THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN ONTARIO

THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC (ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY) SCHOOL SYSTEM IN UPPER CANADA (ONTARIO)

By

GARY CRITTENDEN, B.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

July 1975

MASTER OF ARTS (1975) McMASTER UNIVERSITY
(Sociology) Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: The Socio-historical Development of the Public (Elementary and Secondary) School System in Upper Canada (Ontario)

AUTHOR: Gary Crittenden, B.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor R. A. Ripton

NUMBER OF PAGES: vi, 109.

ABSTRACT:

It is the purpose of this thesis to study the historical foundations of the elementary and secondary school system in Ontario. By outlining the proceedings, over time, of John Strachan and Egerton Ryerson, it can be seen that by the end of the nineteenth century the basis of Ontario's system was established.

The major thrust of education, its purpose, was the preservation and maintenance of the existing order: that is, of the aristocracy in the colonial period; and of the economic, political and social elite in later times. This observation leads to the conclusion, that, there was a continuity from historical period to historical period of the purpose of educating the public. This conclusion is that education is used to support the domination of a minority of people over the rest of the population. Further to this conclusion, by examining historical trends, it can be seen that this purpose has remained with us to the present. And, that the purpose has been sustained by the perseverence of the basic structure of the school system since the late nineteenth century.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Reg Ripton for his invaluable assistance in the preparation of this thesis and also for his co-operation and patience with me. I would like to thank Barry Thompson for what he called 'a kick in the ass'. Special thanks to Randy Nelson for keeping my head on straight at a time when I could not find it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of the 'educational' process in this generation is of extreme importance to every person. It affects us all, since all must pass through the school institution. But one may ask, just how important is education? "Education is the largest and most rapidly growing area of Ontario government expenditure. In the 1969/70 provincial budget, the education system is estimated to receive 42 percent [sic] of net general expenditure". [1] The planned expenditure was 1,269,990,000 dollars, approximately double that for 1966. In 1971, total public education costs amounted to nearly two and one-half billion dollars in Ontario. The school board expenditure for 1970 was approximately 1,702,420,000 dollars. [2]

This particular situation, of heavy government funding, is not a local occurrence as is indicated, for example, in the United States. The education industry in the United States "in 1970 was spending about $70 billion a year, compared to only $9 billion as recently as 1950. It is second only to

---

[1] Christopher Selby-Smith and Michael Skolnik, Concerning the Growth of Provincial Expenditure on Education in Ontario, 1938-1966 (Toronto, 1969), p. 1.

[2] W. G. Flemming, Education: Ontario's Preoccupation (Toronto, 1972), p. 276.

the military industry in dollar volume, and growing much faster." [3] As to its growth, estimates indicate that the ""knowledge industry" (schools plus its subcontractors . . .) has been growing 72 per cent faster than the general economy." [4]

As can be seen, simply in terms of dollars, education is a valuable commodity to government and to us all, since we all have attended, and, in some cases we are the ones who finance the institution. If education is important enough to government to warrant large quantities of money being spent (42 per cent of Ontario's budget), what are the returns? What does education do for the government of Ontario? Are the expectations consistent with official statements regarding the purpose of schools? These and other questions lead to an additional area of examination. We know that educational policy is made and governed, at least superficially, by political forces. However, from available sources, including C. Wright Mills and many others, exclusive political control must remain suspect. If the assumption that there is an elite, interconnection between economic and political spheres, is indeed legitimate, then the possiblity of elite intervention in the construction and maintenance of the educational system must be examined. Further, the question of motives and ultimate expectations,

---

[3] David Hapgood, Diplomaism (New York, 1971), p. 42.

[4] Ibid.

of purpose and desired results, must also be answered.

The school is a powerful institution as indicated by its dollar value, heavy government funding and by the numbers of people who attend. In this day and age it touches the lives of every person in the nation. In a country supposedly built on principles of freedom, democracy and so on, do the majority of people have a hand in directing school policy? David Hapgood, in Diplomaism, suggests that the consolidation of school districts represents a decline in public influence. Although his suggestion relates the American experience, a similar interpretation could be made for Ontario with its recent regionalization of local school boards. The question is then, who is doing the influencing?

These questions and a host of others must be asked and answered if there is to be any social understanding, any social awareness about the society we live in. Education, and knowledge of its purpose, its hidden aims and functions, is an important institutional area to study to come to this understanding. All too often those with access to the mediums of the media tend not to answer such questions. Instead, the problems of schooling are dealt with in such a way so as to reinforce the basic concepts, to make more efficient or better established methods as opposed to questioning the basic concepts as the source of the problem. Therefore, we must question the very foundations of our school system to first of

all understand what the problems are and, secondly, to effect a solution of positive benefit. This thesis will be one small step in uncovering the whole story.

Education has been a subject for centuries. Religious cults sought better methods of teaching their ways. Early philosophers commented on various aspects of the educational process. Early sociologists such as Emile Durkheim and Herbert Spencer theorized on education. American sociologists in the nineteenth century made contributions to the education of the labour force not only in academic ways but also in methods of a healthier physical and spiritual life. Henry Pestalozzi, a European, wrote about and attempted to practise his own brand of educational philosophy. His ideas eventually permeated, to some extent, the methods of education in the western world. John Dewey wrote numerous books on the subject of education. These authors represent only a few of those who have contributed to educational thought.

In more recent times, Talcott Parsons, and his particular brand of sociology, has led to the formation of a sociology of education. Parsons and his followers accept education as an absolute, that essentially, the "educational revolution is constructive". [5] The structural functionalists see education as inherently good for society. As a result, theore-

---

[5]Talcott Parsons and Gerald M. Platt, The American University (Massachusetts, 1973), p. 3.

tical questions revolve around how to make it work better and a description of the function of schools.

Parsons views the school as the prime agency of socialization although not as the sole means. By socialization he means "the development in individuals of the commitments and capacities which are essential prerequisites of their future role-performance." [6] Secondly, Parsons represents an additional prime function of schools as being the agency of manpower allocation.

Robert Dreeben, a recent spokesman for the structural functionalist sociology of education, in On What is Learned in School, states that the school:

> is an organizational embodiment of a major social institution whose prime function is to bring about developmental changes in individuals. It is an agency of socialization whose task is to effect psychological changes that enable persons to make transitions among other institutions; that is to develop capacities necessary for appropriate conduct in social settings . . . [7]

He goes on to point out that "the school's explicit purpose and official reason for existence lie in the area of instruction: imparting the skills, information, and beliefs each

---

[6] Talcott Parsons, "The School Class as a Social System: Some of its Functions in American Society", Harvard Educational Review, XXIX (1959), 298.

[7] Robert Dreeben, On What is Learned in School (Massachusetts, 1968), p. 3.

child will eventually need as an adult member of society." [8] His book is, as the title suggests, a description of those things that are learned in school. Viewed in this light it is a good book.

The structural functional school has given us a sociology of education that portrays education as a great socialising and democratising agent from which the values, the commitments, and capacities of society are passed on from one generation to the next. Beyond this it sheds no light on the school system. From my perspective there are two major shortcomings to this approach to the sociology of education. Structural functionalism is a weak point of view because of its ahistorical nature and the lack of any social explanation. In this regard I have chosen to study education by using a historical analysis. It is not an all encompassing study. Rather, it is a small step in trying to understand our peculiar institution: schools and the process of education. Specifically it is the purpose of this thesis to investigate the socio-historical development of public (common or elementary and grammar or secondary) schools in Ontario. There are two men who were the primary figures responsible for the fundamental development of the Upper Canadian public school system. They are: Bishop John Strachan, 1778-1867; and the Reverend Egerton Ryerson, 1803-1882. For seventy-five years these two men directly con-

---

[8] Ibid., p. 33.

trolled the course of education in Upper Canada. They are the focus of attention in this research.

Through the efforts of Strachan and Ryerson the basic structure of Canadian education was established by the end of the nineteenth century. It is my contention that the basic structure and purpose of education has not changed to this date, though there have been cosmetic changes. This structure, in Upper Canada, is similar to that in the United States as described by Michael B. Katz: "it is, and was, universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratic, racist and class biased." [9] The attempts at educational reform in both the United States and Canada shared a similar purpose: "the central aim of the movement was to establish more efficient mechanisms of social control, and its chief legacy was the principle that "education was something the better part of the community did to others to make them orderly, moral and tractable."" [10]

With regard to the methodology of the thesis, a historical analysis will be used. The value of a socio-historical inquiry is fundamental to an understanding of education:

> to appreciate the interweaving of structure and purpose in education it is necessary to study its origin and development. Today's educational structures are historical products; they represent

---

[9] Michael B. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools (New York, 1971), p. xx.

[10] Ibid., pp. ix-x.

> patterns that have become deeply imbedded in . . . society and are enormously resistant to change.[11]

Canadian education did not just suddenly exist, it has historical roots and there are historical trends throughout its development to be understood.

It is important to a sociological study that history be included as part of the analysis. Lucien Goldman portrays sociology, and indeed all social sciences, as having a "common ahumanistic, ahistorical and aphilosophical attitude."[12] This attitude, he argues, is a reflection of our technocratic society. Goldman further states "that the main theoretical currents of contemporary social science . . . loses sight of the qualitative changes in social structure and of the historical dimension of human facts."[13]

This is not to deny that the focus of contemporary sociology has a certain value for understanding modern society. A sociologist must "understand the main currents of contemporary sociology, the nature of their movement at the centre of this reality, and the social frameworks which are capable of promoting or, conversely, of reducing their positive value as

---

[11] Ibid., pp. xviii-xix.

[12] Lucien Goldman, The Human Sciences and Philosophy (London, 1969), p. 13.

[13] Ibid., p. 16.

instruments of knowledge." [14] But this is as far as contemporary sociology goes. Sociology is limited to localized study in a historical vacuum dismissing antecedent tendencies. And, it tends to herald the positiveness and achievements of modern society to the neglect of society's negative and dangerous aspects.

Sociological history, as an interpretation leading to understanding, rejects the abstract and narrow view of a contemporary sociology. In essence:

> every social fact is a historical fact and vice versa. It follows that history and sociology study the same phenomena and that each of them grasps some real aspect of these phenomena; but the image which each discipline gives of them will necessarily be partical and abstract in so far as it is not completed and qualified by the findings of the other. [15]

As Michael Katz puts it: "significant problems do not respect disciplinary boundaries; that is true for both intellectual and practical issues." [16] Goldman goes on to say that it is not enough to merely join history and sociology together. Rather, it is necessary to abandon the abstractness of both sciences to form a "concrete science of human reality." [17]

---

[14] Ibid., pp. 18-19.

[15] Ibid., p. 23.

[16] Katz, op. cit., p. xxvi.

[17] Goldman, op. cit., p. 23.

It is important to realize that history is not just interested in magnificient, localized events. Such events have a certain value for historical investigation, but disclose only a particularized view of society. "History", as Goldman says, "has a single object, the social life in all its forms; and history is interested in everything that had or now has a significant influence on the community." [18]

A sociological history makes the attempt to interpret those influences affecting the community. Historical trends and patterns are an integral part of these influences. As such, socio-historical investigation examines the historical context of modern phenomena, to attempt to understand the formation of society, and its consequences for human life.

History is, in one sense, selective, in that it is interested in that which affects the community. The community is made up of people, so that history is a study of ourselves. It is a search for understanding, for meaning, and for answers. There is little in our lives that this does not encompass. "To study history is first of all to try to understand men's actions, the impulses which have moved them, the ends which they have pursued, and the meaning which their behaviour and their actions had for them." [19] This history must include social, political and economic factors.

---

[18] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[19] Ibid., p. 32.

Further, history must connect "the conscious intentions of the actors of history to the objective meaning of their behaviour and actions." [20] The conscious intentions of people are only a partial aspect of history and therefore must be connected to the facts. Such facts are the visible actions and social consequences of these actions. This is the evidence history and sociology gather for interpretation and examination.

History and sociology together, historical sociology, must study the total human character in connection with all in which he is involved. How can there be any understanding, total understanding, if any of the facts are hidden or if illusion and myth are perpetrated as reality? Sociology should not attempt to adapt people to the existing structure under the guise of value-free, objective science. Sociology should not avoid those events in our history which explain this society's genesis. In Goldman's words, sociology "no longer seeks to understand but to 'domesticate'." [21]

To understand human reality, a sociological history or a historical sociology requires:

> the courage to break with all conscious and implicit prejudices and to recall always that science is made, not from the standpoint of this or that particular group, nor even from an extrinsic and supposedly objective position which presupposes the external character of the basic

---

[20] Ibid., p. 35.

[21] Ibid., p. 75.

> structures of present society, but from the standpoint of freedom and the human community, of man and humanity. [22]

Any such investigation and its perspective must remain unhampered by the influences of what may be termed 'proper thinking'. Investigation that is restricted by a particular group or interest promoting a particular line of thought, cannot lead to understanding because it is like a horse with blinders, seeing only in one direction unable to turn its head, being restrained by the man with the reins in his hand. Such research will undoubtedly inhibit a study from full comprehension by directing the focus away from conflicting data, ideas or theories and towards specific topics amenable to the dominant group or interest.

Modern education is a historical product. Contemporary sociology studies most aspects of schools, but neglects to explain why particular features are found there. For example, we are led to believe that schools were a progressive and popular reform for all. Yet, is this true? The accepted purposes of education and the socio-historical reality are perhaps two entirely different things. Despite democratic ideology, it would seem that children of the wealthy are the best achievers in school and society; poorer children very rarely reach similar heights.

---

[22] Ibid., p. 79.

The significance of socio-historical research lies not only in the attempt to understand our past, but also, the value of history, according to Michael Katz, "can serve reform partly by emancipating it from dependency upon an idealized past." [23] Once we can observe and understand both past and present without depending upon the idealized past and its mythology, positive reformation may be possible.

Modern sociological analysis, standing alone finds itself with an insurmountable problem. The answer lies in the history of the educational system. In Michael Katz's view:

> It is the historical result of the combination of purpose and structure that has characterized . . . education for roughly the last hundred years. The purpose has been, basically, the inculcation of attitudes that reflect dominant social and industrial values; the structure has been bureaucracy. The result has been school systems that treat children as units to be processed into particular slots roughly congruent with the status of their parents. [24]

There is structure and purpose in education today and it is possible to trace these trends historically. Then "we can analyze the interaction of social goals and social forces that entrenched those features in social history and ensured their survival over alternate proposals." [25]

---

[23] Katz, op. cit., p. xxvi.

[24] Ibid., p. xviii.

[25] Ibid., p. xix.

Education took its particular form because education was at least a partial solution to the problems confronting the emerging nation. The bureaucratic nature of education was established "because men confronted particular kinds of social problems with particular social purposes. Those purposes reflected class attitudes and class interests." [26]

It is my contention, in this thesis, that education was used as a mechanism of social control. Historically, it was used to instil proper attitudes and behaviour in lower class children. The structure of social class relations is important for understanding reality. As Goldman puts it "the existence of social classes and the structure of their relations (struggle, equilibrium, collaboration according to country and historical period)" [27] is the key phenomena for understanding social reality.

