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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMMES:
AN ANALYSIS AND A PROPOSAL

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AN ANALYSIS AND A PROPOSAL

by

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A Project

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts in Teaching

McMaster University

May, 1982

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING (1982)
(Sociology)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Elementary School Lunch Programmes: An Analysis
and A Proposal

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NUMBER OF PAGES: v, 87

ABSTRACT .

Elementary School Lunch Programmes: An analysis and a proposal.

Where are our six to twelve year old children at noon? What do they do at lunch? Who is responsible for noontime supervision? What attitudes prevail in the minds of parents, educators and politicians regarding lunchtime supervision? Are the needs of parents, children and educators being recognized? If not, what are the social implications of continued current practices?

The intent of this project has been to examine these questions in relation to social changes resulting from the inclusion of mothers in the work force.

Questionnaire mailings followed by an interview study of educators and other concerned citizens in the Hamilton area, identified legal responsibility for lunchtime child care to be with the school.

Based on the conception of lunchtime as a legal inclusion in the school day and the educational potential this time affords, it is proposed that lunchtime be structured into the school's curriculum in the form of an Educational Lunch Programme.

It is argued that legal custodial responsibility of the school at lunch be recognized as a realistic social expectation. Lunchtime child care, organized as an Educational Lunch Programme, represents a "need" fulfillment of contemporary society.

This paper concludes that continued research and curriculum design decisions are required in the development of the proposed elementary school Educational Lunch Programmes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Catherine Beattie and Dr. Jane Synge for their support and guidance in the preparation of this project.

Thanks are also extended to all those who contributed by providing research data and to Doreen Drew and Vera Koledin for their secretarial assistance.

I am most grateful to friends, family and Programme Chairman, Dr. S. Najm for their continued encouragement.

I dedicate this project to my daughter, Kimberly. She contributed indirectly by arousing my interest in lunchtime child care.

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CHAPTER I

THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND

What is a school lunch programme? A school lunch programme refers to a particular slotted time period during the school day allocated for the eating of the midday meal. It is a programme because this time is supervised by a responsible adult who has a pre-planned recreational or instructional activity for the children for the time not required for the eating of the noon meal. In this project, the definition of the term Lunch Programme comprises two aspects--that of responsible supervision and secondly, appropriate activity. In the following chapters when reference is made to lunchtime child care which operates under the name of lunch programme but does not fit the definition as intended for this project, the word "programme" will be placed in quotation marks. (Please note that the use of the word programme in the title of this project connotes both the intended as well as the unintended meaning of the word.)

My initial and continuing interest surrounding the question of lunch programmes stems from a general interest in whether and/or how educational institutions have been affected and/or have responded to changes in the institution of the family.

In countries such as Britain and Sweden, lunch programmes have been an organized part of the school day for many years. Lunch time and lunch time activities are considered as part of the educational programme

of the school.

Data from a survey of Canadian schools, described in chapter 2 of this paper, suggest that Canadian school administrators do not consider the lunchbreak as part of the school programme. Canadian school administrators expect children to go home for lunch. Is this a realistic expectation for today's urban family?

Changes in family patterns have been necessary due to the continued increase in work force participation of women with school-aged children. As a result, delegation of child care responsibility has become a contemporary social issue. Much concern has been focused on the pre-school child's need for supervision and adequate nutrition. Day care is a crucial community service. However, day care cannot limit itself to include only pre-school children.

Benjamin Schlesinger has pointed out in his report on one-parent families in Canada, that there is, "...widespread anxiety and restriction of opportunities of both parents and children...because of the limited provision of group day care, family day care and lunch-hour, after four and holiday supervision."¹

There appears to be a common assumption that once children are of school age, day care responsibility ends for working parents and is assumed by the school. Parents who work must arrange for the supervision of their children after school until such time as they return home from work. However, what about lunchtime care during the school day?

Women are responsible for child care, however, women must also work in the event of widowhood, separation and divorce. The high rate of such events has resulted in numerous single-parent families. The majority of these families are female-headed and financially solely

female supported. These working women generally cannot be at home for their children during the midday school break.

In recent years even those women who live with a spouse have found it necessary to enter the paid labour force in order to supplement family incomes. In contemporary society, "...most women work outside the home, not because they want to fulfill themselves, not because there are stimulating jobs available to them in the labour market, not because they have changed their minds about a woman's place, but because they need the money..."²

The expanding female work force is primarily due to economic necessity as well as the development of an economic system which has created the jobs for which women are required. A period of rapid expansion in the Canadian labour force between 1965 and 1974 increased the number of paid workers by 35.3 per cent representing some 2.5 million wage earners. Female workers represented a substantial 60.1 per cent of this participation rate increase. During this decade, Ontario showed the greatest rate of increase for female workers. By 1973, 1.2 million or 42 per cent of all Ontario women worked outside the home.³ Not only has Ontario had the largest total increase in female work force participation for all of Canada but Ontario also has the highest provincial participation rate for women with school aged children six to sixteen years of age. The table prepared by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics illustrates the high rate of working mothers with school-aged children in comparison to mothers of pre-school children:

Labour force participation rates of Mothers
aged 20 to 54 by age of youngest child, by
region, Canada, October, 1973⁴

Region	Mothers (aged 20-54) by age of youngest child		
	6 - 16 years	2 - 5 years	Under 2 years
	%	%	%
Atlantic	36	27	23
Quebec	33	28	23
Ontario (highest rates)	48	36	26
Prairies	47	34	23
British Columbia	47	29	19
Canada	43	30	24

Based on the increased presence in the work force of those mothers with children of public school age, it might mistakenly be assumed that once children are in day school, day care problems have ended. The Women's Bureau have confirmed that this assumption is false. They state that working mothers of school-aged children face an especially difficult type of child care problem:

Although their children are in class for most of the work day, it is often necessary to provide supervision for lunchtimes and the period between the end of the school day and parents' return from work. This kind of intermittent care is often difficult to obtain and most often parents must arrange informal (and sometimes unreliable methods of care for school-aged children.)⁵
(my emphasis)

It is the intermittent nature of the required care which makes the child care arrangements a particularly difficult problem for working mothers. Adult full-time work averages forty hours per week. Children

attend school five to six hours per day or twenty-five to thirty hours per week. With almost half the mothers working, one must ask what does happen to these children when they come home from school before parents get home from work? The provision of after-school as well as noontime child care is of concern to working parents.

It is the intention in this paper to focus on the aspect concerning intermittent child care which revolves around supervision during the midday school break. The noontime supervision of concern is for those pupils six to twelve years old. These elementary or public school children, unlike older high school students, require responsible lunch-time supervision.

The working adult is usually provided with an allocated area in which to eat lunch. What about the young child? The Manpower Report on Working Mothers and Their Child Care Arrangements indicates that 46 per cent of Canadian school-aged children⁶ look after themselves.

Child Care Arrangements for
School-Age Children, 1973,
Canada

Type of Arrangement	Children in family- School-Age only
Unpaid Care	36%
Children Care for Themselves	46%
Paid Care	11%
Other	7%
Total	100%

The now chronically unhealthy state of the Canadian economy

gives every indication that continued economic pressures will force even more women into the labour force in order to maintain family standards of living. As a result, increasing numbers of mothers will be away from home during the school lunch break. The Manpower study conducted in 1975 showed that a large number of those mothers who were not currently working or looking for work, reported that they would indeed prefer to be working. When asked why they were not working, 40 per cent of these unemployed Canadian mothers replied that they were unable to arrange satisfactory child supervision.

The social changes and trends are evident. Mothers can no longer be considered to be primarily "at home". The state enforces children's school attendance. Economic factors force mothers into the labour force. Despite their active and permanent inclusion in the work force, it is women who continue to be responsible for housework as well as child care according to studies done by Pat and Hugh Armstrong.⁸

In the following chapters, the position is taken that lunchtime supervision of school children is a contemporary social problem as defined by social theorists Spector and Kitsuse, outlined in chapter IV of this paper. Based on the attitudes of those Canadian school administrators surveyed, questions have been raised as to why this problem exists. An attempt is made in Chapter III to place the existence of the supervision problem within the larger context relating to the position of women in our society. It is argued that the extension of the school's custodial responsibility to include lunchtime child care is not only a realistic expectation for the working woman but represents the fulfillment of a "need" in contemporary industrial society.

Research revealed that contrary to common belief or practice,

schools in Ontario are legally responsible to provide supervisory care at lunch. It is proposed in Chapter V that this supervision take the form of a school organized lunch programme to be considered as an integral part of the school's educational programme.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

1. B. Schlesinger, One-Parent Families in Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 35.
2. H. Armstrong, P. Armstrong, "The Segregated Participation of Women in the Canadian Labour Force, 1941-71", Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, 12(4) Part 1, 1975, p. 381.
3. Ontario Ministry of Labour, Women in the Labour Force: a series of factsheets, Women's Bureau, 1975, Factsheet No. 2, "Basic Facts".
4. Canada, Department of Labour, Women in the Labour Force, Facts and Figures; Information Canada, Ottawa, 1975.
5. Ontario Ministry of Labour, Women in the Labour Force, Women's Bureau, Factsheet No. 4, "Child Care".
6. A school-aged child is generally considered to include those up to the age of 16. Nevertheless, a significant percentage of those children who "Care for Themselves" fall within the age group of 6 to 12 years.
7. Canada Manpower, The Labour Force, "Working Mothers and their Child Care Arrangements", September 1975.
8. P. Armstrong, H. Armstrong, The Double Ghetto, "Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work", McClelland and Stewart, 1978.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY - CURRENT PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS DURING LUNCHEBREAK

Have schools responded to the contemporary working mother family structure? If, as statistics suggest, nearly half of all mothers cannot be "at home" at midday; it would seem reasonable to conclude that provision at school for lunchtime supervision is in the best interest of both the child and the working parent. Are school administrators aware that an increasing number of mothers work and are not home during the school day? Do school administrators assume any responsibility to fill the noon-time supervision gap?

These were some of the questions which prompted an investigation of the actual practices in Canadian elementary schools during the lunch break.

In order to determine the organizational practices in schools during the lunch break, information was requested by mail from all Provincial Ministers of Education. (Addresses of the Provincial Ministers of Education, the letter of enquiry as well as the questionnaire included in the appendix.)

Replies from the Provincial Ministries of Education revealed that the organization of school lunch periods was not a provincial matter. All provincial ministers replied that it was in the jurisdiction of the individual school boards of the province to determine lunch policies. Most of the provincial ministers forwarded a list of local school boards

within their jurisdiction. School boards in the more populated urban centers were selected from the lists of addresses received. A second and more detailed questionnaire was prepared (see appendix) and mailed with an accompanying letter of enquiry. A total of twenty-two letters of enquiry and questionnaires were mailed out to Canadian educational administrators.

To obtain a comparative sampling, contact was also established with several foreign Ministries of Education. Fourteen requests, similar to those mailed to Canadian sources, were mailed to educational authorities in ten different countries. In alphabetical order the countries from whom information was requested were Argentina, Australia, three requests to Belgium, Britain, Germany, The Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, three requests to the U.S.A. and one to the U.S.S.R.

Three requests were sent to Belgium and to the United States because both of these countries listed addresses for International Associations of education and requests were directed to them as well. The appendix lists the actual educational authorities and the addresses to whom the fourteen requests were directed. Addresses were selected through the Europa Year Book, 1977 and from the International Yearbook and Statemen's Who's Who's.

