

The psycho-sociological impact to inner city English language schools in Montreal  
resulting from the faulty implementation of public policies.

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## Abstract

### **The psycho-sociological impact to inner city English language schools in Montreal resulting from the faulty implementation of public policies.**

Cynthia Jean Martin

This thesis follows the historical movement of Quebec's educational and language policies for the purpose of illustrating the antecedents that led up to the emergence of Quebecois nationalism; and to illustrate that prior to the 1960's and the 'Quiet Revolution', anglophone Quebecers enjoyed a majority status mentality, despite being a numerical minority. I argue that due to their prior majority status mentality, their demotion to that of a minority was in fact involuntary. Gibson and Ogbu (1990) demonstrate that involuntary minorities specifically, those from the lower social-economic strata are particularly vulnerable to the negative psychological effects that are partially caused by the restraints placed on their rights. One of the areas most negatively affected is the education system. Studies indicate that students who attend inner city schools are more likely to dropout than those students from more affluent neighbourhoods. There is also a higher ratio of 'at risk' students, more specifically, students with behavioural problems to 'normal' students. When this is compounded with class sizes of between thirty and forty students, the potential for anti-social behaviour is increased. Case studies and interviews with educators demonstrate that it is impossible to effectively implement ministerial directives such as the 'New Curriculum Reform' because policy-makers at the *Ministère d'éducation du Québec* (MEQ) did not account for these kinds of environments. I argue that there is a need to create new paradigms for the service and delivery of ministerial policies/directives to inner city English language schools.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 Introduction

The foundation of any democratic society rests on its educational institutions, which are responsible for transmitting systems of knowledge, languages, customs and traditions. It makes sense therefore, that educational policies would be the vehicle through which a state would develop and maintain the cultural heritage of its citizens. This is especially important in a democratic society that promotes the liberal values of equality, inclusion, and self-determination. However, problems can arise when the self-determination of one group clashes with that of that of another group. How then does a state effectively promote minority rights without infringing on the rights of the majority?

As a liberal democratic federation with two official languages, Canada has had its share of problems stemming from minority language rights in education. Education policies dealing with language in Canada have often been an impetus for conflict, so much so that even the Fathers of Confederation were unable to resolve minority language rights in education. Magnet (1982) contends that the entrenchment of Section 93<sup>1</sup> of the Constitution Act 1867 left Canadians with a legacy of conflict over education policies, such that

[t]here will be no lasting accommodation between French and English-speaking Canadians until just settlement of the education question extinguishes the last smouldering ember of fear about schools.<sup>1</sup>

Section 93 (1) of the Constitution Act (1867) gave the provinces authority in matters of education except where a law could “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.” When Quebec entered into Confederation in 1867, the denominational structure of public

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<sup>1</sup> Magnet .J (1982) “Minority Language Educational Rights”: (1982) *A Supreme Court Law Review* 195-200. In *Rights Freedoms and the Education System in Canada; Cases and Materials*. G.M Dickinson. & A.W Mackay Eds. (1989) Toronto Edmond Montgomery Press PP, 92-118



education in that province was divided on the basis of religion, and schools fell under the jurisdiction of either Catholic or Protestant school boards with the French speaking majority attending the Catholic schools, and the English-speaking minority attending Protestant schools.

Education for French-Catholic Quebecers during the nineteenth century, and well into the twentieth century was inferior to that of the English Protestant Quebecers, which featured a secular education system with an academically superior curriculum. In addition to their concern with conquering the harsh Canadian climate; French Canadians, with the help of the French, Catholic clergy, believed that it was their Providential duty to live an agrarian lifestyle, and to procreate as much as they possibly could. Moreover, collective fear [perpetuated by the clergy] regarding assimilation into the English speaking community made them extremely suspicious of any form of education that was not endorsed by the Church. They were content, therefore, to believe that education was meant for a small elite segment of French-Quebecers i.e., doctors, lawyers and priests. What little there was of Catholic, public elementary education had a strong religious basis, which took precedence over all other subjects. The absence of quality education for French Quebecers, compounded with their general apathy for it left them essentially unqualified for positions in the field of business, leaving the door of opportunity open to the minority English Protestant community. Magnuson (1980), Jones (1982), Kahn (1992), Smith (1995) Fraser (2001)

These respective education systems functioned well in Quebec until the establishment of the Ministry of Education in 1964. Government policies during that period began to reflect the needs of the francophone majority who thereafter received better quality education. Moreover, the centralization of the education system, the creation of crown corporations such as of Hydro Quebec, and the Quebec Pension Plan required a large bureaucracy, the positions of which were filled by a new breed of young, educated francophone professionals. Unlike their parents, this generation was moving up the hierarchy of power. The francophone majority was now in a position to fulfill their collective desire for self-determination. Magnuson (1980), Fraser (2001)

The emergence of self-determination, or nationalism, manifested itself for a variety of reasons, not the least of which being the dwindling francophone birth rate. This led one demographer to predict that the francophone community in Montreal would be reduced to 52.7% by the year 2000.<sup>2</sup> It also resuscitated the francophone community's fear of assimilation into the English community, which prompted the Quebec government to reevaluate immigration policies that allowed immigrants to assimilate into the anglophone community via English language schools. It was thus, during this time that education policies began to reflect the francophone majority's desire to integrate new immigrants into the francophone community via the French public school system. The centralization of the education system, discriminatory language policies, the re-routing of immigrants to the francophone education system, and the emergence of a new middle class of professional francophones, served to effectively reduce the status of the anglophone community to that of an *involuntary minority*. (See the definition of term's section in this chapter) Gibson & Ogbu (1991).

This demotion in status had a profound psychological impact on the anglophone community whose education system was weakened by the Quebec government's language and education policies. This is evident in the dwindling enrolments to English language schools, school closures, and an overall decline in the quality of English language education. It is this author's contention that due to their discomfort with their new minority status, and an overall insecurity regarding their children's education, many anglophone parents chose to send their children to either French language schools or French Immersion schools, which perpetuated the erosion of English language education. It would take the entrenchment of minority educational rights in the Constitution Act (1982) to provide them with a sense of security regarding their children's right to be educated in their own language. The repatriation of the Canadian Constitution from Britain to Canada was the start of a new era in minority language education

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<sup>2</sup> Fraser Graham (2001) *Rene Levesques and the Parti-Quebecois in Power* Toronto, Macmillan Press. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition McGill-Queens University Press.

rights in Canada. S. 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) guarantees minority education rights to anglophones of Quebec, as well as to francophone minorities in the rest of Canada.

## **1.2 Thesis Statement**

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that the integrity of the English language public education system in Quebec is eroding due to the provincial government's discriminatory language policies. I argue that not only have these language policies effectively weakened the foundation of the English language public education system, but that ministerial directives designed specifically for the francophone system cannot be effectively implemented in English language schools, and specifically, English language inner city schools. I assert that special care should be taken regarding the implementation of ministerial directives such as the integration and inclusion of students with special needs, and the New Curriculum Reform I contend that in addition to the minority education rights set out in section 23 of Constitution Act (1982) which serve to protect the anglophone community's right to education in their own language, further initiatives have to be taken by local school boards to protect the integrity and quality of English language education.

## **1.3 Methodology**

The research within the body of this text is qualitative in nature, which is an effective method of advancing the claims that are set forth in this thesis. In order to substantiate these claims, a variety of data sources are employed, i.e., case studies, interviews, observations, historical texts and documents. The employment of these multiple data sources or the *triangulation*<sup>ii</sup> of data is necessary to validate the generalizability of the research, and as well, helps to eliminate researcher bias, errors and anomalies Anderson (1995) Lincoln, & Guba. (1985) Denzin, & Lincoln (1994)

It is applied research as it addresses issues that are pertinent to both individuals and groups who experience them, and because it “aims to assess and describe, document or inform people concerned about the phenomena under investigation”<sup>3</sup> The effects manifested by the individuals and groups described in this body of research are substantiated in this thesis by psychological and sociological theories, and thus, can be generalized, with possible exceptions, to all inner city English language schools in the Greater Montreal area. Rosenthal & Dinkmeyer & Dreikurs (1963), Jackson (1968), Trites & Price (1976) Natriello *et, al.* (1990) McCool (1994), Jenkins (1995) Medin & Ross (1997) Middleton-Moz (1999)

Ethnographic inquiry is effective since it generates data that is always in flux, and often follows a distinct pattern of movement. Anderson (1998) maintains that the

term ethnography generally refers to research which has one or more of the following features: a strong emphasis on exploring phenomena within their natural setting; a tendency to work with data which is not pre – coded in terms of its analytic categories; investigation of a small number of cases; and a form of analysis which emphasizes description and explanation rather than quantification and statistical analysis.<sup>4</sup>

This thesis will, therefore, follow the socio-political movement of language and education policies in Quebec, with an emphasis on legislation that emanates from Constitutional law e.g., Section 93 of the *Constitution Act* (1867), Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982), *The Charter for the French Language* (1977), as well as subsequent amendments to the *Charter*, i.e., the amendments, section 73, which closes the loophole that allowed immigrant children and French speaking children to attend English-speaking schools: the *Quebec Education Act*; and finally, constitutional amendments that allowed the Quebec

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<sup>3</sup> Anderson Gary (1998) *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London Fulnar Press. pg., 121

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

government to replace denominational school boards with linguistic boards. The framework of this thesis will be Hegelian in structure in that it will follow the logical movement of Quebec's educational policies from the nineteenth century to the present day. The *dialectic*, according to Hegel follows the logical movement, or evolution of a society. "The task...is to submerge [one's] freedom in the content and let it be moved by its own nature. If the argument follows a dialectical movement, then this must be in the things themselves, and not in just the way we reason about them."<sup>5</sup> An historical dialectic or movement in the Hegelian sense can be defined as " certain historical forms of life [that] are prey to inner contradiction, either because they are doomed to frustrate the very purpose for which they exist [...] or because they are bound to generate an inner conflict between different conditions which are equally essential to the fulfilment of the purpose...."<sup>6</sup>

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

In order to determine if implementation methods for educational policies are conducive to a specific academic setting, the following questions will be explored:

1. Can MEQ policies such as the 'New Curriculum Reform' be applied effectively in English language, inner city schools? And if not....
2. What are the factors that pose obstacles to the effective delivery of ministerial policies/directives to inner city English language schools?
3. Do policies enforcing the integration of 'at risk' students, i.e., students with behavioural with into the mainstream affect the quality of English-language instruction? And if so...
4. What solutions would educators like to see in place?

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<sup>5</sup> Taylor Charles. (1979) *Hegel and Modern Society*. Cambridge University Press. Pg., 55

## 1.5 Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this thesis, the terms *Anglophone or English Canadian* will be used to describe those Canadians whose first language is English, and whose ancestors immigrated to Canada up to the mid twentieth century from Great Britain. *Francophone or French Canadian* will be used to describe those Canadians whose first language is French, and whose ancestors immigrated to Canada from France prior to the British Conquest of 1760.

The term *allophone* describes a person whose first language is neither English nor French. They are either new immigrants, or they can be first or second generation descendents of immigrants who continue to adhere to the traditions of their homelands, e.g., their mother tongue continues to be that of their homeland, and they adopt English or French as a second language. These groups are also referred to as *immigrant minorities*.<sup>7</sup>

The term *involuntary minority*<sup>8</sup> refers to non-immigrant minorities who are granted an inferior role within a society. This has generally been the case with aboriginal peoples. However, for the purpose of this thesis, the term *involuntary minority* will be used to describe the anglophone minority of Quebec, which I contend to be a valid statement due to the majority status mentality that the anglophone minority of Quebec enjoyed prior to the establishment of centralized government bodies in the 1960's.

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<sup>i</sup> *Constitution Act 1867 Section 93 Education Rights*

In and for each Province the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to Education, subject and according to the following Provisions-

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 57

<sup>7</sup> *Supra Note 2*, pg. 358

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

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- (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 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 as only 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.

<sup>ii</sup> *Triangulation*, according to Anderson (1998) is the

process of using multiple data sources, data collection, methods, and/or theories to validate research findings, help eliminate bias and detect errors or anomalies in your discoveries.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.1 Introduction

From the outset, the responsibility of educating French Canadians was left solely to the Catholic Church. French, Catholic missionaries arriving in New France brought with them formal education, which they used not only as a tool to convert the aboriginal peoples, but also, to educate, in small measures, the early colonists. The British military conquest notwithstanding, the French Catholic clergy, to the detriment of English speaking Catholics, continued to dominate the Catholic school system, which was predominately French. English language education was therefore, left in the domain of the Protestants, who fashioned their own education system with the funding they received from the State. The clergy for their part preached that it was the French Canadians' Providential duty to create large families, and live an agrarian lifestyle, both of which required little to no formal education. Those who did aspire to higher education were limited to the professions of doctor, lawyer and priest. French Canadians were for the most part discouraged by the clergy from entering the business world, and therefore, management positions were predominately held by English speaking Protestant Quebecers. According to Quinn (1963)

the Church always held that higher education was for the elite rather than the masses and that it had to be built around the hard core of classical studies. Thus it was an educational system better suited to turning out priests, doctors, lawyers, and other professional people, rather than the accountants, engineers, and technicians required by an industrial society.<sup>1</sup>

McRoberts (1997) maintains that the decline of the agrarian society in Quebec and the re-emergence of a nationalist ideology had been underway since the 1930's. It was during that time that a new middle-class of intellectuals and professionals began campaigning for a more

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<sup>1</sup> Quinn Herbert. F (1963) *The Union Nationale: A study in Quebec Nationalism* University of Toronto Press. Pg., 13



interventionist state. Leftwing supporters welcomed this nationalist ideology, which was manifested by the support that these groups received from the labour unions.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, religion would continue to be the predominant symbol of culture in Quebec, and continue to affect the educational system until the 1960's.