Other factors, such as the family religion, industrialization, urbanization and technological change, had an effect on education. But, it must be remembered that the emerging capitalist economy affected these factors first, and then, in turn, changes were reflected in schools. Such things are subservient to capitalism and the class basis of society in terms of importance to the structure and purpose of education.

Socio-historical research is useful if we are to under-

---

[26] Goldman, op. cit., p. 101.

[27] Ibid., p. 101.

stand educational structure and purpose as related to a perception of humanity. "The relations of structure and purpose in organizations, of bureaucracy and social class in education - these are not historical questions or sociological ones or some curious amalgam of the two. They are important intellectual problems that involve the past and present, and they should be regarded in that light." [28]

With regard to the organization of the thesis, Chapter Two is divided into two main sections dealing specifically with the ideological perspectives of the two founding fathers of education in Ontario: John Strachan and Egerton Ryerson. Their attitudes and policies were consistent with the social, political and economic atmosphere of their time. Strachan's period was clearly aristocratic. The feudal nature of the economy, of the form and purpose of government, and of the church was reflected in his educational designs. Strachan functioned aristocratically in the method and aim of his educational policy.

Ryerson, on the other hand, was dealing with attitudes under a new order, bourgeoise society. The emergent social relations of capitalism made an impact on the focus of education. Ryerson accommodated education to bourgeoise society under the democratic guise of education for the common man. The purpose of education had not changed however, it

---

[28]Katz, op. cit., p. xxvi.

remained the same: to serve class interests.

Chapter Three centres specifically on the practical and historical problems of instituting the school system. This system had to be centrally controlled by government. Its function was to create loyal, docile workers. In this chapter, attention is given to the problem of local autonomy and the American influence. Early attempts by Strachan to solve these problems failed. At the time, practical problems were insurmountable, but legislatively, Strachan's policies formed the basis for future action by Ryerson. The system instituted by Strachan contained a structural division. Education in common schools was for the poor and this was separated from education in grammar schools which was for the aristocracy. Strachan's focus was on Grammar schools. Although his system ultimately failed, the legal requirements, the precedent, was there for Ryerson to use in instituting the 'modern' system of education.

Next, this chapter focuses on the 1837 Rebellion, a rebellion in reaction to the oppressive aristocratic rule of the Family Compact. This reaction was part of the change creating a new social and political order in conjunction with the emerging economic relationship of capitalism. Educational changes had to make some concession to popular working class demands.

Lastly, this chapter sets down the beginnings of the

modern era under the leadership of Egerton Ryerson. The Rebellion had shown the need for education to be used as a form of social control. Emerging capitalism and the attendant industrialism and urbanism provided the impetus for Ryerson to create a centrally controlled school system. He took into account popular demand, but set up schools that would train people to correct behaviour in the new bourgeoise order, train people to questionless obedience and give skill training for industrial labour. Unlike Strachan, Ryerson focused on common schools since the majority of the school population attended them. And, large numbers of people had to be trained to operate, and work in, the lower levels of the capitalist system.

The inputs of Ryerson rounded out a system of education whose central features exist in the modern era. Not only are the fundamental structural elements present today, but also, the purpose of education remains the same. Schools still reflect and confirm the social structure that built them. [29] They are a mechanism of social control. They exist to protect established social class relationships.

---

[29] Ibid., p. xviii.

CHAPTER II

IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Between Strachan and Ryerson, for three-quarters of a century and more, they controlled the design and destiny of education in early Ontario. Although there were schools existing before the nineteenth century, a comprehensive system of centrally controlled schools did not. It was this system that was the end result of the years of struggle and building in which Strachan and Ryerson took part.

Why was it necessary to create a system of schools or even to have education at all? The more vociferous proponents claimed that Upper Canada, as a colony, needed education "to produce a civilized and competent elite, equipped to preserve and extend Christian civilization in the new world." [1] Moreover, with Christianity as part of the culture of the colony, it also meant that the culture as a whole should be preserved and extended. Since the colony's political institutions were part of that culture, education could be a potential weapon in that struggle. Schooling could also serve as the handmaiden of religion in terms of disseminating Christian principles and promoting piety. [2]

---

[1] Douglas Lawr and Robert Gidney, Educating Canadians: A Documentary History of Public Education, (Toronto:1973), p. 17.

[2] Ibid.

Strachan

Bishop John Strachan was born in Aberdeen, Scotland. Although his family was relatively poor, he attended Grammar School, then entered the University of Aberdeen graduating with a Master of Arts degree in 1796. Fully intending to become a Presbyterian minister, Strachan was forced to shelve his plans because of financial considerations. After teaching in Scotland until 1799, Strachan then emigrated to Kingston, Upper Canada.

Bishop Strachan entered the Canadian educational picture just after its legislative birth in 1797. Whether by design or fate, Strachan emigrated:

> to Upper Canada on the invitation of the Hon. Richard Cartwright, probably to become tutor to his four sons, though Strachan in later life conveys the impression that it was to organize a college or university. He had been disappointed in regard to a university post in Scotland and probably expected that in the new country he might have a better opportunity. [3]

Cartwright was one of the more prominent members of Upper Canadian society who agitated originally for funds to create a respectable Grammar school system and a College or University in the colony.

Strachan remained in Kingston for four years until he was made a deacon in the Church of England. This post sent

---

[3]Walter N. Bell, The Development of the Ontario High School, (Toronto: 1918), p. 13.

him to the mission in Cornwall. One year later, in 1804, he was ordained as a priest.

Opportunity for Strachan was indeed better in Upper Canada when, in 1803, "the young rector opened Cornwall Academy, a school for the youths of the town and its environs." [4] Strachan's "clerical duties gave him ample time to carry on a school." [5] From the point of view of Strachan as an educator, his political and religious views are of extreme importance in his career. Not only, was Strachan an educator, but also, very quickly, he became a powerful political force in the arena of educational reform.

The Cornwall Academy became the most famous of the early Ontario Schools. Strachan was considered to be the best teacher available at the time. It was evident that most other teachers were misfits in that they were teaching only because they could do nothing else. Whatever was considered as being quality in a teacher was recognized in Strachan who was employed as a teacher of the aristocratic governing class. "The leading families, including the governing class of York, hastened to send their sons down to Mr. Strachan." [6]

This fact cannot be overly stressed. It was during this time that Strachan had as his pupils, future members of

---

[4]J. D. Purdy, "John Strachan, Conservative Reformer", Profiles of Canadian Educators, eds. Robert S. Patterson, et al., (Canada, 1974), p. 40.

[5]Bell, op. cit., p. 14.

[6]Purdy, op. cit., p. 40.

the Family Compact who ruled Upper Canada. The graduates of the Cornwall Academy resemble a Who's Who for Upper Canada. The names of some of Strachan's students are as follows:

> Sir J. B. Robinson, Sir J. B. Macaulay, Very Rev. Dean Bethune, Right Rev. Bishop Bethune, Hon. Chief Justice McLean, Hon. Justice Jones, Hon. W. B. Robinson, Hon. G. S. Boulton, Rev. W. Macauly, Judge George Ridout, Surveyor-General Chewet, Col. Gregg, Captain Macaulay, R. A., Inspector-General Markland, Sheriff McLean, Messrs. T. G. Ridout, P. Vankoughnet, S. P. Jarvis, J. Radenhurst and others. This is an imposing list. [7]

In 1812 Strachan was posted to the parish of York. Immediately following this the War of 1812 broke out. Strachan vociferously championed the cause of loyalty to Britain. Because of this he was projected into the Executive Council, "the very heart of local political power and for about a decade and a half after the war he acted as virtually the unofficial prime minister of Upper Canada." [8]

Any attempt to understand Strachan's philosophy must inevitably include his views of education, religion and politics. He was an active participant in all three of these areas. As such his philosophy of education must be considered in light of the man as a priest and a politician. Strachan became a powerful man, deeply entrenched in 'capital' as is evidenced by the incredible number of offices he accumulated:

---

[7] Bell, op. cit., p. 32.

[8] Purdy, op. cit., p. 41.

> including membership in the executive and legislative Councils, the presidency of the General Board of Education, the chairmanship of the Clergy Reserves Corporation, the Presidency of the University of King's College, and membership on the board of directors of the Welland Canal Company, the Bank of Upper Canada, and Upper Canada College. In 1825 he was made Archdeacon of York. [9]

Strachan's view of education was based on the fact that "knowledge, if not founded on religion, is a positive evil." [10] For Strachan this religion was Anglicanism. This was the dominant religion in the motherland at the time, and in the colony the majority of the members of the aristocracy were Anglican. Education had to be founded on religious principles (Anglican principles for Strachan). In addition, the schools must be controlled by the church. In England and Scotland "the established churches were regarded as bulwarks of the social order and in both areas the churches had a leading responsibility for education." [11]

Strachan felt that "the first duty of the church and its handmaid, the school, was to inculcate the right political attitudes in the children." [12] His educational views "were designed to produce young men forming an elite of talent and ability who would be active participants in building the local community." [13]

---

[9] Ibid., p. 39.

[10] Ibid., p. 41.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

The whole concept of Anglican, religious education was unmistakably elitist: It was an

> aristocratic prejudice entrenched behind an executive predisposed towards the conceptions of education then prevalent in the mother country, and inclined to look upon the movements for popular and non-denominational schools as an inovation tinged with disloyalty. [14]

Since the church had responsibilities for the education of the people, schools became the training ground, seminaries, instituted for the wealthy classes.

Any universal system of education would have been contrary to the ideals of the political officials and industrialists of the country. At this time Strachan, who we have seen was a leading member and active participant in both of these groups, stated that "he would have looked upon such a plan as subversive of the existing orders of society." [15] Strachan's mention of a 'plan' refers to establishing a universal system of education applicable to all classes. There were some people in this period who wished to have a form or system of schools that the lower classes could attend.

The political leaders of the time thought that any demand for elementary instruction for the lower classes was

---

[14] H. T. Coleman, Public Education in Upper Canada (New York, 1907), p. 31.

[15] J. Harold Putman, Egerton Ryerson and Education in Upper Canada (Toronto, 1912), p. 47.

not the responsibility of the state. The original land grant for the establishment of a system of schools was solely for the purpose and use of grammar schools. Not only were these schools catering to the members of the wealthy class, but also, they were used as stepping stones for the Anglican clergy.

Besides believing in a religious basis of education, Strachan felt that "it is of the greatest importance that the education of the colony should be conducted by the clergy."[16] It was Strachan's intention to create a seminary, King's College, to be an institution for the training of Anglican clergymen, and this clergy to then educate the people. This college, as William Lyon Mackenzie stated in 1833,:

> (already a monopoly) becomes almost an exclusive school for the families of Government officers, and the few who, through their means, have, in York, already attained a pecuniary independence out of the public treasury. The College never was intended for the people, nor did the Executive endow it thus amply that all classes might apply to the fountain of knowledge.[17]

Although Strachan supported the necessity of elitist schools he did attempt to involve the common people in creating their own schools. There would be no government initiative but if local communities could build schools and hire

---

[16]Bell, op. cit., p. 20.

[17]Putman, op. cit., p. 69.

a teacher then they might expect some government financial aid.[18] This involvement of the common people was to be at the local level only. "The selection of textbooks, the drawing up of regulations, the handling of the government appropriation, and the defining of teachers' qualifications were matters too grave to be left to the uneducated populace."[19] Therefore if the local communities wanted financial aid, control of these schools would rest in the hands of state officials. The inevitable result was training in Anglican religious moral principles because teachers and curriculums had to be religiously, and conservatively, Anglican based.

Strachan believed in the superiority of the Anglican religion and therefore felt that all people should be devoted to its principles for the sake of morality, good government of the colony and devotion to the motherland. Many positions, both political and educational, required affiliation with this Church.

One of the major stumbling blocks Strachan ran into in trying to perpetuate Anglican domination of education was that he ignored the religious plurality in the colony.[20] This was to affect him in the later stages of his educational career, but at the time, church domination of education was

---

[18] Purdy, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

[19] Ibid., p. 44.

[20] Ibid.,

not contested. His educational philosophy was a reflection of the times.

One of the principle thrusts of the Anglican domination of education was to instil 'morality' in people. The sectarianism preached by Strachan, and supported as legitimate by the political administration, survived only until the 1830's. Due to the increasing numbers of vociferous opponents to this kind of system, Strachan lost educational and political power. The new social forces realized the necessity of retaining morality as a part of education. However, they rejected the notion of Anglican sectarianism. Instead, Christian principles of morality were applied in the schools.

There is no doubt that Strachan, even with his belief in the supremacy of the Anglican religion and the domination of the colonial aristocracy, made valuable contributions to the foundations of the educational system:

> Firstly, he acted as a skilful propagandist for education. He kept it before the public in season and out. Secondly, he established institutions which served as examples and precedents for what could be accomplished in a frontier community which, by the time of his death in 1867, was transforming itself into an urbanized-industrialized state.[21]

---

[21] Ibid., p. 52.

Ryerson

Egerton Ryerson was born in 1803 into a Loyalist family. His formal education was not extensive. He had attended grammar school and received instruction in the classics. Shortly following his classical training, at the age of twenty-one, he entered the Methodist ministry.

The limitation of his formal education did not hinder Ryerson's ambition or drive:

> Ryerson became well-known in Upper Canada in his early careers as preacher, writer, editor and negotiator . . . On the basis of his demonstrated skill as a thinker, as a debater and as an instructor, Ryerson was appointed principal of the Methodist Academy in Upper Canada in 1842, and, eventually in 1844, as Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada. [22]

As with John Strachan, Egerton Ryerson was deeply involved with and committed to a religious sect. With Strachan it was Anglicanism, with Ryerson it was Methodism:

> Ryerson's commitment to formal education grew out of his religious commitments. The Methodists held that obedience to God required a discipline of mind and will, and therefore a systematic and thorough education. [23]

Although Ryerson held strong convictions for the principles of Methodism, as an educator, he revoked any

---

[22] J. L. McNeill, "Egerton Ryerson: Founder of Canadian (English Speaking) Education", eds. Patterson, et al., Profiles of Canadian Educators (Canada, 1974), pp. 118-119.

[23] Ibid., p. 127.

notion of sectarianism. Instead he opted for the general principles of Christianity. At the same time, the school system he set up did contain practical Methodist ideology without its specific theological flavour. Education was to be "Christian, universal, free and compulsory". [24] In addition, it was to be practical.

The lack of formal training Ryerson had received did not prevent him from becoming a devout scholar. He studied and read voraciously on his own time. So accomplished a scholar had he become, that in 1829 the Methodists recognized his capabilities and subsequently made him the editor of the Christian Guardian. The Christian Guardian was the literary voice of the Methodists.

