here was the government just took the norms laid out for the Francophone boards and applied it to the Anglophones, knowing it wouldn't necessarily make sense. We're hoping they'll be flexible" (in Dow, April 20, 1997: 7).

As a result, it was clear from the outset that the boards affected had serious concerns with respect to the creation of a "mega-board," and, essentially, all parties concerned were in a state of real confusion. As Gifford stated in April of 1997: "No one's really sure about the possible deviations which could be accepted...Everyone's in the same boat, asking where we are going?" (in Dow, April 13, 1997: 3).

The Negotiations Commence

With the unveiling of her plans on March 24, 1997, Education Minister Pauline Marois did stipulate that there would be a process of consultation with all of the denominational boards, but, all recommendations from the boards would have to be received by the ministry in Quebec City by June 4th, leaving some two months for discussions. All those interviewed were in agreement that these deadlines were very restrictive, and, perhaps unrealistic, and that, in effect, the government was moving far too quickly in its efforts to create linguistic boards. Many suggested, at least implicitly, that the guidelines were so stringent as to quell any potential public backlash to the elimination of denominational boards. According to Gifford, the government was fully cognizant of how the public might respond, and, obviously, "...they had done their homework." As one former commissioner stated:

> It would be rather naive to assume that rights which

> had been constitutionally protected since 1867 would be shelved without any outcry. I realize that religion is not as important as it once was, but there are still those who believe that the confessionality of the system had to be upheld, particularly among the Catholic community, so, the Premier and his Minister were quite aware of the hostility this move would create. By limiting the time for reflection, it effectively shut down any chance for an uprising....

Thus, working against severe time constraints, emergency negotiations commenced between Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, and officials from both the Greater Seven Islands School Board and Greater Quebec school boards. It was perfectly clear from the outset that the school boards in Quebec City were not interested in entertaining any proposals dealing with amalgamation. However, Gaspesia and the Islands, as well as Greater Seven Islands, were both in agreement that a merger between these two boards was feasible. According to Gifford: "most of us [agreed] that this geographical unit with 1,600 to 1,700 students would be feasible if the money [was] there to run it properly" (in Dow, April 20, 1997: 7). For David Carver, Director-General of the Greater Seven Islands School Board: "our clientele [resembled] each other. We [were] both rural communities based on fishing and farming. And Gaspesia [showed] a commitment to maintaining small schools which [was] also important to us" (in Dow, April 20, 1997: 7).

Gaspesia and the Islands maintained throughout the negotiations that they would rather keep their current territory, which they considered to be enough of a challenge in terms of distances and meeting the special needs of small schools. However, if a merger was inevitable, Gaspesia and the Islands were prepared to amalgamate with

Greater Seven Islands, and, by mid-May, after numerous meetings, and unending conference calls, an agreement to this effect had been reached, although the status of the Baie Comeau Dissentient Protestant Board remained in question.

On May 23rd, a brief was presented in Quebec City to Grant Hawley, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, who would present his own recommendations to the minister by June 3rd. Thus, the fate of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board was completely beyond its control, for, as was pointed out by all those interviewed, while there was room for minimal imput, the final decision rested with the ministry in Quebec City, and, without question, the board would have to accept any decision arrived at by Marois and her department.

Finally, on June 27th, after nearly one month of nervous nail-biting, the Education Minster unveiled her plans for linguistic boards, and, as was expected, Gaspesia and the Islands would be merged with Seven Islands, Baie comeau, Métis Beach, and possibly Schefferville - a territory which would cover one third of the entire province. It is interesting, as Terry Maloney points out, that the board hierarchy first learned that their proposals had been accepted through checking the provincial government web site for updates. According to Wade Gifford, the merger was much as the school board had thought it would be. With the bulk of students located within the Gaspe, the Director-General was confident that the board office would most likely remain on the peninsula, and, furthermore, most jobs, such as those of both janitors and teachers would be maintained. In the opinion of Terry Maloney, once the plan was unveiled, there was a general mood within the board that, at a very minimum, it still existed.

According to a former commissioner:

> I don't want to speak for everyone, but, it was my feeling that many of the board employees feared that the government could have easily decided to merge to a greater degree than they had. This could have resulted in no local control over education. In fact, it could have resulted in the coast having such a minor position, that our interests would have been completely overlooked. I guess, in a way, the merger was the least of all the possible evils which may have surfaced.

For Wade Gifford, the new board, which would cover a huge territory, would conceivably cost less to operate than the previous structure. "He noted that only one Director-General [would] be required, that administrative activities would be centralized to cut some costs, and that other steps could be taken" (Dow, July 6, 1997: 1). This view was supported by Guy Lelièvre, the Member of the National Assembly for Gaspe, who confirmed that the new board would save money, despite its territory, because the role of the new linguistic boards would be limited, with more decision-making powers being vested in the school communities (Dow, July 6, 1997: 2). Thus, in the opinion of Gifford, it was conceivable that the new Council of Commissioners would meet only the required four times a year, while leaving more decisions in the hands of the Executive Committee.

Community Reaction to the Proposed Change

The analysis of the transition to a linguistic board would be incomplete without taking into account the reaction of Gaspesians to the proposals. According to all those who were interviewed, the general public was not particularly concerned with the changes afoot in the educational realm. As Wade Gifford stated, most individuals

do not take a particular interest in these issues, since they seldom impact upon their daily lives in any meaningful manner. As Terry Maloney put it, most people's reaction was simply "what change," in referring to the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges.

However, this is not to suggest that the issue was devoid of any interest on the coast. Certainly, the local community newspapers such as *Spec*, and its French-language counterparts, devoted particular attention to chronicling the demise of denominational boards, and their replacement by linguistic ones. As well, local television stations such as CBC TV and CHAU-TV reported on the issue in its daily newscasts. As such, despite the fact that the matter failed to capture the attention of the local citizenry, it was considered to be newsworthy none the less.

In its efforts to inform parents with children enrolled within the schools administered by Gaspesia and the Islands, the school board sent various correspondences to these parents regarding the proposed move towards linguistic boards. Therefore, according to Daryl Beebe, families were quite well advised regarding the future educational arrangements which were to be implemented. According to Cyrus Journeau, of those parents who were involved and actively voiced opinions, the creation of linguistic boards was generally regarded in the affirmative. Yet, despite the efforts by the board, most parents remained rather passive actors in the preliminary stages of the transition, either because of apathy, or uncertainty over what the plan actually entailed.

However, the docility so prevalent in the Protestant community at large was not

evident within the Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA). This advocacy group, established in 1975 in response to the intensification of nationalist sentiment throughout the province, had, as its primary interest, the furtherance of English rights on the Gaspe Peninsula. For CASA, which largely equated profession of the Protestant faith as synonymous with being a member of the Anglophone community, the denominational rights guaranteed according to section 93 of the *British North America Act, 1867*, could not simply be eliminated without assurances for the new English-language boards. As such, almost from the outset, the president of CASA, Lynden Bechervaise, himself a former Director-General of the Regional School Board of Gaspesia, asserted that while not opposed to linguistic boards, some type of guarantee to the Anglophone community, be it constitutional or otherwise, would have to be made in regards to the creation of linguistic boards. As he stated in September of 1997: "Right now we feel we have some kind of protection for confessional boards...we're not opposed to the change as long as some kind of guarantee - Constitutional or some other kind - is made. Whatever they can come up with" (In Dow, February 23, 1997: 2).

As a result, the position of CASA was similar to that voiced by Alliance Quebec (AQ), who were equally vociferous in their demands that the provincial government take steps to ensure the continued existence of English control over its educational institutions.

With the announcement in June by Education Minister Pauline Marois regarding the creation of a "mega-board," CASA was decidedly against such a move, and, in a

brief presented at a private hearing organized by the Member of the National Assembly for Gaspe, Guy Lelièvre, Bechervaise said amalgamation of the Gaspesia Board with those of Seven Islands and Baie Comeau might make sense, but, the creation of a board to serve all of Eastern Quebec was not realistic. According to one CASA activist:

> ...the initial proposal was unacceptable. Can you just imagine how much clout we would have had with the big players from Quebec City. CASA had to take the stand that it did, since we are, after all, a spokesman for the rights of people on the coast....For me, it was important to have a locally controlled English board, and, in no way was amalgamation the way to ensure this.

As such, CASA was in agreement with the position adopted by the hierarchy of Gaspesia and the Islands. According to Cyrus Journeau, then Assistant Director-General of the school board, the support of CASA was welcome, and, throughout the remainder of the transition, this English rights advocacy group was kept well-informed of the manner in which the government was planning to pursue the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges within the province.

Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the Gaspe Peninsula is a region quite unique within the province of Quebec. With its population being divided between French-speaking Catholics, who are the majority, and English-speaking Protestants, the coast is unlike other areas, where two distinct groups cannot be as easily delineated.