## **2.2 The Historical Evolution of Education in Quebec**

Quebec's educational beginnings are marked by the clash between the English speaking Protestants' preference of a secular school system; and the French Catholic Church's insistence that Catholicism be the foundation of education; a philosophy that was fuelled by the call for the assimilation of all Canadians into the British way of life, i.e., Canadians were to be "anglicised and protestantized...."<sup>3</sup> These fears however, were tempered by the efforts of early military governors, such as General James Murray, whose vision of a country that would be built around two cultures led to The Quebec Act of 1774. The Act was a victory for French-Canadian culture because, for example, it re-established the system of French Civil Law<sup>4</sup>

Jones (1982)<sup>5</sup> describes three diverse groups of English-speaking people who immigrated to Quebec between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were the English-speaking people from England, the English-speaking people from the northern United States, and the Irish immigrants. These groups had very different ideas regarding the education of their children. Immigrants from the northern United States, both loyalist and non-loyalist, believed that it was the responsibility of

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<sup>2</sup> McRoberts Kenneth (1997) *Misconceiving Canada: The Struggle for National Unity*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Magnuson Roger (1980) *A brief history of Quebec Education: From New France to Parti Quebecois* Harvest House, Montreal. Pg., 12

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Jones Alan. W (1982) "Education for English-speaking People until 1964" in *The English of Quebec: From Majority to Minority Status*. Pp., 91-102 Gary Caldwell & Eric Waddell Eds. Published by the Institut de Recherche Sur la Culture.

the secular state, and not religious authorities, to provide education to the children of the community. Taxing citizens for education therefore was totally acceptable.

English, Anglican immigrants held similar views to that of the French, Catholic Canadians. They too adhered strongly to the notion that education had to have a religious basis, and moreover, that education was for the upper and middle classes, with the lower classes receiving as much as was deemed necessary for them to have.<sup>6</sup> English speaking, Irish Catholics, much like the French Canadians, that education was the responsibility of the Church i.e., “education must be part of the work of the Catholic Church in caring for and raising her flock. It is an aspect of pastoral care and has nothing to do with the secular state.”<sup>7</sup> This assertion placed Irish Catholic, immigrants in an unfavorable position, i.e., they were neither Protestant nor French, and therefore, not fully accepted by either the French Canadian Catholics, or the English speaking Protestants.

The Act of 1801 led to the creation of Quebec’s first secular, public system of education, which was known officially as the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning. Although schools under its auspices received funding from the government; it would be the support of the individual communities that would ultimately define its success or failure<sup>8</sup> Problems surfaced because French Canadians remained committed to their beliefs of a clergy headed education system. This was due in part to scare tactics, such as threats of excommunication that were used to thwart parishioners from sending their children to secularised schools. According to Magnuson,

because the Royal Institution was inspired and directed by the Anglo-Protestant authorities and because it put the state before the church in educational matters, the system generated little enthusiasm among

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pg., 94

<sup>8</sup> *Supra Note three*, Pp., 19-20

French Canadians. As a result, the great majority of Royal schools were English and Protestant. Thus it was recommended [...] that all means be taken, including the denial of Sacraments, in order to prevent Catholic parents from sending their children to Royal schools.<sup>9</sup>

Ironically, Royal schools that were established in French Catholic communities were in fact French and Catholic in structure demonstrating that cultural assimilation was not on the agenda of Protestant school officials. Despite these concessions, attitudes were difficult to change, and eventually, the doors to most of the Royal Institution's schools closed. The Royal Institute for the Advancement of Learning was ultimately deemed a failure.

Respite for the French-Canadians came in the form of the Fabriques Act of 1824, which allowed each parish council, or *fabrique* to set aside a portion of its revenue for the creation of a parish school. However, French Canadian apathy regarding education still prevailed, and therefore, the individual parishes were not inclined to set aside large sums of its revenue to support the venture. Nor did the policy include any stipulations for state funding. These factors led to the Act's inevitable demise<sup>10</sup>

In 1829, the exception of the Syndics Act allowed for the election of *syndics* or trustees to manage the establishment and maintenance of schools with the assistance of government funding. Once again, the French clergy was vehemently opposed to the Assembly of schools because

it undermined the influence of the *cures* by allowing for the election of local trustees independent of parish administration. And although amending legislation in 1830 made parish priests eligible to run as trustees, the higher clergy continued to regard the Syndics Act with hostility. The significant feature of the debate surrounding the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pg., 22

legislation of 1829 is that the chief combatants were French Canadians. It was the French Canadian majority in the assembly who sponsored the legislation and it was the French Canadian clergy who led the campaign against it. <sup>11</sup>

Notwithstanding the opposition of the French Canadian clergy, the Syndics Act was successful as was manifested in the increase in the number of schools in the years immediately proceeding the inception of the Act. The rebellion of the *Patriotes*<sup>i</sup> in 1837-38, and the tense relations between the British dominated Executive Council and the French dominated Assembly caused the government to vote against the existing school policies. The withdrawal of government funding ultimately led to the closure of schools, and it would be another five years before educational policies were implemented in Quebec.<sup>12</sup>

In 1840, Charles Mondelet published a series of letters. In these correspondences, he strongly recommended that local trustees or commissioners be given the responsibility for the operation of public schools. What was most significant of Mondelet's recommendations was "that the privilege of dissent be granted to minority religious groups and that a superintendent of public instruction be named by the central government."<sup>13</sup>

In the years proceeding Mondelet's recommendations, Catholics and Protestants began to go their separate ways. (Magnuson, 1980, Jones, 1982 Smith 1995) New legislation allowed for the division of public schools according to Catholic and Protestant school boards. Schools located outside of Montreal and Quebec City were categorized as 'common', i.e., as the first school to open its doors in a particular area, it accepted all children notwithstanding their religious background, or 'dissentient' i.e., those preferring to establish denominational schools based on

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., Pp., 22-23

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Smith William. J (1995) *Themes and Traditions in Quebec Education: A Source Book for Educators*. Office of Research on Educational Policy. McGill University. Pg. 25

their religious beliefs could do so under the auspices of a dissentient board. The rights to establish dissentient school boards outside of the cities of Montreal and Quebec were reserved only for the Catholic or Protestant minorities of the area. The Act of 1846, under which education in Quebec operated for approximately the next one hundred years, stipulated that in Montreal and Quebec City, there was to a board of Protestant Commissioners and a board of Catholic Commissioners. There were no provisions stipulated in the Act for linguistic boards

leaving much to local initiative and enterprise [the Act of 1846] was one that allowed for difference of opinion regarding answers to ultimate questions and accorded equality even in matters of finance to those who dissented from the majority position.<sup>14</sup>

This philosophy was later incorporated into section 93 of the BNA Act of 1867, i.e.;

...Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any class or persons have by Law in the Province at the Union....<sup>15</sup>

This was a victory for both the English Protestants, and the French Catholics. And given that the vast majority of French Canadians were Roman Catholic, they would experience very little conflict between language and religious lines. The same can not be said for English speaking Catholics however, who were thereafter legally divided between religious lines of Catholic or Protestant, which were philosophically at odds in matters of education. Jones (1982) claims that "there is no common theme to the history of the two between 1875, and 1964,"<sup>16</sup> while Magnuson (1980) asserts that "the Irish were Quebec's first [educational minority]. As most Irish were English-speaking and Catholic, there was lacking a natural place for them in the education system."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Supra* note five, pg., 97

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 99

<sup>17</sup> *Supra Note* three pg., 81

There were heated debates regarding education at the Quebec Conference of 1864. The delegates of this conference argued that it was unacceptable to give the provinces exclusive legislative powers over education. D'Arcy McGee introduced a proposal to take the edge off of provincial power:

Saving the rights and privileges which the Protestant or Catholic minority in both Canadas may possess as their denominational schools at the time when the Constitutional Act goes into operation<sup>18</sup>.

The inclusion of section 93 of the British North America Act 1867 was due to the exerted pressure of Protestants in the province of Quebec through their representative in Cabinet, Alexander Tilloch Galt of Sherbrooke, (Magnuson, 1980, Magnet, 1982 Smith, 1995) who at the London Conference of 1866 introduced a further check on provincial powers.

Under Galt's amendment, an appeal would lie in the federal executive against provincial laws affecting Catholic or Protestant education privileges. The federal Parliament would have the power to implement the executives' decision by legislation, if the province refused to do so<sup>19</sup>

However, Galt's proviso would not stand the test of time and by 1982, it would prove to be a "constitutional dead-letter- an original Canadian bad idea, discarded on the scrap heap of constitutional law."<sup>20</sup>

### **2. 3 Education in the twentieth century**

The democratization of the education system was slow to manifest in Quebec, despite the efforts of the new middle class, French speaking intelligentsia to separate the church from state in matters of education. Magnuson (1980) McRoberts (1997) Urbanization, however, resulted in a

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<sup>18</sup> Magnet J (1982) "Minority Language Educational Rights": *A Supreme Court Law Review* 195-200. In *Rights Freedoms and the Education System in Canada; Cases and Materials*. G.M Dickinson. & A.W Mackay Eds. (1989) Toronto Edmond Montgomery Press PP, 92-118

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

surplus of people in Montreal, and thus, a need to increase the allocation of resources for education, something for which, the clergy was ill-prepared for. They were soon to discover that mass education, and the material resources that were required in a modern society, were needs that were best served by the state.

The clergy for its part continued on with its campaign endorsing the family and church as those best suited to giving children a proper education. There is also evidence that the clergy was instrumental in perpetuating animosity between the French and English speaking Canadians. According to a study conducted in the 1930's by the anthropologist, Horace Miner, textbooks used by French Canadian children attending school in a St. Denis Parish "displayed a bias against English speakers".<sup>21</sup> Duplessis for his part exploited the clerical influence in Quebec to maintain his autocratic grip. He is known, for example, to have said, "a vote for the opposition Liberal Party was tantamount to voting for an education ministry and taking the crucifix off the school wall."<sup>22</sup> So strong was the influence of the Church over educational matters in Quebec that when Canadian Senator T.D Bouchard criticised how history was taught in Quebec schools, saying that the methods were "biased and anti-Canadian," the Premier of Quebec fired he from his position as president of Hydro Quebec.<sup>23</sup>

By the mid-twentieth century, students enrolled in Quebec Catholic schools lagged far behind their Protestant counterparts. Moreover, while education in Ontario became compulsory by the mid-nineteenth century; it would not be until 1943 that education was made compulsory in Quebec. (Magnuson, 1980, Kahn, 1982)

By the 1950's the public school system in Quebec was essentially a two tiered, decentralized system, i.e., the majority Catholic system, and the minority Protestant system.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Kahn Linda (1992) *Schooling, Jobs and Cultural Identity: Minority Education in Quebec*. Garland Publishing Inc. New York & London. Pg., 62

<sup>22</sup> *Supra note three*, Magnuson pg. 76

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pg. 75

During this stage of Quebec's educational history, the Church was still at the apex of power in the Catholic system, and continued its stance against state interference in educational policies. And while the Protestant curriculum did not call for the religious indoctrination of their pupils, Protestant school officials took an equally firm stance against state interference in matters of education. (Smith, 1995, Magnuson 1980) Many educational analysts of the day believed that the Duplessis government was the main barrier to educational reform.

Often not knowing what their government grant would be, or when it would arrive, school boards were at the mercy of the government, unable to plan on a rational basis or pay their teachers on time. A favorite tactic of the Duplessis government was to warn school districts that unless they voted Union Nationale their grant was in danger of being reduced or cut off altogether. [...] The system of discretionary school grants was also a tool for ensuring political orthodoxy.<sup>24</sup>

Notwithstanding this claim, there is evidence that during the mid-1950's, twenty percent of the provincial government's spending was geared toward education.<sup>25</sup>

In 1961, the Liberal government under Jean Lesage enacted a series of educational policies known collectively as the *Grande Charte de Education*. The most important aspect of the Charter is that it entrenched the rights of all Quebec children regardless of their socio-economic background to receive free public education.

The major provisions of the Magna Charta of Education were the raising of the school-leaving age from fourteen to fifteen, the abolition of public secondary school fees, the right of parents to vote in school

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Pp. 105-6

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 117



elections, plans for the establishment of larger school units, and increased government spending at all levels of education.<sup>26</sup>

The *Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education*, also known as the *Parent Commission*, (1963-1967) is a three part, five volume report the recommendations of which, led to the enactment of important educational policies. Part one of the Report focuses on the organizational structures of Quebec education. Foremost are its recommendations for the creation of a Ministry of Education and a Superior Council. And in keeping with the spirit of the Magna Charta, the report stipulated that

[t]he schools of the province of Quebec must be open to every child, regardless belief, racial origin, cultural background, social position, age, sex, physical or mental health. Moreover, they should offer to everyone services of approximately equal quality and variety so that pupils in the remote areas [...] may enjoy opportunities comparable to children in metropolitan areas<sup>27</sup>

(Parent Report. Vol. 1, Pp., 75-76)

The 1965 Preliminary Report of the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* described the socio-economic structure of Quebec society as a hierarchy of economic power where unilingual francophones were situated at the bottom, unilingual anglophones at the top, and bilingual persons in the middle. Their findings also indicated that the more educated an anglophone was, the less likely he or she was to speak French, and by the same token, the more educated a francophone, the more likely he or she was to speak English. This was later confirmed by a study for the Gendron Commission<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pg., 106

<sup>27</sup> *Supra note* thirteen, Smith pg., 44

<sup>28</sup> Fraser Graham (2001) *Rene Levesques and the Parti-Quebecois in Power* Toronto, Macmillan Press. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition McGill-Queens University Press. Pg., 99

## **2.4 The effects of ineffective immigration policies and the declining francophone birthrate.**

The move to a state-centered society had negative effects for the French education system in Quebec. Firstly, the growing indifference to Catholic values had caused the francophone birthrate, which had once flourished under the watchful eye of the local parish priest, to decrease at a steady rate. This subsequently led to the decline in the number of francophone children attending French language schools. Secondly, immigration policies allowed for the majority of immigrants to go to English language schools, and assimilate into the anglophone community, thus seeing the number of enrolments to English language schools increase. There were attempts to justify these claims by advancing the claim that the francophone community in Quebec did not openly accept anyone from different cultural backgrounds. According to Gibbins (1990)

immigrants from countries other than France tended to settle outside Quebec [...] in part because of the relatively homogenous and therefore closed nature of the French Canadian community....<sup>29</sup>

Those immigrants who did settle in Quebec tended to assimilate into the anglophone community because the anglophone community was more receptive to newcomers, and because it afforded them better economic opportunities.<sup>30</sup> These two factors would prove to be the impetus for the French Canadians' resurgence for self-determination, and would ultimately become a fundamental issue in the subsequent debates over language and education policies in the decades to follow, an issue will be explored further in chapter three.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Historical documentation indicates that the clergy was able to retain its stronghold over French Canadians by making them distrustful of new ways of living and learning. The rationale behind this resistance being that modernization would impose alien values upon them that were

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<sup>29</sup> Gibbins Roger (1990) "The Politics of Language and Quebecois Nationalism" in *Canadian Political Science*. Nelson Power Pak. Nelson Thomson Learning 2000 pg., 148

incompatible with the teachings of the Church. However, clerical resistance to a modern society would prove disadvantageous to the francophone majority, as it became progressively impossible to deal with twentieth century problems using nineteenth century solutions.