The requested information was received by return mail. Both completed and partially completed questionnaires, additional comments and other resource material were received in reply from Canadian and from foreign sources.

Some conclusions and assessments of social attitudes have been formulated on the basis of the results of the information received.

Limitations:

There is no suggestion that this study is a detailed statistical sampling of all Canadian schools. The survey sample is small but the similarity of the comments of the replies received indicates common practices among Canadian schools.

It must be noted that lunchtime supervision focuses on only one particular aspect of the numerous "feminine" problems which the working mother faces as she attempts to harmonize her two careers as housewife/mother and as a paid employee.

On the basis of the information received from the questionnaire, or in some cases, the lack of information received, some general conclusions have been reached.

Results: Canadian

Replies from the first questionnaire sent to the Provincial Ministries of Education in 1977, revealed that the school lunch break was not considered to fall within the jurisdiction of the Ministries. In Ontario the only provincial stipulation was that, "Pupils and teachers shall have a minimum of 40 minutes for lunch break."¹ Provincial ministries of education replied that the organization of the midday break is a local school board matter. (The only ministry which did not reply was British Columbia.)

From the addresses provided by the provincial ministries, boards of education in urban areas were selected in each province. A list of school boards from whom information was requested is listed in the appendix. A more detailed questionnaire was prepared and mailed with a letter requesting information regarding their lunchtime practices. The information

received from this second mailing revealed a further delegation of lunchtime policy. The Boards of Education replied that the organization of the school lunchbreak was the responsibility of the individual school principal. For example, a reply from Edmonton stated; "The Edmonton Separate School Board has no policy. ...each principal decides if children can eat lunch at school or not."² From Manitoba a reply by letter stated that, "There are no set policies regarding this, each school division varies in its policies."³ From the Yukon, "please contact schools direct."⁴ From Calgary, "Each school principal... establishes a lunch policy..."⁵

The conclusion of the first two mailings was that no official provincial or territorial school lunch policy existed. Furthermore, most school Boards had not set a clearcut lunch policy but left these arrangements to each individual school principal.

Some of the school boards forwarded their questionnaire on to one or more of the schools within their jurisdiction. A few boards provided names and addresses of their elementary schools and principals. A third mailing was directed to individual school principals. (See appendix for names and addresses.) On the questionnaire, the principals were asked whether their pupils (aged 6 to 12 years) had the option to stay at school during the lunch break. Some representative positions are the following: from the Calgary board, "...students attending our schools are encouraged to go home for lunch." "The Edmonton Public School Board discourages elementary pupils from eating lunch at school except in unusually cold weather." From an Ottawa school, "it is not an encouraged practice."

While there was a general agreement among the respondent school

administrators that it was not an "encouraged practice" to have pupils stay at school during lunch, it was reported that some children do stay at school under special circumstances or by special permission. One of these special circumstances involved the distance travelled by the student between home and school. Principals allowed students to eat their lunch at school if the student had to travel over one mile to school. From Manitoba the reply read, "bussed students and urban students beyond set boundaries are allowed to stay for lunch." An Ontario principal replied, "in some cases [children are permitted to stay] depending on the distance from school."

Another special circumstance which would warrant the student permission to stay at school during lunch, depended on the climatic condition of the day. This particularly affects areas in Canada which experience extreme temperatures. For example, a reply from Dawson City, the Yukon stated that students were NOT allowed to stay for lunch on a regular basis, "except in -30 temperatures, if prolonged." From Brandon Manitoba a principal replied that children might stay, "if there is some reason, i.e. distance, or weather."

The Ottawa Board published a report in March 1977 dealing with Elementary Lunchroom Accommodation. This report was directed primarily at improving the existing arrangements in schools where principals allowed eating areas. It also outlined problems regarding the ratio and cost of lunchtime supervisors. The report states that, "an affirmative statement regarding the noon-hour role of elementary schools and parents was adopted...but...even under the new policy, parents are still faced with a variety of interpretations as to who may or may not remain in the school for lunch."⁶ The preparation of a written report on

lunchtime arrangements suggests that the Ottawa area does recognize a need for lunchtime supervision. They however, maintain that... "because of a lack of lunchroom facilities, it is not an encouraged practice..."⁷ to have pupils remain at school. Canadian elementary students are expected to "go home" for lunch with exceptions in cases of severe weather or long distance travelled to and from school.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that none of the administrators reported the existence of cafeterias in their elementary schools. In answer to the question--where do students (who are permitted to stay at school) eat their lunch?--all the schools reported that empty classrooms were used as lunchrooms. A few schools used the gymnasium as a lunchroom facility.

In reply to the question of time allotment for lunches, the answers varied across Canada. Several schools reported one hour lunch breaks, others scheduled one hour and twenty minutes to one hour and one-half for their school lunch break.

The questionnaire requested information regarding the provision of food for children. None of the elementary schools had commercial or private catering of hot or cold foods on a regular basis. An Ontario principal reported, "mothers send lunches that their children like." This appeared to be the general policy for all schools. Approximately half the schools did report that milk or juice was available at reasonable rates or at cost for children to purchase.

The Ottawa Report indicated concern among principals regarding student activities during the lunch break for those students who spent the lunch break at school:

Since students generally require only the first twenty

or thirty minutes to eat lunch, there is a forty to fifty minute block of time before afternoon classes begin...principals seemed generally concerned that this free-time was not a constructive, positive part of the students' day.⁸

In the questionnaire, principals were also asked to indicate who supervised those students who stayed for lunch. Half the schools reported that teachers supervised the students. Several schools reported the hiring of paid supervisors. According to the Ottawa report; "The availability of competent lunchroom aides who are capable of exerting necessary control over the students under their care seemed to be the single most important factor in the success of the lunchroom..."⁹

It was only in the Ottawa area that school-organized lunch supervision was reported to be in effect in some of the schools. However, "many of the principals...found it to be difficult or even impossible to recruit a sufficient number of aides."¹⁰ If schools have difficulty hiring intermittent noon-time aides or supervisors, it must be equally or more difficult for individual parents to find this type of care for their child.

With little or no organized lunch supervision by the schools, working women must organize lunch supervision among themselves. Ontario with the greatest number of working mothers can be expected to experience the most acute lunch supervision problem. This was verified by a questionnaire response which suggested that in many Ontario elementary schools, "parents organize their own lunch programs and hire lunchroom supervisors."

Why in Ontario is the criterion for permitting students to stay at school not determined by the presence or absence of the mother in the home? Why was no mention made by the principals' questionnaire responses

that almost half the students have mothers who work and may not be "at home" to receive their children at noon.

The need for noon-time supervision exists. The question becomes one of responsibility--the responsibility of society or of the individual.

Traditionally the mother has been responsible. However, as the social changes in family work patterns have indicated, mothers can no longer remain exclusively in the home.

High schools have taken responsibility for noon-time programmes and lunch facilities for their students. It is a common, unquestioned and encouraged practice for senior students to stay at school during the lunch break. Recreational programmes are organized and subsidized cafeterias cater hot and cold foods for senior students. While no official lunch policy exists for elementary schools, board policies do exist for high schools. The Alberta School Act 1970, Section 65 (3)(d) effective December 1976 states that, "cafeteria areas and equipment will be provided in senior high schools only."

Why not provide these for public school students?

Day Care centers for pre-schoolers provide and supervise lunches and schedule their hours to suit the adult work day. Yet a void exists for lunch supervision of children aged six to twelve years.

Lack of supervisory services for elementary students cannot be entirely related to economic restraints, since some boards of education are able to finance and see fit to extend and improve lunch facilities for senior students. In New Brunswick a Task Force was formed in 1975, "to study the provision and extension of food service in [senior] schools."¹¹ In their investigation the New Brunswick Task Force made the following observation:

Only...high schools usually had cafeterias. Yet elementary school children in many cases travelled farther to school and were less able to procure and prepare their own food.¹²

In Ontario, "publicity over school cafeterias in the media" prompted a study and publication of a Working Paper on School Food Services in March 1976.¹³ The Ontario Ministry of Health Nutritionists' report makes recommendations for improving the nutritional aspects of existing food service facilities. However, no mention is made of the absence in elementary schools of food services.

If publicity in the media has been able to prompt a Ministry investigation aimed at improving high school lunch facilities, perhaps publicity in the media will be able to prompt action toward the establishment of elementary school lunch facilities.

Concern over nutrition has even received political attention at the federal level. A Federal-Provincial Nutrition Committee published the Guidelines for School Food Programs in Canada, in June 1976.¹⁴ This is basically a "how-to" manual--how to assess and implement school food programmes. Again, no mention is made of elementary schools. The report expresses concern that, "the consequences of poor nutrition have a significant effect on the ability of students to benefit from their school education."¹⁵ The report continues:

The objective of a school food program is to ensure adequate nourishment...and to increase understanding and awareness of food as a health factor.¹⁶

Should this awareness not begin at the elementary level in a student's school career? With large numbers of young children left to be tended to by unreliable private babysitters, neighbours, older siblings or to look after themselves, these youngsters may very well establish

poor nutritional patterns which are difficult to remedy in later years.

Not only is nutrition of concern but the Ontario Ministry of Health also recommended that:

School lunch room facilities and the time allowed for lunch be conducive to a pleasant relaxed mealtime.

It would seem reasonable to assume that these recommendations are applicable also to elementary school children. It is in the early years that behavioural patterns are established. Who will raise the issue of elementary school lunch programmes?

Survey Results: Foreign

What are the lunchtime practices in the elementary schools of other countries? For comparative data, fourteen requests were made for information from foreign countries. (See appendix for names and addresses of foreign contacts.) Seven replies were received from the foreign countries contacted. The most comprehensive replies came from Britain and Sweden. The programmes implemented in these two countries will be outlined in greater detail.

The office of the Minister of Education in Brussels, Belgium replied that optional lunch programmes were available at 75 per cent of their elementary-level schools. Food cost is not subsidized but food is available in the schools and can be purchased by students. The other two International Educational agencies which were contacted in Belgium responded by forwarding lists of addresses for possible contact for information.

The Minister of Education in Canberra, Australia replied that students may stay for lunch at their schools. Voluntary mothers' labour provided the necessary planning and preparation of food in some of their

schools. Teachers supervise the children in class or in a lunch room for the duration of the one-hour lunch period.

The only reply from the U.S.A. was from the Public Schools Department of Education. They indicated that optional lunches were provided in their schools. Food is planned by a dietician as, "one-fourth of the recommended dietary allowance for normal healthy children."¹⁸ The cost is minimal and subsidized by the U.S. government. Children are reported to be supervised by principals, teachers or lunchroom workers. The time allotted for lunch varied.

The questionnaire sent to New York City was returned unopened. The Washington questionnaire was unacknowledged, as were the requests for information to the U.S.S.R., The Netherlands, Germany and Argentina. The South African inquiry had been redirected from Pretoria to Kaapstad, opened then resealed with a staple and returned to Canada without comment.

As previously mentioned, the most extensive replies were received from Britain and Sweden. In these countries the education authorities include lunches as part of the school programme for all school-aged children.

Not only is supervision provided during the noon-hour in British schools but meals are provided as well. The meal programme in Britain evolved as early as 1906 as the, "...result of the grave malnutrition disclosed in the recruiting for the South African war."¹⁹ Regulations are laid down for local Education authorities, "to provide on every school day, so far as it is reasonably practicable, mid-day meals suitable in all respects as the main meal of the day for pupils at maintained schools. In practice about 5 million pupils partake of the school dinner on every school day."²⁰ The cost of the food service is heavily

subsidized by the government.