In a similar manner to the rest of the province, education, based on religion,

evolved from schools administered by municipalities, to the configuration in place in 1997-1998, in which Protestant education was the responsibility of the Gaspesia and the Islands School Board. With ten schools scattered along the south shore of the Gaspe, and the Magdalen Islands, and, with enrollments totaling some 1,100 students, the board provided a high degree of service to its clientele.

However, since the 1990s, an ever-increasing demand for the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges, and, the creation of linguistic school boards permeated the upper echelons of the government. Finally, in 1997, Education Minister Pauline Marois announced her intention to proceed towards this end. While Gaspesia and the Islands supported this plan, it was reluctant to embrace the notion of one English-language "mega-board" which would have served all of Eastern Quebec. Thus, through negotiation and compromise, it was decided that in fact, Gaspesia and the Islands would merge with Greater Seven Islands and Baie Comeau. Thus, the territory to be administered by the new school board had, in effect, been determined. However, there still existed a great degree of uncertainty as to the manner in which the new proposals put forward would be realized, and, it is these issues which the subsequent chapter will address.

Chapter 4:

Linguistic School Boards and the Aftermath

Introduction

With the announcement by Education Minster Pauline Marois on June 27, 1997, it was clear that the denominational Gaspesia and the Islands School Board would disappear, to be replaced by a linguistic board by June of 1998. The transition to this new board, which would cover the South shore of the Gaspe peninsula, Seven Islands, Baie Comeau as well as Métis Beach (for a graphic depiction of the territory served by the new board, refer to Appendix C), would pose numerous interesting challenges during the next twelve months.

Of course, as Cyrus Journeau pointed out, the fact that the territory for this new board was smaller than what the government had initially proposed was obviously an advantage for Gaspesia and the Islands, since it was by far the largest board involved in the new merger, and, thus, the possibility of maintaining the central board office on the peninsula was very good. Furthermore, Journeau believed that the boards to be merged faced the same problems, had a similar cultural identity, and dealt with needs which were not entirely dissimilar. Thus, in amalgamating school boards which were, in essence, very much alike, it would be the responsibility of the new administrative apparatus to ensure that the quality of education for all students to be served was comparable, if not superior, than that offered by the former denominational structure.

Without question, the impact of the transition from a denominational to a linguistic board had yet to be realized, and, it was only during the following months that the

true ancillary effects of such a modification of the education system would be felt, as the ramifications would reverberate throughout the Gaspe peninsula.

The Progression Continues

There is general agreement among all those concerned that the efforts of Wade Gifford, the Director-General of Gaspesia and the Islands, in representing the school board in its negotiations with both the government as well as other boards during the initial phase of the transition to a linguistic structure were laudable. According to one former commissioner:

> Wade [Gifford] must be commended for the role he took in the entire affair. Even though he had planned retirement, and, his health was an issue, he felt it was his obligation to stay on and see it through. The effort he put into ensuring that Gaspesia and the Islands would receive the best deal possible from Quebec City was very much appreciated....In fact, had it not been for him, perhaps there would be no board to speak of on the coast, and that would have been a most unfortunate conclusion to the situation.

However, despite his valiant efforts, by April of 1997, due in part to his own poor health, Gifford had stepped down as Director-General of Gaspesia and the Islands. Thus, the principal architect of the board's response to the proposed "mega-board," and the person who had guided Gaspesia and the Islands through the preliminary stages of the transition had now departed the scene. Thus, responsibility for overseeing the implementation of a linguistic arrangement fell squarely on the shoulders of Cyrus Journeau, who was named acting Director-General of the board. The new position, according to Journeau, was looked upon as an interesting

challenge, given the vast array of changes which were forthcoming.

Among the first issue which the new Director-General was "faced" with was the uncertainty over the proposed merger of the former denominational boards. After several meetings with Seven Islands, it was obvious that both administrations were in concert. However, the Baie Comeau board, which had indicated a preference in remaining with the Eastern Quebec Regional Board, was apprehensive that this merger would leave them without a voice in the administration of the new system. Thus, Journeau was forced to open an immediate line of dialogue with Baie Comeau, in an attempt to quell their fears that any concerns they had would not be adequately addressed by a board controlled by the Gaspe. Coupled with this was the consolidation of teachers and students from Métis Beach, who, having been previously with the Eastern Quebec Regional Board, would now be in a completely new administrative setup.

At the same time, the board still had no details about the impact of integrating Anglophone Catholic students from Gaspe, Perce and Chandler. While students in both Gaspe and Perce could easily be accommodated at local schools, such was not the case in Chandler, where the board did not have a building.

Thus, it was clear that the new Director-General was confronted with many issues of great importance. To add to the complexity of the condition, the movement to a linguistic board would have to be made in the face of deep budget cuts imposed by the provincial government. Despite the obstacles, Journeau maintains he assumed the position because he enjoyed "tackling new things," and, without question, the number

of issues which would have to be tackled in the coming months would be unending.

The Provisional Council is Established

As Cyrus Journeau has pointed out, from the outset of the proposal to establish linguistic school boards throughout the province, the government was adamant that the restrictive guidelines which they had established were to be met by all boards, regardless of the circumstances. Thus, it was imperative that the new administrative structure strive to meet the September 1997 deadline for creating a provisional council. While the *Linguistic School Boards Act* of 1997 explicitly stated that the implementation of the new system was to be achieved by July 1, 1998, in the interim period, provisional councils were to be established to facilitate this transition from denominational to linguistic. As Smith, Foster and Donahue (1999: 118) point out:

> Provisional councils were mandated to undertake all tasks related to the formation of the new linguistic school boards, including the transfer of personnel, division of assets, admission of new students, etc....Each council [would] be composed of elected and parent commissioners from the existing school boards in its territory which offered instruction on September 30, 1997, to at least 100 students in the language of instruction of the new linguistic board.

Thus, by late September, a provisional council was established for the new school board, with Audrey Acteson, former chairperson for Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, being elected as chairperson. At the council's first meeting in October, Cyrus Journeau was named as Director-General for the new board, even though David Carver, Director-General for the Greater Seven Islands School Board, who had withdrawn, was also eligible. Furthermore, it was decided that Gaspesia and the

Islands School Board would handle all budgetary matters, and provide a temporary address for the new school board until the location for a permanent office was determined. As well, the provisional council elected their executive council, and adopted their budget.

> Because of the huge territory the new English school board [would] cover, they [were] offered the largest budget available. There [would] be $40,000 to cover operating expenses, $4,000 per commissioner for travel expenses, remuneration of $2,586 for commissioners, and an additional $3,074 for executive members. The total budget [was] therefore over $150,000. This did not include salary for the professional support required, such as the Director-General and Secretary-General (Dow, 1997: 5).

At the same time, it was agreed that all subsequent meetings of the provisional council would have to be held at locations throughout the territory served by the new board, thus sending a clear message that this would not be an administrative structure dominated by the Gaspe.

The Search for a Name

Until February of 1998, the new English-language school board covering the eastern part of the province, including the Gaspe coast, had no official name, and, for the ministry of education, which demanded that an official name be chosen by April, the board was simply referred to as number 50-02, the official designation imposed by Quebec City.

As such, a contest was launched by the provisional council amongst all schools in an effort to arrive at a name representative of the new board. As a result of this

competition, the name chosen was Gaspesia-North Shore-the Islands, but, the name was immediately rejected by the province's toponymy commission, because it was translatable. According to Cyrus Journeau, a name which was entirely English could have been chosen, but a translatable name corresponding to a specific region was considered unacceptable. Journeau went on to explain that the school board had, in fact, received few submissions which would have met the toponymy commission's guidelines, and, since there were time constraints to contend with, there was not adequate time to ask for re-submissions from the schools, so, the final decision was made by the provisional council (Dow, March 1, 1998: 1). One former commissioner describes the controversy surrounding the proposed name as symbolic of the province's obsession with the issue of language.

> I think it was absolutely ridiculous. Here we have a government in Quebec City that is in the throes of the most dramatic overhaul of the education system in quite some time, and, despite the deadlines they set for the creation of linguistic boards, they can still find time to reject a name, simply because it does not meet their language requirements. It just seems to prove that the government has a great love-affair with making sure that everything fits into their plans of defending the French language. This seems to me to show that the priorities of our government are not really in touch with the realities of this change to linguistic boards.

On February 28th, approximately one month after the proposed name of Gaspesia-North Shore-the Islands had been rejected, a special meeting of the provisional council was convened to select a new name for the school board. After much discussion and some lobbying, it was decided, through a vote of all those in

attendance, to choose the name Eastern Shores. At the meeting, Audrey Acteson, chairperson of the provisional council, quipped that people would be informed as soon as this name was rejected, in reference to the strict guidelines followed by the province's toponymy commission. However, by June, the name had been approved by Quebec City, and, officially, school board number 50-02 would now be referred to as the Eastern Shores School Board (Dow, March 8, 1998: 1).