In the Guardian, and in other writings, Ryerson defended the Methodist position on religion, politics, and education. To some extent this position could be defined as Ryerson's although not all Methodists accepted it as official. Opposition also came from other journalists. Nevertheless, Ryerson, on July 11, 1838, in the Christian Guardian, firmly stated:

> that the field of education was his public goal. It was also to be the dominant ambition of his next forty years. "In nothing is this Province so defective as in the requisite available provisions for, and, an efficient system of, general education. Let the distinctive character of

---

[24] J. D. Wilson, "The Ryerson Years in Canada West", Canadian Education: A History, eds. Wilson, Stamp, Audet (Scarborough, 1970), p. 217.

> that system be the union of public and private effort . . . To Government influence will be spontaneously added the various and combined religious influences in the country in the noble, statesmanlike, and divine work of raising up an elevated, intelligent and moral population." [25]

"Ryerson began his educational career as a founder and the first principal of Victoria College at Cobourg." [26] This was the first institutional step that was to propel him into the position of Superintendent of Education. Basic to the development of the population and his position as Superintendent, was his view that the state should be involved in creating, legitimating and running a system of schools.

Both Strachan and Ryerson shared a similar political position in the attempt to institute a system of schools to educate the population, and, although the ends can be seen as identical, the means by which each attempted to accomplish this end are quite different. The major difference revolves around the thrust of educational reform. Ryerson concentrated on the development of a Common School system directed specifically at the common people. Strachan had rejected a universal focus, instead, he had concentrated on an elitist school system.

The point that Strachan seemed to have missed was

---

[25] Clara Thomas, Ryerson of Upper Canada (Toronto, 1969) p. 81.

[26] McNeill, op. cit., p. 127.

that in order to have a loyal citizenry, these citizens, the common people, had to be properly educated. Strachan and Ryerson shared a similar philosophy as to the kinds of things that were necessary to be taught, but differed as to whom they should be taught.

All of Ryerson's energy was:

> directed unrelentingly on the ordering and civilizing of Upper Canada into a corporate community, religiously by the private exercise of each man's conscience, and socially by the public education of all the children. [27]

It is important to realize that Ryerson wished to preserve the socio-economic structure of society as it stood. Social class relationships were to be maintained and this was to be accomplished, at least in part, through the proper educational training of the common people. As the following quote shows, Ryerson acquired political influence to make his educational policy of reverence to British cultural institutions work:

> When the middle and lower classes became sufficiently powerful to enforce their demands, John A. MacDonald and Egerton Ryerson captured the leadership, redirected their objectives and inflicted restrictive colonial forms upon the population. Their actions prevented the normal development of indigenous cultural institutions. The colony of Ireland, with its master British institutions and large Catholic population served as the model, and the Irish National Schools became the basis of Canada's own system. Careful censorship was

---

[27] Thomas, op. cit., p. 75.

> exercised over the Canadian curriculum to guard against American influence, or republican and democratic ideas. In addition to permitting only British topics, the interpretation of history and civics was oriented towards a reverence for the mother country and her national heroes. Literature programs were selected to inculcate a veneration for the British way of life; teachers who were not Anglican clergymen worked under political rules patterned on those of Ireland; and the whole program was enforced through a centralized Board of Education which was largely Anglican and Conservative. [28]

Until Dominion in 1841 the Family Compact had ruled Upper Canada. "They controlled the bench, the church, owned the land, the chartered banks and "almost exclusively all offices of trust and profit."" [29] After Dominion, coinciding with the emergence of a new economic order, a complementary system of education had to be developed.

The man the Canadian government appointed to build this system was Egerton Ryerson. "Ryerson's religious views were an essential part of the basis of his political views and both these were formative in the development of his educational views." [30] The change marked by Dominion was from the feudal society of the Family Compact to the emergent capitalism of the nineteenth century. The schools would teach

---

[28] Howard Adams, The Education of Canadians, (Montreal, 1968), p. 111.

[29] Wallace Clement, The Canadian Corporate Elite: An Analysis of Economic Power (Toronto, 1975), p. 51.

[30] McNeill, op. cit., p. 125.

people to accept the new political and economic structures. Just as the church was the institution of ideological control in feudal society, the school would be the similar institution in bourgeoise society.

Ryerson felt that government was based on Christian principles of morality. If people were to respect and obey this government then they had to believe in and act with Christian morality. Ryerson believed that government could be guaranteed by the teaching of Christianity in schools.

If the official authorities wish to preserve themselves as a ruling body, both politically and economically, measures have to be taken to ensure that people become acclimatized to a tradition of thought which in turn will substantiate and affirm the position this body holds. Following Ryerson's reasoning, institutions called schools could be used to indoctrinate every person with the concept of good government, which for Ryerson was based on Christian principles.

It was not by accident that Ryerson, with the support of politicians and industrialists, as a champion of Christian morality, built schools for <u>mass public</u> education as a proper vehicle for the dissemination of Christianity ultimately to reach out and touch the minds of every person in the country:

> Ryerson looked on the school as a vehicle for inculcating loyalty and patriotism, fostering social cohesion and insuring domestic tranquility. "In a land where the people was king, it was es-

> sential to educate the sovereign." And so the school would provide a base for a smooth evolution of society without any violent disruption of time worn values or traditions. [31]

Realizing that Ryerson's focus of education was on the common people, we can see the basis of his thought. On the one hand, officially devoted to the education of all children, he was, on the other hand, devoted to the preservation of an elitist, capitalist economic order through a controlled system of education. As a process of educating people, Ryerson:

> held that a system of education should be "in harmony with the views and feelings of the better educated classes". In the mid-nineteenth century the "better educated classes" were synonymous with the wealthy who occupied the positions of authority in the government and judiciary. An aristocratic system of public instruction would be in harmony with the interests and benefits of the governing circles. [32]

Egerton Ryerson had the necessary qualifications to be appointed Superintendent of Education in 1844. It is this appointment rather than his being elected that is significant. He had to be set apart from politics and thus from political control by the people. Ryerson felt he should be responsible to the "Governor, rather than the Executive Council, because he thought that by such an arrangement he was

---

[31] Wilson, op. cit., p. 215.

[32] Adams, op. cit., p. 54.

a servant of the country and not of any political party." [33]

With this political structure Ryerson's major problem would be convincing Parliament to pass his legislation. His job, however, was secure from political turmoil.

The school system Ryerson founded was necessary as a medium for inculcating obedience to the government and to the Canadian aristocracy of which he was a member. He "belonged by birth and tradition to the Loyalists who were for him, a natural Canadian aristocracy". [34] Ryerson was intelligent enough to realize that if the minds of the people were not 'tuned' in accordance with the will of the government, there might be trouble. In earlier years, with Strachan and the Family Compact, under oligarchical rule, the people had revolted, as in the case of the 1837 Rebellion. Although unsuccessful, the Rebellion created enough concern that:

> an emigration society has been formed embracing some of the leading citizens. Its object is to commence a colony in the Iowa Territory on the Mississippi. A very large class are becoming uneasy, and many of the best inhabitants of the country, as to industry and enterprise, are preparing to leave. [35]

Ryerson realized that the problem resulted from the people not being properly <u>trained</u> in adhering to the values

---

[33] Putman, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 135.

[34] Thomas, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 109.

[35] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 80. Taken from a letter dated April 22, 1838.

and traditions of the society. As he saw it, with Strachan's leadership, the system of education had not been firmly established nor had it reached any significant portion of the population. As a result the people had revolted. It was his responsibility, he felt, to train the populace in the proper respect for the governing bodies and the institutions and industries of the country:

> The object of education, rightly understood is, first to make good men - good members of universal society; secondly, to fit them for usefulness to that particular society of which they constitute an integral fact - to form their principles and habits - to develop their talents and dispositions in such away [sic], as will be most serviceable to the institutions in which they dwell. Any narrower view of the great end of education is essentially defective and erroneous. [36]

Many would argue that this is exactly what our schools do today.

---

[36] McNeill, op. cit., p. 129. This is a statement made in 1841, at an address at the opening of Upper Canada Academy, a Methodist institution which began construction in 1831. In April of 1831, Ryerson wrote this of the Academy in the Christian Guardian:

> It is the first institution which has been commenced by any body of ministers in accordance with the frequently expressed wishes of the people of Upper Canada . . . Education among the people is the best security of a good government and constitutional liberty; it yields a steady, unbending support to the former and effectually protects the latter. (J. Harold Putman, Egerton Ryerson and Education in Upper Canada, p. 70.)

In order to accomplish his educational aims, upon his appointment as Superintendent, he took an extended tour of Europe and America to collect information about these systems. The result is contained in his Report on A System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada, 1846.[37] This could be considered a manifesto for the development of the Canadian school system.

The next step in accomplishing his aims took thirty-two years; his entire reign as Superintendent. In the face of opposition, most noteably from George Brown of the Globe,[38] Ryerson must be credited as being a superb politician. In spite of opposition he had the knack of persuading the people:

> by his rhetoric, to give them pride in their educational system. Then he pushed their pride to its practical application by an unrelenting use of his financial lever over all the school sections and trustees -- his administrating of the school funds for school grants. He understood his function as one of paternalistic, benevolent - and total - authority over all echelons of the system under him.[39]

Ryerson was too clever to push too hard or too fast to get

---

[37]This report is the most singularly important document in the history of Canadian education because it forms the structural basis of our present system. The more noteable features contained in the report can be seen in our contemporary system. They are: compulsory education, universality, standardization, and essentially Christian morality related to the economic system, education geared to economic production - labour training and curriculums related to industry, and education as crime preventer.

[38]Thomas, op. cit., pp. 102-103.

[39]Ibid., p. 123.

his plan instituted. By the time of his retirement in 1876, the foundation of Canadian education had been laid upon which all future development took place.

Ryerson did not believe in human equality. He accepted fully the class basis of his society and saw education as facilitating it. Schools created a large force of workers for industry, while, at the same time, taking children off the streets and preventing them from creating havoc in the cities. Noteably, it is the poor classes who received education as social training for jobs and the prevention of crime and vice:

> Ryerson argued that universal elementary education would decrease crime and poverty and increase the efficiency, happiness and compliance to the rule of the population; he did not expect it to act as a levelling or equalitarian force in society. Rather, as a liberal conservative, he saw in it a means of "fitting children for their place in the social hierarchy". [40]

His argument was based on the experience and knowledge he obtained on his European-American tour.

Ryerson was concerned with the development of Canada as a nation, and as a result of this concern and of his religious background, he saw the need for training in practical and moral matters. The training would not be responsive to the working class desires. On the contrary, they would be

---

[40]McNeill, op. cit., pp. 133-134.

trained to accept their place in the social hierarchy. In 1841, at the opening address of the Upper Canada Academy, Ryerson had stated that: "education should be "suited to the station and intended pursuits of the educated"".[41]

There was a need for skilled industrial workers. It would be the common people who would be trained for those positions, not only in industry, but also, in agriculture, manufacturing, and business. The wealthy class would be trained in the business of becoming a leader, a member of the elite.

Remembering that Grammar Schools were considered institutions for the elite, Table 1 indicates enrolment figures in these schools as a percentage of the number of total pupils in publicly controlled elementary and secondary schools.

TABLE 1

Number of pupils in publicly controlled elementary (common) and secondary (grammar) schools; percentage of secondary school pupils of total pupils.

year	elementary	secondary	total	percentage
1870	351,248	82,020	433,268	19
75	465,451	24,501	489,952	5
80	467,914	28,041	495,952	6
85	463,332	23,372	486,704	5
90	484,181	31,779	515,960	6
95	476,116	42,598	518,714	8

Continued

[41] Ibid, p. 129.

TABLE 1 continued

year	elementary	secondary	total	percentage
1900	456,260	39,191	495,451	8
05	442,661	44,974	487,635	9
10	464,042	46,658	510,700	9
15	516,517	52,513	569,030	9
20	558,804	----	----	-
25	574,532	82,502	657,034	13
30	606,854	98,582	705,436	14

Adapted from M. C. Urquhart, ed., Historical Statistics of Canada (Toronto, 1965), p. 590.

Table 1 shows only a small percentage, of the total, of children attending grammar (secondary) schools. As the table shows, it was not until 1925 that grammar schools contained over ten percent of the total attending population. One significant factor concerning grammar schools is that despite the lack of a compulsory attendance law, this part of the school population remained relatively stable. The increase in numbers was gradual. For example from 1875 to 1915 the increase was from 5 per cent to 9 per cent. With the introduction of secondary level technical education the grammar school population still did not increase significantly. It is possible to interpret these figures as being significant if you consider that it took forty years for the population of grammar schools to increase from 5 to 9 per cent (1875-1915). From 1915 to 1930 the increase was from 9 to 14 per cent, less than half the time for practically the same increase.

One possible interpretation of these figures is that, combined with the small numbers attending grammar schools,

the belief in grammar schools as institutions for the elite and because of the tuition fees charged, grammar schools were educating a privileged few. Working class people could not send their children to grammar schools because of lack of money for tuition fees and other incumbent expenses.

As the demands of industry and commerce became more urgent there had to be a class of people trained to move quietly into these fields. As a class, these people had to accept that this was their place. Necessary to the development and maintenance of the economic order, education had to instil a sense of discipline in the common people. "Good discipline implies order, punctuality, silence, cheerful obedience, respectful attention and steady patient working." [42] A perfect description of the attitude necessary for an industrial atmosphere, of the attitude necessary to participate in the lower levels of bureaucracy.

By putting these lower class children in school, they would be effectively removed from roaming the streets. At the Assizes in 1860, Mr. Justice Hagerty said that "it is from this class that our young criminals spring - it is this class we are chiefly interested in humanizing by education." [43]

---

[42] C. E. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada (Toronto, 1957), p. 531.

[43] J. G. Hodgins, Historical Educational Papers and Documents of Ontario (Toronto, 1911-1912), III, 27. It should be noted that Hodgins was directly below Superintendent Ryerson in the chain of command. Although Hodgins' voluminous material is a good source of data, it contains a bias in favour of Ryerson because of their close relationship.

This was the challenge of the educational system: to eliminate ignorance and evil and to give the people a means of survival. Dr. Charles Duncombe, in a Report on the Subject of Education 1836, stated that "man must be disciplined and furnished according to the duties that lie before him." [44] This is education on a class basis - each class receiving an education appropriate to its position in society.

Ryerson's educational perspective was specifically directed at the common people. He felt that:

> Education is a public good, ignorance is a public evil. Therefore every child should receive an education sufficient to overcome "the evils of want and poverty" and "to fit him to be an honest and useful member of the community". [45]

The public 'good' and 'evil' Ryerson refers to is made up of the values of the propertied middle and wealthy upper classes, not the poorer classes. The purpose of education then was twofold: not only was it to placate common folk in terms of their desire to have some schooling, but also, to subtly indoctrinate them with a social consciousness whereby the relationship between high and low classes would remain stable.