It was concern over child nutrition that initiated school lunch programmes in 1906. Concern over nutrition is still central to the British lunch programme policy today. The British Education Department reported that; "The planning of menus is carried out by School Meals Organizers who are employed by each Education authority and these people normally have some nutritional qualification and experience in catering management."²¹ The actual preparation and provision of meals is carried out by staff working in school kitchens. These meals are served in whatever space in a school is allocated as the dining room. The time allotment for lunches varies from one region to another in England, however, it is generally 90 minutes.

The supervision of pupils during a lunch break sometimes involves the teacher but largely it is the responsibility of a staff especially employed for the purpose. In the primary schools particularly, supervisory staff are available in both the dining rooms and in the playgrounds where the children go after eating their meals. The supervisory staff are all paid employees of the local education authority.

While it is the local authority which implement the day to day operation of the school lunch programme, it is interesting to note that in Britain, unlike Canada, the formulation of lunch policy is a matter of concern for the national government rather than that of the individual school as appears to be the case in most Canadian schools. The centralized British Education Department has amended and revised its lunch policy over the years. The Daily Telegraph of London reported in 1979 that consideration was being given to amend school lunch policy in order to relieve, "...local authorities...from their statutory duty to provide

[free] school milk and meals."²² The Bill under discussion reflects the economic restraints of the 1980's which are faced by all social institutions in Western economies. Among other educational concerns, the implementation of this Bill would mean that local school authorities may charge an economic price for meals for those people not eligible for supplementary benefits. This would mean that more people who could afford the cost of the meal would pay for meals or forego school meals and thereby reduce the amount of the government school lunch subsidy. Meals may be purchased, or may be brought to be eaten at school, in a dining room facility under responsible supervision. These lunchtime practices are in contra distinction to that in the Canadian urban schools surveyed. In Britain, unlike Canada, it is the school which assumes responsibility for providing responsible supervisors for children at lunch. Furthermore, British schools are, "...forbidden to charge pupils [for the provision of supervisory care] for eating their own food on school premises."²³

Information received from Sweden indicated that children were not only assumed to stay at school for lunch but they were provided with a nutritionally balanced free meal at school. Sweden has a National Board of Education who in consultation with the National Institute of Public Health, formulate lunch policy. Sweden reported that as early as 1845 some meals were served in elementary Swedish schools. Regulations were laid down by Statute in 1946 and again in 1959 that, "school lunch should be available to all children and students wishing to partake... [and the] meal should be free of charge."²⁴ The costs for school meals is a regional responsibility and are often combined with other forms of public catering. "In some places, schools, pensioners homes, children's

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day care centres and similar institutions will soon be covered by a single catering organization."²⁵ Meals services are provided by about 97 per cent of the municipalities in the country. In total some 1.2 million pupils eat school meals every day.

In planning their school menus, the municipalities consult a special brochure entitled, "school lunches". It contains 24 specimen menus and sets out the nutritive content of each daily meal and ingredients. The nutritional requirements are, "...the same as in the U.S.A. as we [Sweden] have adopted the standards recommended by the National Board of Health in Washington, D.C."²⁶

In Sweden the view that educators hold is that, "...one of the principal aims associated with school meals is that of accustoming young people to a proper diet which they can maintain in later life."²⁷ Special meal provision is also made in Sweden for pupils suffering from diabetes and allergies. Often details of school meals are published in the daily papers for the information of families, thus enabling them to provide the right balance in the meals served at home. Not only are the nutritional aspects of a good diet stressed as part of Sweden's lunch programme policy but lunch time provides an opportunity to familiarize pupils with the rules of etiquette. Sweden reported that efforts are made during the school lunch to inculcate good table manners.

Unlike the proposed cut-backs in British lunch programmes, Swedish schools, "have tended in recent years to serve an additional snack during school hours. The introduction and nature of this service are left to the discretion of the municipalities, but recommendations have been issued by the Federation of Local Authorities and the National Board of Education in consultation with the National Institute of Public

Health."²⁸

Survey Conclusions:

Based on the information received in the replies from the survey, it can be concluded that in Britain and Sweden lunchtime has been and continues to be considered a responsibility for the school while in Canada it is the individual parent who is considered responsible for lunchtime child care. Canadian elementary schools are organized on the assumption that mothers are "at home". One can only speculate whether the political centralization of school lunch policy under the National Boards in Britain and Sweden has been instrumental in establishing an attitude toward greater societal responsibility for institutionalized lunchtime child care.

The survey responses pertaining to British and Swedish lunch programmes are important in providing comparative data from which we can view our own Canadian practices. In the concluding chapter, it will be suggested that the philosophy of communal responsibility be used as a basis for the development of Lunch Programmes in Canadian elementary schools.

Neither Canadian nor foreign school administrators made any specific comment regarding the need for supervisory care due to the absence in the home of the working mother. Are administrators indeed unaware of noon-hour child care problems encountered by working mothers? Must administrators appear apathetic to the "female" problem due to other more pressing priorities? Are there other factors involved?

The existence of school lunch programmes in Britain and Sweden have, therefore, not come into existence as a response to a specific feminist issue. On the contrary, the initiation of British school lunch

programmes might be considered to have been a response to a "male" issue--that of "beefing-up" potential military recruits for the Boer War. In the next chapter it will be argued that central to the question of responsibility for custodial care is the gender-based political and economic power relations in society which in turn determine whose concerns will be acted upon.

The existence of lunch programmes in Sweden can perhaps be related to the 45-year political continuity of Sweden's Social Democratic government.²⁹ A government whose basic tenet has been the establishment of equality between the sexes would be responsive to child care needs. Aspects of Swedish lunch programmes upon which lunch programmes in Canadian schools might be developed will be referred to in the concluding chapter of this paper.

From the results of the survey of Canadian Schools, it might be inferred that administrators are not aware of the fact that more than half of all mothers work outside the home. If administrators are indeed unaware of the high incidence of working mothers; that would suggest the majority of working mothers to be a silent majority. Do working mothers not complain about the added burdens they face? Is there a stigma attached to working? Do working women feel that in spite of social-economic changes, it remains solely their personal "female" responsibility to care for their children "at home"? Is this why some working women organize volunteer programmes to arrange private noon-time supervision?

For Canadian women, nothing will be done to ease their plight unless working women voice their needs and demand specific action.

In their neglect to make mention of noon-time supervision problems for working mothers, educational administrators can be considered to be

apathetic to the working mothers' problem.

Certainly, many technical difficulties exist for administrators in arranging for extended noon-hour child care within the school system. The Ottawa Board pointed to a lack of funds for adequate facilities and qualified supervisors. However, these financial problems have a tendency to disappear if the problem is turned into a political issue. According to the survey results this does not appear to have happened in Canada.

The economic pressures which have forced women out of the home have not been responded to by other support institutions such as education. Why is this so?

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 11

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CHAPTER III

WOMEN AND LUNCH SUPERVISION POLICY - ECONOMIC/POLITICAL GENDER-BASED RELATIONS

Mass education as we know it today was born with the modern capitalist system. Schools were created for and continue to serve the interest of the economic order.

It would, therefore be reasonable to assume that the inclusion of an ever increasing number of mothers of school-aged children within the economic base of society would effect changes in educational policy and practices. It would seem reasonable to envision the educational system filling the child care gap by providing reliable supervision of children during lunch breaks and after school hours.

The foregoing survey of school administrators suggests that this has not happened in urban Canadian schools.

What are some of the political and economic factors surrounding the question of custodial responsibility? Women comprise 52 per cent of the population, yet there is no known society where women achieve close to a fifty per cent share of political power. Very few women are active in politics and those who are have been relatively ineffective within the political decision making process. Why is this so?

In order to gain some insight into why women have relatively low input into the social policy setting process, it is necessary to examine the sex-based power relationships and how these are maintained in western industrialized capitalist society. The issue of child care can

then be understood in terms of the relation of that work to the organization of the productive enterprise in society.

From a socialist perspective, Marxian theory deems a society's economic arrangements to exert the most important influence on all its other social institutions. It is the economic system which defines the social relations--the degree of relative control and relative privilege of particular groups and particular individuals. Economic power thus determines development and change within other institutions such as that of education.

Whether economic power is this important for a society's stratification system is a subject of controversy in the social sciences. I propose, however, that there seems to be less doubt with respect to women.

Employing a Marxist perspective, Patricia Connelly in her book, Last Hired, First Fired, analyses the social relations of women within the capitalist economic production process. Connelly claims that because women have two spheres of work--that of the home as well as the labour force, women are vulnerable to exploitation. Aspects of women's vulnerability are exemplified by the fact that women earn lower wages than men, experience discrimination in hiring and promotion, have difficulty in unionizing, are subject to sexual harrassment and lack adequate support systems such as day care for children. Connelly suggests that it is this same vulnerability to exploitation which has placed women in a special class as a "reserve army of labour".¹

According to Marxist theory, the process of capital accumulation creates and demands the availability of an army of surplus or reserve labour from which to draw during periods of capital expansion.

Connelly argues that women form a large part of that reserve army of labour because women satisfy the three Marxist preconditions for reserve labour; women's labour is available, women are cheap labour, and women compete for jobs.

When viewed as a reserve army of labour, both spheres of women's work--that of housework and child care as well as wage work are considered to be directly linked to the changing needs of the developing capitalist economy. It has been a direct result of capitalist development that women, unlike men, have two spheres of work. In attempting to gain some understanding of an issue such as custodial responsibility of children, I would agree with Connell's position that women's dual role cannot be examined as separate but needs to be understood in terms of the connections of both the home and the work roles as integral parts of the whole capitalist process.

Connelly is critical of traditional theorists whom she claims simply describe rather than explain female work roles in respect to a woman's individual subjective choice whether to work outside the home or not. Connelly's alternative structural analysis distinguishes women as members of a special group which provide support for other social structures. The support provided by women as homemakers and workers is profitable for the capitalist male order and thus resistant to change. The gender-based relations of women to the capitalist system suggests an explanation for the relative ineffectiveness by women to politically determine public policy on issues such as child care.