The Structure of the New Board is Finalized

Having arrived at a name which was satisfactory to both the provisional council, as well as the Quebec government, there still remained the major task of finalizing the structure the new board would assume. Since the new linguistic board was a result of a merger of the former Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, the School Board of Greater Seven Islands, the Baie Comeau Dissentient Board, and Métis Beach, among the most pressing of all the issues was where would the central office be situated. After much debate and speculation, it was announced in late February that New Carlisle would be retained as the administrative center for Eastern Shores. Of course, since the former Gaspesia and the Islands School Board had the largest number of schools, as well as the most students within the new arrangement, it was mutually agreed upon that the central office be maintained on the Gaspe. This decision resulted in the transfer of employees from the former denominational boards to New Carlisle. However, it was also decided that a North Shore office, with a reduced staff, would be maintained in Seven Islands, to coordinate activities which were essentially "local" in nature.

Another major issue which had to be addressed was in regards to the issues of school buildings and students. As was pointed out, Gaspesia and the Islands School Board operated ten schools with some 1,100 students. However, with the creation of a linguistic board, the number of schools rose to 18, with a total student body of approximately 1,600 pupils, through incorporation because of expanded boundaries, and incorporation involving the transfer of Anglophone Catholics. In regards to the former, while the board gained but one school from the Baie Comeau Dissentient Board, as well as one school from Métis Beach, four schools were absorbed into Eastern Shores from the School Board of Greater Seven Islands: Riverview School in Port Cartier, Fleming Elementary School and Queen Elizabeth High School in Seven Islands, and Fermont Elementary School in Fermont. In regards to the latter, the new board was also transferred, from the French language board, Commission Scolaire René Lévesque, formerly the denominational Roman Catholic Commission Scolaire Rocher Perce, 24 students from St. Patrick Elementary School, and 25 students from Polyvalent Mgr. Sevigny (for the composition of the Eastern Shores School Board, refer to Appendix D). As was pointed out previously, since the Eastern Shores had no buildings in this area to accommodate these pupils, an agreement was negotiated with the Commission Scolaire René Lévesque to rent space within the two aforementioned schools in which to educate the 49 students. This sharing of facilities between an English and French language board was also common in regards to the former denominational boards, since Gaspesia and the Islands rented space from Roman Catholic school boards in which to instruct Protestant students, as was, and

still is the case, at the Bonaventure and Gaspe Polyvalents, for example. At the same time, all seven teachers and 40 students from the English Catholic Sacred Heart School in Gaspe were integrated into the Eastern Shores School Board from the French-language Commission Scolaire Chic Chocs, formerly the denominational Roman Catholic Commission Scolaire Falaise.

As a result, through incorporation because of expanded boundaries, as well as incorporation involving the transfer of Anglophone Catholics, with some 18 schools, and 1,600 students, the former Gaspesia and the Islands School Board had grown considerably. Add to this the related fact that there were few, if any French Protestants within the board's territory, and, as a result, the introduction of linguistic boards increased pupil population densities in the English language system. As Terry Maloney points out, in terms of integrating the Roman Catholic students into the Eastern Shores School Board, the decision was quite logical, since having these small schools, which operated in English, within Roman Catholic boards, which operated in French, was not practical. Certainly, these boards had major difficulty in attempting to offer services to such a limited number of students. Therefore, it would seem that in the majority of instances, the former Catholic boards were quite willing to allow the Eastern Shores School Board to assume educational responsibility for these students. As Cyrus Journeau points out, the parents of those students who were integrated into the new board were proud to have their son or daughter attend schools operated by this board. While their professed religion was Roman Catholicism, they were part of the English community, and, as a result, believed that their children would be better

served under this new arrangement.

According to Howard Miller, president of the Gaspesia Teacher's Association, the union did not object to the creation of a linguistic board per se; however, the integration of seven English Catholic teachers from the Sacred Heart School in Gaspe was initially regarded with concern, since it meant that the surplus situation in the greater Gaspe area would become critical, and, because these teachers would maintain their seniority, members of the Gaspesia Teacher's Association were justifiably concerned about job security. With one person on surplus, and, with the additions from Sacred Heart, the additional forty students would not justify the increased number of teachers. However, as Cyrus Journeau pointed out, the surplus staff was put to good use, by separating some split classes, offering a French immersion program, and, through moving teachers to other schools (Dow, March 22, 1998: 1, 6). And, through attrition, the issue of these Catholic teachers possibly "bumping" educators from Gaspesia and the Islands never became an issue.

At the same time, the union had to struggle with other changes brought about by the establishment of linguistic boards. The Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec (CEQ), which had been renamed La Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ), would now represent all local unions within the Francophone school boards; the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers (PAPT), which had represented all teachers in Protestant school boards, had changed its name to the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT), and, would now be responsible for representing local unions in the Anglophone school boards, including educators represented by the former

Provincial Association of Catholic Teachers (PACT). At the local level, the new union, which grew from 100 to 150 members, would cover Gaspe and the Magdalen Islands teachers, as well as those educators in Baie Comeau, Seven Islands, and Métis Beach, and would be incorporated into the QPAT. Since the Gaspesia Teachers Association was the largest union involved in the merger, it was decided that the draft Constitution would be based on the Gaspe model. While there were initial rumors that the new union would be called the Gulf of St. Lawrence Teacher's Association, after some debate, the name Eastern Shores Teacher's Association was adopted (Dow, March 22, 1998: 6).

Miller also suggested that because of the huge territory covered by Eastern Shores, it was unlikely that all teachers would ever be able to get together at one location for meetings, and, as a result, separate meetings would be held on the North Shore, for instance.

In a similar vain, Terry Maloney pointed out that the sheer growth in geographic size, number of schools, as well as students, has created tremendous difficulty for all those involved with the board. Certainly, elected commissioners would now have to travel great distances to attend board meetings, and, the amount of commuting required by individuals such as the Director-General was extensive. For Maloney, the board's primary psychologist, the change to a linguistic system meant an enormous change in his role, as he was now expected to visit each school and conduct educational testing, which, in his opinion, was unrealistic, given the sheer size of the board. Maloney went on to explain that visiting a school once, and then providing no

opportunity for follow-ups was a great disservice to all those involved. As he stated, the move to a linguistic board meant "taking a wonderful job, and turning it into an impossible job." As a result of the sheer exhaustion caused from having to provide psychological services for some 1,600 students at 18 different schools, Maloney chose to resign his position, since he believed that in his new role, he was not truly "helping" any of the students he was evaluating.

However, the merger of the former denominational boards into one structure has served to unite English students from different regions of the province. As both Journeau and Maloney assert, through such events as public speaking contests, and sports competitions, all pupils are enriched by the experience through having the opportunity to interact with individuals from different regions of the province, with different backgrounds. Thus, the larger board afforded opportunities for student exchange not possible under the former denominational system.

The Election of the Council of Commissioners

The *School Elections Act* stipulates that each school district in Quebec is divided into a number of electoral divisions based upon the number of students enroled in the schools of the school board on September 30th of the preceding school year. As such, the Eastern Shores School Board, with approximately 1,600 students, was allotted nine electoral divisions, with the boundaries for each determined by the Ministry of Education.

It is worth noting that initially, persons eligible to vote in the English school board elections were restricted to those persons who qualified for admission to English

schools under Bill 101 or whose children so qualified. Not surprisingly, the Anglophone community denounced this as a clear indication that the government was attempting to reduce the viability of the English school system. As a result, the final version of the *Linguistic School Boards Act* removed the Bill 101 criterion, but, to appease Francophone nationalists, the two systems were still not placed on an equal footing. As Smith, Foster and Donahue (1999: 121) point out:

> In brief, the starting point for drawing up an electoral list is the list of all electors (for the school district) prepared by the Chief Electoral Officer of Quebec. Those persons with children in the English language board of that territory and others who have sent in a written notice that they wish to be on the English language board are removed and put on a list of electors for the latter. Thus, the original list becomes the base list for the French language board but anyone, other than a parent, who wishes to vote for the English language board must get himself or herself on the list.

Of course, the right to vote for a particular linguistic school board was extremely important, given the fact that voting for either an English- or French-language board would determine where a person's property taxes would be directed. While individual property owners with children in school payed their taxes to the school board or boards in which their children were enrolled, other individuals could choose the board they wised to pay their taxes.

With Sunday, June 14, 1998 chosen as the date for the elections, officials had to scramble to meet the deadlines imposed by Quebec City, as a new electoral list had to be developed. Cyrus Journeau admits that he was extremely concerned about the electoral list, since there were a number of names of eligible voters which were not

included. As Journeau stated: "The number of electors on the list [was] less than our student enrolment, and, we [didn't] understand where all the parents' names went" (in Dow, May 3, 1998: 2). As such, a massive publicity campaign was launched to ensure that all persons were aware of how to register to vote, with the Committee for Anglophone Social Action undertaking a telephone campaign to inform voters of the impending elections.

At the same time, the Quebec School Boards Association, which represented the nine new English school boards in the province, also stressed the importance for all eligible voters to take an active interest in the elections. As its president, Ron Edwards stated: "The June 14 elections offer a unique opportunity for the English-speaking community to send a message that the control and management of our school system is important to the community" (in Dow, May 10, 1998: 10).