In his appeal for this kind of education, Ryerson neglected to inform the people of the fact that, even though they would receive a training called education, it was de-

---

[44] Dr. Charles Duncombe, Report on the Subject of Education 1836 (Toronto, 1836), p. 19.

[45] Wilson, op. cit., p. 217.

signed for the protection of the propertied middle class and the ruling bodies of government and industry. No mention of the fact that common people would be forever bound to the chains of restriction to their class. In a letter dated May 10, 1841, to Nathan Bangs, President of the Weslayan University in Middletown, Connecticut, Ryerson shows his contempt for the common man and perhaps one of the reasons why he neglected to inform people of his hidden perspective. He stated that "Canada is indeed a plantation; and its inhabitants are a province of slaves." [46] In a master (Ryerson) - slave (people) relationship, a slave requires no explanation of the motives of the master.

Although Ryerson was "in principle devoted to freedom of thought and speech, his effect was paradoxically to strangle both in favour of his authority". [47] His authority was total. With the use of this authority Ryerson was able to create a system of centrally controlled schools that dominated the common people and served the interests of the political and economic elite:

> His words suggest a concern for Christian principles, a secular common school system, and democratic programs which would benefit all the people; his actions however reveal that he was more concerned with a Protestant colonial school system

---

[46] Thomas, op. cit., p. 87.

[47] Ibid., p. 95.

which would serve the ruling minority.[48]

Summary

One of the most important considerations for both Strachan and Ryerson, was the preservation of the existing order. This order can be defined as an exclusive group of people who control the political and economic life of the country. Both men used education as a mechanism to further this cause. Strachan's system of schools focused on an elite or aristocratic form of education. In effect he neglected the lower class desire for education and, ultimately, his system failed because of its aristocratic nature. Ryerson used the desire for education to create a system of common schools directed at the labouring classes. This system trained people to accept their lower station in society. Where Strachan had neglected these people, Ryerson focused on them. The ultimate effect was the same but the method changed. And Ryerson's system did not fail but remains basically the same today, over a century later.

---

[48]Adams, op. cit., p. 115.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CLASS NATURE OF EDUCATION

In Canada, as elsewhere in the world, school systems were developed under the central control of the government's administration. The focus of the Canadian system was social control. The system did not just spring into existence. It has historical roots. Teething problems were encountered in building the system to function efficiently. Since the focus was on social control, the difficulties that arose pertained specifically to that theme. In addition the social, economic and political conditions of the era shaped the content of education.

Colonial Beginnings: Local Autonomy and the American Influence

State controlled schools were introduced and maintained primarily because of the colonial aristocracy's fear that the common people might revolt and destroy the society as it stood. Views on education as expressed by the leaders of early nineteenth century colonial Canada "emphasized its value in maintaining the existing order". [1] Lt. General Simcoe, first

---

[1]Phillips, op. cit., p. 104. " . . . As society becomes more enlightened, it realizes that it is responsible not to transmit and conserve the whole of its existing achievements, but only such as make for a better future society. The school is its chief agency for the accomplishment of this end." John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York, 1916), p. 20. The two statements are not contradictory if the assumption is made that it is the existing order who is best qualified in determining the direction and formation of a

Governor of Upper Canada, wrote that a system of education:

> would be most useful to inculcate just principles, habits and manners into rising generations . . . In short, to now form, as it were, one nation, and thereby strengthen the union with Great Britain and preserve a lasting obedience to his majesty's authority. [2]

At this stage of development, two closely related factors hindered the school from performing its role as maintainer of the social order: first, a relatively large number of local schools were completely divorced from centralized control, and secondly, these schools were staffed principally by American immigrants.

It was estimated that by 1816 two hundred private schools were in operation supported by local subscriptions and fees. These schools were operated under local, community control. In this early period, before centrally, state controlled schools, any person wishing to do so could simply announce that he or she would begin teaching whatever subjects he or she could teach on a certain day at a certain place. Payment was not always in hard cash. It depended on

---

future society. The school, as an instrument of promulgation of society, neglects the history of conflicting interests between the existing order and its radical opponents. The reason is to reduce the possibility of a radical, and potentially dangerous, ideology forming around the mistakes and improprieties of the existing order.

[2]Hodgins, op. cit., 11, 2.

the resources of the parents. Room and board was provided by each household sending pupils to the school. This was equally divided among the households. Either the teacher would spend an equal amount of time at each house or the community would provide a separate residence and share in providing food and performing the necessary chores. Other payment took the form of small amounts of money, foodstuffs and other saleable items. These payments were negotiated between the teacher and the parents who wanted schooling for their children.

Since education was seen as a means of preserving British cultural institutions of the colony, American influence was conversely seen as a threat to the British character of Upper Canada. American teachers, found in these privately and independently operated schools, were recognized as "completely calculated to train up our citizens as citizens of the republic and divert them from every affection and respect for the parent country." [3] Americans had no place teaching in Canadian schools.

With regard to the problem of the American schoolmaster, the reasoning of the Upper Canadian administration was that because Canada and the United States, as two separate political bodies, were involved in a difference of political ideology, acceptance of Americans as teachers was

---

[3] J. D. Wilson, "Education in Upper Canada: Sixty Years of Change", Canadian Education: A History (Scarborough, 1970), eds. Wilson, Stamp, Audet., p. 192.

contrary to colonial intentions. A conservative, colonial, Canadian government was trying to remain loyal to the traditions of the motherland. They felt that the United States had become a hotbed of radicalism destined not only to destroy themselves, but also, in opposing Britain, the United States would engulf and destroy Canada as well.

The revolutionary American state was felt to be a threat to the preservation of English cultural traditions, to religion, and to colonial identity. Consequently, the status and power of the colonial rulers was in jeopardy. The industrial sector of Canada still assumed a friendly attitude towards the United States in terms of trade relations. On a cultural level, however, the government became aware that American teachers, using American textbooks, would have a devastating effect on the, as yet, uneducated, unindoctrinated public. It was seen as a matter of course that the presence of American schoolmasters meant that the ideological content of the curriculum would be radical and democratic and therefore contrary to colonial political, social and cultural policy. What became apparent to the government was the increasing urgency of creating a system of mass, formal schooling with teachers who were committed to the preservation of the colonial cultural tradition.

American influence had to be eliminated in schools. The remedy was a state controlled <u>system</u> of schools in which the correct perspective would be taught. The schools would

reflect, in their teachings, the social and political aims of the Canadian colony.

Independent, locally controlled schools formed the general picture of formal education in the early nineteenth century. No centralized system existed. Government officials recognized the need for a centralized system administered by government.

The first evidence of the inauguration of such a school system occurred in November 1797, when, at the suggestion of Governor Simcoe, the Legislature:

> addressed a Memorial to King George III, asking that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to direct his Government in the Province to appropriate a certain portion of the waste Lands of the Crown as a fund for the establishment and support of a respectable Grammar School in each District thereof, and also of a College, or University, for the instruction of the youth in the different branches of liberal knowledge.[4]

Consequently, a parcel of land, 519,217 acres, was set aside for these purposes. This land was called "Clergy Reserves". The district Grammar schools were referred to as seminaries.

In 1807, a Grammar School Act was passed, providing for the education of children under state authority. The Memorial to King George III asked for permission to attempt to establish some sort of school system. The Act of 1807, in simple terms, mainly dealt with the legal and administrative

---

[4]Hodgins, op. cit., 1, 2-3.

areas of education that were necessary to exert government influence upon the operation of schools. Essentially, the Act was not designed to deal with the actual inception of schools.

At least on paper, the Act of 1807 set up a system of schools placing control in the hands of government. At the local level 'trustees' were appointed by the Lt. Governor. The trustees were appointed from the community where the school was situated. Some semblance of local control was maintained since the trustees were authorized by government to make "such rules and regulations for the good government and management of said schools with respect to the teacher, for the time being, and to the scholars, as in their discretion, shall seem meet." [5] This was the extent of local control. As noted above, this Act was not particularly effective in developing a system of education.

A Common School Act, passed in 1816, "provided for the election of trustees and the payment of monies for the teacher's salary, if the community had erected a schoolhouse and could claim twenty puils." [6] In addition, the trustees were in control of the school locally. The textbooks used in Common schools were supplied from a restricted list. This did not effectively eliminate American textbooks from Canadian

---

[5]Coleman, op. cit., p. 36.

[6]W. T. Newnham and A. S. Nease, The Professional Teacher in Ontario (Toronto, 1967), p. 23.

schools. It was not a list in the strictist sense, rather, trustees had to report to the Board of Education, the books used in the schools. If these books were not satisfactory, the District Board had the power to remove said books and replace them with others more suitable.[7] The outlines, at least, of a centralized form of control are evident in the Common School Act of 1816. But again, no centrally controlled system of schools ensued. The problem still remained: to establish a working system of proper education for the populace. Hodgins outlines the basis of the problem as being lack of financial support from the Legislature. Additionally there was no provision for the training of persons as teachers.[8]

---

[7]The Common School Act of 1816 states: ". . . that it shall and may be lawful for the said Trustees, and they are hereby required, to report to the District Board of Education, hereinafter to be appointed, the Books used, with the Rules and Regulations used in the said Schools, once in every three months; Provided always, that it shall and may be lawful for the said District Board of Education, on such report as aforesaid, being received, to order and direct such Books, or any of them, not to be used in the said Schools, and to rescind the said Rules and Regulations, or any part of them, if it should be deemed expedient, giving sufficient notice thereof to the said Trustees, who shall warn the subscribers to the said School to provide other books for the tuition of the said Scholars, and to make other alterations, rules or regulations in the said schools, as they shall deem necessary, in order that there may be a more uniform system of education throughout the Province." (J. G. Hodgins, Historical Educational Papers and Documents of Ontario, 1, 6-7)

[8]Hodgins, op. cit., 1, 9.

As previously stated, there were a large number of private, community controlled schools existing by 1816. The majority of these schools were located in rural areas. State controlled schools, however, were situated mainly in urban centres because of the ease of administration. Despite their central location, these schools were experiencing a depressing lack of attendance which was very disturbing to government officials.

TABLE 2

Total Enrolment and Total Average Daily Attendance for Publicly Controlled Elementary and Grammar Schools in Thousands of Pupils; Percentages Showing Per cent of Children Attending School Daily; Percentage Increase in Enrolment and Attendance Year By Year in Ontario.

Year	Total enrolment	Total average daily attendance	% of pupils in attendance	% increase in enrolment	% increase in average daily attendance
1867	389.9	167.1	43	---	---
68	410.6	170.0	41	5	2
69	423.9	178.1	42	3	5
70	433.3	181.6	42	2	2
71	443.0	188.3	43	2	4
72	462.4	188.7	41	3	0
73	473.8	193.2	41	2	2
74	479.1	192.2	40	1	-1
75	490.0	192.9	39	2	---
76	499.1	198.6	40	2	3
77	498.0	222.4	45	---	12
78	499.6	230.6	46	---	4
79	499.1	226.4	45	---	-2
80	496.0	227.3	46	-1	---

continued on next page

TABLE 2 continued

Year	Total enrolment	Total average daily attendance	% of pupils in attendance	% increase in enrolment	% increase in average daily attendance
1881	489.4	222.5	45	-1	-2
82	484.0	220.8	46	-1	-1
83	476.2	222.0	47	-2	1
84	479.7	229.2	48	1	3
85	486.7	234.1	48	1	2
86	502.8	247.8	49	3	6
87	510.7	255.4	50	2	3
88	513.3	256.3	50	1	---
89	519.5	264.7	51	1	3
90	516.0	262.7	51	-1	-1
91	514.0	268.3	52	---	2
92	508.5	267.5	53	-1	---
93	512.9	273.3	53	1	2
94	516.1	282.9	55	1	4
95	518.7	286.6	55	1	1
96	516.7	271.4	53	---	-6
97	517.7	288.4	56	---	6
98	512.8	287.4	56	-1	---
99	504.7	282.3	56	-2	-2
1900	495.5	275.9	56	-2	-2
01	492.5	275.2	56	-1	---
02	489.9	276.0	56	1	---
03	487.9	275.4	56	---	---
04	484.4	273.8	57	-1	1
05	487.6	281.7	58	1	1
06	492.5	285.3	58	1	1
07	493.8	285.0	58	---	---
08	501.6	292.1	58	1	1
09	507.2	295.4	58	1	1
10	510.7	299.7	59	2	2
11	518.6	305.6	59	3	5
12	527.6	323.4	61	3	5
13	544.1	340.2	63	3	5
14	563.9	357.5	63	4	5
15	571.4	368.0	64	1	3
16	---	366.9	64	---	---
17	---	371.1	65	---	1
18	---	382.5	67	---	3
19	---	391.5	69	---	2
20	---	398.3	70	---	2
21	---	450.7	79	---	13
22	---	475.6	83	---	6
23	634.1	482.1	76	11	1
24	650.7	496.1	76	3	3
25	658.9	496.7	76	1	---
26	670.6	508.0	76	2	2
27	637.0	512.2	77	-5	1
28	686.3	528.5	76	8	3
29	706.2	535.7	76	3	1

Adapted from M.C. Urquhart, ed. "Historical Statistics of Canada" (Toronto, 1965), pp. 588-589.

As shown in Table 2, at the time of Confederation in 1867, attendance figures were significantly less than half of those children enrolled in schools. In 1867 only 43 per cent were attending. Ten years later in 1877, 45 per cent attended. An interesting point is that at the time of the first compulsory attendance law in 1871, only 43 per cent of enrolled pupils attended school. Attendance dropped the next year and continued to do so until 1875 when a low of 39 per cent was reached. After this there was a steady increase until in 1887, sixteen years after the compulsory attendance law was first passed, attendance reached the 50 per cent mark. By the time the compulsory attendance age of 16 had been fixed in 1919, only 69 per cent of the children were attending. This lack of attendance at the state controlled schools was a major problem for government officials.

Most observers considered poor attendance as a reflection of parental views which placed "a low value on formal education". [9] To the contrary "local residents proved their concern for public education by building schools at their own expense when they realized they were barred from the grammar schools. [10] Grammar schools during this period were used as exclusive social clubs, "as aristocratic education facilitated

---

[9]Leo A. Johnson, History of the County of Ontario 1615-1875 (Whitby, 1973), pp. 268-269.

[10]Adams, op. cit., p. 6.

membership in the exclusive circle of the Canadian patriciate." [11] Lower class people recognized this as a fact. The outgrowth was that their demands focused instead on common schools. The Act of 1819 had provided for the education, in grammar schools, of 10 boys from each District, although little attention was paid to this. For example, it was found in 1829, that only one school, in the Gore District, had conformed to the law. [12]

Economic conditions played an important role in the, so called, lack of concern displayed by the lower classes. Grammar schools were generally located at urban centres. Here the accumulation of wealth could financially sustain and support grammar schools. Unfortunately, these urban centres were few and far between. Rural people were unable to send their children to attend state institutions, not only, because of limited, primitive travel facilities, but also, due to lack of financial resources required to pay room and board and tuition fees for their children.