Before industrialized capitalism, members of each family laboured together to produce the items (use values) needed for their existence. The family was the productive economic unit. While the kind of work

[each member of the family] performed differed according to the social division of labour, the definition of their labour in relation to production was the same--both produced use values."² With the advent of industrialized capitalism, however, "...the general labour process was split into two separate spheres; commodity production (exchange value), done mainly by men in industry and domestic labour (use value) done by women in the home."³ The relation of labour to production thus became gender-based. Capitalism altered social relations and produced new class divisions. New class divisions arising out of labour-based commodity (exchange value) production and non-commodity (use value) production altered the relations between men and women. Men are primarily the commodity producers while women are responsible for home and family. Prior to capitalism women were an essential part of the economic production unit but; "By the turn of the century in Canada, women had been essentially defined out of the capitalist [productive] labour market. Although some women have always sold their labour power to the capitalist, it was at this point that women as a group became an available source of [reserve] labour power for the capitalist system"⁴

Approximately 3.5 per cent of married women were active in the labour force during the early part of the twentieth century, therefore, the majority of those women considered available as "reserve labour" have been housewives. The availability of married women as a reserve army of labour has been most overtly exemplified by the need for women workers under conditions of war. "During the war period women were employed in many jobs that had formerly been done by men only. At the end of the war, however, men reclaimed these jobs and the form of reserve labour consisting of married women was deactivated."⁵

Not only are women available, but they are cheap. Under capitalism the male is defined as head of the household. Men's wages include not only the means for their own subsistence but also that of their families. Under capitalism not only have male and female jobs been differentiated but female work has become differentially valued. "The average income... of women with paid work was less than half that of men in 1971."⁶

While women's earnings may be considerably lower than that of the male wage earner--men's wages have not kept pace with the increased expectations of a developing capitalist economy. This has meant that as the standard of living rises, increasing numbers of married women become active in the labour force to supplement husband's incomes in order to maintain their relative standard of living. When women enter the labour force, the jobs accessible to them are concentrated in "service" oriented occupations. The development of capitalism favoured the growth of those occupations which have become defined as "female". Service areas such as nursing, teaching and clerical occupations have concentrations of women employees in excess of 70 per cent. The skills required for these "service-type" jobs are similar to and can be considered to be the "natural" extension of those of the nurturant homemaker. These "female" jobs offer little upward mobility and accomodate the concept of reserve labour because women move in and out of these work roles as required, with relative ease. Women have become segregated from men in their occupational roles. Women, therefore, do compete for jobs, but not in one job market alongside men but women compete with other women for "female" jobs. Connelly claims that as a result there is, "...not one labour market where men and women compete instead there are two distinct labour markets, a female and a male labour market."⁷ That women compete

within a female labour market and that the precondition of availability is directly tied to her role as housewife was not conceived of within classic Marxist theory. By extending and moulding Marxist theory to fit modern social and historical development, Connelly has convincingly argued that gender-based economic disparity is directly linked to the special class relationship (as an army of reserve labour) that women have to the mode of economic production under capitalism. Sex-based disparity originating in the economic system is reflected within other social institutions such as education.

Educational critics such as Rossanda, Cini, Berlinguer and Bowles, in Power and Ideology in Education⁸ have examined the education system from a Marxist perspective. They argue that while schools are assumed to be institutions offering equal opportunity, they in fact reflect and reproduce the hierarchial social positions defined through the economic relations to production. In other words, schools provide a selection process by which education has become the key to obtaining higher occupational positions for achieving social status and wealth. Class, sex and race biases perpetuated through the schools are thus seen to be reflections of the structure of economic power and political privilege in society at large.

Sex-based political privilege is reflected in the political realm by the unrepresentative number of females active in determining public policy. The gender-based relations to production originating in the economic system, facilitated through the education process and reflected in the political realm are maintained or perpetuated through a patriarchal ideology according to Dorothy Smith in her article entitled, "Ideological Structures and how Women are Excluded".⁹

In our society men govern, administer and manage the community. Men hold the positions from which the work of organizing the society is initiated and controlled. Men as the dominant class occupy the public sphere and have been in control to interpret the world from their viewpoint. Smith claims that; "One of the consequences of living in a world intellectually dominated by men...is that women try to have opinions which will satisfy the approved standards of the world...and these are standards imposed on them by men."¹⁰ Both men and women have internalized a single-gender world view as the only perspective. Women are not assumed to be nor are they proportionately represented within the public sphere where social problems are aired and policies are set. Women's place and women's problems such as lunchtime and after school child care are thus external to the place where decisions are made and policy is determined. Patriarchial ideology under capitalism maintains the sexual division of men and women in the hierarchial sex roles and structures their related duties in the family and the economy. Despite the increased work force participation by women, the work world remains a male domain. Patriarchial ideology is based on the conception that man is head of the household and sole provider and the woman's "natural" place is at home. Working women, especially women with children, are viewed as "deviants" within this patriarchial ideological system. Female job discrimination, low pay, inadequate child care facilities are justified on the grounds that women's "natural" place is primarily in the home. Work force participation has not liberated women to greater economic and social control. Working women with children experience particular problems as a result of being a mother in our society. One of these problems is child care. Within patriarchial ideology, child care is

seen as a service to the individual husband and not a service to the community. It is then understandable that educational policies have not been implemented to include extended supervisory care for school children.

The social action required to change institutional policies demands the power of authority. Authority is defined as "masculine". It is men who are invested with authority not because they as individuals necessarily have special competencies or expertise but, "...because as men they appear as representatives of the power and authority of the institutionalized structures which govern the society."¹¹ Women, "...are defined as persons who have no right to speak as authorities in religious or political settings."¹² If women are deprived of political power, can what they have to say become a basis for complaint and action for policy change?

The patriarchal ideology of capitalist society serves the interests of the dominant male class. The ideological base for the "natural" order of the family functions very profitably for the capitalist male order. In the workplace, women provide cheap labour. In the home, women provide free labour. Women do two jobs for less than the price of one. Furthermore, as consumers, women stimulate the economic system through which their class position developed. Capitalist patriarchy is entrenched in the economic process which gave rise to it and is resistant to change.

Can women then be instrumental in altering educational policy to ameliorate the problem of lunchtime child supervision?

There are a small number of women who do hold authoritative positions but frequently they do not represent the women's perspective.

Smith argues that women who reach higher administrative policy making levels have been passed through a rigorous filter. These are women, "...whose work and style of work and conduct have met the approval of judges who are largely men."¹³

While the difficulties and resistance to change that women experience is profound--change is not impossible. The contributions by Connelly and Smith through their analyses of sex-based capitalist relations may be beneficial to effecting change. If women become consciously aware of the social relations inherent in capitalist patriarchy, then women have taken the necessary first step toward affecting the political authority to bring about change. Women need to become consciously aware that there are basically two kinds of work in capitalist society, that of wage labour and domestic labour. At that point the sexual division of labour can be challenged in terms of its connections to the capitalist patriarchal system. What must first be altered is the way we think about workers. Men and women's work must be considered to be of equal value.

Marylee Stephenson, in "Housewives in Women's Liberation"¹⁴ claims that a strategy toward greater economic and political equality can grow out of women's struggle with the problems in their daily existence. She cautions, however, that it can not be a mere accumulation of stressful conditions in the lives of women which will bring about change, "...for the process of change to begin and to continue there must be a conscious perception of a need to alter one's self and one's circumstances."¹⁵

Placing the problems of intermittent day care within the framework of "capitalist patriarchy" will necessarily uncover the sexual

division of labour which now obscures the relation between the family and the political economy. The ability of women to view the "problem of intermittent day care" as a social responsibility may indeed act as the necessary lever to raise women's conscious perception of a need to alter themselves and their circumstances.

I believe the onus to initiate action toward change in policy lies with those who are most concerned about the provision of extended supervisory care, namely, the working mother. The beginnings of change toward that end, while difficult, are conceivable and have in fact been successfully initiated through the actions of a small group of women in the Hamilton area. Their efforts to politicize the issue of lunch-time child care will be outlined in the next chapter. These women challenged the conception of child care as an individual concern and argued that it should be seen as a social concern. Their conscious efforts affected the beginnings of change. They started the political cogs in the Hamilton area turning toward change in educational policy dealing with child care which is more realistic for the working mother.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER III

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CHAPTER IV

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMMES: A SOCIAL PROBLEM

Is lunchtime care as invisible and unpoliticized an issue as may have been inferred from the initial questionnaire survey of school administrators? Have women been politically as ineffective as it might appear from the foregoing examination of the gender-based relations in society?

Personal contact with friends suggested that lunchtime child care was a problem. Furthermore, several women indicated that they would actively support any action to alter educational policy toward organized supervisory care within the school.

In an effort to gain a better understanding of lunchtime child care, a more intensive local study was conducted in the Hamilton area from September 1979 to March 1980. The study focused on determining whether or not lunchtime child care was considered to be a social problem by urban Hamiltonians.

Research data was collected through the study of official documents, personal interviews and by personal observation at school trustee meetings. The data disclosed that particular individuals claimed that because parents work, it was frequently impossible for parents to look after their children during the school lunch break. Demands had been made that those children whose parents work, be allowed to remain at school to eat their lunch. It was further proposed by a citizen's

group that noontime supervision and recreation be officially organized in the school in the form of a Lunch Programme.

Other people, including principals and teachers, opposed these proposals on the grounds that Lunch Programmes would be detrimental for educators and the children who attend.

It became evident from the data that different groups of individuals alleged that different sets of conditions were undesirable. The data further revealed that individuals and groups lobbied and complained through particular channels in an effort to have their grievances heard and acted upon.

The analysis of the collected data is made from the particular perspective of social problems theory espoused by Malcolm Spector and John Kitsuse in, Constructing Social Problems.¹ It is the active nature of complaining which has been defined by these theorists to be the basis for a sociology of social problems.

The observable activity of complaining in the form of letter writing, preparation and presentation of briefs, position papers, use of the news media, or other forms of protest to publicize Lunch Programme grievances are referred to by Spector and Kitsuse as, "claims-making activity". "A claim implies that the claimant has a right at least to be heard--if not receive satisfaction."² It is the activity of making claims, the demand for change which is, "the core of what we call social problems activity".³

The grievance activity of groups with opposing interests on school lunch programmes suggested Spector and Kitsuse's theory as appropriate for my research. It is from their particular theoretical perspective of social problems as claims-making and responding activity that the

Lunch Programme fieldwork data will be analyzed.

Spector and Kitsuse propose that the life of social problems activity can be analyzed as a "career" of sequenced stages of transformations. Based on their particular perspective, they formulate a hypothetical four-stage natural history model. The Lunch Programme fieldwork data has been analyzed as closely as possible through the developmental social problems activity stages presented by Spector and Kitsuse.

Not only is the theoretical perspective of Spector and Kitsuse of interest for its applicability to the fieldwork data but their theory also represents a radically different approach to the sociology of social problems. In fact, Spector and Kitsuse would argue that their theory, based on social problems as "activity", represents the initiation for the development of a sociology of social problems. Upon reviewing the literature surrounding social problems research, Spector and Kitsuse concluded that, "there is no adequate definition of social problems within sociology and there is not and never has been a sociology of social problems."⁴

I, therefore, propose to outline Spector and Kitsuse's conception of social problems by which they develop what they deem to be an "adequate" definition of social problems and from which they formulate their hypothetical paradigm. Based on these formulations, I will analyze the Lunch Programme fieldwork data within their theoretical framework.

Spector and Kitsuse's Conception of a Sociology of Social Problems:

Spector and Kitsuse begin their reformulation of social problems by rejecting the traditionally dominant functionalist approaches in social

problems research. They argue that functionalists view a social problem as a "subjectively" defined disorganization or dysfunctional "condition" in society. This view presupposes the existence of a consensus-based "objective" condition against which a "subjective"-dysfunctional definition is compared. Functionalist theories, they argue, seek to identify "how" society defines a situation.

Spector and Kitsuse reject the conception of social problems as socially defined conditions. They argue that the fundamental question is: "How do individuals arrive at their definitions." The definitions that individuals espouse constitute a developmental process. Spector and Kitsuse further argue that it is the dynamics of this definitional process which should become the subject matter for the sociology of social problems.

The dynamics of this process are observable through the activity inherent in the definitional process. When a threatening or undesirable condition is alleged to exist by individuals or a group, these individuals may complain, lobby, strike, or be active in some observable grievance activity. These observable actions which are intended to call attention to alleged conditions, are referred to as, "claims-making activity".

When claims are made, they may be responded to by others who oppose such claims or perceive conditions differently. Counter or competing complaints, lobbying or other claims-making activity may be observed.