The new French speaking middle-class intelligentsia were instrumental in forging an increased desire for self-determination, which they accomplished by shedding the antiquated mindset that had lingered on in the collective self-concept of French Canadians. The negative effects to this liberation are demonstrated in the declining francophone birthrate, and the assimilation of immigrants into the anglophone community. This was counterbalanced by a new state centered society, where language superseded religion as the predominant symbol of culture, thus giving French- Canadians the impetus for a resurgence of nationalism, which would ultimately affect education policies, and the destiny of English language students in the decades to follow.

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<sup>i</sup> Bergeron Leandre. (1977) *The History of Quebec: A Patriote's Handbook*. New Canada Publications Toronto.

The Patriotes originated from a split in the *Parti Canadien*, i.e., in 1830, Governor Aylmer attempted to pass a budget before the Assembly for approval. The assembly however refused to approve it on the grounds that the budget did not conform to the rules set down by the Report of 1828. According to Bergeron, John Neilson, second in command to Louis-Joseph Papineau, proposed moderate revisions to the budget, while Papineau took a more radical position. "This difference between the two leaders of the Parti Canadien divide it into the *Moderates* and *Patriotes*." Pg., 73

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.1 Introduction

Quebec's emergence into the twentieth century was by no means uneventful, and, if as a society they had been behind the rest of the Western world, they were catching up by leaps and bounds. It certainly was an exciting time for Quebec's new breed of intellectuals who were bestowed with the privilege of restructuring the education system. The period between 1964 to 1997 was a time where Royal Commissions and legal battles settled language and education disputes. What stands out the most during this period is the clash that ensued between democratic and liberal values. This was manifested in the majority rule mentality of Quebec language laws making French the only official language of Quebec; and the call to defend the minority language rights of the anglophone community. Superimposed against these social tensions were the unsuccessful attempts by various Quebec governments to restructure the education system via school board reforms. The major stumbling block to school board reform lay in s. 93 of the Constitutional Act 1867. Ss. 93 (1) stipulates that

[n]othing 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.

“At Union”, Lower Canada had an education system in place, as did Upper Canada and therefore, both systems were protected by the constitutional rights accorded to them in s. 93 (1) (2) (3). The truth of the matter is that there would not have been a successful union of the two Canadas had education not been placed under the auspices of Provincial authority. Moreover, nowhere in the Constitution Act 1867 are any provisions made for the protection of minority language rights in education. However, denominational rights in education were accorded to the Queen's Roman Catholic subjects, and as well as to the Queen's Protestant subjects. A solution was called for, and

it came in the form of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) s, 23, which effectively entrenches minority language educational rights to all Canadians

### 3.2 Pre Charter Legislation

Perhaps the most contentious aspect of the Parent Report 's recommendations was its call to streamline the forty-one existing boards into unified or single boards, i.e., confessional, non-confessional or linguistic Magnuson (1980) Bissonette (1982) Smith (1995)

It is [...] necessary to reduce the number and increase the size of school commissions. [...] The single school commission also appears to us as an essential prerequisite for organizing the public school in such a way as to afford the greatest possible respect for the freedom of conscience of all elements of the population...<sup>1</sup> (Parent Report. Vol. IV, Pp., 146-147)

Given that the majority of anglophones were schooled in the Protestant sector, Protestant school officials were threatened by this recommendation and for that matter, any change to the status quo. Bissonette (1982) maintains that the Parent report's recommendations to restructure the existing school boards was not an attempt to disempower the English community, but rather, was proposed to effectively reorganize the education system. According to this assertion, English language instruction was negatively affected in the years proceeding the Quiet Revolution due to the resistance of English language school officials to restructure the public school system. According to Bissonette, their fears were unfounded because

Concern for effective teaching methods came before any concern for what the present government calls the "affirmative collective". It is at

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<sup>1</sup> Smith William. J (1995) *Themes and Traditions in Quebec Education: A Source Book for Educators*. Office of Research on Educational Policy. McGill University. Pg., 45

that moment still relatively “neutral” politically, that the anglophone community, falling back on its own position, manifested its refusal to join the common effort. Paradoxically, it may have well introduced “politics” where “politics” did not exist.<sup>2</sup>

Subsequently, the Liberal government proposed Bill- 28 calling for unified school boards. They soon discovered however, that like those before them, they too would be unsuccessful in their attempts to create linguistic school boards.

Opposition being fierce and politically explosive, the Liberals abandoned their plan in June of 1972 opting instead for a step by step solution to the problem...A problem that had started out as an ‘organizational’ one became a highly political one.<sup>3</sup>

Bissonette maintains that the impervious positions held by leaders in the anglophone sector regarding their refusal to restructure school boards that led to the demise of Bill 28; while Smith (1995) contends that the failure of Bill 28 was due not only to opposition in the anglophone community, but also to “the opposition in the National assembly over language of instruction (Bill 63) that caused the bill to become stalled in the legislative process and eventually the bill was withdrawn”<sup>4</sup> Language had usurped religion in Quebec. Thus, it became the major recognizable characteristic that determined one’s cultural background, and therefore, began taking center stage in debates around school board reform and language of instruction. The first manifestations of this were observed in the Montreal community of Saint Leonard when the Catholic school board decided that it would not grant its permission to have a high school board built, and moreover, to phase out English language instruction all together. Smith, (1995). Fraser

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<sup>2</sup> Bissonette Lise (1982) “School Restructuration on the Island of Montreal: A Missed Opportunity for the Anglophones.” in *The English of Quebec: From Majority to Minority Status*. Pp., 279-292 Gary Caldwell & Eric Waddell Eds. Published by the Institut de Recherche Sur la Culture. Pg., 281

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* pg., 282

<sup>4</sup> *Supra* note one, Smith, pg., 70

(2001) English speaking parents of Italian descent were enraged by the decision, and fought desperately to have it reversed. This case brought to the forefront that there were no constitutional provisions to protect minority language rights in education, as it became progressively obvious

that nowhere in the Constitution or the Education Act of the Province was English language instruction protected [...] and for many on the English side it provided a horrible example of what would happen to English education under unified school boards. (Henchey, 1972, pg., 112)<sup>5</sup>

The political and social repercussions of this were felt in the streets of Montreal where riots ensued in the fall of 1969. In response to this, the government called for an inquiry, which led to the *Royal Commission of Inquiry on the Linguistic Rights of the Majority and the Minority*, also known as the Gendron Commission. The Commission was given the mandate to come up with a French language policy for the province. The work of the commissioners took four years to complete. Their findings however were overshadowed by ongoing political events. Mounting pressure from anglophones and francophones had the government scrambling to come through with some kind of language policy. With the enactment of Bill 63, parents for the first time in the history of Quebec gained the right to

have their children educated in the language of their choice. Traditionally English and French education rights in Quebec had rested on the custom and on the protection of denominational school rights as defined in section 93 of the British North America Act<sup>6</sup>

The outcry from the francophone community was swift. They claimed that Bill 63 served only to threaten the longevity of French schools in Quebec due to the projected increase in enrolment of immigrant children into English schools. It became evident that what was previously a division in

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<sup>5</sup> cited in Smith 1995, Pp., 167-168

religious beliefs, had now turned into division based on political ideologies. The clash between the tenants of liberalism and democracy had begun, and it would not be until the Canadian Constitution was repatriated from Britain to Canada that a partial resolution would be reached. In the meantime however, the demand for change was too strong for the government to ignore, and opting for the side of democracy, the Bourassa government enacted Bill-22, thereafter making French the official language of Quebec.

Bill 22 called for English proficiency exams for immigrant students wishing to attend English language schools. The PSBGM, for its part, refused to participate in the formation of the exams. Moreover, with the Lakeshore School board as its ally, the PSBGM set out to actively protest the legality of Bill 22. English leaders feared that Bill 22 would exacerbate an already tumultuous political situation in Quebec, claiming that “Law 22 posed a threat to the vitality of the English language educational system: [and thus] its attractiveness to neo-Quebecers.”<sup>7</sup> But if the Protestant School Board thought they would find a friendly Court, they were mistaken. Justice Deschenes reminded the plaintiffs that the rights that were accorded to French minorities outside of Quebec applied equally to the minority rights of the English-speaking minority of Quebec. Chief Justice Deschenes said that

even if the question is cruel and apt to revive old would wounds, the argument of the Protestant school Board makes it mandatory. When the constitutional text was similar, did anyone think of serving the French culture of the Catholic minority of Manitoba, when the language question was underlying the religious conflict which was jeopardizing its right to denominational schools? And when the constitutional text was identical did anyone think of saying that the French culture of the

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<sup>6</sup> Magnuson Roger (1980) A brief history of Quebec Education: From New France to Parti Quebecois Harvest House, Montreal. Pg., 126



Catholic minority of Ontario, when the language question also jeopardized its system of denominational schools?<sup>8</sup>

The Court subsequently dismissed the Protestant School Board's petition against the Quebec Government's Official Language Act

In 1977 Bill-101 was passed in the National Assembly by the Parti-Quebecois. It was intended to have the effect that Bill-22 was unable to accomplish, i.e., a need for the 'symbolic affirmation' of a Quebecois identity. Prior to becoming the Premier of Quebec, Rene Levesques epitomized the spirit of this desire when he said

that to be ourselves means to maintain and develop a personality that has lasted for three and a half centuries...At the heart of this personality is the fact that we speak French...Everything else is tied to this essential element, derives from it, or brings us back to it without fail.<sup>9</sup>

The *Charter for French Language* was published in all of Montreal's major newspapers, and was favourably received by the editors of the French language press, the exception being Claude Ryan, the editor of *Le Devoir*. Although Ryan had initially endorsed the Parti Quebecois, he disagreed with the

approach, methodology, argument, and recommendations of the White paper. In his first editorial on April 2, [1977] he argued that the rights of the English-speaking community would be seriously diminished by the severity of the criteria for access to English schools, the suppression

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<sup>7</sup> Bissonette Lise (1982) "School Restructuration on the Island of Montreal: A Missed Opportunity for the Anglophones." in *The English of Quebec: From Majority to Minority Status*. Pp., 279-292 Gary Caldwell & Eric Waddell Eds. Published by the Institut de Recherche Sur la Culture.

<sup>8</sup> *Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal v. Minister of Education of Quebec* (1976) 83 D.L.R [3<sup>rd</sup>] 645 (Que. Sup. Ct.)

<sup>9</sup> "Quotations from Rene Levesques" (1977) Jean Cote and Marcel Chaput Eds. Translated by Robert.Guy Scully and Jacqueline Perrault. Editions Heritage de Montreal

of Article 133 of the BNA Act, and the restriction on signs, which he found offensive...<sup>10</sup>

In fact, he is reported to have said that the spirit of the White Paper was “frankly abusive and contrary to the most elementary principles of freedom of expression”<sup>11</sup>

Ryan was appalled by the White Paper’s interpretation of the studies conducted by the Gendron Commission. He accused the authors of the Charter of misquoting and twisting the studies so as to exaggerate the plight of francophones in the business community.

The authors of the White paper said that Gendron had found that eighty two percent of the communication on the job was in English. In fact, sixty-four percent of francophones used only French at work; *eighty-two percent of the anglophones polled used only English*<sup>12</sup>. [Italics added]

The reaction in political circles to the White paper included accusations made by Gerald. D Levesque of “totalitarianism authoritarianism, state planning and intolerance”<sup>13</sup>

As Minister of State for Cultural Development, Dr.Camille Laurin was responsible for the development of language legislation. His language polices were framed by his desire to make the French language the “defining reality of Quebec.” He and his colleagues, Fernand Dumont and Guy Rocher, introduced a Whorphan model of linguistics,

which maintains that thought and therefore, culture are inextricably linked with language. [...] Three ideas lay at the root of the desire for language legislation; the economic inferiority of francophones, the tendency of immigrants to assimilate with the English-speaking

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<sup>10</sup> Fraser Graham (2001) *Rene Levesques and the Parti-Quebecois in Power* Toronto, Macmillan Press. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition McGill-Queens University Press. pg., 105

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. pg,106

community, and further threaten the demographic balance in Quebec, and the desire to make a symbolic affirmation of Quebec as a French-speaking place<sup>14</sup>.

The movement from a Church based society to that of a political one had taken shape, but the deep rooted fears that were instilled in French Canadians by the clergy were difficult to erase, as they continued to fear assimilation into the English community. Their fears were compounded further by a faulty demographic analysis made by Jacques Henripin in the 1960's. In it, Henripin concluded that, at the most pessimistic rate of assimilation of immigrants to the English community, the proportion of francophones in Montreal would drop from 66.4% in 1961, to 52.7% in the year 2000<sup>15</sup>.