Further to the problem of a central state system of schooling, farmers needed all the available bodies they could muster just to keep the family alive. In the early settlement era, obviously the land had not been cleared. Therefore, no crops could be planted. Combined with a relatively short

---

[11] Ibid., p. 111.

[12] Bell, op. cit., p. 21.

growing season, this represented a dismal future unless adequate acreage could be cleared, sufficient crops planted and then harvested. If the labour force of the farmers (their families) was reduced, food production would decrease, threatening their survival:

> The farmer is not only compelled to devote himself entirely to the cultivation of his ground, but also to call in the aid of his sons, as soon as they are able to assist him. [13]

In general the Canadian:

> economy provided for physical needs and not much more. This condition, and the accepted opinion that only a minority could appreciate the finer things of life, were educationally effective in keeping aesthetic tastes and intellectual activity low. [14]

In one sense the characterized indifference of the people was false. It would seem that the people were indifferent to government action, but not for lack of interest in educating their children.

The high cost of attending grammar schools forced the erection of community schools. Also, the fact that grammar schools were considered schools for the elite compounded the government's problem of creating a centrally controlled school system. It must be remembered that nineteenth cen-

---

[13]Wilson, op. cit., p. 215.

[14]Phillips, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

tury views on education were concerned only with the wishes of the feudal aristocracy. As yet, the master-servant relationship remained stable, and as such, this view was reflected in the system of education.

With the creation of a centrally controlled system of schools, the locally controlled, community schools were wrenched away from parental control and turned into state institutions. This process, along with the resolution of the American teacher problem, took a lengthy historical development. The operation had its legislative foundations in the colonial era. In these beginnings, the inception of Common schools and Grammar schools and their specific class focus would be the basis for the future school system.

The Class Tendency: An Education For The Rich And An Education For The Poor

In the early period of educational reform, an aristocratic prejudice ruled most thoughts on this subject. The most vociferous proponent of aristocratic values in education was John Strachan. He himself was a member of the Canadian aristocracy, holding positions of importance in the Anglican Church, the Family Compact, and in the developing business community.

Aristocratic thought tended to neglect education for feudal serfs. The original Land Grant (1797) for the erection and maintenance of Grammar schools reflected this. For those of the lower orders, education was left to their personal

devices. John Strachan changed this conception. Instead of neglect, he showed patrician concern for the education of common people.

Such education had its focus on training in morality, religious piety and political loyalty. Ordinary people were involved at the local level, having no control, however, in the decision making process. As previously stated there was some semblance of local control. The situation actually provided for the election of local officials who had powers over local matters. This control was effectively thwarted because the trustees' decisions had to be approved by the Lt. Governor. This man could overturn any of these decisions and decide for himself on an appropriate course of action. Therefore real, local control did not exist.

Education for John Strachan and his aristocratic cohort had a twofold purpose: first, to educate the children of the aristocracy to their position as leaders of the colony; and secondly, to train the general populace to accept the discipline, restraints and values imposed by government. [15] The establishment of this system would educate "the children of the principal people of this country who would become the country's leaders" while for the rest "such education as may be necessary for people in the lower degrees of life". [16]

---

[15] Purdy, op. cit., p. 42.

[16] Wilson, "Education in Upper Canada: Sixty Years of Change", Canadian Education: A History, p. 193.

Prior to 1840, education was dominated by the Anglican Church. In general, this arrangement was not questioned. The goal was to have more people under the influence of Anglicanism. The concept of universally equal education did not apply in this scheme. Instead, it was seen as necessary to have two separate systems: one for the elite and one for common people.

As already noted, the original land grant was designed for Grammar school use, not for Common schools. The purpose of Grammar schools was made explicit in the Grammar School Act of 1807. "The intention of this legislation was to provide Upper Canada with an educated leadership cadre which the upper classes thought was essential for Upper Canada's development as a British colony." [17]

The local, community controlled schools in existence before 1816 were populated by common people. For the most part the schools were free from government interference. Strachan "now wished to take advantage of this spirit by extending government financial assistance and by creating a more regularized system. What the people had started, the government should take up and develop." [18] The Common School Act of 1816 accomplished this. It was not just humanitarian concern that caused Strachan to aid the lower classes in edu-

---

[17] Purdy, op. cit., p. 43.

[18] Ibid., p. 45.

cating their children. As an aristocrat wishing to preserve the existing order, there were a number of problems he faced. As previously stated, there were privately operated schools divorced from centralized control, and staffed by Republican American teachers. Also, children attending these schools were not receiving the benefit of Anglican religious training. If the common people were allowed to carry on in their own way, Upper Canada, as a traditionally British colony, could soon be lost.

Strachan felt that central control of schools was a prime essential. Accessibility to political power and influence allowed Strachan to create the General Board of Education.

> The germ of central control may be found in the General Board of Education brought into existence in 1823. It was the creation of the Executive Council of Lieutenant-Governor Maitland and its prime purpose was to establish "one introductory school on the national plan in each town of a certain size". [19]

By injecting himself into the Board as chairman, Strachan was able to control the destiny of education policy uninterrupted until March 1833. At that time, the Board was dissolved and its duties transferred to the Council of King's College. Strachan, however, was the President of the College and the membership of the Council was essentially the same as that of the General Board.

---

[19] Bell, op. cit., p. 48.

Strachan's focus was on Grammar schools. "In harmony with their particular social outlook, Anglican and Conservative leaders established elite grammar schools modelled on those of England." [20] For state common schools a curriculum of sound religious, moral instruction was introduced. A revised Grammar School Act, passed in 1819, allowed that "ten poor boys in each district would be educated free of charge at the district grammar school." [21] This concession meant very little considering the fee requirements of the schools and the financial conditions prevalent among the poor.

Two separate and distinct systems of schools evolved under Strachan. The figures in Table 3 show attendance figures at common schools and grammar schools.

TABLE 3

A Comparison of Common and Grammar School Attendance Figures 1838

Name of District	Attendance in Common Schools	Attendance in Grammar Schools
Johnson	1925	19
Bathurst	2090	31
Prince Edward	2110	No Report
Newcastle	No return	31
Eastern	2460	30
Ottawa	670	24
Home	2557	21
Niagara	No return	36
Western	761	30
Midland	No return	32
Gore	No return	35
Talbot	No return	No school
London	2103	22
Totals	14,776	311

J. G. Hodgins, Historical Educational Papers, 1, 126-127

[20] Adams, op. cit., p. 111.

[21] Purdy, op. cit., p. 45.

One possible inference from the figures in Table 3 would indicate the class basis of the system. When the percentage of Grammar school children is calculated from total attendance, the figure is 2 per cent. As shown in Table 1 the same calculation results in a figure of 5 per cent of the total school population being Grammar school pupils in 1875. Although there was a dramatic increase in the attendance rates from 1838 (15,087 pupils in total) to 1875 (433,268 pupils in total), the ratio of Grammar school children to the total remains relatively stable. The increase in total population could be interpreted as reflecting the increase in the population of the colony as a whole. The same interpretation might also apply to the expansion of both Common and Grammar school populations. The Common school attendance rate went from 14,776 in 1838 to 465,451 in 1875. Grammar school attendance rates changed from 311 in 1838 to 24,501. As indicated above the attendance figures in each school showed a large increase while the ratio between Grammar schools and the total remained stable over the years. However, the question still to be answered is why did this ratio not change? Considering that the population at large increased and that more children attended Common schools why were there not more and more children going to Grammar schools? One reasonable explanation of these figures might possibly be that, indeed, Grammar schools were for the education of the

wealthy, propertied upper class children while Common schools educated the lower class children.[22] Since the ratio of Grammar school children to the total did not increase significantly one assumption might be that Grammar schools excluded those in the population who were not wanted there. As Common schools accommodated the majority of the school population, and based on the assumption that preservation of the existing order was necessary, it is plausible to assume that the orientation of these schools was directed specifically at training the majority of the population to acceptance of the existing

---

[22]The following is taken from the joint report of the High School Inspectors of Ontario, 1873, referring to the differing functions of the high school and elementary school (that is the grammar and common school respectively). "The raison d'etre of the High School system is entirely different from that of the Public School system. The object of the latter is to provide for every child of sound mind, the means of obtaining a minimum amount of knowledge and mental training; the object of the former is to provide for a comparatively small fraction of the population the elements of a liberal culture. The Public Schools exist to sow intelligence widely, the High Schools to plow deeply a small portion of mental soil. The all-important aim of the latter is to combine thorough training with breadth of mental vision. In the former case the number of pupils instructed should be mainly regarded by the community, in the latter, the quality of instruction. The quality of instruction given in the Public Schools and the numbers attending the High Schools are not themselves unimportant matters, but their relative importance is different in the two classes of Schools . . .

In the High Schools are being educated, it is to be presumed, the leading men of the next generation, its clergymen, its lawyers, its doctors, its editors, the men who will make farming a science, its engineers and machinists, its prominent manufacturers and merchants, and its teachers. It is important that they, at least, as the advisors and guides of the future, should receive a wide culture and know what thoroughness is." (Lawr and Gidney, Educating Canadians, p. 96.)

order. Grammar schools on the other hand, would train certain people to be the leaders of the country as is indicated in footnote 22.

Logically then, if common schools and grammar schools have different functions, the curriculum of each school will reflect the differences. Table 4 is a comparison of the curriculum of the common and grammar schools from 1825 to 1950.

TABLE 4

A Comparison of 1) Common School and 2) Grammar School Curriculums

1) The Common (Elementary) School Curriculum.

(Underlining indicates subjects or activities found in relatively few schools)

1825 - 1850	1850 - 1875	1875 - 1900	1900 - 1925	1925 - 1950
		kindergarten	kindergarten	kindergarten
reading	reading	reading	reading	reading
		literature	literature	literature
writing	writing	writing	writing	writing
		composition	composition	composition
grammar	grammar	grammar	grammar	grammar
arithmetic	arithmetic	arithmetic	arithmetic	arithmetic
		bookkeeping		
geography	geography	geography	geography	social studies
		history	history	history
	object lessons	object lessons	nature study	science
	drawing	drawing	art	art
			manual training	industrial arts
			household science	home economics
	music	music	music	music
		physical drill	physical training	physical education
		physiology and temperance	hygiene	health
bible verses				religious education enterprise

TABLE 4 continued

2) The Grammar (Secondary) School Curriculum

(Underlining indicates subjects taught in few schools or to few pupils)

1825 - 1850	1850 - 1875	1875 - 1900	1900 - 1925	1925 - 1950
reading	reading	reading	reading	
writing	writing	writing	writing	
grammar	grammar	grammar	grammar	
	composition	composition	composition	composition
		literature	literature	literature
latin	latin	latin	latin	latin
greek	greek	greek	greek	greek
	french	french	french	french
		german	german	german
				spanish
arithmetic	arithmetic	arithmetic	arithmetic	general mathematics
algebra	algebra	algebra	algebra	algebra
geometry	geometry	geometry	geometry	geometry
practical mathematics		trigonometry	trigonometry	trigonometry
natural philosophy	science			general science
		chemistry	chemistry	chemistry
		physics	physics	physics
		botany	biology	biology
			agricultural science	agricultural science
geography	geography	geography	geography	geography
history	history	history	history	history
-ancient	-ancient	-ancient	-ancient	-ancient
	-British	-British	-British	-British
		-Canadian	-Canadian	-Canadian
			-general	-general
		drawing	art	art
				music
				drama
		physical training	physical training	physical education
		physiology		health
			manual training	industrial arts
			household science	home economics
bookkeeping		bookkeeping	commercial subjects	commercial subjects
			technical subjects	technical subjects

C. E. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada (Toronto, 1957), p. 433 and p. 438.

One very important difference in the two curriculums, given in Table 4, is the conspicuous lack of religious instruction in Grammar schools. Common schools did include bible verses in their curriculum during the period 1825-1850. After this, religious instruction disappears until the second quarter of the twentieth century. The time from 1825 to 1850 is the same period as the reign of Strachan and the aristocratic Family Compact. Also included here is Ryerson's appointment as Superintendent. In the rest of the nineteenth century we can see the effect Ryerson had on religious education. There were no formal classes in Common schools since he set the system up as being non-sectarian and Christian. The change from a feudal state to a bourgeoise state would change the thrust of religious morality to a secular morality that would protect the new economic relationship of employer-employee. This secular morality took the form of a Christian, work-oriented, disciplinary training seeking a bureaucratic obedience. History, introduced in the period 1875-1900, was used to glorify the past accomplishments of the new order. Temperance and physical drill, or physical education and health as it was later called, trained people in discipline and told of the evils related to excessive and sinful living. Grammar schools were oriented to a classical training not entirely impractical. Lawyers, doctors and others needed this training since it was used as an everyday part of their work. Before 1875, and common to all Grammar schools were such sub-

jects as reading, writing, grammar, Latin, arithmetic, algebra, geometry and geography. This provided the training necessary to be able to run businesses, to become lawyers, doctors and so on, to become politicians, editors, to become those persons who controlled the country. After 1875, hard science was slowly introduced, in keeping with the demands of industry for more highly skilled personnel. As I will point out later this did not conflict with the image of Grammar schools as elitist institutions. By 1900 chemistry, physics, botany and drawing had been introduced. By 1925, reading and writing were being phased out and biology, agricultural science, art, physical training, manual training, household science, commercial subjects and technical subjects had been introduced. By this time fee schedules had been dropped from Grammar schools and the modern school leaving age of 16 had been introduced in 1919. This allowed the poor children to attend the high school. Although the training was more sophisticated, secular morality training is also evident in that children were being trained to be good workers, good mothers and to be disciplined and to take care of one's body.

In Strachan's era, education was aimed at the aristocracy and their training for leadership. But this system failed and created an animosity towards an aristocratic form of a centrally controlled school system. Strachan's major mistake was denying the lower classes. He made no attempt to respect their wishes nor cede their demands. He did not rea-

lize that in order to preserve the existing order the thrust of the system should have been aimed at those classes of people not already committed to the colonial social system.

Egerton Ryerson would be the man to understand the necessity of lower class involvement in education. Practically, Ryerson's school system would be no different from Strachan's. Ryerson, however, would incorporate lower class demands into the system. One other important aspect was that Ryerson seemed to more fully recognize the significance of education as a mechanism of social control. Consequently, Ryerson concentrated on building a centralized system of common schools. There would be little need to tamper with Grammar schools. As a result it was not until 1850 that Grammar schools came under the same central control as Common schools.