Spector and Kitsuse conceive social problems to be a process of activities by those, 'who assert the existence of conditions and define them as problems.'⁵ Social problems are therefore not defined as

"conditions" but as, "the activities of individuals or groups making assertions of grievances and claims with respect to some putative conditions."⁶

For a social problem to emerge as a public issue, the claims-making activity of individuals must become organized. "The emergence of a social problem is contingent upon the organization of activities asserting the need for eradicating, ameliorating, or otherwise changing some condition."⁷

Based on their definition of social problems as organized activity; "The central problem for a theory of social problems is to account for the emergence, nature and maintenance of claims-making and responding activities. Its subject matter focuses on the activities of any group making claims on others for ameliorative action, material remuneration, alleviation of social, political, legal or economic disadvantage."⁸

Spector and Kitsuse propose a theory of claims-making activity as opposed to a theory based on social conditions. Their claims-making activity theory does not analyze whether perceived conditions are legitimate or illegitimate. "Only assertions made about them [perceived conditions] are the subject matter for claims-making activity theory."⁹

To guard against the functionalist tendency to analyse or certify conditions, Spector and Kitsuse assert that even the existence of the condition itself is irrelevant to claims-making theory. Conditions, therefore, are merely "alleged" or are "imputed" to exist in "claims-making activity" theory.

A Natural History Paradigm:

Based on their conception of social problems as an investigation

of activities of specific and identifiable individuals who are engaged in defining conditions in particular terms with specific purposes, Spector and Kitsuse posit a theoretical model by which to analyse research data based on their conception of social problems.

Relying extensively on the "natural" history models, Spector and Kitsuse formulate a typology by which the "career" of the social activities under investigation can be studied and analyzed as emerging sequences of events or as developmental stages of activity.

A natural history or "career" suggests that social phenomena can be divided into several periods. Furthermore, each of these periods or stages is "characterized by its own distinctive kind of activities, participants and dilemmas."¹⁰ The distinctive characteristics of activities inherent at each stage lead to the, "conception of the problematic and uncertain development of social problems from one stage to another."¹¹ It is imperative that social problems issues are kept alive if they are to continue their development.

In the Spector and Kitsuse natural history typology, the first two stages deal with the activities surrounding assertions about the existence of some condition and attempts at stimulating controversy for the purpose of creating a public or political issue over the matter. The recognition by an official governing body empowered to remediate the alleged undesirable condition may effectively achieve the amelioration sought by the claims-making individuals.

In the literature pertaining to natural history models, it is suggested that the implementation of an official policy represents the final stage in the career of a social problem. However, it must be asked, "When does the social problem cease to exist?" Spector and Kitsuse

suggest a third and fourth stage in order to determine what happens to a social problem after the implementation of an official policy. In their formulation, stages three and four represent a 'second generation' of the social problem by which solutions to previous problems become the basis for new claims and demands by new complainants.

Where to Begin:

"Where do social problems activity--claims making and responding activities--come from?"¹² In their conception of social problems, Spector and Kitsuse suggest that the origin of social problems activity does not differ in kind from the activity of claims making. Social problems activities must be analysed within the context and background of their social base--as a, "seamless web of events."

Social problems activity comes from other activities or events which lead up to prepare and set the stage for claims making activities.

Setting the Stage:

We will now see whether events have lead up to or prepared the stage for claims-making activities surrounding the question of lunchtime supervision for elementary school children in Hamilton.

In 1971 the Hamilton and District Social Planning and Research Council published a report entitled, "Day Care Needs for Children in Hamilton and District". Their report revealed that over 8,000 elementary public school children in Hamilton were from single parent families or from families in which both parents work outside the home. The report suggested that making arrangements for lunchtime supervision was often difficult if not impossible. The report further recommended that a school lunch programme would provide a solution to the problem faced by

the parents of thousands of these children. The Council proposed that a school lunch programme would be able to provide children with a safe and happy environment in which to eat lunch. It was reported that despite the recommendation by the Council that either the Board of Education or a community group take appropriate action to implement school lunch programmes--nothing was done.

The suggestion that "nothing was done" substantiates Spector and Kitsuse's position that the perceived existence of undesirable social conditions alone does not form the basis of a recognized social problem. However, the documentation of these alleged conditions did stimulate a few citizens to action in an effort to make the implications of the putative "lunchtime supervision" condition a public issue, demanding amelioration.

The initiation by a few citizens of complaints, suggests Spector and Kitsuse's model as an appropriate paradigm by which to analyze the claims-making activity surrounding the development of the social problem of lunchtime supervision.

Initiation - the "career" of Lunch Programmes as Claims-making Activity:

Spector and Kitsuse's theoretical model suggests that initial claims-making activities are usually unofficial attempts to call attention to a condition so that it might be defined as an issue.

A few citizens had occasion to informally discuss their concerns about lunchtime supervision as far back as 1972. Their shared interest led them to the decision to make more people aware of the need for school organized lunchtime supervision. They decided to develop a mailing list of those people in the community whom they thought would share

their concern. A mailing list would serve to distribute information for the purpose of developing a greater awareness of the perceived need for school lunch programmes. A mailing list would also serve to solicit members of the community to support their cause.

By the beginning of 1973, the success of this initial claims-making mailing activity is documented by the completion of an impressive four-page long mailing list of names of "concerned" citizens.

Not only individual citizens, but no less than twelve community service groups were contacted and responded in support of the demand for the establishment of school lunch programmes.

Some of these community groups included the following:

- Hamilton Status of Women Council
- Group of Equal Rights at McMaster
- Junior League Community Education Committee
- National Council of Jewish Women
- Y.M.C.A. Community Services Committee

This extended public interest led to a larger and more formally organized community meeting of "concerned citizens". Held at the Hamilton Y.M.C.A. in March 1973, this meeting provided a forum for concerned citizens to, "discuss issues and aspects of lunchtime supervision."¹² As a result of this and subsequent meetings, an official Citizens' Action Committee was formed. This newly organized body clearly identified its aims through its new title--the Citizens' Committee for the Establishment of School Lunch Programs".

As an organized group, they were now identifiable both by the larger community and by the influential institutions from which ameliorative action was to be sought.

The first goal of the Action Committee was to convince the Board of Education to assume responsible involvement for the establishment of

supervised lunch programmes in the schools.

Mechanisms for Pressing Claims:

Spector and Kitsuse suggest that claims-making activity can be identified as a political process. The politicians in the educational system are the school trustees. Complaints were directed toward individual trustees. As a result of their complaint activity, citizens gained official recognition as the Board of Education Minutes indicate:

At a school Trustee's Committee meeting on November 20, 1973, school trustee, Dr. Paikin, "informed the members that he has received many complaints from parents that their children are not allowed to remain in the school during the lunch hour."¹³

Another strategy for pressing claims was through newspaper coverage. More sympathetic citizens as well as supportive officials were recruited through the attention in the media to the issue of lunch-time care.

On May 28, 1973 City of Hamilton Controller, Anne Jones addressed a two-page letter to the Chairman of the Board of Education. Addressing him with the personal salutation... "Dear Peter:" she informs him that...

I noticed in the paper that an organization has been formed by citizens in connection with community use of schools and that the opportunity for children to remain at school for lunch may be under discussion at one of your June committee meetings.¹⁴

In the same letter she is sympathetic with the claims made by the Citizens' Committee. Jones claims to have been concerned over the same issue being protested by the Citizens' Committee. In her letter Jones states that:

Having gone through a period of time when the lunch-hour

was terribly important and a matter of great concern to me...I would like to say that I do feel strongly that some opportunity should be given to parents who simply cannot be at home at lunch to have their children have lunch at school...I felt that because of my own experience, I would like to express somewhat informally my views on this situation.¹⁵

Through her influential position as a City Controller and her personal association with the Chairman of the Board of Education, Anne Jones has been instrumental in mobilizing a responsive action by the Board of Education.

Jones indicated that she identified with the protestors through her actions by distributing copies of her letter to three school Board trustees whom she knew to be supportive to the protestors' complaints. Shortly after Anne Jones joined the Citizens' Committee for the Establishment of School Lunch Programs.

Another observable factor which helped to pressure the Board to take responsive action lies in the social-political prominence of a substantial percentage of other members on the Citizens' Action Committee.

Upon perusing the names on the membership list of the Citizens' Committee, I noted the names of several members who were or have become School Board Trustees since the formation of the Action Committee. Some of the trustees who have been active in the Citizens' Committee are: Vine, Simmons, Van Horne, Rogers, Gallagher and Baskin.

While any sort of complaint COULD become the basis of a social problem, the vast majority of such claims are disposed of. However, when members have prior knowledge, expertise and opportunity to press their claims to the decision making body--they add legitimacy to the group and thereby attain greater success in keeping the issue alive.

The Committee's expertise and knowledge is exemplified by its

most influential claims-making mechanism--the presentation of a report to the Board of School Trustees. The report precisely outlined the complaints, affixed responsibility for dissatisfaction and presented proposed remedies. Entitled, "A Proposal for the Establishment of A Lunch Program in Hamilton Elementary Schools", the following excerpts outline the Committee's position:

We are concerned about the need to extend day care by providing supervised lunch programs for elementary school children. We see this as a need of children whose parents work and are unable to be home at noon...

...why is it not possible for the Hamilton Board to consider the needs of children and parents in the area of lunchtime child care?...

...Where do these thousands of children eat lunch? How many of them are supervised? How many may eat alone?...

...We are suggesting that children be able to bring lunch...to eat at school in a supervised setting.¹⁸

The proposal was prepared in June 1973 by two of the Action Committee's founding members, Mona Levenstein and Carolyn Rosenthal. The presentation of their brief at the Trustees' Board meeting, indicates the successful claims-making activity by the Citizens' Committee to gain official recognition. The official recognition by the Board of the Citizens' Committee legitimates their position. The Committee is no longer just a protest group but becomes the identifiable representative for all those who share their grievances.

With reference to Spector and Kitsuse's typology, this official recognition represents an important and essential initial step in the process of transforming individuals' troubles into public concerns as social problems.

Social Controversy:

The interests of those desiring to transform individual concerns into public issues may be challenged. Spector and Kitsuse have suggested that: "Social problems arise from the statements by groups that certain conditions are intolerable and must be changed... [However] such actions may provoke reactions from other groups that prefer existing arrangements..."¹⁷

Conflicts of interest over proposed lunch programme solutions arose among two groups who had different or incompatible interests. Principals opposed the proposal for school lunch programmes. Their opposition is observable in the form of counter-claims activity. Elementary School Principals prepared a Position Paper re Proposed Lunch-room Program.¹⁸ This counter-claim activity appears to have been anticipated by Board of Education officials. Board of Education minutes recorded the following:

Mr. Simmons stated that he believed the Hamilton Principals' Association is in the process of preparing a brief and would like to present it verbally...¹⁹

The principals' claims were also anticipated to be influential in the formation of Board policy on the Lunch Programme question. The Board's minutes state that principals,

...wish to appear...to present their views before any decision is reached by this Board with respect to lunch programmes...Dr. Price stated that he would like officials to have the opportunity to hear these submissions before preparing their report...²⁰

(my emphasis)

Unlike the Citizens' Committee which had to achieve legitimate recognition, the Hamilton Principals' Association was an established and recognized legitimate group. The comment by Dr. Price verifies that

the Principals' counter-claims would receive more than a passive acknowledgement by the Board.