However, at the May 9th meeting of the provisional council, there were still only 987 names on the electoral list for the Eastern Shores School Board. Since the last electoral list for Gaspesia and the Islands School Board contained 4,200 names, and, given the fact that the new board covered a larger territory with more families, it was assumed that the list would contain between 6,000 and 7,000 names. According to Journeau, the tremendous discrepancy in the number of names was very troublesome, and, as such, all commissioners considering running for seats on the new board were asked to meet with voters in their area to ensure that all those eligible were registered. Adding to these woes was the fact that approximately 300 names were rejected for inclusion on the electoral list, because the civic addresses of the parents were not

complete. For example, almost all the residents of Entry Island were not included because there are no proper civic addresses used in the area. However, this technical problem was eventually dealt with, and all names were subsequently accepted by the government (Dow, May 17, 1998: 3).

By May 31st, officials were scrambling to meet the flood of people registering to vote, as constant and continuous revision was made to the electoral list. According to Lise Beaulieu, President of Elections for Eastern Shores, by June, 3,000 names were on the list, but, the number changed by the hour as new names were added; in fact, some 968 names were added in just one day (Dow, May 31, 1998: 3).

Despite the increase in the electoral list, mistakes continued to plague the election process, as numerous Francophones had mistakenly registered to vote for the English board. Adding to the confusion was the inability of Canada Post to deliver election notices to potential voters because these information packages were sent to civic rather than postal addresses, and addressed to "occupant" rather than to specific individuals, resulting in postal employees not being able to ascertain who should receive the notices (Dow, May 31, 1998: 3). In response to this complication, CASA demanded that the provincial government postpone the school board elections, citing the fact that many voters had simply discarded their information packages since they resembled "junk mail." The English rights organization was also concerned that absentee landlords, who could not vote in the elections, but, could pay their taxes to the English school board, had not been informed by the provincial government (Dow, May 24, 1998: 1, 5). Since a failure on the part of eligible voters to cast a ballot

would result in the property taxes of that person not being directed towards the Eastern Shores School Board, the resource base would thus be diminished. In echoing the demands of CASA, Alliance Quebec president Constance Middleton-Hope also called for an extended revision period.

As a result of the numerous problems in ensuring that all Anglophones were on the electoral list, the Quebec government decided that instead of postponing the elections, they would amend the election law so as to permit voters to choose the school board they wished to be affiliated with on the day of the election. Thus, on June 14, 1998 elections were held throughout the province for all of the new English- and French-language school boards. A larger number of voters turned out to vote in the election for the Eastern Shores School Board than for any other board in the province. Of the five wards in which ballots were cast (six candidates were unopposed), 1,736 people voted, with over 50% of eligible voters turning out in every ward, and, with the average for the five wards being 64.53%. However, there were problems with polling, as heavy turnouts resulted in considerable delays, especially for those not on the electoral list for Eastern Shores. As well, at the advance poll in Matapedia, the wrong ballots had been supplied, resulting in ballots having to be brought from Escuminac, and, delaying the start of voting (Dow, June 21, 1998: 1, 6).

In spite of these obstacles, the Eastern Shores School Board had elected its first council of commissioners, with Audrey Acteson being subsequently elected its first chair. Thus, as July 1st approached, the structure of the new linguistic board was officially in place. However, the transition to a fully linguistic board was still

incomplete, and further issues would have to be addressed in the coming months.

The Road to Reform Nears Completion

By mid-July 1998, the Eastern Shores School Board was putting the final touches on its administrative plan for the 1998-1999 academic year. With both principals and head teachers being named, and, with formal registration for all students commencing at various locations, the board was in the final stages of the massive reform which eliminated all denominational right and privileges throughout the province.

According to Bill 180, which was adopted in 1997, the role of schools within the new linguistic boards was to change radically, largely through the creation of a new school governing board, which replaced the former orientation committees, and, would be composed of parents, staff, students and community members, which, in a largely advisory capacity, would make recommendations to the school board. However, unlike the orientation committees, all of the above groups would be given the same number of seats on the board, thus promoting the creation of an educational community where decisions would be made in a collegial manner, drawing upon the ideas, skills and experiences of all those involved. While sections 74 to 95 of the *Education Act* detail the functions to be exercised by these governing boards, as Smith, Foster and Donahue (1999: 156) point out, these structures were basically delegated three modes of decision making: (1)adopting but not approving such items as the budget for the school; (2)approving proposals by the principal, such as student rules; and (3)approving events like cultural and sports activities.

Within the Eastern Shores School Board, the structure and composition of all

school governing boards were in place by August of 1998, but, as Cyrus Journeau asserts, the new system, rather than reducing work at the board level, simply added more bureaucracy, since the board would still be responsible for allocating budgets to each school, and administering their bank accounts. As such, Journeau believes that the governing boards, who have no real power, but, must nevertheless be consulted, serve as a type of watchdog for the government in regards to all activities undertaken by the board.

In terms of the education provided to students within the schools administered by these new linguistic boards, the curriculum did not change from that offered by the former denominational boards. According to Daryl Beebe, a teacher at New Carlisle High School, the transition to a language-based arrangement had virtually no impact on what was being taught within the schools of Quebec. As Smith, Foster and Donahue (1999: 190-191) point out, the school must ensure that all students master basic knowledge and skills within five fields of study: languages, technology, science and mathematics, social sciences, arts education, and personal development. Without question, the former denominational system, with its reliance, particularly within the Catholic system, on its confessional character, was maintained under the new linguistic boards. As section 5 of the *Education Act* states:

> Every student other than a student enrolled in vocational training or adult education has a right to choose, every year, between either Catholic or Protestant moral and religious instruction or moral instruction.
>
> He also has a right to choose, every year, moral and

> religious instruction of a religious confession other than Catholic or Protestant where such instruction is given at the school.
>
> In elementary school and in the first two years of secondary school, the parents shall exercise the right of choice on behalf of their child.

Within the Eastern Shores School Board, the vast majority of students have chosen to enrol in moral instruction, which is a trend prevalent throughout the province in both the French and English language boards, perhaps representative of the decreasing importance of religion in Quebec society.

Perhaps the most difficult issue with which the Eastern Shores School Board had to deal with was a financial crisis, manufactured in Quebec City, and, which arose as an ancillary result of the move to a linguistic system. Faced with the realization that with such an immense territory to cover, the Ministry of Education, through its neglecting to factor in the costs associated with travel, would place the board in a most precarious financial position. As Cyrus Journeau pointed out, a flight, for instance, from Seven Islands to Fermont costs $1,000, so, the board had to appeal to the government for increased funding to help cover travel costs. Through meetings with the Ministry of Education in Quebec City, Journeau, along with Fouad Elerksoussy, Secretary-General for Eastern Shores, relayed to government officials the board's estimated shortfall of some $270,000 for the 1998-1999 fiscal year. Having received no commitments from the ministry in regards to increased funding, the board began to consider ways to reduce the costs associated with travel, including the use of teleconferencing, which would save a considerable amount of money in the

long-term (Dow, December 13, 1998: 5).

Despite the optimism expressed by Eastern Shores officials that the government would provide assistance, on May 20, 1999, Education Minister François Legault announced that $1.2 million would be guaranteed for schools with less than 200 students in the Lower Saint Lawrence and Gaspe regions. But, the Eastern Shores School Board received only a small percentage of this, according to Journeau. As he stated:

> Every one of the eighteen schools in our board fits the criteria. There is not one with more than 200 students. But while the government seems to have looked at the needs of small schools, it appears they have used the same formula for allocating the money. And that doesn't take into account our geography (in Dow, June 27, 1999: 27).

For Journeau, the allocation resulted in each school receiving only an additional $1,600, which fell far short of meeting the board's financial crisis. Adding to the board's woes were the enrolment figures for the 1999 school year, which indicated that the 18 schools administered by Eastern Shores had some 1,580 students, which was 40 to 45 fewer pupils than had been anticipated, with most of the decline within the Gaspe. By November, the board was showing a $77,000 deficit, and, was faced with having to absorb a loss of an additional $129,000, due to the drop in the number of students. Given its immense territory, the board was not able to save money though moving elementary students to other schools, as was the case with urban boards, and, furthermore, because of the travel factor, Eastern Shores was unable to have one-day board meetings (Dow, November 7, 1999: 13).

By June of 2000, the bleak economic picture for the Eastern Shores School Board was revealed, when it was announced by interim Finance Director Nicole Cosgrove that the deficit for 2000-2001 would be $640,723, due, in large measure, to a reduction in the number of students served by the board, as well as a short-changing by the government in its budgetary envelope for teachers. While Director-General Journeau remains optimistic that additional monies may be allocated to alleviate this deficit, the future of the board, despite its complete transition to a linguistic arrangement, remains very much in question.

Conclusion

As the preceding discussion has revealed, the twelve months following the announcement in June of 1997 that all denominational school boards in Quebec would be replaced by linguistic ones were dominated by both obstacles and challenges.