The Educational Committee of 1831 expressed the ineffectiveness of Strachan's school system when they reported that

> no apparent benefit has resulted to the inhabitants of the country from the school reservation for a period of 30 years; and that the original intention of the Legislature expressed in the Joint Address to His Majesty in July 1797, . . . have . . . been lost sight of. [23]

In trying to discover why Strachan's system was ineffective, officials did not or would not examine what they considered

---

[23]Johnson, op. cit., p. 97.

the characteristic attitude of indifference of the lower classes. This indifference, as earlier noted, was not towards educating their children, rather it was towards the overly expensive aristocratic school system then operating. The failure, in fact, was in the political finagling which was contrary to the desires and needs of the people.

Changing Social Patterns: The 1837 Rebellion

The year 1831 marks the beginning of what could be called a transition period for the school system in Upper Canada. Slowly, state officials were coming to realize that all the legislation of government previous to that year was quite literally useless as a means of instituting a system of education directed at the common people. Indeed, once the value of educating the ordinary folk was appreciated and reports of the ineffectiveness of the existing structure were accepted as significant, there was a renewed effort by officialdom to create an efficient system of state controlled schools. These would provide a national, universal, compulsory, free, Christian and practical education.

Even as the attempt was made, very little substantial action actually took place. Herein was the problem of the aristocratic oligarchy dominating social (including religion and education), political and economic policy. Ultimately, it was a reaction to this aristocratic domination that was at least one of the causes of the social upheaval

expressed in the Rebellion of 1837.

That little social progress was made can be attributed to the ideology and power of the Family Compact. Of the Family Compact it can be said that they were "against democracy in all its forms, they were intolerant of opposition or criticism which threatened their power to rule." [24] The Family Compact ruled Upper Canada with its traditional aristocratic haughtiness until Dominion in 1841. As a governing body, it held close to British values. Since Upper Canada was a colony with aristocratic, Tory administrators, the Family Compact felt society was based on the conception of inequality, therefore an elite must rule. To rise above one's ordained position would result in social chaos:

> The essence of the Tory vision of the ideal society was the conception of an ordered, differential and graded society which, centred around an elite in government and an established church, would provide stability, peace and contentment for each and every citizen. It was assumed that men were naturally unequal and as such had a proper place and role in society. [25]

In view of this vision, it is easy to see why the Family Compact, and generally the aristocracy, were very worried about William Lyon Mackenzie and the Reformers. The things that these people were asking for contrasted sharply with the established colonial socio-economic structure.

---

[24] Adams, op. cit., p. 2.

[25] Johnson, op. cit., p. 96.

This fear was evident when the aristocracy decried the Reformers as blasphemous and defilers of law, order, and decency.

The aristocracy also believed the revolution to have commenced. This observation was made by Strachan in 1833. Even this early, people's dissatisfaction with the present order was recognized. The problem was that political officials could not see to the heart of the conflict.

The conflict, in one sense, was the aristocracy themselves and what they stood for. In describing what the aristocracy was, Mackenzie printed this definition, in 1831, in the Colonial Advocate:

> aristocracy in the nineteenth century, is the league, the coalition of those who would consume without producing, live without working, know everything without learning, carry away all the honours without having deserved them, and occupy all the places of government, without being capable of filling one. [26]

Being thus defined and by adhering to a Tory vision of society, the aristocratic oligarchy was blind and deaf to the conditions and appeals of the common people. Very simply, working people wanted to rule their own destiny and be fairly remunerated for their labour.

Locally, as early as 1827, petitions were being signed and sent to the government in a manner consistent with consti-

---

[26] Ibid., p. 109.

tutional process. These petitions asked for a better position politically and economically. When due process failed to net any consideration at all, people wondered if any justice could be found in the hands of a government who abused their power. When this question was raised and received a negative response, people began to become more and more radical in their actions towards government. Overt signs of dissatisfaction surfaced when "King Township, for example, refused either to nominate its township officers or to pay its taxes in 1834." [27]

The Rebellion of 1837 is history: it failed. The government, however, was still terrified of further trouble and in a sense cut its own throat. Officials did not even make a pretence of granting popular demands. Further, "the persecution of those who had rebelled or who had stayed neutral in the crisis did not end with the sentences." [28] Continued harassment by the government pushed many people towards emigration to the United States. It also:

> led to an open hositility on the part of many previously loyal citizens. Indeed, a kind of underground warfare of individual reprisals was begun which caused the Government to fear that a second uprising might occur. [29]

---

[27] Ibid., p. 111.

[28] Ibid., p. 125.

[29] Ibid., p. 126.

This particular fear led to the formation of the emigration society in 1838 for wealthy, upper class people.

The Rebellion of 1837 brought to a head some of the important social conflicts of the time. One of the most important, from the perspective of this thesis, was that people were no longer tolerant of blatant aristocratic, oligarchical rule. This ultimately led to a restructuring of society with a capitalist, as opposed to a feudal, base. While the people:

> ultimately would see the defeat of its oldest enemy, the aristocratic Toryism of Bishop Strachan, it would fall prey to that new rising class of entrepreneurs whose version of "progress" was the accumulation of capital and the employment of men. [30]

Within a decade, the demise of the Family Compact in 1841 and Ryerson's appointment as Superintendent of Education, had occurred. The ideals the Reformers had fought for were now a reality. The transition from the end of an aristocratic, feudal form of government to the beginning of a liberal, democratic, bourgeoise system had been completed. The change was reflected in the school system of Upper Canada.

Ryerson and the Beginnings of the Modern Era

The 1837 Rebellion had shown colonial political leaders the power of concerted, lower class action. Since the lower classes had rejected the feudal aristocracy, a new type

---

[30] Ibid., p. 127.

of social structure was developed in accordance with developing political and economic trends. One thought which remained foremost in this development, however, was the preservation of the emerging class relations.

With a new political structure, a new system of education was developed. It was different in content: less focus on religious obedience and other feudal aspects. It was not different in form: education was still class based. Education was still used to preserve class relationships, the new class relationship of employer to employee.

To institute a proper system of schools required the right man. Government found such a man in Egerton Ryerson. He was appointed Superintendent of Education in 1844, and for the next thirty-two years he ruled and controlled educational policy. And he did this without government interference since he was appointed by, and reported to, the Lt. Governor rather than the Executive Council. This meant, in effect, that he was not responsible to any political party. He was an educational power unto himself.

Ryerson was not only committed to educating the common man, but also, he was committed to preserving and extending the new socio-economic order. His emphasis on a Christian, universal, free, compulsory and practical education could be equated with the desires of the upper classes. Ryerson meant education to be:

> not the mere acquisition of certain arts or of certain branches of knowledge, but that instruction and discipline which qualify and dispose the subjects of it for their appropriate duties and employments of life, as Christians, as persons of business, and also as members of the civil community in which they live. [31]

As the educational system developed, the basic nature of its purpose changed very little. The reason for state involvement in the school system was still the preservation and perpetuation of class hegemony. That government was involved in education at all can be attributed to Ryerson's ability to persuade "the people of the province to a belief in education as a primary responsibility of the government." [32] Ryerson felt that "if the parent or guardian cannot provide him with such an education then the state is bound to do so." [33]

It was evident to Ryerson that for the colony to survive, the government must institute and support a system of enforced schooling to preserve the established social order. In pursuing this policy, locally controlled public education would be co-opted. These government supported institutions were the "vehicle for inculcating loyalty and patriotism, fostering social cohesion and self-reliance and insuring domestic tranquility." [34] Education would not only train-up

---

[31] Putman, op. cit., p. 111.

[32] Thomas, op. cit., p. 122.

[33] Wilson, op. cit., p. 217.

[34] Ibid., p. 215.

people to an occupation, but also, would train their very minds and characters. Trained docility was the goal.[35]

The training was done under the guise of inculcating morality, a central and most important aspect of the new state education. What was the morality? It was, and still is, training in obedience and ideology in the form of beliefs and values unquestioning state control and one's lot in life as an employee. Class hegemony would be preserved and colonial power maintained.

One major problem Ryerson faced when he went about setting up his system was the quality of teachers available. As previously mentioned, the early colonial period faced the problem of the American schoolmaster. Ryerson had to confront the same condition. It would seem that the problem has still not been eliminated in the modern era as is evidenced by the concern shown over the number of American teachers in our universities. Worry over the quality of available teachers plagued Ryerson, and as such the "teacher-training school

---

[35]Marx quotes from a letter dating to the late seventeenth century which shows why education or training, of children is necessary and what the results are.
"Tis not their practice (in Germany) as with us in this kingdom, to bind an apprentice for seven years; three or four is their common standard: and the reason is because they are educated from their cradle to something of employment, which renders them the more apt and docile, and consequently the more capable of attaining to a ripeness and quicker proficiency in business. Whereas our youth, here in England, being bred to nothing before they come to be apprentices, make a very slow progress and require much longer time wherein to reach the perfection of accomplished artists." (emphasis added) (Karl Marx, Capital (New York, 1906), ed. Frederick Engels, pp. 299-300.)

was a cornerstone of Ryerson's plan." [36] He realized that a standardized form of education, including teachers, must be instituted. Teachers and curriculums had to conform to state determined programmes.

Just because schools had such a curriculum with proper teachers did not mean that it reached everyone. One of the compelling necessities under the new regime was to increase attendance rates at Common schools. Table 5 shows the population that was of school age and the total number of children attending Common schools.

TABLE 5

Summary of the progress of the Common schools from 1842 to 1854

Year	Adult population of Upper Canada	Population between the ages of 5 and 16 years	total pupils attending the Common schools
1842	486,055	141,143	65,978
1843*	---	---	---
1844	.....	183,539	96,756
1845	622,570	202,913	110,002
1846	.....	204,580	101,912
1847	.....	230,975	124,829
1848	725,879	241,102	130,739
1849	.....	253,364	138,465
1850	803,493	259,258	151,891
1851	950,551	258,607	168,159
1852	953,239	262,755	179,587
1853	.....	268,957	194,736
1854	.....	277,912	204,168

*No reports received this year in consequence of a change in the school law.

Hodgins, Historical Educational Papers, V, 220-221.

[36] Thomas, op. cit., p. 104.

As shown in Table 5, the attendance in 1842 was less than half of those children eligible. When Ryerson was appointed Superintendent in 1844, attendance rose to just over fifty per cent. Within a decade, in 1854, attendance figures had reached approximately seventy per cent of the eligible population. Attendance at common schools was one of the major concerns at this time. If Ryerson was to carry out his policies effectively, then children had to go to school. He was able to do this to a significant degree by 1854. The reason for the dramatic rise in attendance from 1842 to 1854, for Common schools, lies in the nature of Ryerson's plan of education and his ability to persuade the people of the value of his system. Additionally, common schools provided skills increasingly necessary for obtaining jobs in the new industrial, capitalist order.

Many innovations in the Canadian educational system were not indigenous to Ryerson. On the contrary, he borrowed whatever and wherever he could. Immediately upon his appointment in 1844, Ryerson left on a tour of Britain, Other European countries, and the United States. His '<u>Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada, 1846</u>' was the result.

Ryerson found the Irish educational picture very interesting. Some fundamental aspects of the Upper Canadian system were borrowed from Ireland. For example, the Irish Normal School was the basis for the Ontario teacher training

school built at York (Toronto). The Irish National Series of textbooks was particularly useful. At that time, in Upper Canada, there was no standardized set of school books. Those that did exist were mainly American, a carry over from the early colonial period and the problem of American influence. The Irish Series "were not only graded but they were also patriotic (in a British sense) and were devoid of denominational leanings." [37] Since the Irish textbooks were ideologically proper, Ryerson imported them to Upper Canada. Soon after, Ryerson obtained permission to reprint the books in Canada. He found he could do this very inexpensively, thus eliminating any competition from other textbook publishers. This allowed Ryerson to initiate the (American) textbook ban, which, although not rigidly enforced until 1859, continues for more than a century.

Another of the innovations begun by Ryerson was the Book Depository, started in 1850. Its function was simply to supply schools, upon request, with materials like books, maps and globes. In effect it destroyed any freedom of choice schools and teachers had in obtaining subject matter. They had to conform to regulations, which, among other things, meant schools had to deal with the Depository, or lose their grant monies. The Book Depository was one method Ryerson used to obtain curriculum standardization throughout the country. It was only one more mechanism used in consolidating schools

---

[37] Wilson, op. cit., p. 219.

under central control.

The Beginnings of the Modern Era: Urban and Industrial Factors Affecting Educational Reform

Early colonial farmers could do little other than survive. Other occupations suffered no less. Their lives were devoted to existence itself. This situation affected the attitudes of farmers through the first half of the nineteenth century until the 1850's, when the farmers experienced an economic boom. The country as a whole experienced a change in occupational arrangements and in technological development:

> By the middle of the 1800's some of the pioneer occupations were giving way to newer modes of making a living - lumbering, trapping, fishing and agriculture were having to make room for some manufacturing, industrial development and mining. This development meant a change in the status and orientation of the labour force with the new influence being noted with the establishment of the first trade union, the Typographical Society of York (Toronto) in 1832. [38]

Moreover technological progress gave rise to more sophisticated means of transportation and communication (i.e. steam trains, improved roads, bridge construction, and the invention of the telegraph). [39] This progress enabled the educators of the day, Ryerson being the key figure, to not

---

[38] Purdy, op. cit., p. 96.

[39] Ibid., p. 96.

only disseminate their programs more efficiently, but also, to insure that they would be carried out. In other words central control of all schools, including rural schools, was now physically possible.

As J. D. Wilson put it: "clearly the state of education in the province could not remain unaffected by urban development, the early stages of industrialism and improvements in transportation and communication." [40] People became less and less self-sufficient, and as urban growth began, education took on a greater and greater importance as a mechanism for controlling class society:

> As they became less and less self-sufficient, there grew up a need for specialized urban services including schools of a sophisticated nature. Thus the education of children became not only more widespread as the need for education became more widely recognized, but also more formalized and institutionalized. [41]
>
> Schools then were set up to teach habits and attitudes which would make children fit neatly into a disciplined hierarchical society with the few at the top and the many at the bottom. [42]

Ryerson had set himself up as the advocate of education for the common man although he always held the assumption that there would be an educated elite. His political independence allowed him free rein to firmly establish a

---

[40] Wilson, op. cit., p. 215.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Myra Novogrodosky, "Schools", Canadian Dimension Vol. 10, No. 3 (Winnipeg, July 1974), 51.

centrally controlled Common school system. The system, at least in part, took into account the wishes of ordinary people, while at the same time the structure of the system was directly in accord with upper class expectations. Not until 1850 was any legislative attention directed towards Grammar Schools. Even this was inconsequential in terms of changing the elitist flavour. As was shown in Table 1, the figures indicated a very small percentage of Grammar school children making up the total public school population. In 1873, a joint report of High School Inspectors for Ontario, stated that: "the total number of pupils attending all the public and private High Schools of the Province may be set down as about one-half of one per cent of the entire population." [43] In 1853, a Grammar School Act brought the whole system under one centre of control: this included grammar schools, common schools and normal schools.