In their brief, Principals question the claim made by the Citizens' Committee that there is a "need" for supervised lunch programmes:

IF there is a need to provide a supervision²¹
service for children of parents who work...
(my emphasis)

Principals also argued against the claim by the Citizens' Committee that Lunchtime supervision is the responsibility of the educational system:

...we do not believe that the educational system
or the teaching staff, is obligated to provide
this service...²²

To emphasize their opposition, Principals suggest that:

At this time when the education dollar is shrinking,
and when the allotment for elementary schools is
shrinking also, the cost of additional social
services must not be derived from funds raised for
educational purposes.²³

From fieldwork interviews with principals an even broader range of claims in opposition to the establishment of lunch programmes in schools emerged. One principal suggested that teachers oppose supervisory lunchtime duty:

...the teachers are very reluctant to have students
stay...teachers were resentful in being requested to
look after them...²⁴

Another principal suggested that the implementation of school lunch programmes might cause a decline in staffing in schools:

...it will be interesting to see how many teachers
will want to transfer to schools without lunch pro-
grammes.²⁵

A principal has also suggested that, "...kids really should not be at school all day..."²⁶

Principals would lose free time if school lunch programmes were implemented:

...invariably kids get hurt and then they call on me as principal to help...or one of the kids gets sassy with the supervisor...its just one more thing for the school...²⁷

One principal summed up his perception of the Citizens' Committee claims as follows:

With regard to the issue of working mothers...I think they want to use the school as a dumping ground...²⁸

Attempts by the Citizens' Committee to change the existing conditions provoked reactions by principals who stood to lose if the existing arrangements were altered. However, conflict may also arise between groups who do not share the same values. Such activity is referred to by Spector and Kitsuse as competing claims activity.

Another group of citizens, identified themselves as those in Opposition to the School Lunchroom Programme. Their "competing claims" received official acknowledgement by the Board and they were given the opportunity to "air their views". Their competing claims were presented in the form of a petition together with a brief outlining their position. The following is an excerpt from their brief as presented to the Board of Education:

Mr. Chairman...we wish to present you with this petition of 112 names opposing lunchroom facilities for children within walking distance of their schools...we realize that the goal of the brief supporting lunchrooms, to relieve more mothers of their responsibility so they may 'Pursue activities outside the Home' is indeed a backward step...The first allegiance of a parent able to opt out on his family responsibility may...have ramification...of a loosening of parental input...which will have serious connotations for the development of our society...

We cannot condone a lunchroom programme which is

really a means of furthering a communal state where children are cared for by government employees even though they have parents to look after their well-being. This type of programme is not one that will build an interest and concern of one person for another in our community but rather lose our present consideration and replace it with self-interest and unconcern except in a business way...²⁹

The alleged lunchtime supervision problems of working parents have been challenged by opposing groups who hold different views. Those in opposition perceive changes in child care responsibility to pose a threat to the traditional family structure. A shift in the structure of the family, which outlined in chapter 3, has already taken place as a result of the permanent inclusion of married women in the work force.

Presentation at public Board meetings of briefs by representatives with different and conflicting positions, provided attending reporters with information to stimulate public debate. The opportunity to appear before the Board of Education provided each of the three position papers with an official public legitimacy. Furthermore, newspaper reports increased the visibility and public awareness of the questions surrounding the supervision of school children at lunchtime.

Public exposure of the conflicting views of the three groups--the Citizens' Committee, Principals and the Opposition Group--have helped to keep the issues alive.

Spector and Kitsuse have argued that it is through the dynamics of the process of claims-making and responding activities that private or individual troubles may be transformed into publicly debated social problem issues.

Based on the observed dynamics of the transitional process, the questions surrounding the Hamilton Elementary Schools' Lunch Programme,

can be conceptualized as a Social Problem.

A New Stage - Responsive Action by the Board:

Although the claims supporting the Committee for the Establishment of School Lunch programmes have been transformed into a social problem--this does not ensure that the Board will act to establish a school Lunch Programme. "A given social problem may remain at this stage indefinitely, it may quickly be transformed into the next stage, or it may falter and die."³⁰

The social problem of lunch programmes was kept alive. Several members of the Pro-Lunch Citizens' Committee were also members of the Board of Trustees. The goal of the Citizens' Committee was to have the Board of Education assume responsibility for establishing lunch programmes. Members who had influential Board positions could be instrumental in achieving this goal.

Board of Education Minutes record the formation of a Trustees' "Committee to Study the Matter of School Lunch Programmes." This is a first step toward the assumption of responsibility for lunch programmes by the Board.

The establishment of a Trustees' Committee also acknowledges the recognized legitimacy of the Citizens' Committee claims. By identifying themselves with the lunch programme issues, the Board of Education has acknowledged their jurisdictional role in the decision-making process. The Board begins to take part in the social problems activity. The formation of a Board of Education Trustee Committee to look into lunch programme questions has ensured that the issues have been recognizably entrenched into the political decision-making realm. The lunch programme issue now cannot disappear unnoticed. The Committee of

Trustees provides a channel through which to pressure for further action.

The assurance that such pressure will be brought to bear through the Trustee Investigative Committee is evident in the composition of its membership. Two of the five members of the newly formed Trustee Committee to Study the Matter of Lunch Programmes--are also active members on the Citizens' Committee for the Establishment of Lunch Programmes. Representation on the Investigation Committee by trustees sympathetic with the claims will pressure for pro-Lunch action by the Board.

Not only can pressure for action be channelled through representatives on the Investigation Committee, but pro-lunch trustees are also well represented at the decision-making Board level. Of the sixteen Public School Trustees, no less than five are also members of the Citizens' Committee for the Establishment of Lunch Programmes.

The access to expertise and political power by representatives of the Citizens' Committee ensured that the issue was kept alive and provided an open channel through which to press for continued pro-lunch Board action.

Evidence that the issue was kept alive and achieved the desired pro-lunch Board action is suggested by the recommendation that a Pilot Project for School Lunch Programmes be established in three Hamilton Elementary Schools as early as the school year 1973-74.

The continued and extended involvement by the Board in the social problems activity is suggested by the official sanction of the original claims made by the pro-lunch Citizens' Committee as to the perceived undesirable lunchtime conditions for children. Board of Education Minutes verify the Citizens' Committee claims as follows:

The Hamilton Board of Education has become increasingly

aware that many elementary school pupils return to empty houses during the 135 minute lunch period, since they come from homes where both parents work or where there is only a single parent who must work in order to support the family.³¹

By January 1974, the Hamilton Board of Education officially established a Lunch Programme Policy for children of working parents. The institutionalization of a Lunch Programme policy ensured the continued existence of lunch programmes and provided the mechanism for its growth and expansion.

In June of 1974, renewed claims making activity emerged. This time some members within the Board of Education initiated the claims. Claims no longer focused on the earlier questioned desirability or need for lunch Programmes. These new claims were expressions by some Board members of their concern about "how" the growth of these newly established Lunch Programmes should best be managed:

...as demand increases, it is becoming inevitable that this Board must provide some leadership in training and hiring supervisors, finding appropriate space and working out suitable activity programmes in the individual schools...³²

In their effort to work out suitable activity programmes, the Board would, "...encourage community involvement in the education system...".³³ This was accomplished through the establishment of a contractual relationship with the Y.M.C.A., as a community agency. The Y.M.C.A. was to act as the liaison between the Board of Education and those parents involved in School Lunch Programmes. The Y.M.C.A. was to "set-up" new lunch programmes, hire and train supervisors, organize activity programmes and deal directly with complaints from parents.

The signing of a one-year renewable contract with the Y.M.C.A. as an official agency, effectively routinized programme activities,

complaints and administrative procedures.

With their vested interest and sanctioned authority such agencies have a potential for growth. This newly institutionalized mechanism for growth could and did become instrumental in initiating further transformations in the social problems activity surrounding Hamilton Elementary School Lunch Programmes.

New Complainants: New Complaints:

"When social problems activities culminate in the creation and establishment of procedures to deal with claims those activities may diminish and even disappear."³⁴ But, it is possible that the newly established procedures may be misconceived or inappropriate to the claims and demands they were intended to handle. Thus, assertions about inadequacy, inefficacy or procedures may themselves become the conditions around which new claims activities are organized.

The 1974 Lunch Programme Policy permitted the children of working or single parents to stay at school to eat their lunch. These "programmes" however, had to be approved by each principal of the school and sponsored financially by the participating parents. Prior to 1974, it had been Board policy to only allow children to stay at school if they commuted beyond a one-mile distance to school. Very few Hamilton school children fit this category. This policy dated back to 1940. For thirty years, "excessive distance" travelled was the only "legitimate" reason for staying at school during the lunch break. By the early 1970's, however, a few schools in newly developed areas lacked sidewalks. This posed a safety risk for children commuting to school along busy roads. The Board decided that these children should be accommodated at school

for the lunch periods. A regulation was required.

Rather than amend or revise the existing one-mile policy, the Board's administrative procedure was to adopt an entirely new legal instrument which would co-exist with the 1940 policy. In 1972 a new "no-sidewalk" official policy was adopted to allow such children to stay at school.

Since both the 1940 and the 1972 policies affected relatively few children, no administrative difficulties were encountered by their parallel existence.

However, the 1974 Board decision to permit working parent children to stay for lunch under parent sponsored programmes--also required an official regulation. The procedural precedent established in 1972 was to adopt a new legal entity. Rather than merge their existing policies to accommodate all three lunch categories, the Board formulated a third lunchtime policy to co-exist separately with the other two.

The 1974 Lunch Policy affected a large number of children of working parents. Responsibility for administrative procedures and problems for the 1974 Lunch Programmes had been contracted to the Y.M.C.A., as mentioned. (See pages 22 and 23.)

Lunch Programmes were becoming popular at about the same time that enrollments were declining and schools were being closed. Children were required to travel greater distances to new schools. Often children were bussed to school outside their immediate area. Increasing numbers of children travelled more than one mile to school. Under the 1940 policy, which existed alongside the "no-sidewalk" and the 1974 "working parent" policies--the Board was obligated to provide lunchtime

facilities for these children. No longer did the 1940 policy affect the "exceptional" few children. The number of "one-mile" students kept growing.

Unlike the parent-sponsored programmes, the Board was responsible for the administrative as well as all the supervisory costs for those children who stay for lunch under the 1940 Policy. The Board had effectively contracted with the Y.M.C.A. to handle the organizational duties of parent-sponsored programmes. However, with the rapid increase in Board sponsored, "excess of one-mile" programmes, the Board found that rather than streamlining its administrative duties as had been the intention with the contractual arrangements with the Y.M.C.A; for "working parent programmes"--the Board had developed a duplication in administration and financing procedures.

The Board was strained by mounting organizational responsibility and spiralling costs as the number of children under the Board sponsored "one-mile" policy almost equalled the number of children who stayed for lunch under the "parent-sponsored" policy. The bureaucratic procedures instituted by the Board had themselves become the conditions which stimulated action for reform. They were initiated by new complainants--some members of the Hamilton Board of Education.

As a result, an Administrative Trustee Committee was formed to investigate the problem and recommend a solution for the Board in 1978. The Superintendent of Education, his assistant, together with the Director of Education presented their recommendations to the Trustees in June of 1979. The Administrative Trustee Committee claimed that all three lunchtime policies should be merged under a new single, "Comprehensive Lunchroom Policy."