Henripin, for his part, did not take into account effects of anglophone migration from Quebec, and he was forced to reject his own predictions, but the initial analysis became the fundamental basis of the nationalist view of francophone Quebec as a vulnerable hemorrhaging community. McRoberts (1997) Fraser (2001) Moreover, Henripin also failed to take into account that the tumultuous political situation in Quebec discouraged the immigration of anglophones from other parts of Canada to Quebec. According to Caldwell (1982)

the language legislation is a reality, and English Quebec is now confronted with its consequences. Of these, the most crucial is the closing of the demographic inflow which characterized English Quebec, while the outlet remains wide open. [...] Out-migration of anglophones, its extent and what to do about it has become one of, if not the central, issue in Quebec.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Pp., 97-98

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Pp., 99-100

<sup>16</sup> Caldwell Gary (1982) "People and Society" in *The English of Quebec: From majority to Minority Status* Institut Quebecois de Recherche Sur la Culture. pg., 68

Despite the fact that Henripin went on to refute his own calculations, the government pursued its desire for schoolboard restructuring. In 1984, an Alliance Quebec report asserted that as

Minister of Education, Dr. [Camille] Laurin seemed intent on breaking what was left of the school boards' countervailing power against the department of Education, and centralizing even more power in the hands of that Ministry.<sup>17</sup>

This exacerbated fears in the anglophone community over the loss of any remaining control over their institutions. Their fears were further compounded by comments made by Laurin “who predicted that English school enrolment would drop from 229,756 to 194,500 by 1986-87”<sup>18</sup> Their apprehension was validated by a demographic analysis from the thirty-year period from 1971-1991. However, a demographic projection by Jedwab (1996) tells a different story. He rebukes the “[c]onfusing theories of linguistic integration that are at times advanced by some demographers....”<sup>19</sup> Jedwab’s data indicate that the enrolment trends in the English sectors were actually lower than those predicted by Laurin in 1981, i.e., where Laurin predicted a drop to 194,500 by 1986-87. The actual enrolment in real numbers in 1986 was 119,714<sup>20</sup>.

### **3.3 Minority language education Rights and Constitutional Law.**

Rene Levesques, Gerald Godin, and others in the Parti Quebecois disagreed with the *Quebec Clause*, which was intended to restrict English education to those children whose parents were educated in Quebec. The Laurin team, however, was adamant; education was under the jurisdiction of Quebec, and that “there should be no distinction made for those educated outside

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<sup>17</sup> Alliance Quebec (1984) “The Evolution of the Language Issue in Quebec 1977-1983” Montreal, Quebec. Alliance Quebec Publishers pg., 23

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Jedwab Jack (1996) *English in Montreal: A Layman’s Look at the Current Situation*. Les Editions Images pg., 162

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pg,86

of Quebec”<sup>21</sup> Denis Belleval suggested a form of reciprocity linking the eligibility rights of the anglophone minority in Quebec to that of the francophone minorities in the rest of Canada. He proposed that Quebec and Canada take part in bilateral agreements that would guarantee minority language of education rights with the other provinces, and Levesques accepted this compromise. At the inter provincial premiers conference of 1977, Premier Richard Hatfield of New Brunswick convinced the other Premiers that an agreement to reciprocity would be understood as an endorsement of unilinguism.

In 1982, the Canadian government repatriated the Canadian Constitution to Canada from Britain. Smith (1995) asserts that the education provisions in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) Section 23 subsections 1 (a)(b), 2 and 3 (a)(b) are the “expression of a political compromise, rather than the expression of inherent human rights.”<sup>22</sup> However, these minority language rights are not granted to all minority groups, but rather, are limited to the English, and French-speaking minorities of Canada, i.e., English as a minority language in Quebec, and French as a minority language in all other provinces, thereafter making language one of the most predominant symbols of Canadian culture.

The general purpose of s. 23 is clear: it is to preserve and promote the official languages in Canada, and their respective cultures, by ensuring that each language flourishes as far as possible, in provinces where it is not spoken by the majority of the population. The section aims at achieving this goal by granting minority educational rights to minority language parrots throughout Canada.<sup>23</sup>

The enactment of the *Charter* changed the role of the judiciary system. Article 24 of the Charter allows “recourse to the courts to obtain reparation that the court considers appropriate and

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<sup>21</sup> *Supra note ten*, Fraser pg., 102

<sup>22</sup> *Supra note one*, Smith. Pg., 175

<sup>23</sup> *Mahe v. Alberta* [1990] 1 S.C.R 342 , 68, D.L.R (4 th) 69

just in the consideration of the circumstances”. With the Constitution as their guiding light, judges and justices had become guardians of the law. This was uncharted territory for judges who were now asked perform duties that had been traditionally in the hands of Parliament. The case of *The Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards v. the Attorney General of Quebec*<sup>24</sup> was the first post-Charter case that the Quebec Superior Court had to contend with. The issue was whether Article 73 of Bill 101, also known as the *Quebec Clause*, was in violation of Article 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, also known as the *Canada Clause*. The Association of Protestant boards argued that Article 73 of Bill 101 was unconstitutional because it restricted access to English schools to those students who had at least one parent *educated in English in Quebec*. Article 23 of the Canadian Charter stipulates that children of parents, who have received an *English education in Canada*, are eligible to receive English education anywhere in Canada, including Quebec. The conundrum facing the court was deciding which law took precedence. In his judgement Justice Jules Deschenes maintained that

[a]ccording the Article 52 of the *Constitution Act 1982*, Canadian Charter law takes precedence. Still this article must be read in conjuncture with Article 1 of the *Charter*. For example, Quebec can restrain a right guaranteed by the *Charter*, for example, the right to instruction in the minority language. This restriction should be expressed in a ‘rule of law’, for example, bill 101, but it must remain within reasonable limits....<sup>25</sup>

The Quebec government argued that Article 23 of the *Charter* applies only to *individual rights*, and that the Charter of French Language applies to *collective rights*. Justice Deschenes ruled that the Quebec government’s argument

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<sup>24</sup> *Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards et al v. Quebec (A.G) et al* (No.1) 1982 140 D.L.R (3 d) 33.3 C.R.R. 114

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

demonstrates a totalitarian concept of society to which the court could not subscribe...other societies put the collectivity over the individual... This conception of society has not yet taken root here...and this court will not honour it with its approval....<sup>26</sup>

The final decision in this precedent setting case was that Article 73 of Bill 101 negated the rights of certain individuals in Quebec, and therefore, the *Canada Clause* prevails. In his discourse, Justice Deschenes argued that Section 23 of the *Charter* is in many ways much like the reciprocity deal Quebec was offering the other provinces in 1977. “The court doesn’t understand how Quebec refuses to accept today what it offered...” The decision was upheld by the Quebec Court of Appeal in 1983, and by the Supreme Court in 1984. The Charter had become the instrument that effectively squashed any further political victory based solely on collective rights. It is also entrenched forever the vision of former Prime Minister Pierre. Elliot Trudeau’s that anglophones and francophones from coast to coast could enjoy their mobility rights, and not be compelled to stay in a region simply because there would not be schools available for their children. That he and the framers of the Charter did not trust that legislatures would be accommodating to this is evident in the Supreme Court decision to uphold the two lower court rulings.

[...] the framers of the Constitution manifestly regarded as inadequate some – and perhaps all – of the regimes in force at the time the Charter was enacted, and their intention was to remedy some of the perceived defects of these regimes by uniform corrective measure, namely those contained in s. 23 of the Charter, which were at the time given the status of a constitutional guarantee<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> *Quebec (A.G) v. Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards*. [1984] 2. S.C.R. 66

With section 23 of the Charter in place to protect minority language rights in all of Canada, section 93 of the Constitution Act 1867 seemed redundant. The time was ripe to open up the dormant issue of school board restructuration.

In 1984, Bill 3 was enacted. This piece of legislation called for the replacement of all the existing common denominational school boards with common linguistic boards. The five dissentient and confessional boards in Montreal and Quebec City would continue to operate. Public support for the bill notwithstanding, it was later declared to be *ultra vires* because it necessitated the negation constitutionally protected rights<sup>28</sup>. In 1986, the newly elected Liberal government was ready to develop a new education act. However, experience regarding the unconstitutionality of previous legislations led to the formulation of five questions that were subsequently forwarded to the Quebec Court of Appeal. The questions were formulated following a broad consultation with representatives from the school board. After its review, the Quebec Court of Appeal ruled that notwithstanding the need for a few amendments, the Act did not breach any constitutionally protected rights.<sup>29</sup> This decision was appealed, by some of the school boards that were involved in the process, and was and subsequently heard before the Supreme Court where the Justices ruled that

[t]he provisions in Bill 107 at issue in this appeal do not prejudicially affect the rights and privileges protected by s.93 (1) and (2) of the Constitution Act 1867. The five constitutional questions are answered in the negative, provided... there is no territorial reduction within the boundaries of the municipal corporations of the cities of Montreal and Quebec, unless the territory so detached is served by a confessional board offering the same rights and privileges.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Quebec Associations of Protestant School Boards v. Quebec (A.G)*, [1985] C.S 872, 21 D.L.R (4<sup>th</sup>) 36.

<sup>29</sup> *Supra* note one, Smith pg., 71

<sup>30</sup> *Reference Re Education Act (Que.)*, [1993] 2 S.C.R 511, 105 D.L.R. 266, aff'g [1990] R.J.Q. 2498 (Que., C.A.)



The Supreme Court decision gave the Quebec government the green light to create linguistic school boards with the provision that it maintain confessional boards in Montreal and Quebec City.

In 1997, the Quebec government enacted Bill 109, which was to provide for the implementation of linguistic school boards. Unlike the provisions of Bill 107 (provisions that were never implemented), the provisions in Bill 109 required a constitutional amendment. The intended amendment would revoke denominational educational rights guaranteed in s. 93 of the Constitution Act 1867, which would allow the Quebec government to implement education policies that would be subject only to s. 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The Quebec government argued that “retaining section 93 rights would engender additional costs and fragmentation of the school system because of parallel structures – parallel and linguistic – that would be required.”<sup>31</sup> Amongst the recommendations of the Commission for the Estates General 1995 was that “confessionality must be unlocked at all levels of the system [to] continue the separation of Church and State.”<sup>32</sup> For the purpose of this analysis, Foster and Smith weighed the following four options,<sup>33</sup> that is whether or not to

- 1-retain the constitutional status quo – no amendment
- 2-amend section 93 to remove ‘stumbling blocks’
- 3-replace section 93 with ‘linguistic content’
- 4- remove section 93 guarantees.

Foster and Smith considered the fourth option to be the logical choice, a decision that was based on a comparative analysis of s.93 of the *Constitution Act 1867*, and s.23 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. 1982. The comparative analysis was based on a study of six policy issues, i.e.

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<sup>31</sup> Foster William. J & Smith William J (1997) *Restructuring the Education in Quebec; The Amendment of Section 93* <[http://ed-lex.law.mcgill.ca/doc/ed\\_qc/reform/const/prp9702.pdf](http://ed-lex.law.mcgill.ca/doc/ed_qc/reform/const/prp9702.pdf)>

<sup>32</sup> Commission for the Estates General on Education. 1995-1996 “Renewing Our Education System: Ten Priority Actions”. Minister of Education Government of Quebec

<sup>33</sup> *Supra note* thirty-one Foster & Smith

“school board and school structures; general policy and administration; curriculum and instructional organization; human resources; language of instruction; funding and taxation; denominational aspects of schooling”<sup>34</sup> They also contended that s.93 was not conducive to the new ‘management control’ that the jurisprudence of s. 23 called for.

The Federal Government positively accepted the Quebec government’s proposal for a constitutional amendment, but nevertheless assembled a Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate whose mandate it was to hold public meetings regarding the proposed constitutional amendments. The Joint Committee established that overall, there was indeed a consensus for change, and a bill was passed at Parliament that fall.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The Parti Quebecois was criticized in political circles for requesting a constitutional amendment .The Quebec government’s reliance on s. 43 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* which allows for bilateral agreements between the Federal government and the Province requesting the change. The obvious reaction to this being that if the Quebec government has to rely on a constitutional agreement to reform its education system, it stands to reason that it would have to rely on the same amending formula to secede from Canada. So great is the conundrum that in April of 1997, all eight members of Parti Quebecois’ Montreal region executive resigned in protest. The eight dissenting members of the Parti Quebecois argued that provincial government’s bilateral agreement with the federal government “[...] dealt a fatal blow to the Charter of the French Language”<sup>35</sup> The dissidents claim that this opens the door for the anglophone community to “chip away further at Bill 101 and the Charter of the French Language.” Be that as it may, school board restructuring has taken place, and as the change is still in the early stages of development, it is still too soon to determine if the change has served to

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

improve the organizational structure of the education system, and specifically, if the restructuring has improved the quality of service that anglophone students are presently receiving. However, school board restructuring notwithstanding, there are other variables that are having an enormous impact on the quality of education that anglophone students are receiving, variables such as school closures, and directives from the Ministry to integrate children with special needs into mainstream classes. When this is factored in with the psychological effects of dropping from a majority status mentality to that of an involuntary minority, there is evidence that the quality of education received by the students in traditionally working class districts is diminished. These factors will be explored further in the proceeding chapter.

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<sup>35</sup> McKenzie Robert (Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1997) "Montreal party officials resign over language" in *The Toronto Star*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.1 Introduction

During the Quiet Revolution, the majority status<sup>i</sup> mentality that the anglophone community had enjoyed, despite being a numerically smaller group, began to diminish. The first manifestations of their decline in status became evident in their loss of control over institutions such as schools and hospitals that were now controlled by a central government body. Subsequent language policies set into place the foundation for educational policies, which effectively reduced the status of the anglophone community to that of a minority I argue that this demotion in status has put them in the position of an *involuntary minority* despite the fact that the French community in Quebec was and continues to be, numerically larger.

After the election of the Parti Quebecois, and the subsequent tabling of the White Paper in the National Assembly, many anglophones decided that their needs were better served outside of Quebec. Indeed many observers from that era will recall the mass exodus of English speaking Quebecers on highway 401 to Toronto. Those anglophone Quebecers who did remain had to quickly learn how to adapt to the social and political transformation. This was difficult for many of Quebec's English speaking citizens, particularly for those who, had they had the means to leave, would have, but stayed simply because leaving was not an option. Others, who stayed, some of which who were not financially affected by the change, settled comfortably into the Quebecois lifestyle. It was during this time that many parents decided that their children would be better served by French schools or French Immersion Schools. As a rule, this would have been an admirable decision, especially in light of the fact that Canada has two official languages, and the more people who can speak both the better. However, regarding the English-speaking minority in Quebec, who were already in a vulnerable psychological position as a community, more children in French language schools and French immersion schools, meant fewer enrolments in English language schools, and subsequent school closures.