With the merger of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board with Seven Islands, Baie Comeau and Métis Beach, Director-General Cyrus Journeau was faced with a number of issues which had to be addressed. First, a provisional council had to be established to facilitate the transition from denominational to linguistic. Among the matters addressed by the council were: (1)the selection of Eastern Shores as the official name for the new board; (2)the decision to maintain New Carlisle as the administrative center; and (3)the transfer and integration of both schools as well as students into the Eastern Shores School Board.

The elimination of all denominational rights and privileges also led to the former Gaspesia and the Islands Teacher's Association being renamed the Eastern Shores

Teacher's Association, as the inclusion of educators from Seven Islands, Baie Comeau and Métis Beach pushed membership in the new union to 150 people.

By June of 1998, the transition to a linguistic board was progressing, as the first council of commissioners had been elected. It is worth noting that this was achieved in spite of numerous difficulties, and, amidst constant cries from the Committee for Anglophone Social Action that the elections be postponed.

Despite these pitfalls, Eastern Shores has evolved into a linguistic school board, complete with school governing boards, and, offering a curriculum remarkably similar to that provided by Gaspesia and the Islands. However, viability of the new board remains in question, as a continued deficit continues to loom, and, it is impossible to state with any degree of certainty what the future will hold.

Chapter 5:

Some Final Thoughts on Denominational and Linguistic School Boards

Introduction

When I began this thesis in earnest some twelve months ago, I embarked upon a study which I believed would shed light into an area in which there was a scarcity of research, that being the 1997 transition from denominational to linguistic school boards in Quebec. After having arrived at a conscious decision to focus my analysis on the manner in which the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges in the province impacted the Eastern Shores School Board, formerly Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, it was decided that in regards to this thesis, a pattern theory, which would tease out meaningful regularities or themes from the data, would be employed. In a qualitative study such as this, such a theory was an excellent vehicle in that it served to reduce rather large quantities of data into a lesser number of analytical units.

To facilitate in teasing out these patterns, a descriptive design was also employed. While rote description is often regarded as the most basic form of research, because it has both a contemporary as well as historical dimension, and, owing to the fact that there is an inextricable link between the establishment of denominational rights and privileges in 1846, and the elimination of these rights 151 years later through the creation of linguistic school boards, a descriptive design appeared to be the most cogent model to use in teasing out existing patterns.

Thus, having arrived at both a theoretical model to use, as well as the design to be

employed, all that remained was the gathering of data. Through interviews with members of the board hierarchy, as well as scrutinizing all available texts, articles, government documents, and newspaper accounts, I was able to craft a thesis which I believe fairly and accurately represents this transition.

A Classification of Emergent Patterns

In scrutinizing the information which was gathered during this thesis, it was abundantly clear that there were certain themes, or patterns, which both appeared and re-appeared with a relatively high degree of regularity. As such, while these themes may not have been explicitly pointed out in the previous chapters, it is useful, at this juncture, to highlight these trends for purposes of simplicity and clarity.

The Decline of the Religious Cleavage. Through both the data collection phase as well as the writing of this study, it was abundantly clear that the religious cleavage in Quebec, which, up until the 1960s, was perhaps the most dominant force, had declined in importance to the point where it was regarded as an anachronism, and, its position within the tenets of a modern secular society were regarded as suspect. At present, the descent of the religious cleavage is evidenced and manifested by the limited role the Roman Catholic Church now plays, particularly in the realm of education. Since the creation of a provincial ministry of education during the Quiet Revolution, the Church's powers, according to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, have been usurped at an increasingly alarming rate, and, it seems evident to experts and observers alike, that the religious face of Quebec is but a relic of the past.

The Rise of a Linguistic Cleavage. As the religious cleavage in Quebec was

crumbling, a new linguistic reality was emerging concurrently. During the 1970s, and continuing to the present, language has become the most dominant and divisive factor in the province. Thus, it is clear that while the denominational school boards were a perfect complement for a society so imbued with religion, they were a rather imperfect parallel for a world in which language was the cardinal consideration. As such, it appears that there is a unanimity of agreement among those interviewed in that it was the decline in religion, coupled with the ascension of language to a position of importance, that prompted the government to vigorously pursue the creation of linguistic school boards. Of course, this is not to imply that economic factors, such as the need to battle the deficit, were not taken into consideration, but, such facts were used as a type of secondary justification to buttress the ministry of education's primary policy.

The Acceptance and Desirability of Linguistic School Boards. Without question, the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges in Quebec was generally regarded favorably. In the case of the hierarchy at the Eastern Shores School Board, it was logical to move towards a linguistic system, since it would serve to unite all English students under one board. In fact, there was unanimous agreement that the change should have occurred three to four decades ago, but, because of a number of stumbling blocks, chief among them the denominational provisions contained in section 93 of the *British North America Act, 1867*, no provincial government was able to successfully implement linguistic boards. Thus, when the Parti Québécois was able to secure a constitutional amendment in 1998, it was viewed as the means to

achieving a necessary modification to the existing system. Building upon the logic that there is invariably strength in numbers, such a transition would result in an infusion of students into the board system, as English-speaking Roman Catholics would now be served by the Eastern Shores. With the schools along the Gaspe witnessing declining enrolment figures, an influx of new students had to be regarded as positive. Besides this, with guarantees from the provincial government that the English language would be adequately safeguarded under the new system, and with these guarantees being enshrined in the *Education Act*, the Eastern Shores School Board was satisfied that the new linguistic arrangement would serve the disparate needs of its clientele as well as the former denominational boards.

The Uniform Transition to a Linguistic Arrangement. When the initial proposals were advanced by the Quebec Ministry of Education, there were initial concerns that such a transition would not be easy to implement. Of course, with denominational rights being guaranteed in the 1867 *British North America Act*, it was obvious that such a scheme would pose numerous obstacles and difficulties. Yet, with unrelenting recalcitrance, the Minister of Education, Pauline Marois, embarked upon dismantling the province's denominational boards, and, replacing them with 69 language based boards. In the case of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, despite having to merge with boards from Seven Islands, Baie Comeau, and Métis Beach, as well as the accompanying liturgy of tasks which accompanied this forced amalgamation, the transition to a linguistic structure was achieved by July 1, 1998. Of course, there were stumbling blocks and obstacles, but, overall, those interviewed indicated that the

transition went remarkably smooth, considering the magnitude of the reform, and, also taking into account, government-imposed deadlines which made the transition all the more strained.

Lack of Public Involvement. In examining the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards, it is particularly interesting to note that throughout this process, there was little, if any, public interest. While parents who had children enrolled within the schools administered by Gaspesia and the Islands were kept abreast of all developments through correspondence, it appears that this failed to raise the interest of most. Furthermore, despite both television and newspaper reports dealing with the issue, the general public remained virtually unconcerned, and, it would seem, unaware of what was actually transpiring within the educational realm. While it must be noted that the Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA), an English rights advocacy group on the Gaspe, remained vociferous and vigilant in its role as guardian of the rights for those it represented, this was but one of the few instances of public involvement, and, as such, the transition was implemented with but a modicum of curiosity from the whole of society.

The Prevalence of Ancillary Changes. It is worth noting that in examining this transition, the most significant changes to the system were those that were ancillary to the elimination of all denominational rights and privileges. More specifically, the amalgamation of school boards, and the issue of budgetary constraints, were largely political decisions which accompanied the transition to a language based system, and, without question, each of these changes could have occurred at different times. Thus,

it is clear that while the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards was relatively uncontroversial, the other related issues that accompanied this transition did cause problems.

Suggestions for Further Research

As was pointed out, the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards in Quebec was a most arduous process accomplished in a relatively brief period of time. However, despite the brevity of the process, these reforms had a significant impact on the province's education system. In terms of this particular thesis, the focus was on the manner in which this transition impacted the former Protestant Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, now the Eastern Shores School Board, an English-language board serving the Gaspe peninsula, the Magdalen Islands, the North Shore, and Métis Beach. As such, this study was limited in scope, in that the research conducted was confined to one particular board, with the majority of insight gleaned from interviews with pre-selected members of the board hierarchy.

Thus, building upon the research base of this thesis, there is a vast opportunity for further research, particularly since this is an area of investigation in which there has been a lack of scholarly pursuit. Certainly, it would be quite interesting to determine how this transition impacted upon the French language boards which serve the Gaspe coast. Were the experiences of these boards similar or dissimilar to that experienced by the Eastern Shores? As well, another avenue of pursuit would be in comparing the Eastern Shores with any of the other eight English language boards in the province. Would there exist commonalities, or would the transition have impacted each in a

rather unique manner? A further study of interest would be in contrasting the experiences of rural and urban boards. It would seem logical to assume that the transition would have impacted a rural board like Eastern Shores in a dramatically different fashion than it would have an urban school board. Also, since the religious to linguistic transition, strictly defined, was uncontroversial, the obvious question to be addressed is why? The relative absence of controversy in the case of Quebec stands in marked contrast to the bitter struggle in Newfoundland regarding the elimination of denominational schools. Thus, why were there such dramatic differences between these two instances? And, finally, one cannot discount the value to be gleaned from a replication of this thesis. It is interesting to hypothesize whether or not a researcher relying upon my design would obtain results which would either conform or reject my findings.