Their rationale is outlined as follows:

1. Because of declining enrollments, pupils may have greater distance to travel due to the closing of the local school or some grades in it. There is a need to accommodate them at noon.
2. Parents are requesting lunch hour supervision in greater numbers; They are willing to pay for the service. There is a perceived need.
3. Several different programmes are now being operated in order to accommodate pupils who stay for lunch...There is a need for quality programmes which should be well co-ordinated and which will ensure fairness to all pupils who stay at noon.³⁵

The Committee recommended that both financial and Administrative procedures be merged under this new proposal. The Board's contractual agent, the Y.M.C.A. would handle all the administrative work. Both Board and parent sponsored programmes would become fee-structured. This proposal was acceptable by both the Administration and a voting majority of school Trustees. It was approved in principle by the trustees of the Board of Education at the end of November 1979.

Parent - Counter Claims:

Throughout its social problems career, Lunch Programme claims have been pressed through public forum debate. The attendance of journalists at public school Board meetings, has been instrumental in making issues visible to a wider public and such publicity has helped instigate protest.

Under the terms of the proposed, "Comprehensive Lunchroom Policy"--those parents whose children had been accommodated at the Board's expense under the 1940, "one-mile" policy--would now be required to pay for this lunchtime "service". Newspaper coverage was headlined, "Parents May Pay for Extra Supervision".³⁶irate parents telephoned trustees to protest the adoption of this policy. At the next Trustees' meeting on December 6, 1979, it was decided to refer the proposed policy back for

re-appraisal. Following this meeting, the news coverage read, "Parents Hot Over Lunch Fee...Protests from parents have prompted city school trustees to reconsider a policy requiring parents to pay for children staying at school for lunch."³⁷

Through counter-claims activity by parents who stood to lose, the Board had to re-appraise the financial base for their new policy. The next scheduled meeting at which this could be done was January 10, 1980.

The Board's Dilemma:

Parents had not protested the proposed streamlining of administrative functions with the Y.M.C.A. However, the contract with the Y.M.C.A. expired at the end of December 1979. The Board could not negotiate a new contract to cover the new proposed extended administrative services with the "Y" until the revised Comprehensive Lunch Programme Policy was officially adopted. This could not be done until 1980. Without the Y.M.C.A. contract, the Board would be solely responsible not only for its own Board sponsored lunch programmes but suddenly also for those parent sponsored programmes which had been administered by the Y.M.C.A.

Competing Claims:

Parents had protested the financial rather than the proposed administrative arrangements with the Y.M.C.A. However, internally, a few trustees and particular staff members lobbied against a contract with the Y.M.C.A. They challenged the conception of "community-agency involvement in the educational system". This had been the rationale for the initial contract with the Y.M.C.A. The competing-claims

proponents argued that both parent and Board sponsored lunch programmes should be administered directly and solely by the Board of Education.

Policy Revisions:

The political effectiveness of both the parental protestors and of those who lobbied behind the scenes is evident in the results of a January 10, 1980 Trustee Committee meeting. The trustees decided that parents whose children commuted more than one mile would continue to be exempt from Lunch Programme fees. Secondly, the Board would administer, organize and supervise all lunch programmes both parent and Board sponsored.

The committee expected, that one February 14, 1980 at the Board meeting; that this revised policy position would be adopted as the new Comprehensive Lunch Policy for Hamilton Elementary Schools. This, however, did not happen.

Are fee-structured, Parent Sponsored Lunch Programmes "legal"?

By February 14, 1980 the legitimacy of the Board's Lunch Programmes was challenged by a "higher bureaucratic order"--the Ontario Ministry of Education.

Throughout the life of the lunch programme problems, claims and counter-claims activity had been based on the assumption that children should or should not be "permitted to stay" or somehow "accommodated" by the school at lunch time. The basis of this assumption had been that, "...participation in any lunch programme is a privilege."³⁸ (my emphasis)

Correspondence from the Deputy Minister, refers to a Ministry Regulation 704/78 which stipulates that lunch time supervision is NOT a

privilege for elementary school children but it is their legal RIGHT!

Pupils have the right under Section 3(8) of the Regulation to be in the school during the lunch hour and Section 12(2)...require the principal, not the parents, to provide adequate supervision and assign suitable quarters for pupils to eat lunch...³⁹

Concerning the fee structuring of any lunch programme, the Deputy Minister was reported as having notified the Board as follows:

"...School Boards...don't have the authority to charge parents for supervision of children during lunchtime, but they must provide supervision."⁴⁰

Newspapers both in Toronto and Hamilton published the Ministry's challenge as to the legitimacy of the existing parent sponsored lunch programmes. Lunchtime supervision for elementary students in Ontario has been interpreted by the Ministry to be the RIGHT of each student. Not only can students expect to stay at school for lunch as of right, rather than at the discretion of principal "privilege", but the responsibility for providing necessary supervisory staff has also been interpreted to fall within the responsibility of the educational system.

The generation of new claims surrounding the legitimacy of established and future lunch programmes by parents, the Board, the teachers, principals and the Ministry--all set the scene for yet another stage in the "natural history" development of Spector and Kitsuse's theoretical model for social problem activity surrounding the question of lunchtime supervision for Hamilton Elementary school children.

Conclusion of the Hamilton Study:

Contrary to the apparent lack of concern concluded from the questionnaire survey, the local Hamilton study revealed lunchtime supervision to be an ardently disputed social problem. Furthermore,

wider public disclosure of the existing provincial legislation which challenges the legality of existing fee-structured, parent-sponsored lunch programmes presents the potential for an intensely controversial political issue in the near future.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER IV

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10. Ibid., p. 148.
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14. Board of Control, Hamilton, Ontario, Correspondence by A. Jones, Controller, dated May 28, 1973, p. 1.
15. Ibid., pp. 1 and 2.
16. A Proposal for the Establishment of a Lunch Program in Hamilton Elementary Schools, prepared by Mona Levenstein and Carolyn Rosenthal, June, 1973, p. 1.
17. M. Spector and J. Kitsuse, Constructing Social Problems, p. 148.
18. Hamilton Principals' Association, Position Paper re Proposed Lunch-room Program, October, 1973.

19. Hamilton Board of Education, Minutes, November 29, 1973, p. 4.
20. Ibid., p. 4.
21. Hamilton Principals' Association, Position Paper re Proposed Lunchroom Program, October, 1973, p. 1.
22. Ibid., p. 1.
23. Ibid., p. 2.
24. Research fieldnotes, October 23, 1979, p. 1.
25. Ibid., p. 2.
26. Research fieldnotes, October 11, 1979, p. 1.
27. Ibid., p. 3.
28. Ibid., p. 2.
29. Opposition to the School Lunchroom Programme, 1973, pp. 1, 2 and 3.
30. M. Spector and J. Kitsuse, Constructing Social Problems, p. 148.
31. Hamilton Board of Education, Minutes, June, 1974.
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34. M. Spector and J. Kitsuse, Constructing Social Problems, p. 151.
35. Hamilton Board of Education, Comprehensive Lunchroom Policy, proposal, June, 1979.
36. The Spectator, Hamilton, Tuesday, November 13, 1979.
37. The Spectator, Hamilton, December 7, 1979.
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39. Ministry of Education, Ontario, correspondence by Deputy Minister, H. Fisher, dated January 10, 1980.
40. The Spectator, Hamilton, February 15, 1980.

CHAPTER V

LUNCH PROGRAMMES - AS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The data obtained through the questionnaire survey as well as the local study in the Hamilton area provide evidence that changes in the family structure have not been paralleled by changes in our educational structure.

From the results of the survey, it appeared that Canadian urban elementary schools operate on the basis that mothers are at home to provide lunchtime care. The Hamilton study verified that the expanding number of females in the work force has effectively shifted an increasing percentage of mothers away from the home during daytime hours. Parental absence from the home during the day has created a significant need for intermittent child care. School administrators and parents have experienced difficulty arranging for responsible child care for the intermittent hours involved. Through the initial efforts of a few women determined to politicize their concerns surrounding lunchtime child care, what has emerged from the research is the existence of a contemporary social problem having direct impact on the family and the school.

The essence of the debate over lunchtime child care centered on the concept of "responsibility". Is it the responsibility of the individual parent or the responsibility of the school?

On the one hand, the parent at work experiences difficulty arranging for child care and many of these parents desire extended supervision by the school to fill this custodial gap. This does not

imply a desire on the part of the parent to waive all child care responsibility. In fact, many concerned parent volunteers have been instrumental within the schools in organizing supervisory facilities in their effort to secure reliable lunchtime child care.

Daytime supervision of children historically has been a shared responsibility of the school and the parent. When schools were located in more rural settings children stayed at school for lunch. Not until developing urbanization within cities has the closer proximity of the school to the home made it possible for children to go home at lunch. It is also in urban areas that the greater percentage of working parents live. The promotion of school lunch programmes should, therefore, be viewed as a means of fulfilling a contemporary social "need".

On the other side of the debate over lunchtime custodial responsibility is the school administration. Even those school administrators who recognize a contemporary "need" for lunchtime child care, express considerable resistance to the idea of providing lunch care support within the school. They envision a host of organizational obstacles. However, at the base of their opposition has been the claim that lunchtime care is not their responsibility.

Legal Aspects:

In response to the questionnaire survey in 1977, the Ontario Ministry as well as the local Boards of Education, replied that no official lunch policy was in existence. Changes occurred shortly after that time. In 1980, the Hamilton study revealed that in the Province of Ontario, legislation had been formulated, although not acted upon, by 1978. The Ministerial Regulation 704/78, stipulates that it is the

school principal who is responsible for providing lunch facilities as well as supervision within the school. This regulation did not gain public attention until several years after it was passed. Even school administrators were surprised at its existence.

Clearly, the existence of legislation does not necessarily reflect contemporary attitudes or practices. The research has identified that lunchtime child care responsibility in Canada, and Ontario in particular, is defined differently by different groups of people.

Conflict and conflicting ideas are inherent in Marx's theory of social change. Although patriarchal ideology under capitalism is resistant to change, it was argued in chapter 3 that change is not impossible. The airing in public of opposing group interests surrounding the issue of Elementary School Lunch Programmes, may have been instrumental in raising the public's perception of the need to alter circumstances, thereby creating a political awareness that led to the formulation of Regulation 704/78.

Certainly the existence and finally public disclosure of legislation pertaining to lunchtime custodial responsibility does suggest, at least in theory if not in attitude or practice, that the onus of lunchtime child care responsibility is in the process of change. Lunchtime responsibility is being shifted from the individual parent to the realm of the educational institution--from an individual responsibility to a social or community responsibility.

While social change, such as the institutionalization of lunchtime child care within the school, represents a functional solution to a contemporary need; its ethical justification remains controversial.

By way of comparison, in Sweden as well as Britain child care

has been viewed as a social responsibility for some years. It must be emphasized that the responsibility of child care as "social" in Sweden, "...has not been promoted first and foremost for the parents' sake, but for the child's, as an important means of stimulating his or her personal growth."¹

It is argued in this paper that the Swedish conception and practice in dealing with child care as a social or community responsibility is a realistic expectation for contemporary industrial society.

From that perspective, child care for the 1980's can no longer focus on the issue of whose responsibility it is, but on how we as a community can best look after our needs through a more concerned approach to the supervision of children. This does not suggest that the family structure will lose its socializing impact. It means that the family and its support systems, such as education, must work in closer harmony in the best interest of the child and the community.

Practical Aspects:

The 1978 Regulation determined legal responsibility. Our efforts must now focus on the practical application of the government directive.

If lunchtime is to be institutionalized within the school, how is that time to be organized? What mechanisms in existence at present might be utilized? Who might be instrumental in making some of these design decisions?