The closing of English language schools have forced many of Montreal's English speaking children to be schooled outside of their communities. The sheer inconvenience of this situation aside, ethnographic studies also indicate that this is detrimental to the psychological well being of children. Moreover, many children became, and continue to be stigmatized by the fact that they attend English elementary schools, or Regular English programmes in secondary schools. Ironically, it is not the francophone community who bequeaths this stigma upon the anglophone community, but rather, anglophones themselves. I contend that policy makers at the Ministry, who have little to no experience in pedagogy, fail to take into account that while a ministerial directive may appear to be to be good in theory; its implementation may not be so easily applied in the English language school system. This chapter will focus on how ministerial directives have been implemented in inner city, English language schools in the former Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, as well as inner city, English language schools in the present Lester. B Pearson School Board.

#### **4.2 From a majority status mentality to that of an involuntary minority status.**

In an attempt to describe a particular phenomenon, social scientists will look for characteristics that are common to all the groups in question. Gibson's (1991) research on involuntary or nonimmigrant minorities indicates that

common to all [...] is the fact that they were brought involuntarily into a subordinate relationship with the dominant group of their present societies, and subsequently treated to a history of denigration, exclusion and unequal educational and economic opportunities. This history has had a direct bearing on the perceptions, interpretations and responses to schooling of involuntary minority students and their families<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Gibson Margaret .A & Ogbu John. U (1991) *Minority Status and Schooling: A Comparative Study of Immigrant and involuntary Minorities*. Garland Publishing Inc. New York & London Pg., 365

Arguably, one may make the claim that this is how the French community perceived themselves prior to the Quiet Revolution, however, the French had control over their social institutions prior to the 1960's, and therefore, the psychological effects that they felt as a result of being economically inferior are not comparable to that experienced by the anglophone community. Gibbins (1990) argues that

Quebec anglophones became strangers, if not imperialists in their own land, “les autres” in a province vibrating to themes of Quebecois nationalism. Anglophones took up the uncomfortable garments of minority status being shed by francophones; their relative wealth became a political stigma, and their contribution to the province was stripped of symbolic recognition as Quebec was increasingly recast as a francophone society. Their grip on the province's business community was loosened, if not broken, by language legislation and educational reform.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, for those schools in poor, and working class districts of Montreal, the impact of educational reform was, and continues to be, significantly more difficult to bear. For many working class, anglophone parents with troubled adolescents, the school system is no longer serving as a place to reinforce societal values as dwindling enrolment and a lack of resources have led to the demise of extra curricular activities, and the loss of school spirit. One former student of Argyle Academy asserts that:

I [...] think that much of what made Argyle a special school was at that time becoming almost non-existent. For example, we had an amazing sports programme. That's why so many people picked the school. But that too changed. There were less and less teams, and then we had to

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<sup>2</sup> Gibbins Roger (1990) “The Politics of Language and Quebecois Nationalism” in *Canadian Political Science*. Nelson Power Pak. Nelson Thomson Learning 2000 pg., 151

pay extra to be on teams...everything that kept us contained as a group  
just dwindled away...it was once a good place.<sup>3</sup>

Despite that fact that the youth of that community have never been accustomed to an extravagant lifestyle; before the effects of school reform and school closures began to manifest themselves; they were accustomed to a better quality school environment. This loss of important extrinsic motivational variables has led to what Ogbu (1991) refers to as 'anti-academic success' i.e., "peer pressure among involuntary minority students [...] to discourage school success"<sup>4</sup> In these instances, community and familial pressure to achieve academic success are not present to the extent that they are for immigrant minorities. This is confirmed by Gibson 's (1991) research on immigrant and non-immigrant, involuntary minorities, which demonstrate that education is more important to immigrant parents than for non-immigrant, involuntary minority parents. While the latter group still believes that an education will open the doors of opportunity for their children, they remain skeptical that their children will have the opportunity to become well educated. According to Gibson's research

a history of inferior schools for minority children coupled with inappropriate curricula [and] poor teachers [...] has led nonimmigrant minorities to lower their expectations for their children's school achievements.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, nonimmigrant children appear to be the victims of a 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. That is, they will behave in the manner in which they are conditioned to believe they should. Like their parents, this group has little to no expectations from the education system as opposed to children from an immigrant minority family. Rosenthal and Jackson (1969) maintain that it is not necessarily because children are disadvantaged that they perform poorly compared to middle-

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix one pg. 72

<sup>4</sup> Gibson Margaret .A & Ogbu John. U (1991) *Minority Status and Schooling: A Comparative Study of Immigrant and involuntary Minorities* Garland Publishing Inc. New York & London

class children, but rather that “the predictors [teachers’] expectation is communicated to the other person, [the student] perhaps in quite subtle and unintended ways, and so has an influence on his actual behavior.”<sup>6</sup>

### 4.3 A Case Study: Argyle Academy

McCool (1994) looks at increased high school dropout rates in Quebec during the 1990’s. He maintains that technological gains in North American society made it necessary for young people to acquire a whole new set of skills. These technological changes, and the skills needed for production purposes have served to demotivate already at risk youth, i.e., dropouts are ‘pushed’ towards their fate by social and institutional factors”. For example, in 1992, poverty was a major concern for school officials on the island of Montreal. It was estimated that “another ten million dollars [was needed for] programs to feed poor children in order to have a hope of reaching its dropout reduction rate”<sup>7</sup>

With the advent of Canadian education over one hundred years ago, educators and educational institutions became an integral part of young people’s lives. The provisions included in the Juvenile Delinquents Act (1908) by the Federal Government, meant that children were no longer seen solely as their parent’s property, but rather, were viewed as having the potential to become extensions of Canadian values. This has become the accepted norm in Canadian society, and thus, schools have provided a safety net for disadvantaged or ‘at risk’ children. After the inception of the JDA, most of the Provincial governments that did not already have a policy of mandatory school attendance were quick to follow suit. However, policy-makers at that time, did

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Rosenthal Robert & Jackson Lenore. F (1968) “Teacher Expectations for the Disadvantaged” *Scientific American* vol. 214, no. 4 in *Readings in Social Psychology: The Art and Science of Research*. Steven Fein & Steven Spencer Eds. Houghton Mifflin Company 1996 PP, 3-9

<sup>7</sup> McCool Daniel (1994) “The Social Context of High School Dropouts and Prevention Initiatives: the Quebec Case” Department of Education. Concordia University. Montreal Quebec. pg., 15



not (and probably) could not predict the pressure that this would place on the education system in terms of resources, particularly after reforms made in the early 1960's, i.e., raising the bar of mandatory education from fourteen to sixteen years of age. McCool maintains that

[o]ver the past century, since the institution of compulsory education has become fairly widespread, more and more responsibilities have been imposed upon educators. In addition to teaching basic academic skills and transmitting general cultural knowledge, teachers are also expected to provide students with job training and personal coping skills. [...] The general public seems to accept handing over additional tasks from the family to the schools...How well are the educators and schools equipped to deal with the increasing burdens placed upon them, many of which do not seem altogether appropriate considering the inherently bureaucratic nature of the institution<sup>8</sup>.

The Argyle Academy Peer Tutoring Program: From 1992 to 1994, McCool served as a part-time coordinator for a peer-tutoring program at Argyle Academy situated in Verdun Quebec. As the project coordinator, McCool worked closely with the school guidance counsellor, and specific teachers. Teachers chose students who required remedial help, as well as the likely tutors, while McCool as the coordinator organized and supervised the sessions.<sup>9</sup>

Argyle Academy was a small high school situated in the inner city, working class municipality of Verdun, and under the jurisdiction of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal [PSBGM]. After the shift from denominational boards to linguistic boards it fell under the jurisdiction of the Lester. B. Pearson School Board.

The area was formally predominately anglophone, and home to workers in the heavily industrialized area of Montreal's southwestern

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pg., 25

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pg., 75

regions bordering on the Lachine canal. Over the past thirty years, this area suffered deterioration caused by such socio-political influences as the exodus of many industries to tax burdens both in and outside Quebec. ...As a result, the population of this high school could be classified as lower income originating from a depressed region<sup>10</sup>

In 1994, the dropout rate at Argyle Academy was estimated to be at thirty-six percent [36%] making the student population high risk, and thus, making it the perfect testing ground for preventative interventions. However, these preventions were useless in the face of

indifference by many students, coupled with compression of the teaching staff in response to dwindling enrolments. Teachers are teaching outside their areas of expertise, and students are failing to become engaged in their studies<sup>11</sup>.

McCool asserts that the teachers at Argyle Academy were overworked and discouraged, and could not be faulted for their skepticism regarding the Peer Tutoring Project. "Teachers often feel that ministerial directives are formulated by bureaucrats who have little understanding of how schools actually operate."<sup>12</sup>

To say that teachers are frustrated by Ministerial directives is an understatement. When asked if educators are ever consulted in the policy process, one Special Needs Technician told this writer

I've never been consulted; all we're told is that it's coming. And, if we're not on board with it, or if we express any concerns about the directive, we're basically told too bad for you. I hate to sound negative about the ministry directives, but again, what sounds good in theory is often extremely difficult to implement.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pg., 76

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pg., 77

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pg., 78

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix one, pg. 79

In March of 1997, riot police were called to Argyle Academy in response to an altercation between a black grade ten student and a white grade nine student. The situation had a potentially fatal ending when one of the two students brandished a knife. Constable Richard Magnan from Station 16 of the Montreal Urban Community Police Force maintained that the police officers were being attacked by the crazed mob, and therefore, it was necessary to resort to the use of pepper-spray. According to Constable Magnan

I've been in the police 27 years. In my wildest dreams, to go into a school and beat up 14-year-olds-- I just never would have thought it possible. Students were attacking police officers. Otherwise we would never have used pepper spray on kids<sup>14</sup>.

This incident was brought about by the amalgamation of the secondary I, II and III students from Shadd Academy to Argyle Academy, which only served to exasperate the problems that were already brewing at Argyle. Shadd Academy was situated in the Montreal district of Cote Des Neiges, a far cry from Verdun. Not only was it unjust to uproot these students from their community school, a school that they had an affinity for; but it was also naïve of the PSBGM to even consider placing students of West Indian descent into a school that for the most part housed kids of Irish descent. This is a classic case of cultural integration gone wrong simply because it was expected that these kids would get along together. When asked to describe her experience during that period at Argyle, a former student maintains that

we had an amazing group of teachers. They were available to us before classes in the morning, at lunch and after school to help us with our work. But then they became so frustrated with the all the problems in the school, that they became unreachable<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Charlton Jacque (1997) "Pepper-Gas—The Choice of a New Generation" in The [Montreal] *Mirror* Vol.12 No.45

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix one, Pg., 72

When asked about the pepper gas incident she replied that

the repercussions of that incident left a permanent stain on Argyle Academy. That incident was the culmination of the racial tension that had been brewing particularly amongst the younger grades when Shadd Academy was merged with our school. From that day on, there was a clear division between the blacks and the whites. The next day we were told that the school was not safe. We told to go home.<sup>16</sup>

By July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998, Argyle had shut its doors, and the students were transferred to the Verdun Catholic High School facility. The two school bodies were housed under one roof, until January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999; at which time, both school bodies were converged and the school was renamed Verdun Regional High School.

From the outset, Verdun Regional did not stand a chance. The community was still reeling from the loss of its two well established English high schools, and rather than set their hopes on Verdun Regional, which they felt was lacking in resources, they opted to send their children to schools outside of their own community. It would appear that the majority of textbooks and other supplies did not follow the ‘Argylians’ to Verdun Catholic. When interviewed a former Argyle student complained that at the time of the school merger a relative had to share a History textbook at Verdun Regional because there were not enough to go around. She maintains that:

when the students from Argyle were transferred to Verdun Catholic, their school supplies were not forwarded with them ...[textbooks etc] when we were at Argyle, everybody had their own textbooks, and we never had to share. All of a sudden, people were sharing textbooks, which made it difficult when studying for exams.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

A limited amount of resources, the absence of school spirit, and low enrolment put Verdun Regional in an extremely precarious position.

Jenkins (1995) maintains that schools are “the primary social institution to assume responsibility for teaching children appropriate social behavior.”<sup>18</sup> She argues that since young people spend much of their time within a school setting, it only makes sense that the school becomes a place where they derive a sense of belonging. This is especially important for disadvantaged youth, i.e., those from the lower socio-economic sphere. Jenkins looks at the factors that encourage school - commitment and to what extent school commitment influences such factors as crime, school misconduct and non-attendance. This is particularly relevant for those students whose schools are experiencing the effects of low student enrolment, limited resources, and overworked underpaid teachers. According to Jenkins “unsatisfying social interactions in school are believed to prevent some students from developing school ties of attachment”<sup>19</sup>

It would take more than the band -aid solutions being offered up by the Lester. B Pearson School Board to reestablish a community high school in Verdun. This is evident by the fact that Verdun Regional closed its doors on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001. And it would take a mobilization of parent groups to actively pursue the best interests of their children before Beurling Academy would open its doors in September of 2003. In the interim, however, many parents would soon discover that sending their children to schools outside of their community was indeed not in their children’s best interests. Natriello et, al (1990), who studied the school experiences of disadvantaged youth, confirmed this. They contend that the problems experienced by disadvantaged youth are the result of persistent issues that cannot be improved using band-aid solutions. They assert it is not necessarily true that the root of the problem lie with dysfunctional families, but rather that the

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<sup>18</sup> Jenkins Patricia H (1995) “School Delinquency and School Commitment” *The Sociology of Education* 68: 221-239

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pg., 222

problem lies in the inadequate schools that these youth must attend. This theory is also advanced by Pascow (1970), who asserts that

disadvantage may persist throughout school life and contribute to restricting later economic and social opportunities [...] a child is deprived if for social, political, or cultural reasons, the “normal” facilities of the school system are available to him only in restricted form<sup>20</sup>.