During the latter years of Ryerson's Superintendency he saw the need for more specialized training for the working classes. Growing industry and business had need of skilled labour. Common schools could not provide the necessary level of skills, so Ryerson turned to the Grammar schools. In 1871:

> the grammar school was in effect abolished and replaced by two institutions. One known as the "high school" was to enable boys and girls to receive an education in English, commercial sub-

---

[43]Lawr and Gidney, op. cit., p. 96.

> jects, and natural science, especially agriculture. The other, known as the "collegiate institute" retained a good deal of the former prestige and status of the grammar school. It was intended primarily for boys studying Latin and Greek and those hoping to enter university . . . This special status accorded the classical languages, a feature on which Ryerson insisted, was slow to die in the secondary schools of Ontario. [44]

As can be seen two different services were provided. The 'collegiate institute' remained a school for the elite. Still, this Act did not "provide free and compulsory education. The fee system was allowed to continue, and as late as 1905, 60 per cent of Ontario high schools still required fees." [45]

Summary

From the beginning of local autonomy, through the first School Act, down to Egerton Ryerson, the purpose of education was social control, preservation of the existing order and to provide the upper classes with the training necessary to become leaders of society. In the beginning education reflected aristocratic, feudal society. The social upheaval of the 1837 Rebellion, the beginning of industrialism and urbanization changed this outlook. Education now reflected social patterns of democracy and capitalism. The purpose, however, was still to protect class relationships: instead of the master-servant

---

[44] Wilson, op. cit., pp. 225-226.

[45] Ibid., p. 226.

relationship of the feudal era, the emerging relationship of employer-employee had to be protected in the bourgeoise era.

Ryerson "did sincerely consider all his work to be for the good of the people and to the ultimate glory of God." [46] With such personal conviction he set the foundation for his future pattern of action. Strachan, however, had openly been an aristocrat. Both in his words and actions he tried to preserve and extend the power of the aristocratic class. Ryerson, as the (educational) champion of the common man, accommodated the popular demand but built a system of education to serve different class interests.

Some of the major features of his system included - free, tax-supported, universal, compulsory, Christian and practical education. It was also standardized and fully graded. That fully graded elementary schools could be found in most cities by 1871 "simply meant that factual material could be committed to memory on a more systematized and mass basis." [47]

One further important feature of Ryerson's system was that it was centrally controlled by the state. Through this control he was able to institute programs that would

---

[46] McNeill, op. cit., p. 119.

[47] R. M. Stamp "Evolving Patterns of Education: English Canada from the 1870's to 1914", Canadian Education: A History (Scarborough, 1970), p. 314.

train up the people to work in industry, in manufacturing, in business, and on the farm. In the 1860's an Ontario principal made this observation about the focus of education:

> the true aim of education is being lost sight of, and what is demanded is not true education at all but merely instruction, especially instruction that will speedily equip for work in the factory, the office, the store or on the farm. The instruction that will fit for making money is considered of primal importance.[48]

Effective non-violent control over society and preservation of class hegemony was obtained through the institution of the school system. Schools would teach industrial morality and ethical behaviour. Training in docility and obedience was the specific form which such education took. Industrial tranquility was the educational goal.

---

[48]R. M. Stamp, "Education and the Economic and Social Millieu: The English Canadian Scene From the 1870's to 1914", Canadian Education: A History, pp. 293-294.

CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In November of 1797 the first evidence of the establishment of a system of schools occurred. The half million acres set aside was to be used to build Grammar Schools and a University. It was pointed out that these schools were exclusively aristocratic institutions in the early colonial period. Education was designed to produce an elite that would preserve and extend Christian civilization. An all encompassing system of education was contrary to colonial policy.

This policy, as representative of this particular historical period, maintained the conceptions of education prevalent in the mother country including Anglican domination of education. As a colony, Upper Canada was loyal to Britain and attempted to follow closely to British cultural patterns.

One of the principal colonial educators was Bishop John Strachan. Early in his career as a teacher, he had as his pupils some of the future members of the Family Compact. These connections later projected him into the highest echelons of the religious, business, political and educational worlds. For a time he was the most powerful man in Upper Canada. He was a member of the aristocratic elite holding close to the beliefs and values of this class.

For the feudal aristocracy of Upper Canada, education was a means of preserving the existing societal structure. This meant, as we have seen, the training of an elite to govern the country. One of the major problems facing the colony was the American influence and the lack of acceptance of the Anglican religion. More to the point, the large number of privately controlled schools, estimated at over 200 by 1816, had American schoolmasters and did not teach Anglican principles.

Strachan attempted to solve this dilemma by introducing a Common school system for poor people. There is an apparent contradiction between the attempt at introducing government controlled education for the lower classes and the dominant aristocratic prejudice that neglected this kind of education. Strachan was an aristocrat but he was not stupid. American schoolmasters, teaching in Upper Canadian schools that were divorced from government, represented a dire threat to the safety of the colony. Such teachers were not committed to the Anglican religion and moreover they taught a radical and democratic ideology that was contrary to colonial policy.

Strachan recognized the danger of leaving the mass of people unattended in small community schools. Even though he was a staunch aristocrat, he did attempt to institute a school system for the lower classes. What seems to be a contradiction can be seen another way. Most important to Strachan was the preservation of the dominance of the aristocracy over the rest

of society. Local, community controlled schools threatened this dominance and the only solution was centralized government control of a Common school system. Strachan's major focus, however, was developing aristocratic education. This was one of the ultimate reasons for his demise and that of the aristocracy.

During Strachan's time there was an increasing social awareness that rejected the feudal concept of aristocratic rule. The Rebellion of 1837 confirmed this rejection. A new social structure developed accompaning emerging political and economic trends. Egerton Ryerson, with political backing, set out to build a new system of schools, congruent with popular demand for public education.

Although Strachan's system had failed, the idea of centralized, state control of education remained for Ryerson to use. The major difference between the two men revolves around the focus of education. Strachan focused on Grammar schools for aristocratic education. Ryerson zeroes in on Common schools to educate the working classes. However, it is most important to understand that education was still used to preserve class relationships: to preserve the dominance of a small governing class over the mass of people.

Ryerson was appointed Superintendent of Education in 1844. He immediately left on a tour to gather information that would enable him to build his school system. What I consider

the most important document in the history of Ontario's educational development was the result of this tour. The Report of 1846 is the foundation for all future development of our school system.

Ryerson felt that for the colony to survive, government had to maintain a system of schools. Education in these schools was the "vehicle for inculcating loyalty and patriotism, fostering social cohesion and self-reliance and insuring domestic tranquility." [1] In addition, Common schools provided people with rudimentary skills in reading, writing, arithmetic and a certain level of training increasingly necessary for a labouring position in one of the various developing industries or businesses. The curriculum data provided in Table 4 gave an indication of this.

Ryerson, in his Report of 1846, "urged the inauguration of a classified school system in which the work of all grades was clearly delineated. Such a system was dependent on a series of graded texts." [2] These texts were the Irish National Series. Although the Report dealt with the Common schools, it was his ultimate aim to have an interconnected, linear system from the Common school to the Grammar school to the University. It was also to be open to all people regard-

---

[1] Wilson, op. cit., p. 215.

[2] Ibid., p. 219.

less of class, religion or political persuasion.[3] These ideas represent the basis of the present system.

Strachan had been unable to solve the problem of central control. Ryerson, on the other hand, persuaded people that education was a primary responsibility of government. He felt the state was obligated to educate children if parents would not.

The problem of American influence in Upper Canadian schools still remained from Strachan's days. Government control of schools allowed Ryerson to, at least in part, solve the problem. Because of his total authority over schools, Ryerson was able to force schools to use the imported Irish National Series of textbooks. They were perfect because they were patriotic in a British sense. Additionally, Ryerson instituted the American textbook ban and enforced it in 1859. The attempt at eliminating American influence in schools continues to the present day.

Another aspect of the American problem was the Schoolmaster. Ryerson was concerned with the quality of teachers available. By building a teacher training school at York, modelled on the Irish normal school, Ryerson was able to control the kind of teacher going into his schools.

The system that Ryerson built was based on the Irish school system. The emergence of a new economic order demanded

---

[3]Bell, op. cit., p. 57.

a complementary educational system. The British colony of Ireland provided Ryerson with established an appropriate mechanisms of education that had already been proven loyal to Britain.

As previously indicated, education was used as a mechanism of social control and as a means of training the population to their employments of life. That this was so reflected the needs of the emerging business-industrial community. In addition to education being based on the Irish system, our Royal Canadian Mounted Police was based on the Royal Irish Constabulary. The introduction of such a police force in Canada has an ideological background similar to that of education: that is, of the need for social control.

British colonial social policy required that civil strife and unrest be kept to a minimum in order for the government to maintain political control and for a profit to be made. Social unrest and civil strife was the backdrop against which the Irish Constabulary had developed. And, at the time Ireland was a successful British colony. A further colonial example was found in India. In building the RCMP force, Canadian colonial authorities attempted to follow, at least in part, British colonial authorities in India because "to Macdonald the problem of policing the Northwest resembled that faced by the

British in India." [4] The police force was to be "organized and a commissioner appointed after the mode of administration in Ireland and India." [5]

As we have seen, Canada was a developing industrialist-capitalist nation by the mid-nineteenth century. One of the most important reasons for Confederation in 1867:

> was to serve the needs of the commercial and industrial interests centred in Toronto and Montreal with connections in London. In order to prosper and expand, these companies needed enlarged markets for both primary and manufactured products and, especially in the case of railway and other transportation interests, assurance that trade goods would reach their destination by way of the St. Lawrence route. [6]

The importance of education to this development lies in the fact that schools trained people to a docile attitude and as skilled labour working in these same companies. On the other hand, the police force, the RCMP, according to An Unauthorized History of the RCMP, was developed to deal with the problem of keeping order on the prairies, which in effect protected economic investment both on the prairies and elsewhere. Brown says that "the primary reason for establishing it was to control the Indian and Metis population of the North

---

[4]Lorne and Caroline Brown, An Unauthorized History of the RCMP (Toronto, 1973), p. 11.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

West." [7] Further, if whiskey traders and white outlaw population were not physically controlled "they might provoke drastic action by the Indians themselves which would discourage settlement and investment." [8]

The development of the West was an important feature of economic policy because of the valuable timber and mineral resources. Corporations needed this land for colonization and ultimately profit. As a result the RCMP, or the North West Mounted Police as they were known at that time, was formed as a military force to "facilitate the transfer of most of the territory of the region from the Indian tribes to the federal government with a minimum of expense and bloodshed." [9]

Both education and the military police force existed to serve the same purpose. Considering the strong economic ties between Toronto and Montreal, and London even after Confederation, it was a British colonial policy of social control designed to promote and protect the profit-making interests of the upper classes. That education and police force developed as they did, using successfully established colonial models, lends the Canadian experience an international flavour. This links a similar purpose for education as a mechanism of social

---

[7] Ibid., p. 10.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

control and training for labour world wide. The point is that Canada is not a unique development. Rather, although there are distinct idiosyncratic features, other countries share a common educational goal related to economic, political, and social purpose with Canada.

Education in this new era was harmonious with the desires and wishes of the upper classes. Although Ryerson sold himself as a champion of the common man, he believed, as he wrote, that: "Canada is indeed a plantation; and its inhabitants are a province of slaves." [10] His educational system was designed to serve the ruling minority. Common schools had the specific purpose of controlling the lower classes. This was done by controlling and directing the orientation of all aspects of Common schools, including teachers, curriculum, finance and policy making. Ryerson shared a similar purpose with Strachan. He merely took a different approach.

The Common school system was Ryerson's distinction, but it is important not to neglect his work on Grammar schools. Grammar schools, or secondary schools, were still an upper class institution until the early part of the twentieth century. This was by virtue of the fact that these schools charged fees and only a small percentage of people ever reached Grade nine (less than two per cent in 1898). Grammar schools were, however, under the same central control as Common schools

---

[10]Thomas, op. cit., p. 87.

since the 1850's. The important thing to understand is that the foundations, the legal precedents, for a universal, public, system of instruction were laid by Ryerson.

In this new bourgeoise period, Ryerson realized the potential of education as a powerful mechanism of social control. Whether or not Ryerson realized it, the operational structure of Grammar schools that he built, fitted into the general necessity of controlling the lower classes. The new economic order required that the mass of people be unquestioningly obedient to authority and that they move quietly into the labour of industry. Common schools provided society with this sort of people while Grammar schools remained for the elite. The year 1871 marks the time when the public school system, both elementary and secondary, had reached its concluding chapter. The elementary system was practical, Christian, universal, free and compulsory. Of the secondary system, Bell states that:

> uniformity, rigidity, coeducation, the written examination, the adjustment of the curriculum to meet the needs of those who are to become teachers or other professions, became fused into the system at that date. [11] (Appendix A contains what Ryerson considered a complete secondary education)

At this time Grammar schools were still recognized as elite institutions. However, when social and economic conditions changed in the early twentieth century, it was a simple

---

[11]Bell, op. cit., p. 150.

manoeuvre to open up secondary schools to the lower classes. Ryerson's general educational principles, already noted, made this possible.

The opening up of secondary schools to the general population came about because the nature of industrial necessity required that labourers have a higher level of skill than Common schools could provide. Therefore, technical training was introduced at the secondary level. [12] At that time fees were abolished and the modern school leaving age of sixteen was instituted. For the poorer classes this meant compulsory technical training. The increasing demand for a technically trained working class meant "the utmost energy must be devoted to the development of the schools of the industrial, agricultural and technical type." [13] Most interesting is the fact that it was the Canadian Manufacturers' Association who led the demand for technical training in secondary schools.

Another of the obvious connections between past and present is the written examination. As previously noted, the written examination was part of the school format by 1871. The type of learning encouraged by these particular compulsory examinations "was still apparent in the schools almost 100

---

[12]For a brief review of the introduction of secondary level technical education see Robert M. Stamp, "Technical Education, the National Policy and Federal Provincial Relations in Canadian Education 1899-1919", Canadian Historical Review, Lii (December, 1971).

[13]Bell, op. cit., p. 161.

years later according to the Hall-Dennis Report." [14] This type of learning was, simply, memorization of facts to be regurgitated back on a written examination. The Grade 13 departmental examination is an example. Teachers spent the whole year preparing students to take the examination. Absolutely nothing extraneous was allowed because all the time was needed to prepare for the exam. The consequences of such examination are disastrous for educational purposes. As Mark Pattison has said, "the paralysis of intellectual action produced by a compulsory examination is not more remarkable than its effect in depressing moral energy." [15] In 1879, the Superintendent of the Toronto Lunatic Asylum told of the effects of formal schooling on children and the society at large. In his report, he stated that the:

> Ontario public school system was a "pregnant source of the mental and physical deterioration which, in a secondary way, affects the adult population as well as the youth of our land, from the senseless mental overstrain to which school children are subjected." [16]

Even as early as 1879 it was recognized that there was an identifiable relationship between massive doses of formal education and mental illness. It would seem that intensifica-

---

[14] Wilson, op. cit., p. 226.