Regardless, it remains that it is vital for further research into the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards be undertaken, for, it is only through such academic pursuits that insights into the intricacies of this process can be realized.

The Legacy of the Past

In examining the former Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, there is a consensus that despite the fact that all denominational rights and privileges have been eliminated in the province, the former confessional system has a definite legacy. According to the members of the board hierarchy, the denominational arrangement was a logical compromise to the tension between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism so prevalent in the 1800s, and, this dual educational order, which

prevailed for over 150 years, met the divergent needs of both communities. As a result, the legacy of denominational school boards is that given the time period in which they were in operation, they can be regarded as quite a unique accomplishment, in that despite their longevity, the confessional system, in separating the two communities in terms of education, led to the development of two distinct groups of citizens with divergent, yet similar systems.

Of course, despite the fact that their legacy will remain intact, all respondents agree that the denominational system is a relic of the past, and, it will never return as a fixture of Quebec education.

Conclusion

Since linguistic school boards have only been in effect since July 1, 1998, they are still in their absolute infancy. Thus, the government continues to monitor these structures quite closely, so as to ensure that they are meeting all of their mandated expectations. According to those interviewed, the government is quite pleased with the progression from denominational to linguistic, and believe that the new system is operating much as it was designed. Of course, as a former Director-General points out, while there may have been a theoretical change in the Eastern Shores structure, the actual day-to-day operations remain essentially identical to what they were under the former system, and, in fact, the major changes to the system are a result of ancillary changes which accompanied the transition from denominational to linguistic school boards.

In the case of Eastern Shores, it is abundantly clear that the future remains very

much in question. With ever decreasing student enrolments, and, with massive deficits being recorded each year, the board's long-term survival is in jeopardy. According to one interviewee, it is not entirely inconceivable that at some point, the government could simply assume responsibility for management of the school board, and, this would effectively lead to local control over education being lost, perhaps indefinitely. Add to this the related factor that school board viability continues to be a most contested issue, and, in some provinces such as New Brunswick, the government has issued its response to this problem by eliminating all school boards. Thus, the future for Eastern Shores, as well as other boards throughout Quebec, is not entirely promising.

On a larger scale, several issues remain to be dealt with by the provincial government, including the viability of the Superior Council of Education, whose Protestant and Catholic committees have been replaced by English and French language advisory boards. It is argued that under this new arrangement, the position previously enjoyed by the denominational committees has been eroded so as to divest the Council of any substantive power. As a result, many observers believe that this body will simply become an anachronism, and, eventually, will be eliminated entirely. Another area of importance centers around the local property tax for education, which is now stripped of its denominational protection. With this tax only accounting for some 11.76% of the total revenue raised by school boards, it is thought that perhaps Quebec will now move towards "full funding" of education, as is the case in other provinces; of course, this will prevent local boards from entering the taxation

field in any capacity. Furthermore, the entire system continues to be plagued by protest from mainly French parents demanding access to English schools. In the most recent case, which began on June 15, 2000, a group of Montreal parents launched a challenge to the *Charter of the French Language*, arguing that they must be afforded the right to send their children to English schools in order that they may become fully bilingual. As such, the linguistic boards will be a center for conflict, as they are the primary venue through which citizens must request access to educational services. Thus, the future will inevitably be marred by school boards having to reject students, simply because they do not meet specific language requirements as stipulated by the government. Therefore, despite the creation of linguistic boards, the tensions surrounding the issue of language will not evade the educational landscape in Quebec.

Bibliography

Books and Scholarly Articles

Anderson, Gary. *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. 2nd ed. London: Falmer Press, 1998.

Babbie, Earl. *The Practice of Social Research*. 5th ed. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1989.

Bezeau, Lawrence M. *Educational Administration for Canadian Teachers*. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1989.

Bezeau, Lawrence M. *Educational Administration for Canadian Teachers*. 2nd ed. Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995.

Bothwell, Robert. *Canada and Quebec: One Country, Two Histories*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1995.

Boudreau, Spencer. *Catholic Education: The Quebec Experience*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1999.

Cornell, M. Louise. "The Restructuring of Public Education in Quebec: The Quest for Stability," *Restructuring Administrative Policy in Public Schooling*. Yvonne M. Martin and R.J.S. MacPherson. eds. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1993.

Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 1998.

Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative & Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1994.

Davis, G.B., and C.A. Parker. *Writing the Doctoral Dissertation*. 2nd ed. Hauppauge, New York: Barron's Educational Services, 1997.

Finkel, Alvin, Margaret Conrad and Veronica Strong-Boag. *History of the Canadian Peoples: 1867 to the Present*. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1993.

Foster, William F., and William J. Smith. *A Compendium of Source Materials on Quebec Education*. Montreal: Office of Research on Educational Policy, McGill University, 1999.

Francis, Diane. *Fighting for Canada*. Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1996.

Giles, T.E., and A.J. Proudfoot. *Educational Administration in Canada*. 5th ed. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1994.

Gingras, Pierre-Francois, and Neil Nevitte. "The Evolution of Quebec Nationalism," *Quebec - State and Society*. Alain Gagnon. ed. Toronto: Metheuen Publications, 1984.

Henchey, Norman, and Donald Burgess. *Between Past and future: Quebec Education in Transition*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1987.

Hogg, Peter W. *Constitutional Law of Canada*. 4th student ed. Scarborough, Ontario: Thomson Canada Limited, 1996.

Johnson, William. *A Canadian Myth: Quebec, Between Canada and the Illusion of Utopia*. Montreal: Robert Davies Publishing, 1994.

Jongeward, Ray E. "The School Board in the Rural Community," *Understanding School Boards*. Peter J. Cistone. ed. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1975.

Kaplan, A. *The Conduct of Inquiry*. Scranton, Pennsylvania: Chandler, 1964.

King, Maurice J. *The First Step*. Huntingdon, Quebec: Southwest Quebec Publishing, 1993.

Leege, David C., and Wayne L. Francis. *Political Research: Design, Measurement and Analysis*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1974.

Lincoln, Y.S., and E.G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills: SAGE, 1985.

Lutz, Frank W. "Local School Boards as Sociocultural Systems," *Understanding School Boards*. Peter j. Cistone. ed. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1975.

Magnuson, Roger. *A Brief History of Quebec Education: From New France to Parti Québécois*. Montreal: Harvest House Ltd., 1980.

McKay, Ian. *The Challenge of Modernity: A Reader on Post-Confederation Canada*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1992.

Merriam, Sharan B. *Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1988.

Miles, Matthew B., and A. Michael Huberman. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*. Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1990.

Miles, Matthew B., and A. Michael Huberman. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1994.

Milner, Henry. *The Long Road to Reform: Restructuring Public Education in Quebec*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986.

Mirvis, P.H., and S.E. Seashore. "Creating Ethical Relationships in Organizational Research," *The Ethics of Social Research: Volume 1. Surveys and Experiments*. J.E. Sieber. ed. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1982.

Neuman, W.L. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1991.

Patton, Michael Quinn. *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. 2nd ed. Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1990.

Percival, W.P. *Across the Years: A Century of Education in the Province of Quebec*. Montreal: Gazette Printing Company Limited, 1946.

Percival, W.P. *Life in School: An Explanation of the Protestant School System of the Province of Quebec*. Quebec: Department of Education, 1940.

Percival, W.P. *Should We All Think Alike? Differentiating Characteristics of French Canadian Education in Quebec*. Toronto: W.J. Gage and Company Limited, 1951.

Rioux, Marcel. *Quebec in Question*. Trans. James Boake. Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1978.

Scowen, Reed. *A Different Vision: The English in Quebec in the 1990s*. Don Mills, Ontario: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, Inc., 1991.

Scowen, Reed. *Time to Say Goodbye: The Case for Getting Quebec Out of Canada*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1999.

Sissons, C.B. *Church & State in Canadian Education*. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1959.

Smith, Barbara Leigh, Karl F. Johnson, David Warren Paulsen and Frances Shocket. *Political Research Methods: Foundations and Techniques*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976.

Smith, William J. "Linguistic School Boards in Quebec - A Reform Whose Time Has Come: Reference Re Education Act of Québec (Bill 107)." *McGill Law Journal*, 39(1), 1994.

Smith, William J., William F. Foster and Helen M. Donahue. *How Does the Quebec Education System Work? A Primer for School Governing Boards*. Montreal: Office of Research on Educational Policy, McGill University, 1999.

Smith, William J., William F. Foster and Helen M. Donahue. *The Contemporary Education Scene in Quebec: A Handbook for Policy Makers, Administrators and Educators*. Montreal: Office of Research on Educational Policy, McGill University, 1999.

Smith, William J., and Helen M. Donahue. *The Historical Roots of Quebec Education*. Montreal: Office of Research on Educational Policy, McGill University, 1999.