Natriello et, al also argue for the importance of maintaining neighborhood schools. They argue that

neighborhood schools are said to have a ‘natural constituency’ that might be threatened by expansion of district-wide school choice. Enabling families to ‘escape’ from institutions perceived to be in decline may simply make those institutions more deficient<sup>21</sup>.

The authors also maintain that competition between schools can lead to the weakening of a school, and consequently, school closures. They contend that the commercialization of schools only erodes a community’s commitment to educate their young people. They contend that

we rarely view the success or failure of a restaurant as a matter of public concern. But schools unlike restaurants are fundamental social institutions [...] the constant threat of closure necessarily weakens the ability of schools to fulfil their mandate, because institutions that can close so quickly are universally viewed as transient and unimportant.<sup>22</sup>

Uncertainty of student enrolment could lead to fiscal deficits and, consequently, the inability of the school, school boards and the community to plan for the future of the school

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<sup>20</sup> Cited in Natriello Gary *et, al.* (1990) *Schooling Disadvantaged Children: Racing Against Catastrophe*. Teacher’s College Press pg., 7

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 186

#### 4.4 The MEQ's Integration and Inclusion Policies for Special Needs Students.

Education and language policies of the 1970's were the driving force behind the outmigration of Quebec's anglophone community; and for those who have remained, they also serve to divide the English-language primary and secondary students into two camps: those who attend French Immersion or French-language schools, and those who attend English-language schools. Outmigration and the choice of many anglophone parents to send their children to French /French Immersion schools over English schools has led to dwindling enrolment in many long established English schools, and their subsequent closures. With the foundation of English language education effectively weakened, any further directives from the Ministry have the potential to cause further damage. Anderson et al (1980) study this phenomenon and they maintain that

there exists a need for interpreting educational policies primarily intended for francophone schools to the context of English language school systems. While much of the language associated with the Educational Project [...] can perhaps be translated, it remains uncertain whether notions are easily assimilated within the context of educational thought as it currently exists in the English language community. <sup>23</sup>

I would argue that the MEQ's 1979 Plan of Action, which calls for the integration of special needs children into the mainstream of Quebec schools, may very well be such a policy. This directive was advanced as a

policy [...] based on the right of the child with difficulties to receive from the public school a quality education appropriate to his or her specific needs in the most normal context ever". (MEQ, 1979a, p., 64)<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pg. 187

<sup>23</sup> Anderson Gary. J et, al (1980) *The Educational Project: From Policy to Practice*. Office of Research on Educational Policy. Faculty of Education, Administration and Policy Studies. pg, 2

<sup>24</sup> Smith William (1995) *Themes and Traditions in Quebec Education: A Source Book for Educators*. Office of Research on Educational Policy. McGill University. Pg., 182

However, according to some English secondary school teachers, the setting is anything but 'normal' when there is a disparity in the ratio between average students to special needs students, specifically, those with behavioural problems. The problems that must be dealt with relating to children with behavioural problems effectively make the setting abnormal, and not workable, which ruins the setting for every other student. (See Appendix one, Interviews, A & B) Educators contend that the high number of students with behavioural problems in their classes, and little or no resources to help them makes teaching very difficult. More importantly, children with special needs are coded according to their disabilities, e.g., autism hearing or visual impairments. For every coded student, an educational institution is allocated X amount of dollars from the MEQ. (According to one source X= to approximately ninety thousand dollars per child) However it cannot be stressed too strongly that children with severe behavioural problems, otherwise referred to, as 'at risk students' do *not qualify for government funding*. The problem is that there may be one or two special needs students in a class who are coded with a disability, and the rest may be at risk students. When asked about a typical day in her class, one teacher makes the assertion that

I have to modify the work for special needs students, and they take longer to complete assignments...But these are not the special needs kids who negatively affect the environment; it's the ones with behavioural problems who do so on a daily basis. [At risk children spend their time] [c]alling out in class, fighting in class, swearing in class [...] the noise level is often unbearable as well. A lot of these kids have to be tapping, banging or singing to themselves. Those students who are actually trying to work have difficult time doing so.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the disparity between average students and at risk students in a class is the fact that class sizes have become progressively larger. In a Regular classroom setting this means that a

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<sup>25</sup> See Appendix one, pg. 68-69



teacher will spend a good portion of his or her time addressing issues stemming from bad behaviour. This can be with or without the help of an integration aide. However, it must be understood that the integration aide is a resource person for children who are coded with disabilities, i.e., an integration aide's salary comes out of the allocation of resources administered from the MEQ to a specific child with a disability. However, an integration aide can spend more time fending off behavioural problems than s/he actually spends with his or her designated student. According to one Special Educational Technician (SET)

We usually lump too many behavioral kids in a classroom. This has been the practice because of financial constraints I guess, and what usually ends up happening is a reverse integration where there are not enough better students in the class to act as models for the students with behavioural problems. Teachers get so caught up in the behavioural issues, that we are prevented from getting further ahead with the students who are capable of functioning well in a so called 'Regular' classroom setting. But again, I don't think that we can call it a Regular classroom setting anymore, but rather, a reverse integration situation. It can be fixed, but it'll cost money to do it.<sup>26</sup>

Smith (1995) argues that

[i]f educators are expected to provide appropriate services to children with a wide range of abilities and aptitudes, then they are entitled to expect appropriate support. In a climate of scarce resources, this means making better use of what we do have and developing *new paradigms for service delivery*.<sup>27</sup> [Emphasis Added]

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. Pg71

<sup>27</sup> *Supra Note* Twenty-four, Smith pg., 193

Prior to the MEQ's 1979 directive that called for children with special needs to be integrated into as normal setting as possible, students were 'streamed' for their core classes according to their aptitudes, i.e., essentially, there was a low, medium and high stream for each of the core subjects. That meant that a student who had a strong proficiency for math was directed to the high stream of math. However, if that same student had a low proficiency for French, s/he was directed to a low stream French class etc. For all the optional or elective classes, such as Drama, Art Physical Education for example, the students were integrated with the rest of the students in their grade level. *What is important here is that the students were learning the core subjects in classes that were designed to fit their needs.* The Ministry's directive to integrate students with special needs, in effect, eliminated this system. What replaced it however proved to be extremely damaging for the education system, and specifically, the English school system. When asked if partial integration would be an effective solution, the SET firmly agreed

I would give them what they need in terms of the core courses, and then I would integrate them in classes that I think they could handle where they would not be embarrassed, where they would not be the center of attention. We definitely need smaller class sizes and special attention to zero in on specific needs because right now, I think they're getting lost [...] Where there are forty kids in a class, and of that, eighteen are coded with behavioural problems, there is potential for real danger.<sup>28</sup>

Secondary schools in the Lester. B Pearson School Board currently offer five programs: Regular, French Immersion, Enriched, International Baccalaureate [IBO], and Alternative, the latter being a last resort for students in secondary IV and V who for whatever reason, are unable to finish high school in one of the mainstream programs. As it stands, the French Immersion, Enriched and IBO programs are designed for those students who exemplify above average aptitudes and motivational skills; whereas Regular programs are designed for those students who

are average both in their aptitudes and motivational skills. However, 'regular' or 'average' in this case is a misnomer, as the regular programs are now servicing a high proportion of at risk students, which is both to their detriment, and as well, to the detriment of average students. Moreover, for many students in a regular program, the only reason why they are in that program is due to their inability to succeed in the French Immersion Program where courses like geography and History must be taken in French. Their inability to accomplish this in a second language will lead to the subsequent demotion to a regular, English program. However, for many of these students, the other core classes in the Regular program may simply be too easy for them.

Neuroscientific and Cognitive Psychological research on language advances theories that suggest a *maturational lag* in the temporal lobe region of the brain, which is responsible for language, auditory and perceptual functions, is present in those children who do not succeed in primary French Immersion. (For Factor Analysis of the Neuropsychological Test Battery see Trites and Price, 1976, Pp., 35-73) Trites and Price do not support the claims that those students who are unsuccessful in French Immersion would also be unsuccessful in an English language program. Instead, the results of their research indicate that

Some children of above average potential and normal abilities for school progress in their native language experience difficulty or fail in a primary immersion programme in a second language as a result of mild specific maturational lag<sup>29</sup>

Their findings indicate that when children who are affected by a maturational lag in the temporal lobe regions are transferred from French-Immersion programmes to the English programmes, acceleration in academic skills is manifested. Cognitive theories of *Imprinting*, (Medin and Ross 1997) assert that language acquisition is achieved at the *critical stage* of development, i.e.,

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<sup>28</sup> See Appendix one, pg., 74

<sup>29</sup> Trites R.L & Price M.A (1976) *Learning Disabilities Found in Association with French-Immersion Programming*. The University of Ottawa Press. Pp. III-IV

learning a language is dependent upon the “appropriate auditory environment in which the infant’s own language acquisition system can operate....”<sup>30</sup> This has great implications for the learning of a second language. According to this theory, “there is some language learning capacity only early in development”<sup>31</sup> Thus, if a child enters French Immersion without having been significantly exposed to the French language during the *critical period of development*, his or her chances of succeeding in the French Immersion program are extremely limited. Medin and Ross, like Trites and Price maintain that everything else being equal in the cognitive development of a child “it is conceivable that neural development closes off some possibilities even as it opens up others”<sup>32</sup>

In addition to being in classes that may be too easy for them, children who are ‘demoted’ from the French Immersion Programme, or even those who never made the attempt, are further penalized by being placed in a programme that one teacher describes as a “dropping off point” This teacher maintains that:

I think that the Regular programme has become the dropping off point...here you go...do what you can. And it wouldn’t be so bad if it were like that just for French class because a lot of kids do not do well in French-Immersion simply because they have difficulties learning the French language. But the problem is that they get grouped with these kids with special needs [at risk] for every single class, and that’s the problem. Just because a kid isn’t good in French, doesn’t mean that s/he wouldn’t excel in other subjects like English and Math.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Medin Douglas. L & Ross Brian. H (1997) *Cognitive Psychology* Second Edition. Harcourt Brace College Publishers. Pg., 62

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. Pp., 362-363

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. pg., 364

<sup>33</sup> See Appendix one, pg., 70

The MEQ's latest directive comes in the way of a "New Curriculum Reform, which is supposed to be implemented in all Quebec's secondary schools by 2005. Essentially, the curriculum reform consists of incorporating aspects from one course to that of another. Known as 'cross – curricular learning.' This necessitates the gradual replacement of some of the more traditional teaching methods for a 'corporate style of teaching', where projects and presentations will be the teaching tools of choice. More importantly however, is the fact that this style of learning presupposes that a student is capable of working independently. Thus, the role of a teacher will be transformed to that of an overseer or supervisor. This non-directed form of teaching will have harmful effects to a system that is already sitting in a precarious position as

this would be to the detriment of many children who need structure in order to positively function in the school environment. These children, many of whom have behavioural problems, need a structured, directed environment. Many of them have no study habits, no organizational skills. And, this is not just in this community... this is global. I hate to sound negative about the ministry directives, but again, what sounds good in theory is often extremely difficult to implement<sup>34</sup>.

In order to implement the Ministry's directive, *new paradigms for service delivery* from the level of individual school boards are required. Or, to be more specific, a return to the basics is needed. That means, eliminating the present 'program' paradigm, and return to a paradigm of 'streaming' which is essentially partial integration. This of course will cost the government, as more teachers will be required to effectively serve the clientele. Moreover, Special Needs and At Risk students would be better served under this paradigm, while ensuring the protection of their Human Rights. Partial integration also respects the provisions of the Quebec *Education Act* s.235 stipulates that

Every school board shall adopt, after consultation with the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with

social maladjustments or learning disabilities, a policy concerning the organization of educational services for such students to ensure the harmonious integration of each such student into a regular class or group and into school activities if it has been established on the basis of the evaluation of the student's abilities and needs that such integration would facilitate the student's learning and social integration and would not impose an excessive constraint or significantly undermine the rights of the other students.<sup>35</sup>

School boards are thus given discretionary power in respect to its special education policies. The only requirement that the MEQ makes of the school boards is that they “facilitate the learning and social integration of students with special needs” Partial integration based on a student’s particular needs would be a more efficient method of carrying out Integration and Inclusion Policies for Special Needs Students, and the New Curriculum Reform Policy. Lowering the class sizes and reducing the disparity between students who are coded as At Risk, and the students who perform better at school, is also an alternative solution.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

The majority status mentality enjoyed by the anglophone community, despite being a numerically smaller group, began to diminish in the 1960’s when the francophone majority established centralized governmental departments, such as the Ministry of Education, which thereafter, served to promote and protect the needs of francophones. . Subsequent language policies were the driving force behind the exodus of many anglophone Quebecers, and as well set into place the foundation for educational policies. These factors served to effectively reduce the status of the anglophone community to that of an official minority. School closures caused by dwindling

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pg,73

<sup>35</sup> *Quebec Education Act* R.S.Q, s.235

enrolments have forced many anglophone children to be schooled outside their communities, which often leads to negative results for the students, the schools and the communities.

The foundation of English language education in Quebec has been effectively weakened due to language and educational policies since the 1960's, and therefore, school boards must consider different methods of applying ministerial directives in inner city, English language schools, since schools in these communities are already at risk because the clientele in these neighbourhoods already have to contend with the socio-economical effects of being poor or working class.

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<sup>i</sup> Stein Michael "Changing Anglo- Quebecer self-consciousness" in *The English of Quebec: From Majority to Minority Status*. Institut Quebecois De Recherche Sur la Culture. (1982)

According to Stein, "[I]n its self - analysis of its own role I Quebec, the Anglophone community may be described as having gone through two distinct phases since the end of World War II: 1) a phase of self – confident [majority status]consciousness; and 2) a phase of majority-minority group image dissonance and defensiveness: 3) a phase of minority group positive self-awareness and action" pg., 109

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.1 Concluding Remarks

As a liberal democratic federation with two official languages, Canada has had its share of problems stemming from minority language rights in education. This is why the Fathers of Confederation decided to leave matters of education in the domain of the provinces, To their credit they did attempt to alleviate future disagreements regarding the minority education rights of anglophones in Quebec, and francophones in the rest of Canada via denominational rights. However, these provisions proved to be insufficient in the long term for a modern society where there is a clear delineation between Church and State. It would become the responsibility of future generations of politicians to devise a new strategy of minority education rights.