[15] Bell, op. cit., p. 142.

[16] Phillips, op. cit., p. 365.

tion of formal education on the population coincides with large numbers of that same population having some form of non-genetic mental disorder. However, it should be noted that a precise cause and effect relationship cannot be defined. Rather, both phenomena can be identified as occurring within a similar period. This does not account for other possible sources of influence. For example, the effects of technology, specialization, and urban living might have an influence on mental disorder.

Other questions concerning education's consequence on additional problems must be confronted. What relationship, if any, does modern education have with the rise of alcoholism, to drug addiction, to family breakdown, to crime and many other 'social problems'. Perhaps more to the point, the answer lies in examining the experience of schooling as the source of the problem rather than looking to education as the solution.

In Strachan's era education served the needs of a feudal state and the governing aristocracy. In Ryerson's time education served the needs of emerging capitalism and the small governing class. Education, in both of these periods, was exploited by the governing elite to its own purposes. And, this purpose was class dominance of society. This would seem to be an easily identifiable historical trend continuing to the present. Based on this assumption of class dominance of

society, it can be seen that now:

> The primary function of the schools has been to serve the needs of a developing multi-national monopoly capitalism. Schools have become the centres of evaluation and distribution, channelling young people into the various levels of the economy and conditioning the vast majority of them to accept passive and powerless roles as workers in a highly centralized economic system. [17]
>
> Our economic system must create men who fit its needs; men who co-operate smoothly; men who want to consume more and more. Our system must create men whose tastes are standardized, men who can be easily influenced, men whose needs can be anticipated. Our system needs men who <u>feel</u> free and independent but who are nevertheless willing to do what is expected of them, men who will fit into the social machine without friction, who can be guided without force, who can be led without leaders, who can be directed without any aim except the one to "make good". [18]

Ivan Illich, in the foreword to Joel Spring's <u>Education and the Rise of the Corporate State</u>, sums up the central theme of the book: "the primary purpose of the school system is social control for a corporate state, and for an economy which has as its goal the efficient production and the disciplined consumption of growing amounts of goods and services." [19] As Spring himself states, "the public schools of the twentieth century were organized to meet the needs of the corporate state

---

[17]Niall Byrne and Jack Quarter, eds., <u>Must Schools Fail</u> (Toronto, 1972), p. 145.

[18]A. S. Neill, <u>Summerhill</u> (New York, 1960), p. xi.

[19]Joel H. Spring, <u>Education and the Rise of the Corporate State</u> (Boston, 1972), p. x.

and consequently, to protect the interests of the ruling elite and the technological machine." [20]

Spring points out that the transformation of society to a corporate state required a new form of social organization: one of co-operation and self sacrifice rather than individual independence. Also included was the necessity of individual specialization for efficient production in factories. Both social and economic problems needed a solution. Education in this new organization had a prominent place. For the emerging state to function efficiently, an individual had to labour willingly, not for himself, but for the collectivity. The person needed special skills to perform a job and he needed to work for the national goal or purpose. According to Herbert Croly, The Promise of American Life, "an individual's education consists primarily in the discipline which he undergoes to fit him both for fruitful association with his fellows and for his own special work." [21]

Spring goes on to say that Corporate Progressivism, to a large extent, defined the popular goals in public education. Since a corporate society needed specialization and co-operation, educators saw that education could provide the specialized training of individuals for future occupations. Co-operation and a common social purpose could be taught through ex-

---

[20] Ibid., pp. 1-2.

[21] Ibid., p. 18.

tra-curricular school activities. Thus the differentiated curriculum and vocational guidance, and group class work and a program of social, extracurricular school activities was developed. [22]

As Spring points out, "the modern factory system made direct demands on the public schools to produce workers with the correct social attitudes and skills." [23] Not only were public schools supposed to produce good workers, but also, and in addition, the factory supplemented public education with programs of their own designed to maximize worker efficiency. In conjunction with company sponsored programs, Spring briefly dramatizes the role of sociology in maintaining social control over the workers. Experiments in temperance are but one example.

The point that Joel Spring is making is that despite liberal ideology extolling education and the new economic mode as a benefit to the ordinary person, the reality of the purpose of education was to make docile workers; in other words, to serve the needs of the corporate state.

The question may well be asked: what about education in the twentieth century? Is there still that domination of the educational process in modern times? The answer, very simply, is yes. "Since 1900 the power of schooling has tended to be in the hands of businessmen, political leaders, and pro-

---

[22] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

[23] Ibid., p. 22.

fessional educators who have been instrumental in the development of the modern corporate state." [24] The same type of people still control education.

James Ridgeway, author of The Closed Corporation, fully documents the extent to which universities are controlled by big business. It would be impossible, at this time, to discuss Ridgeway's book and do it justice. Basically, however, Ridgeway demonstrates the connections between universities and business. For example, universities will own and/or operate companies divorced from the academic community. As Ridgeway points out, "the modern university more nearly resembles a conglomerate corporation on its own." [25] University professors, while still teaching, often are engaged in running their own companies or in consulting to another company or researching a government problem.

Education in the corporate world then, gives practical experience in the real problems of the professor's company or project outside the university. Ridgeway gives further evidence of links between universities and corporations by listing those university officials who are a director on a corporation board.

The picture in Canada is a similar one although actual

---

[24] Ibid., p. 149.

[25] James Ridgeway, The Closed Corporation/American Universities in Crisis (New York, 1968), p. 9.

documentation of specific names and their connections with the business world are unavailable. In any case, Wallace Clement holds that in 1972, 31 per cent of the elite members in Canada, at some point, held "a governing position in one of the private schools, universities or other institution of higher learning." [26] The importance of elite membership on the governing bodies of our educational institutions lies not only in the fact that the Canadian economic elite is able to influence the direction and destiny of education, but also, as Clement points out:

> universities not only provide a meeting ground for potential elites during their school days, but continue to act in this capacity even after they have actually entered the elite - providing meeting places on their boards and establishing elite forums where elite members can work out their common problems. [27]

The documentation and publication of university officials and their ties with the business world would provide invaluable information. Further, the business connections of all education officials would be useful data to have.

The accumulated evidence of numerous authors, such as C. Wright Mills, G. William Domhoff, John Porter, Wallace Clement and others, indicates, to a powerful degree, that our society is dominated or governed by a significantly small pro-

---

[26] Clement, op. cit., p. 251.

[27] Ibid., p. 253.

portion of the population. The top decision making positions in the economy, in politics, and in other areas including education, are occupied by these people. The power they exercise forms the conditions under which we, the ordinary people, must live.

An examination of the development of the public school system in Upper Canada indicated that an aristocratic form of education would not efficiently and properly serve emergent capitalism. Under the new economic order, education supported the requirements of the small governing elite, as it had the aristocracy previously. In a recent issue of Canadian Dimensions, Myra Novogrodosky concludes that: "schools now serve and have historically served the ruling class, not the people who work in them or who are educated by them. In this way schools are not all that different from the days of Egerton Ryerson." [28] The educational goal remains consistent throughout history: the perpetuation of a small, dominant class of people and the subservience of the rest of the population to the wishes of this dominant class.

---

[28]Novogrodosky, op. cit., p. 54.

APPENDIX A

This comes from the conclusion of Ryerson Report of 1867 and would appear to be his ideal of a complete secondary education.

"I think the tendency of the youthful mind of our country is too much in the direction of what are called the learned professions and too little in the direction of what are termed industrial pursuits. There is certainly no need to stimulate any class of youth to classical studies with a view to this study of medicine, law, etc., but it appears to me very important, now that the principles and general machinery of our school system are settled, that the subjects and the teaching of schools should be adapted to develop the resources and skilful industry of the country. And should <u>options</u> in any case be necessary, from lack of time or means, the merely useful and ornamental should be made to yield to the essential and the practical. It may not be essential for every child to know all the natural and political divisions of all the continents of the globe, or what heroes fought or what kings ruled, or what peoples flourished and died at every period and in every part of the earth; but I think it is essential that every child should know how to read and speak his own language correctly, to count readily, and write well, to know the names and characteristics of the flowers and vegetables and trees which he daily meets, the insects, birds and animals of his

country, the nature of the soils on which he walks, and the chemical and mechanical principles which enter into the construction and working of the implements of Husbandry, the machinery of mills, manufactures, railroads, and mines, the production and preparation of the clothes he wears, the food he eats, and the air he inhales, and the beverages he drinks, together with the organs of his body, the faculties of his mind, and the rules of his conduct. The mastery of these subjects for ordinary practical purposes is as much within the capacities of children and youth as any of the hundred things that children learn in the streets and by the fireside, and to know them would contribute vastly more to the pleasures of social life, and skilled and various industry, than the superficial tinsel of a Greek and Latin smattering, with homeopathic mixtures of imperfect English and guesses in geography and history."

Walter N. Bell, The Development of the Ontario High School (Toronto, 1918), pp. 106-107. This comes from the conclusion of Ryerson's Report of 1867.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, Howard. The Education of Canadians 1800-1867. Montreal: Harvest House, 1968.

Althouse, J.G. Structure and Aims of Canadian Education. Toronto: W.J. Gage and Co. Ltd., 1955.

Altick, Richard D. The English Common Reader. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Archambault, Reginald D., ed. John Dewey on Education. New York: The Modern Library, 1964.

Bailyn, Bernard. Education in the Forming of American Society. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960.

Bell, Walter N. The Development of the Ontario High School. Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1918.

Biber, E. Henry Pestalozzi and His Plan of Education. London: John Souter, School Library, St. Paul's Church Yard, 1831.

Brown, Lorne and Caroline. An Unauthorized History of the RCMP. Toronto: James Lewis and Samuel, 1973.

Byrne, Nial, and Jack Quarter, eds. Must Schools Fail? The Growing Debate in Canadian Education. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1972.

Cicourel, Arron V., and John I. Kitsuse. The Educational Decisionmakers. New York: Bobbs-Merill Co., Inc., 1963.

Coleman, Herbert Thomas John. Public Education in Upper Canada. New York: Brandow Printing Co., 1907.

Curti, Merle. The Social Ideas of American Educators. New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1935.

Dewey, John. Democracy and Education. New York: The Free Press, 1916.

Domhoff, William G. The Higher Circles. New York: Vintage Books, 1970.

Dreeben, Robert. On What is Learned in School. Massachusetts: Addison Wesley, 1968.

Duncombe, Charles. Report on the Subject of Education 1836. Toronto: M. Reynolds, 1836.

Easterbrook, W. T., and Hugh J. Aitken. Canadian Economic History. Toronto: The MacMillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1960.

Edwards, J. W. The Wedge. Toronto: The Sentinel Publishing Co., Ltd., n.d.

Fleming, W. G. Education: Ontario's Preoccupation. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.

Goldman, Lucien. The Human Sciences and Philosophy. London: Grossman Publishers, 1969.

Goodman, Paul. Compulsory Miseducation and the Community of Scholars. Toronto: Vintage Books, 1962 and 1964.

Hapgood, David. Diplomaism. New York: Donald W. Brown, Inc., 1971.

Harris, Robin S. Quiet Evolution. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967.

Henderson, J.L.H., ed. John Strachan: Documents and Opinions. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1969.

Hodgins, J. George, ed. Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada. 28 vols. Toronto: Warwick and Rutter, 1911.

----------. Historical Educational Papers and Documents of Ontario. 6 vols. Toronto: L. K. Cameron Publishers, 1911-1912.

----------. The Legislation and History of Separate Schools in Upper Canada. Toronto: William Briggs, 1897.

Johnson, J. Henry. A Brief History of Canadian Education. Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

Johnson, Leo A. History of the County of Ontario 1615-1875. Whitby: The Corporation of the County of Ontario, 1973.

Katz, Joseph. Society, Schools and Progress in Canada. Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1969.

Katz, Michael B. Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971.

----------. The Irony of Early School Reform. Boston: Beacon Press, 1968.

Kolko, Gabriel. The Triumph of Conservatism. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.

Krusi, Hermann. The Life and Work of Pestalozzi. New York: Van Antwerp, Bragg and Co., 1875.

Lawr, Douglas and Robert Gidney, eds. Educating Canadians A Documentary History of Public Education. Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold Ltd., 1973.

Malik, Anand, ed. Social Foundations of Canadian Education. Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1969.

Marx, Karl. Capital A Critique of Political Economy. Edited by Frederick Engels; translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling. New York: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1906.

Mills, C. Wright. The Power Elite. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956.

Morrison A., and D. McIntyre. Teachers and Teaching. England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969.

Neill, A. S. Summerhill. New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1960.

Newnham, W. T., and A. S. Nease. The Professional Teacher in Ontario. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1967.

Novogrodosky, Myra. "Schools", Canadian Dimensions. X, July, 1974, 50-54.

Parsons, Talcott. "The School Class as a Social System: Some of its Functions in American Society", Harvard Educational Review, Fall 1959, pp. 297-318.

Parsons, Talcott and Gerald M. Platt. The American University. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973.

Patterson, Robert S., John W. Chalmers, and John W. Friesen, eds. Profiles of Canadian Educators. Canada: D. C. Heath, 1974.

Phillips, Charles E. The Development of Education in Canada. Toronto: W. J. Gage and Co. Ltd., 1957.

Platt, Anthony M. The Child Savers/The Invention of Delinquency. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969.

Porter, John, and others. Towards 2,000. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1971.

Porter, John. The Vertical Mosaic. Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1965.

Putman, J. Harold. Egerton Ryerson and Education in Upper Canada. Toronto: William Briggs, 1912.

Ridgeway, James. The Closed Corporation. New York: Ballantine Books, 1968.

Riffel, J. A., and E. Miklos, eds. Social Goals, Educational Priorities and Dollars: Planning Education in the 70's. Canada: Canadian Council for Research in Education, 1970.

Ryerson, Egerton. The Story of My Life. Edited and compiled by J. G. Hodgins. Toronto: William Briggs, 1882.

Selby, John. Local Autonomy and Central Control in Ontario Education.

Selby-Smith, Christopher, and Michael Skolnik. Concerning the Growth of Provincial Expenditure on Education in Ontario, 1938-1966. Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1969.

Sissons, C. B. Egerton Ryerson, His Life and Letters. 2 vols. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1937.

----------., ed. My Dearest Sophie. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1955.

Spring, Joel H. Education and the Rise of the Corporate State. Boston: Beacon Press, 1972.

Stamp, Robert M. "Technical Education, The National Policy and Federal Provincial Relations in Canadian Education 1899-1919", Canadian Historical Review. LII, December, 1971.

Thomas, Clara. Ryerson of Upper Canada. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969.

Urquhart, M. C., ed. Historical Statistics of Canada. Toronto: MacMillan Co. of Canada, 1965.

Wilson, J. D., R. M. Stamp, and L. P. Audet, eds. Canadian Education: A History. Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1970.