Stevenson, Garth. *Community Besieged: The Anglophone Minority and the Politics of Quebec*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.

Sweet, Lois. *God in the Classroom: The Controversial Issue of Religion in Canada's Schools*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1997.

Usdan, Michael D. "The Future Viability of the School Board," *Understanding School Boards*. Peter J. Cistone. ed. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1975.

Weir, George M. *The Separate School Question in Canada*. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1934.

Williamson, John B., David A. Karp and John R. Dalphin. *The Research Craft: An Introduction to Social Science Methods*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977.

Young, David C. *The Federalist and Separatist Sentiments of Quebec Nationalism: A Comparative Perspective of Evidence and Assumptions*. Wolfville, Nova Scotia: Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Acadia University, 1997.

Young, Robert A. *The Struggle for Quebec*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.

Case Law

Greater Montreal Protestant School Board v. Québec (A.G.), 1 S.C.R. 377, 51 D.L.R. (4th) 521, 1989.

Québec Association of Protestant School Boards v. Québec (A.G.), C.S. 872, 21 D.L.R. (4th) 36, 1985.

Reference Re Education Act (Que), S.C.R. 511, 105 D.L.R. (4th) 266, 1993.

Government of Canada Publications

Department of Justice. *The Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1999.

Government of Quebec Publications

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *A School for the Future: Educational Integration And Intercultural Education*. Quebec, 1997f.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *Consultation Concerning the Green Paper on Primary and Secondary Education: A Survey of the Results of the Consultation*. Quebec, 1978.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *English-Language Education in Québec*: A Response to the Task Force on English Education. Quebec, 1992b.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *Joining Forces: Plan of Action on Educational Success*. Quebec, 1992c.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *Moving Ahead: Elementary and Secondary School Education in Québec: Orientations, Proposals and Issues*. Quebec, 1993.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *Primary and Secondary Education in Québec* (Green paper). Quebec, 1978.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *Régles Budgétaires pour l'Année Scolaire 1996-97: Commissions Scolaires*. Québec: 1996a.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *Régles Budgétaires pour l'Année Scolaire 1997-98: Commissions Scolaires*. Québec: 1997a.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *Régles Budgétaires pour l'Année Scolaire 1998-99: Commissions Scolaires*. Québec: 1998a.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *The Estates General on Education, 1995-1996: Final Report*. Quebec, 1996.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *The Québec School: A Responsible Force in the Community* (Rev. ed.). Quebec, 1982.

Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. *The Schools of Québec: Policy Statement and Plan of Action*. Quebec, 1979a.

Laws and Directives

Act Respecting the Election of the First Commissioners of the New School Boards and Amending Various Legislative Provisions, S.Q. 1997, c. 98.

Act Respecting the Eligibility of Certain Children for Instruction in English, S.Q. 1986, C. 46.

Act to Amend the Education Act and Various Legislative Provisions, S.Q. 1997, c. 96.

Act to Amend the Education Act, the Act Respecting School Elections and Other Legislative Provisions, S.Q. 1997, c. 47.

Bill 40, *An Act Respecting Public and Secondary Education*, 4th sess., 32nd Leg., 1983.

Charter of the French Language, R.S.Q. c. C-11, 1976.

Education Act, R.S.Q., c. I-13.3 as amended to S.Q. 1997, c.96.

Newspaper and Magazine Articles

Babych, Art. "Quebec Parents Battle to Keep Religion in Classrooms," *Christianweek*. Volume 13, No. 2, April 13, 1999.

Catholic Civil Rights League. "Catholic Education Topples in Quebec and Newfoundland: An Update," *Civil Rights Bulletin*. October 1998.

Catholic Civil Rights League. "Catholic Education Topples in Quebec - Who's Next?," *Newsletter*, May 1997.

Catholic Civil Rights League. "Chretien to Remove Constitutional Protection," *Civil Rights Bulletin*. November 7, 1997.

Catholic Civil Rights League. "MPs Vote Against Religious Education: Right Imperilled by Parliament," *Civil Rights Bulletin*. November 22, 1997.

Catholic Civil Rights League. "Opinion: Quebec Schools," *Newsletter*. August 1997.

Cauchon, Paul. "The Most Unsettled School Re-Opening in Thirty Years: Seven Major Actions will Affect Schools this fall," *Le Devoir*. October 25, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Anglos Show Interest in New Boards," *Spec*. June 14, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "Bye-by School Board," *Spec*. April 6, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "CASA asks for Delay in School Board Elections," *Spec*. May 34, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "CASA Fears for Small Boards," *Spec*. June 1, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "CASA won't wait for Constitutional Guarantees for Linguistic Boards," *Spec*. April 6, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Cyrus Journeau: I will Miss Contact with the Kids," *Spec*. August 10, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Eastern Shores: Administrative Structure Largely in Place - Acteson will Chair new Council of Commissioners," *Spec*. July 12, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "Eastern Shores: Cost-Cutting Measures to be Decided Saturday," *Spec*. April 25, 1999.

Dow, Cynthia. "Eastern Shores Needs Public Involvement," *Spec*. April 26, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "Eastern Shores: Only 987 Names on Electoral List so far," *Spec*. May 17, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "Eastern Shores: School Board Still Expects Deficit," *Spec*. October 18, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "Eastern Shores: $77,000 Deficit Confirmed by Audit," *Spec*. November 7, 1999.

Dow, Cynthia. "Election Primer: How to Register for the English School Board - Taxes are the Same at Every Board," *Spec*. May 17, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "Estates General on Education: Local Forums Coming up in March, English Workshops Being Organized," *Spec*. March 3, 1996.

Dow, Cynthia. "Estates General on Education: Local Forums Well Organized for Participation of Anglo Community," *Spec*. March 10, 1996.

Dow, Cynthia. "Gaspesia Teachers' Association: Union Concerned About Gaspe Surplus Problem," *Spec*. March 22, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "Gifford Postpones Retirement Indefinitely: GISB Officials to Meet With Other Boards," *Spec*. April 6, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "GISB Takes Case to Quebec City," *Spec*. June 8, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Home and School Officials Warn Parents to get More Involved," *Spec*. October 12, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Linguistic Boards: Gaspesia School Board will Disappear in 1998: New Board to Cover all of East," *Spec*. March 30, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Linguistic Boards: AQ and CASA Want Guarantees," *Spec*. February 23, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Linguistic School Boards: Officials Unhappy with a Plan for Mega-Board," *Spec*. April 20, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "Linguistic School Boards: Still at the Stage of Confusion," *Spec*. April 13, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "New School Board: Acteson Heads up Provisional Council: Journeau Named D-G," *Spec*. October 12, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "New School Board: Eastern Shores hopes to Bring Staff Together Next Fall," *Spec*. April 5, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "New School Board: Elections set for June 14 - Many Anglo Names Missing from List," *Spec*. May 3, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "New School Board: Provisional Council Chooses Eastern Shores," *Spec*. March 8, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Authorized deficit Budget," *Spec*. June 25, 1995.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Changes," *Spec*. May 25, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board: Dire Warnings About the Impact of Further Cuts - Consultant May be Hired to Identify Where to Save," *Spec*. December 22, 1996.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Elections: Anglos have Until June 9 to Choose - May 31 Deadline for Nominations," *Spec*. May 10, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Elections: Eastern Shores has Highest Turnout," *Spec*. June 21, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Elections: Voter Turnout Heavy in Advance Polls," *Spec*. November 20, 1994.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Elections: 3,000 on the List for Eastern Shores," *Spec*. May 31, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board: Financial Woes taken to MEQ," *Spec*. December 13, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board: Gifford Steps Down as School Board's Director-General," *Spec*. January 26, 1996.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board: Governing Boards will Change School Administration Considerably," *Spec*. August 23, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Meeting; Some Decisions on Hold," *Spec*. April 20, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board: Name Rejected by Toponymy Commission," *Spec*. March 1, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board: Over 1,600 Registered with Eastern Shores," *Spec*. September 13, 1998.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Still Considering Gaspe Reorganization," *Spec*. February 23, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Board Will Submit Deficit Budget: Eastern Shores Expects to be More than $500,000 short," *Spec*. July 2, 2000.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Boards: Gaspe Anglos to Merge with Seven Islands, Baie Comeau, Métis," *Spec*. July 6, 1997.

Dow, Cynthia. "School Enrolment Down by 40," *Spec*. September 19, 1999.

Dow, Cynthia. "Small Schools: Board Expects Little from MEQ," *Spec*. June 27, 1999.

Dow, Cynthia. "Teachers Unhappy with Settlement," *Spec*. March 30, 1997.

Wannamaker, Glenn. "Mulcair: Linguistic Boards...Change Would Protect the Right of the English Community," *Spec*. April 20, 1997.

Reports

Advisory Board on English Education. *The Reorganization of School Boards Along Linguistic Lines: Bill 107 - An English Language Perspective* (Report to the Minister of Education). Montreal, 1994.