Does the Quebec government effectively promote the rights of the anglophone community without infringing on the rights of the francophone majority? In a word, no. Since the mid 1970's, both the Liberal and Parti Quebecois governments have been preoccupied with the maintenance of the democratic rights of the francophone majority with minimal consideration for the individual rights of the anglophone minority. Moreover, had the rights and freedoms of all Canadians not been guaranteed in S.1 of the Constitution Act (1982), English language education in Quebec would probably been altogether negated rather than retrained.

The entrenchment of minority language education rights notwithstanding; there are flaws within the structure of the English language education system itself that need to be addressed. Amendments to section 93 of the Constitution Act (1867) allowing the Quebec government to restructure school boards along linguistic lines are all well and good. But, dwindling enrolments mean less allocation of government funding, which subsequently leads to school closures and an overall decline in English language education. The one thing that school boards can do to maintain the integrity of English language education is to use its discretionary powers when implementing ministerial policies that are specifically designed for French language schools. What this means essentially is that English language school boards could give the schools under



their jurisdiction the greenlight to return to partial integration of special needs students, which would ensure all students a quality education.

In the preceding chapter, it was established that more teachers are required if ministerial policies are to be implemented effectively. In January of 2004, it was reported that one Montreal school board used money that was destined to help some of Montreal's neediest students to pay the salaries of its teachers. The necessity of which was not understood by some members the Montreal media, who were quick to paint the school board's actions with a negative slant. It was reported that a 6.7 million-dollar grant to the *Commission Scolaire de Montreal*, which was tagged to help some of Montreal's neediest students, was in fact redirected to pay the salaries of that board's teachers. The program - known in English as New Approaches, New Solutions - was announced in May 2002 by the Education Department to help 100,000 secondary students from Quebec's poorest neighbourhoods. For five years, 200 targeted schools are sharing \$25 million a year to reduce their collective 37-per-cent dropout rate. It would seem as if the CSDM has the right idea, regardless to what some critics are saying because without the proper ratio of teachers to students, effective teaching and learning are not going to happen.<sup>1</sup>

It was also established in the preceding chapters that school closures have profound psychological effects to the anglophone community, and recently tabled legislation will only serve to exacerbate dwindling enrolments to English language schools. This factor continues to be manipulated by amendments to the *Charter of French Language*. For example, s 73 (5) has been amended so that now instruction in English received in Quebec in a private educational institution accredited for the purposes of subsidies by the child for whom the request is made, or by a brother or sister of the child shall be disregarded. The same applies to instruction in English received in Quebec in such an institution after October first 2002 by the father or mother of the children. Instruction in English received pursuant to a special authorization under section 81, 85

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<sup>1</sup> Lampert Allison "Money for poor students diverted - board member CSDM puts 40% of grant toward deficit" *Montreal Gazette* Thursday, January 22, 2004

or 85.1 shall also be disregarded. When the amendment was proposed in 2002, many anglophone school officials were outraged, and they demanded that the Quebec government withdraw its proposal. That did not happen however, and the Liberal Government passed the amendment in the National Assembly in September of 2003. The amendment also closes the loophole to allow the siblings of a student with a learning disability (who because of the disability cannot attend French school) entrance to English language schools. "It's clearly unconstitutional", said Jeff Polenz, executive director of the Quebec English School Boards Association. "The government risks losing a big battle here." Anglophone educators are particularly unhappy that the government is trying to stop children allowed into English schools under special circumstances - because of learning difficulties - from bringing along their siblings for support. "That's the really insidious part," Polenz said. Polenz also warns the Quebec government that they are on "very, very shaky constitutional ground". He maintains that there is presently no evidence to suggest that there is a demographic crisis to justify the amendment to s. 73 (5). He claims that enrolment to English schools only constitutes ten percent of the total student population of Quebec, and this includes French Immersion schools that fall into the category of an English school. According to Polenz "[r]emoving the rights of a few hundred kids a year isn't going to have any statistical impact on a system with 1.1 million students."<sup>2</sup>

There can be no doubt about it; the seeds for yet another constitutional battle have been sown, and the clash between collective and individual rights will not be over anytime soon. In the interim, however, those who are responsible for the formulation and implementation of educational policies, the public servants, and school board officials, should 'get into the trenches' with the teachers and students, so that they may get an idea of the real situation.

Through case studies and interviews, I have established that ministerial directives cannot be implemented effectively to inner city, English language schools without modifying present

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<sup>2</sup> Seidman Karen "English school boards denounce change in law" *Montreal Gazette* May 15, 2002 p A-9

paradigms of service and delivery. I began this thesis by illustrating the evolution of the education system in Quebec during the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. I demonstrated that clerical resistance to modernization, and its elitist opinions regarding education, placed the francophone majority of Quebec in a weak economic position relative to that of the anglophone minority. This changed when for a variety of reasons, one of which being the declining francophone birthrate, the francophone majority embarked on a quest for self-determination.

I have illustrated that the period between 1964 to 1997 was a time for Royal Commissions, and where language disputes were settled in the courts of law. And finally in chapter four, I established that the anglophone minority, who had enjoyed a majority status mentality prior to the 1960's, was reduced to an *involuntary minority* status, which has had a negative psychological impact on the lower socio-economic strata of the community, and specifically, to English language inner city schools.

The education system in Quebec has evolved tremendously over the last forty years. However, it remains that we have yet to iron out the problems that a democratic education system entitles us to. As a society, we are still in the process of trying to determine which methods of service and delivery will be the most effective in a democratic setting. The rationale behind integration policies is honourable in that it is an attempt to bring equality to the education system. However, the balance has now tipped precariously to the other extreme. It is essential therefore, that schools and school boards consider alternative methods of implementing integration policies.

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## APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX ONE**

*The following Interviews were conducted by the researcher for the purpose of substantiating the assumptions advanced in this thesis by Cynthia Jean Martin (CJM) The identity of the interviewees will remain anonymous, and, therefore will be referred to Teacher1 [T1] in Interview A and Special Education Technician [SET] in Interview B*

### **Interview A**

**CJM:** T1, what programs do you teach?

**T1:** I teach Regular and Enriched programs.

**CJM:** Could you elaborate on the differences between the two groups?

**T1:** Essentially, the kids in the Enriched programs are more capable of doing work on their own, that is, they do not have to be guided through every single step, and they're always willing to go one step further. Whereas, when I do similar assignments with my regular class, I have to take them through every step, and I literally have to tell them this is step one, step two...so that the work is much more outlined and clear for them. I show them examples of what the kids in the Enriched classes have done so that they have a visual example of what the finished product will look like.

**CJM:** Could you tell me how many children in the Regular stream classes fit into the category of 'Special Needs'?

**T1:** I would say that of the twenty-nine in my class, there are about ten who fall in to that category.

**CJM:** How are the other nineteen children affected?

**T1:** I have to modify the work for special needs students, and they take longer to complete assignments...But these are not the special needs kids who negatively affect the environment; it's the ones with behavioural problem who do on a daily basis.

**CJM:** Could you elaborate on that please?

**T1:** Calling out in class, fighting in class, swearing in class...and my class is one of the classes that they do actually 'listen' in to the extent that they are capable of. . Can you imagine the chaos in other rooms? ... The noise level is often unbearable as well. A lot of these kids have to be tapping, banging or singing to themselves. Those students who are actually trying to work have difficult time doing so.

**CJM:** Do you think that the MEQ's directives regarding the integration of special needs kids is realistic...why, or why not?

**T1:** I think that integration works well at the very lowest levels like Kindergarten, as this is a place where children start to learn how to socialize. But I do not think that we can expect that these kids will sit quietly or work in groups in a regular high school setting.

**CJM:** A colleague currently teaching at a different LBPSB high school asserts that it is impossible to integrate students with special needs, particularly those with behavioural problems, into a 'normal' setting because these kids effectively make a normal setting abnormal. Do you think that partial integration would be more effective, i.e., and integration in all classes except for the core curriculum classes?

**T1:** Absolutely. In addition to teaching Geography, and English classes, I also teach Drama where the same kids with behavioural problems excel mainly because the class itself is structured in such a way so that these kids are encouraged to express themselves, stand up and walk around, and even make noise; whereas in the other core classes, they are encouraged to work quietly. The elective courses are probably more conducive to integration. That way, the 'normal' kids are not negatively affected by disruptive behaviour.

**CJM:** So, let's say that partial integration does get implemented in the school, and the otherwise average kids get their regular stream program back as it was prior to the MEQ's directives from 1979. Do you think that the marks of average kids will increase? Will these kids be challenged?

**T1:** I think that I would be able to introduce work that is better suited to their needs, and they'd be able to move on at a faster pace. For example, we've been working on nouns and verbs for the

last three weeks, and antonyms and synonyms for over a month; whereas if I were to cover this with just my Regular kids, I could just zip through the work. It's to the point now that I find myself modifying the work to suit the needs of the regular stream kids, and not the other way around.

**CJM:** It would appear as if the regular classes have become the special education classes. Therefore, would you agree that it is the kids without special needs who are being stigmatized?

**T1:** I think that the regular program has become the dropping off point...here you go...do what you can. And it wouldn't be so bad if it were like that for French class because a lot of kids do not do well in French-Immersion simply because they have difficulties learning the French language. But the problem is that they get grouped with these kids with special needs for every single class, and that's the problem. Just because a kid isn't good in French, doesn't mean that s/he wouldn't excel in other subjects like English and Math.

**CJM:** T1, if you were asked to give your input to the policy-process, what kind of contribution would you make?

**T1:** I think between the two regular classes that we currently have, we could make a small Special Ed class, and a large regular class. And I know I would be able to teach the Special Ed class knowing that I'd have the support of aides, and the other kids would be able to learn at a quicker pace, and be regular, average children. It's horrible to have to discipline an entire class for the bad behaviour of a few. Not to mention that the regular kids get bored because they are forced to sit through repetitive explanations of course material as a result of the misbehaviour. I think that instead of paying teachers more money for teaching larger classes of students, many of which are coded as special needs kids; they [the board] should focus on hiring more teachers, and reducing class sizes. If class sizes were reduced to twenty with even half of them being coded, the environment would be more conducive to learning. There'd be less arguing and less fighting. But with twenty-nine, it's next to impossible. Small class sizes would make the world of difference.

**CJM:** Do you have aides in your classes?

**T1:** I do. But the problem is that they are being pulled around the school doing so many other things like patrolling the hallways that they spend only half the time that they should be in classes.

**CJM:** Do you think that some of the policies, exams, course outlines or textbooks are better suited to fit the needs of French education system?

**T1:** Yes I do. Take the high school leaving exam for example. The kids in French-Immersion always do better than the English program kids because the History exam for the English program kids is translated word for word from French to English, and is therefore poor in quality. The textbooks are also better in French than English.

**CJM:** Do you have enough textbooks for all your students?

**T1:** Yes I do...that's not a problem

**CJM:** Many parents are happy to have a high school back in Verdun again as the closure of Argyle Academy, Verdun Catholic High School, and finally, Verdun Regional [the weak attempt to amalgamate Verdun Catholic and Argyle] was a great loss to the Verdun community. Do you think that the board is taking extra special precautions to ensure the success of Beurling Academy?

**T1:** I think they are, and trust me, I'm not saying this just as a spokesperson. I think they are trying to correct an injustice. When the students from Argyle were transferred to Verdun Catholic, the school supplies were not forwarded with them...[textbooks etc] All the students at Argyle had their own textbooks, and they never had to share. All of a sudden, people were sharing textbooks, which made it difficult when studying for exams. But now, they're really injecting a lot of money into this school. They've upgraded our computer lab because we found that students who are on the cusp are more interested in class if we have Power Point, and presentations... they love computer technology. Many of our children are from low-income families, and when they are exposed to it here they think it is really great, and they get hooked

right away... We've had a lot of renovations done to the building, and we're getting a lot more supplies. I don't know how long it's going to last because a portion of it comes from a fund from the MEQ, but for now, we have money. I've heard that enrolment is good for next year, so as long as we keep getting students, then they're going to keep giving us money.

**CJM:** Now I'd like to turn your attention to your experiences at Argyle Academy. What was it like for you as a student, particularly in the latter years?

**T1:** We had an amazing group of teachers. They were available to us before classes in the morning, at lunch and after school to help us with our work. But then they became so frustrated with all the problems in the school, that they became unreachable.

**CJM:** What can you tell me about the "Pepper-Gas" incident?

**T1:** The repercussions of that incident left a permanent stain on Argyle Academy. That incident was the culmination of the racial tension that had been brewing particularly amongst the younger grades when Shadd Academy was merged with our school. From that day on, there was a clear division between the blacks and the whites. The next day we were told that the school was not safe. We told to go home.

**CJM:** It wasn't always like that though, did the racial troubles begin with the amalgamation of Shadd Academy?

**T1:** Yes that was the beginning, but that day was the culminating event. I also think that much of what made Argyle a special school was at that time becoming almost non-existent. For example, we had an amazing sports program. That's why so many people picked the school. But that too changed. There were less and less teams, and then we had to pay extra to be on teams...everything that kept us contained as a group just dwindled away...it was once a good place.

## Interview B

**CJM:** I've spoken to some secondary I and II teachers who teach the Regular classes, and they agree that the integration of children with special needs, particularly those with behavioral problems, creates an abnormal learning environment. Do you or do you not agree with that assertion?

**SET:** Yes I do agree. It's a question of numbers. We usually lump too many behavioral kids in a classroom. This has been the practice because of financial constraints I guess, and what usually ends up happening is a reverse integration where there are not enough better students in the class to act as models for the students with behavioural problems. Teachers get so caught up in the behavioural issues, that we are prevented from getting further ahead with the students who are capable of functioning well in a so called 'Regular' classroom setting. But again, I don't think that we can call it a Regular classroom setting anymore, but rather, a reverse integration situation. It can be fixed, but it'll cost money to do it.

**CJM:** What do you suggest be done?

**SET:** Smaller classes, and placing more of the students with behavioural problems in the Enriched streams where the focus is on academics, and there are hardly any behavioural problems so they don't have any negative role models...they have better role models in the class because the kids at that stream will generally not play into the negative behaviour game. Whereas in the Regular classroom, if a student has the potential to be a behavioural problem, all they will require is a little spark from somebody else, and the next thing you know, you've got chaos on your hands. I'd like to see the numbers go down...I would limit the numbers because that way we can isolate certain behaviours, and deal with them. But when we have ten, eleven, twelve sometimes eighteen kids with behavioural problems in a class, there's no way to deal with it them effectively, we are just plugging holes.

**CJM:** Do you agree that partial integration would be more effective than total integration?

**SET:** I do. I firmly believe that. I would give them what they need in terms of the core courses, and then I would integrate them in classes that I think they could handle where they would not be embarrassed, where they would not be the center of attention. We definitely need smaller class sizes and special attention to zero in on specific needs because right now, I think they're getting lost. I am speaking for this school. There are some areas where they have very few behavioural problems, and it works out well. But in this community, there are many. Where there are forty kids in a class, and of that, eighteen are coded with behavioural problems, there is potential for real danger.

**CJM:** So a teacher can spend most of his or her time as a referee?

**SET:** Yes, there's no question about it. I usually tell the teachers I work with that between September and December they have to be very, very strict... not to give them an inch, but in some cases, these kids are just beyond any help that we are capable of giving them. Usually after Christmas, the environment is set, and we can just about coast through the rest of the year... a conditioning process has taken place. Again, how successful a teacher is in establishing the ground rules between September and Christmas determines what the rest of the year will be like. There are some teachers who don't do it, and they're paying for it now. It depends on personalities of the teachers too. But, I really feel for a lot of the teachers because they're way in deep with a lot of these kids. They need support. In some cases a teacher can have five integration aides in the class, and it won't help the situation at all... it won't make a dent.

**CJM:** What is your opinion regarding the MEQ's New Curriculum Reform?

**SET:** Well, like many other directives that sound good in theory, they are difficult to put into practice. I think that eventually, we will be forced to return to the basics, which is what I think we need to do...we have to go back to the basics. If the teachers are not on board with the ministry directives, proposed changes in curriculum will be difficult to implement. Teachers, in general, do not take to change too easily, and I don't think that they will buy into the curriculum reform. It'll be years before teachers will be comfortable with the change.



**CJM:** I understand that the New Curriculum Reform will require teachers to work together to create cross-curricular learning.

**SET:** Yes, for example, if the math class is working on a particular project or assignment, the teacher may want to incorporate an aspect of this into the English program. I think teachers will be expected to play the role of supervisor, or overseer, this would be to the detriment of many children who need structure in order to positively function in the school environment. These children, many of whom have behavioural problems, need a structured, directed environment.

**CJM:** Would you agree that the curriculum reform is ideal for the 'self-starter' versus the child who needs to be externally motivated?

**SET:** Yes. Many of them have no study habits, no organizational skills. And, this is not just in this community... this is global. I hate to sound negative about the ministry directives, but again, what sounds good in theory is often extremely difficult to implement.

**CJM:** What would you do to effectively implement these reforms?

**SET:** I think we have to go back to streaming. We have a new inclusion policy in this school board that sounds terrific, it really sounds terrific. But, what good is an inclusion policy with no support. We do not have the support [resource staff etc...] If this is going to work, money has to be spent, and I think we are getting the short end of the stick. Again, if the curriculum reforms are going to work, we have to go back to streaming. And I know that many people will be opposed to that.

**CJM:** Could you give me a brief explanation of what is streaming?

**SET:** What I have always perceived as working is a school system based on a General level, a Regular level and an Advanced level. With this system, one never knew who were the special needs kids... I mean, sure with some kids we knew they had problems, but it was not total integration, nor was it total segregation. A student could be weak in math and be in a lower stream for math, but also strong in English and be in an advanced stream. But in the end, all the students would get to the finish line at the same time. The way it is now, there are only some kids

that can handle the Enriched programs and good for them, but isn't not right that simply because a student is not proficient enough in French, s/he must drop down a level in all subjects. The majority would do better in a streaming system. I would agree with the Curriculum if for example we could distribute the weaker kids evenly across the programs, and not lump them all into the Regular programs. Yea, that might work because there is a good mix...less disparity. Again, it boils down to numbers... it boils down to the ratio. These kinds of directives will not work if you have eighteen kids with behavioural problems in a classroom.

**CJM:** Would you agree that to the detriment of the students, Regular programs are stigmatized because of the high percentage of coded students, particularly kids with behavioural problems? That the Regular programs have effectively become the place for those kids who are all perceived to be below average in their competencies across the board?

**SET:** That's exactly what is has become. I see it here first hand, and the better kids do get lost from what I can see. We've taken some of the otherwise average kids out of the Regular program and put them in the French Immersion program, and the parents panic because they are afraid that their children are unable to cope with the additional language component. Believe me when I tell you that these kids are better off in the French Immersion program just coasting by, versus being in the Regular program where the learning environment is more chaotic. Even if the student has a difficult time in the French-Immersion program, they are usually put up to the next grade as the FI program is recognized as being more difficult than the regular, and that they did more than would have been required in the regular program. This has become a defacto rule, and some students have gone on to do very well. Actually, we are currently in the process of identifying which students who are currently in the regular program fit these criteria, and we will subsequently be contacting their parents to ask them to make the switch to French Immersion. If we truly had a real regular program, there would be no problem. But this is not the case. Many English elementary schools are now viewed as special Ed schools simply because many of the

children who are currently enrolled in them were unable to handle the French Immersion programmes.

**CJM:** I understand that you are funded for the coded children, those with disabilities, the special needs kids. What about the kids coded with behavioural problems, the 'at risk' kids?

**SET:** We get our integration aides because we have handicapped codes. If we didn't have handicapped codes, there wouldn't be a lot of extra funding for special needs kids. And that is a big problem right now because we are inundated with kids who have behavioural problems.... We're inundated with 'at risk' students. There's no extra funding for these kids. And that's a big problem for the people [integration aides] that we do have in place are not going to be as effective as they could be if we had the proper funding. We are just victims of circumstances here in terms of what we can handle.

**CJM:** What are the qualifications of an integration aide, and what is the job description?

**SET:** The job description for an integration aide is currently being rewritten because the job doesn't really exist in the ministry's eyes. But the LBPSB has come up with this sort of a job because of its inclusion policies. Integration aides are needed to facilitate the implementation of inclusion policies. So, there was never really a job description, but recently, we've been working with the ministry to come up with a job description, and we have an interim one in place right now. Mostly what they do is go into the class, and help with the process. They are supposed to help the teacher with handicapped kids, kids with handicapped codes, or at risk kids. But what usually happens is they lump a bunch of these kids into one class, and the money we get for one aide for a coded kid is spread thin. I argue that if a coded kid brings in X amount of dollars, then that kid should get that aide. But that's not what usually happens. That aide will be helping out the rest of the class. Now the aides are starting to take on behavioural issues too, and that is not in their mandate to do that sort of thing. The job description, as it is currently being rewritten, is a cross between a Handicapped Attendant, and a Special Ed Technician. They're not quite Special Ed Tec's, but they have additional duties to that of a Handicapped Attendant. The ministry is

supposed come down with the new job description...a new classification within the next year. The role has evolved, and I think we are actually the only school board that has them. All eyes are on us because the government is pushing integration and inclusion.

**CJM:** Is it the ministry or the school board that are pushing for total integration?

**SET:** That's coming from the school board. I firmly believe that these kids [special needs kids] need consistency. They need one class to go to all day. They need a sense of security, a sense of belonging. The fast pace of high school can be overwhelming for these kids. They should be in specialized classes for the core subjects. Let them integrate in the art class, phys-ed. class, music class, maybe a science class, but they should definitely have a home base for all the core classes at their level with a teacher whose personality meshes with them. Sometimes we get a lot of bad mixes. Some teachers just want to teach, and they do not want the additional pressure of dealing with behavioural problems. Many don't know how to handle behavioural problems. Some think you have to be a Rhodes Scholar. Usually, it just boils down to common sense. These kids like to be treated like human beings, and have their needs understood. If we get those issues out of the way, we can move on. Some just want to start teaching right away, and I don't blame them, but in certain communities like this school, it's not easy to do. Sometimes, to get to the academics, we have to go through XYZ, and then the bell rings, and the teacher wants to know what was accomplished other than feeding the kid, and giving him/her a lesson in life.

**CJM:** Can you tell me what role the consultant plays in the process?

**SET:** They are supposed to provide us with resources. For example, if we need to implement a reading program, a consultant is supposed to direct us to the tools we will require in terms of the program outline etc...they act as liaisons between us the board, that is, if we require additional resources we'll ask them. They will give their opinion as to what the school needs or doesn't need, and make the request to the board. But they don't have any power, and they're not hands on people. I'd love to see them come into the trenches. When we attend workshops, they'll stand up and gives us accolades, and congratulate us on all the work we're doing. But I've seen no

evidence of any good coming from their input in the process. They're good people, with good intentions, but a consultant has to experience what is actually going on before s/he can make any recommendations. Outside of that, I don't know if they're of any use. I think that they're a waste of time.

**CJM:** Do you mind if I include this in the transcript?

**SET:** I don't mind at all. It's my personal opinion. But I know that most educators would agree that consultants are useless. They've created a position that essentially serves no positive purpose.

**CJM:** What steps, if any, does the ministry take to engage the 'people in the trenches' in the policy process?

**SET:** I know there's an outline already out there, I don't know who was involved in creating it, but it's coming down from the MEQ. Take the New Curriculum Reform as an example, all we're told is that it's going to be implemented, and it'll be done in stages. I've never been consulted; all we're told is that it's coming. And, if we're not on board with it, or we express any concerns about the directive, we're basically told too bad for you. I think it's all going to come full circle, and they're going to discover after all the time and money has been wasted that we have to go back to what really works.

**CJM:** Let's sum up this interview by telling me what really works.

**SET:** Again, we have to go down to ratio. We have to give the kids what they really need. We have to give them more consistency in terms of time spent with a particular teacher. Maybe give them their core courses with that teacher. We can integrate them in the elective classes. Lower class sizes for sure, try to disperse some of the high achievers with the kids who have behavioural problems. Don't forget most of these kids have gone through elementary school together, and they'll go all the way through high school together. They've learned these behaviours and they know whose buttons to push, and they've burnt teachers out left right and center. So, there has to be more choice for these kids, there has to be a variety. They can't be compelled to stay together

all the time, and that's what been happening. But again, it boils down to numbers, which determines how many teachers we're going to get. There are not enough teachers, and there are not enough resources. Nor are we whining about it. And the way it's going, the teachers we do have will collapse within five years. I see them burning out left right and center

**CJM:** What's your opinion regarding the LBPSB policy that each high school has an Alternative program?

**SET:** I'm not a big fan. It's the end of the road for a lot of these kids. What's happened is that they've lumped the worst of the worst together, and what have you got? The concept is good, it's a small setting, and the students should get more individualized attention, but what ends upon happening is they learn all the bad habits from each other. Programme coordinators are up against strong drug issues. We might get to a couple of them, but overall, it's just a holding tank. I think there has to be minimal criteria for it, and we shouldn't put them all together because there are too many deep-rooted problems to put them all together. Problems that these kids have inherited for the last fourteen years, and I think it'll take another fourteen years for us to fix it. That's another thing, the school itself, and the Alternative programs have become a rehabilitation center for a lot of these kids. We just can't run an educational facility, and that's our aim, but as I said before, for the most part, we have to get through XYZ before getting to the academic. But, we don't have the time or money. We do our best, but we're in a boat with many leaking holes. I'm not talking about the board as a whole, because there are pockets in the board that function very well, but they never see what goes on here... we're basically an inner city type school, and along with that comes a multitude of problems. For an Alternative program to work, again, it boils down to ratio, and the personalities of the teachers and students. But when they take these students who all have a variety of problems or, they are essentially creating a bomb. Because it's a smaller group, you might get to one or two of them, but at what cost? No, I'm not a big fan of the way it's set up. The program has a stigma attached to it. And I'm not knocking the teachers who are involved in the program, I know they're doing their best. Nevertheless, I've never seen

any real success come from these programs, but success means many different things for many people.

## APPENDIX TWO

Table One

**Enrolment Trends English and French Sectors in Quebec,  
Public and Private Schools  
1972-1993**

|      | English    |          | French     |          |
|------|------------|----------|------------|----------|
|      | Enrollment | % Change | Enrollment | % Change |
| 1972 | 250,479    |          | 1,345,133  |          |
| 1976 | 230,578    | -8       | 1,178,190  | -12      |
| 1981 | 155,092    | -33      | 1,023,596  | -13      |
| 1986 | 119,790    | -23      | 1,012,452  | -1       |
| 1990 | 107,714    | -10      | 1,021,448  | +1       |
| 1993 | 110,712    | +3       | 1,033,639  | +1       |

**Original Source:** Task Force on English Education; Report to the Quebec Minister of Education (Chair: Greta Chambers) Cited in *English in Montreal; a Layman's Look at the Current Situation*. Jedwab (1996) pg., 86



**APPENDIX THREE**

**Table Two**

**Sociocultural Profile of Argyle Academy  
September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1995**

**Mother Tongue**

| <b>English</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>French</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Other</b> | <b>%</b> |
|----------------|----------|---------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| 319            | 83.82    | 2             | 0.59     | 19           | 5.59     |

**Total Number of Students: 340**

**Table Three**

**Sociocultural Profile of Shadd Academy  
September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1995**

**Mother Tongue**

| <b>English</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>French</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Other</b> | <b>%</b> |
|----------------|----------|---------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| 132            | 79.04    | 0             | 0.00     | 35           | 20.86    |

**Total Number of Students: 167**

**Source: Conseil de l'île de Montreal: Profil sociocultural des écoles secondaires de réseau anglais - Commission des écoles protestantes du Grand Montreal**