Advisory Committee on the Establishment of Linguistic School Boards. *Toward the Establishment of Linguistic School Boards* (Report to the Minister of Education). Montreal, 1994.

Alliance Quebec. *Linguistic School Boards: Your Vote and Your Taxes*. Montreal, 1998.

Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation due Québec. *For a Fair Evolution of School Structures in Québec* (Advice to the Minister of Education). Quebec, 1986.

English Speaking Catholic Council. *Brief Presented to the Standing Committee on Education, Government of Quebec, on September 22, 1999*. Montreal, 1999.

Task Force on English Education. *Report to the Minister of Education*. Montreal, 1992.

The Protestant Committee of the of the Council of Education. *Statement Concerning the Report of the Quebec Protestant Education Survey*. Montreal, 1939.

Speeches

Kenney, Jason. "Amendment to the Constitution of Canada: Quebec Schools Issue." July 2, 2000.

Manning, Preston. "Proposed Amendment to Section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 Concerning the Quebec School System." October 1, 1997.

Appendix A

List of Interviewees

Anonymous Respondent, activist within the Committee for Anglophone Social Action

Anonymous Respondent, former commissioner for Gaspesia and the Islands School Board

Daryl Beebe, teacher at New Carlisle High School

Wade Gifford, former Director-General of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board

Cyrus Journeau, former Assistant Director-General of Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, and current Director-General of the Eastern Shores School Board

Terry Maloney, former psychologist with the Eastern Shores School Board

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1)What is your current position and level of involvement in the Quebec public education system?

2)How long, and, in what different capacities have you been engaged in public education in the province?

3)When did you realize that the province was contemplating a change from denominational to linguistic school boards?

4)Quebec has never been a signatory to the 1982 Constitution. What do you think about the decision of the government to seek a constitutional amendment, even though they do not in fact legally recognize the 1982 compact?

5)What was your initial reaction to the proposed change?

6)To what extent had religious differences already been replaced by linguistic differences before the new policy was implemented?

7)To what extent did you believe the new linguistic system, as compared to the denominational system, would secure English rights?

8)To what extent was the general public aware of these proposals, and, if they were, how would you gage their collective reaction?

9)What do you believe was the major rationale which prompted the government to vigorously pursue this course of action?

10)To what extent was the government concerned about a potential backlash from the public?

11)To what extent was the change mandated entirely by the government? To what extent were existing boards actively engaged in the formulation of the proposal?

12)How did existing denominational school boards react to the proposal?

13)To what extent were the former Protestant boards not English boards? That is, how did Catholic Anglophones or Protestant Francophones fit into the equation?

14)What was the reaction of the teacher's union?

15)When did you realize that this proposal would in fact become law?

16)To what extent were you surprised by the smooth transition from proposal to law?

17)To what extent did the approval of the Catholic Church shock you?

18)To what extent did you believe that there would be minor hostile reaction, especially on the part of some groups such as the Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA), in lamenting that English rights were being thwarted by this change?

19)Now that the transition to linguistic boards is complete, what have been the major modifications to the educational system?

20)How has this change altered the dimensions of English and French boards?

21)More particularly, how has this change altered the dimension of your particular board?

22)To what extent has the board hierarchy been satisfied with the change?

23)What, in your opinion, has been the general response of parents whose children attend schools in this new linguistic board?

24)To what extent have English rights been safeguarded under the new linguistic system?

25)Are you aware of the reactions of other school boards to the new system? If yes, could you describe these reactions?

26)To what extent has the government been pleased or displeased with the progression to the new linguistic boards?

27)Do you envision any Quebec government undertaking as drastic or ambitious a change as the one which saw denominational boards replaced with linguistic ones?

28)To what extent does the government continue to monitor these new boards, or, has a certain degree of autonomy been granted by those in power?

29)In retrospect, what aspect or issue in this transition strikes you as being particularly interesting?

30)To what extent will these new linguistic boards fulfil their mandated expectations?

31)What will be the legacy of the now defunct denominational boards?

Appendix C

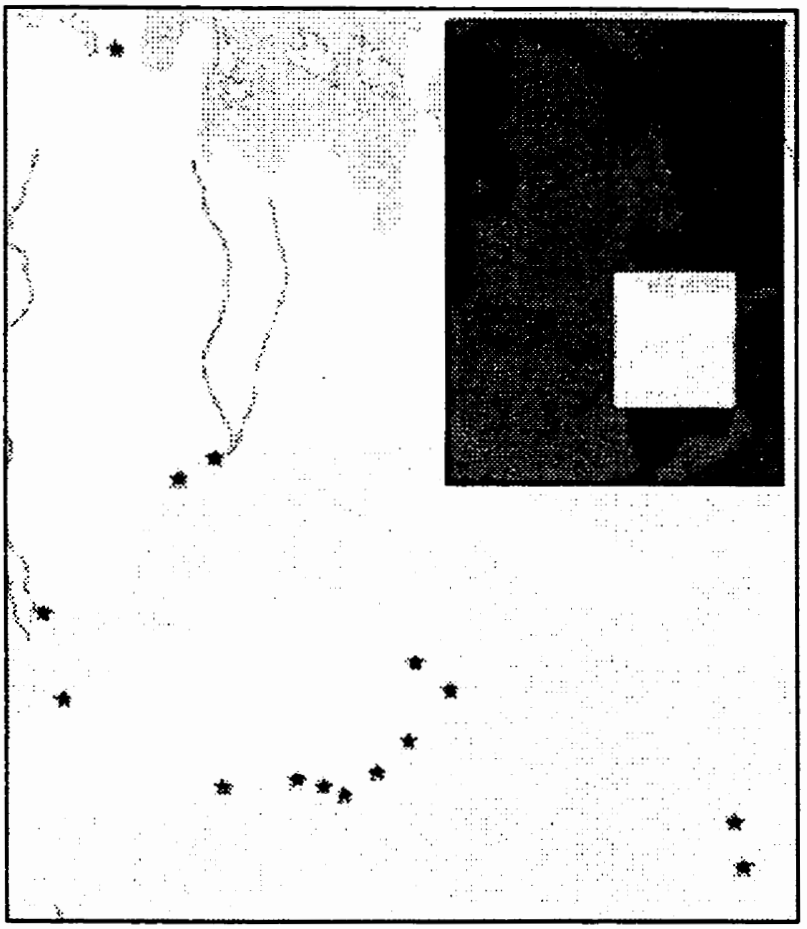

Figure 1, Territory Served by Gaspesia and the Islands School Board, as well as the Eastern Shores School Board (an ★indicates a school location)

It should be noted that the territory served by Gaspesia and the Islands School Board was the south shore of the Gaspe Peninsula, found within the lower left quadrant of the map, including the Magdalen Islands, located within the lower right quadrant. The territory served by the Eastern Shores School Board includes that covered by the former board, as well as the area constituting the upper right quadrant of the map.

Appendix D

School & Level of Grades	Location	Former Board	Number of Students
Escuminac (PK-11)	Escuminac	Gaspesia the Islands	131
New Richmond (PK-8)	New Richmond	Gaspesia the Islands	82
Bonaventure (9-11)	Bonaventure	Gaspesia the Islands	133
New Carlisle (PK-8)	New Carlisle	Gaspesia the Islands	178
Shigawake-Port Daniel (PK-6)	Shigawake	Gaspesia the Islands	98
Belle Anse (PK-6)	Belle Anse	Gaspesia the Islands	54
Gaspe Elementary (PK-6)	Gaspe	Gaspesia the Islands	134
Gaspe Polyvalent (7-11)	Gaspe	Gaspesia the Islands	168
Grosse Isle (PK-11)	Magdalen Islands	Gaspesia the Islands	98
Entry Island (PK-7)	Magdalen Islands	Gaspesia the Islands	18
St. Patrick (1-5)	Chandler	Rocher Perce(Catholic)	24
Poly. Mgr. Sevigny (7-11)	Chandler	Rocher Perce(Catholic)	25
Métis Beach (K-11)	Métis Beach	Eastern Quebec Regional Board	29
Baie Comeau (K-11)	Baie Comeau	Baie Comeau Dissentient Protestant	133
Riverview (K-9)	Port Cartier	Greater Seven Islands	41
Flemming (K-6)	Seven Islands	Greater Seven Islands	123
Queen Elizabeth (7-11)	Seven Islands	Greater Seven Islands	99
Fermont (K-5)	Fermont	Greater Seven Islands	11
Total			**1579**

Figure 2, Composition of the Eastern Shores School Board

It should be noted that in regards to the school population of Gaspe Elementary, 40 Anglophone Roman Catholic students were incorporated into this school as a result of being transferred from the denominational Roman Catholic board, Commision Scolaire Falaise, now the French-language Commission Scolaire Chic Chocs. As well, the 24 students at St. Patrick, and the 25 students at Poly. Mgr. Sevigny in Chandler were incorporated in similar fashion from the denominational Roman Catholic Commission Scolaire Rocher Perce, now the French-language Commission Scolaire René Lévesque.