The urgency in dealing with these organizational questions immediately can best be exemplified by considering some of the ramifications of not doing so. With 46 per cent of school-aged children fending for themselves in 1975 (referred to in Chapter 1)--how many more children look after themselves today? A child not responsibly supervised may

become a delinquent--a factor to consider in examining the increased daytime petty crime rates. A child not properly nourished at noon may not function as effectively in school. An unsupervised child may easily fall victim to physical or emotional harm. Several school principals in the Hamilton area reported that some young children return to school in the afternoon inebriated after spending the lunch break in the home of a peer, unsupervised by a responsible adult. Furthermore, if parents unable to attend to their children are preoccupied with concern as to the whereabouts and the well-being of their offspring, they in turn may not function as well as they might in their employment. The social costs of delaying amelioration are great. Can we afford not to consider the organization and implementation of expanded elementary school lunch programmes?

At present, we in Ontario live in a social and political climate conducive to the implementation of well organized school lunch programmes in all elementary schools. Through Ministerial legislation, legal responsibility has been identified to fall within the jurisdiction of the school. Furthermore, the changing needs of developing capitalism which demands the permanent inclusion of married women in the work force is intertwined with social policies aimed toward the establishment of greater equality between the sexes. Public policies similar to those which have existed in Sweden, afford greater opportunity for successful action on issues such as child care which continue to be of primary concern to women. However, a conducive social milieu, by itself, will not suffice.

The interpretation by the Ministry that principals are responsible for providing supervision and school Boards are responsible for the costs,

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

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1. The first step in the process of the investigation is the identification of the problem. This is done by the investigator who is responsible for the investigation. The investigator must identify the problem and the scope of the investigation. The investigator must also identify the objectives of the investigation and the methods to be used. The investigator must also identify the resources available for the investigation.

is information which is not widely advertised or promoted by school administrators. Some choose to ignore it while others, such as the administration of the Halton Board of Education, have directed principals to provide free lunchtime supervision in elementary schools. Since 1981, supervisors have been hired at Board expense for one hour per day with a pupil-supervisor ratio approximating sixty to one. Hamilton, on the other hand, has maintained its existing fee-structured, parent-sponsored programmes alongside those which were Board sponsored and supported in schools where children have been permitted to stay for lunch.

The provision for supervision and the allocation of the cost for doing so, while important, are only two aspects of lunchtime child care. Just as important is the content of the lunchtime activity.

Some parents have argued that they prefer fee-structured, parent sponsored programmes because they claim existing Board sponsored "programmes" to be inadequate:

Board programmes are not really programmes as such... it really is merely a babysitting service...supervisors are given no training, as in the parent run programmes. They also have a larger ratio of children to supervisors than the parent-run groups...the kids get 10 minutes or² so to eat their lunch and then they are on their own...

Parents distinguish between a proper lunch programme and mere "babysitting". They claim the latter is all that is done under Board "programmes". On the other hand, parent sponsored lunch programmes include not only responsible supervision but a recreational activity is also planned and directed by a trained supervisor. Board "programmes" provide supervision of students while they eat their lunch but during the remaining time students are expected to amuse themselves usually in the school yard. Parents' concern is over the quality of the time

spent during the lunch break.

In their effort to provide quality care for children, "...a core of dedicated parents interested in lunch time recreational programs for the elementary school children...",³ organized themselves and formed the, Hamilton Elementary Lunch Programs, Incorporated, frequently referred to as H.E.L.P. Under the direction of a programme co-ordinator, a number of schools in Hamilton have attempted to develop programmes which entail more than a "babysitting" function. A handbook, prepared by the H.E.L.P. co-ordinator outlines the aims of the parent sponsored programmes:

The lunch-time programme is intended to complement the school programme... While a hungry child doesn't learn well, neither does a child who has spent a chaotic hour running around the gym [or school yard]. It is essential that the school and the lunch programme co-operate in order to effectively serve the needs of the whole child. The lunch programme should not be highly structured, but should provide relaxed, well-supervised activities. Within this programme there must be time allowed for the child to share his or her excitements or fears with an understanding and warm supervisor.⁴

The aims of H.E.L.P., Inc., are intended to serve as a philosophical guideline upon which volunteer parent groups in individual schools can develop their own programme. With the assistance of the programme co-ordinator, parents set their priorities as to the degree of desired programme structure and select the activities. They must bear in mind the constraints of space, personnel, and other resources. This programme decision-making autonomy of local schools is reflected in the character of the implemented programmes. Three parent-sponsored lunch programmes have been observed. They represent varying degrees of programme structure and various programme activities. The observations drawn from the three sample programmes can be visualized in the

following chart. These programmes have been compared to the components of an "ideal" lunch programme. Portions of the research material were drawn from personal observation and interpretation of lunchroom activities. Much valuable information was also derived through many hours of dialogue with the H.E.L.P. lunch programme co-ordinator.

LUNCH PROGRAMME CHART

TOTALS	3	5	6	13
ADEQUATE PHYSICAL LUNCHROOM FACILITY				X
ADEQUATE RESOURCE MATERIALS/PERSONNEL		X		X
APPROPRIATE STRESS ON EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL			X	X
APPROPRIATE STRESS ON RECREATION	X	X		X
ADEQUATE SUPERVISORY PLANNING			X	X
REST TIME				X
ORDERLY WASHROOM VISITS			X	X
ADEQUATE CLEAN-UP PARTICIPATION	X	X	X	X
ADEQUATE DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL				X
SOCIABLE ADULT/CHILD INTERACTION				X
SOCIABLE PEER INTERACTION	X	X	X	X
ADEQUATE STRESS re: SOCIAL GRACES			X	X
PLEASANT EATING ATMOSPHERE			X	X
"Ideal" lunch programme Components*				
Lunch programmes (existing and proposed.)				
1. SENECA				
2. HOLBROOK				
3. FRANKLIN				
4. "IDEAL"				

*Each of the component areas is assumed to contain a range of aims and activities.

Each category may also be subjected to further delineation.

It can be noted from the chart that in all three existing programmes, only six of the thirteen or less than fifty per cent of the suggested "ideal" programme components appeared on observation to be incorporated within these existing programmes.

Although the data is sketchy, it does suggest a need to develop programmes with more structure. In support of the information presented in the chart, the following sample lunchtime activities were observed.

At Seneca Public School, (sample school 1.), the lunchroom consisted of a spare portable classroom. The desks had been removed and replaced with a few large tables at which lunch was eaten and, after students cleaned-up, these tables were used for crafts and games. There were two supervisors present for the 35 children in attendance. While conditions seemed somewhat cramped and noisy, children mingled freely and played or read in small groups on the floor or at tables. Some children played catch with lightweight plastic balls on the far side of the room. Wet weather conditions prevented children from going outdoors.

At Holbrook Public School (sample school 2.), the lunch programme appeared to be more structured. Children were divided into two groups according to their age and interest. The younger children (aged 6 to 8) plus a few older children, numbering about 25 in total, sat around tables to eat lunch. After lunch, children were expected to clean-up the debris and then the room was converted into a musical instrument activity center under the direction of the supervisor. A larger group of older students (aged 9 to 12) ate lunch in a second and much larger classroom under the supervision of two aides. These were students who had chosen to participate in either a craft or sport activity.

The Franklin Road Public School (sample school 3.), also used

two classrooms which were located opposite each other. Sixty pupils were registered in the programme and they were supervised by two aides. After lunch clean-up, one of these rooms was designated as a quiet room, while the other became a games room, (referred to as the noisy room by the children). Children were responsible for selecting which room they would choose to spend time in after the eating of lunch. Activities for each room were posted one week in advance. On the day of observation, the games room featured a Bingo game, while in the quiet room children were involved in a colouring activity. It was particularly interesting to note that a few students went to the library to work on special school projects. The inclusion of the library and involvement of students in school programme projects during lunch, suggests a degree of co-operation between lunch programme organizers and the teaching staff.

The example observations which are contained in the chart on page 76, indicate some ideas implemented in parent sponsored programmes. The other components indicated by the label "ideal" programme, point to some of the missing but important additions to a more desirable programme.

Generally, parent sponsored programmes tend to emphasize recreational activities. Because parent sponsored lunch programmes are entirely dependent on parent energy and involvement, and to a great degree on parental financing, it is understandable that less than half of all Hamilton elementary schools have a parent sponsored lunch programme. (In April of 1981, 22 out of 51 schools had a parent sponsored programme.)⁵

It is to their credit that parents have been able to organize the programmes which are in existence. Parent sponsored lunch programmes were implemented prior to the interpretation of Ministry Regulation 704/78--during a time when staying at school for lunch was considered a

privilege rather than a right.

According to the Ministry Regulation, lunchtime has legally become part of the school day and, therefore, must form part of the school programme or school curriculum. "The Ministry of Education views curriculum as all those experiences of the child for which the school is responsible." (my emphasis)⁶ The Ministry considers a child's curricular experience to be concerned,

...not only with "what" should be experienced, but with "why", "when", "where" and "how" particular kinds of learning should take place, and with the "atmosphere" in which the learning occurs. Curriculum is concerned with all the human relationships in the school, with the respect in which children are held, with the values, aims, objectives, and decisions of the school community.⁷

It would seem that at least in theory, the Ministry shares the concerns of parents with regard to the quality of activities during the time spent at lunch.

Because lunch is part of the school curriculum, the onus of carrying out an effective programme lies in the hands of the educators. The question then arises as to who is best qualified to organize and supervise lunch programmes. I propose that teachers are best qualified. Teachers would seem to be the most logical persons to integrate "ideal" lunchtime activities into an educational programme and to make them a constructive and meaningful part of the school day. (These proposed "ideal" teacher organized lunch programmes, I will refer to as Educational Lunch Programmes.)

The success of any programme depends to a great extent on the competency of those in charge. A major hurdle in any education programme is to develop discipline to the point of being able to control student energy and to channel this energy into constructive activity. Part of

teacher's professional training and experience consists of learning disciplinary techniques. From my observations, and from parent comments, it would appear that supervisors of existing programmes do not have the expertise required.

Supervisors must not only have disciplinary training but they must also have an understanding of children of varying ages, be dedicated to the aims of the programme, be capable of handling children in groups as well as being punctual and reliable. These requirements indicate that supervisors must be trained to educate. Furthermore, the intermittent nature of child care at lunch makes it difficult to hire supervisors for a short work period each day. Advertisements for lunch supervisors for Burlington schools appear almost daily in local newspapers. Most of the supervisors that are hired are housewives. Housewives qualify because they are available on an intermittent basis. Their supervisory experience in most cases has been in dealing with their own children. It does not follow that the capability of tending to one's own child necessarily determines the ability to deal effectively with children in groups.

It would seem reasonable that when lunch programmes are viewed as part of the educational curriculum, then professionals--teachers--must be considered to be the best qualified and most desirable supervisors for lunch programmes. Teachers' opposition to lunch programme supervision has been primarily focused on their fear of the additional workload. Some teachers with a full teaching load have on occasion been requested to forfeit their lunch break in order to assume supervisory responsibilities. The involvement of teachers in an Educational Lunch Programme must not be in addition to their workload but be considered

as an essential part of their work day. In that sense, Educational Lunch Programmes will become another curricular subject. The implementation of an Educational Lunch Programme might require the re-scheduling of teaching periods whereby staff and students stagger their lunch breaks so that extra duty is not required by any one particular staff member. The additional employment of itinerant teachers for the lunch programme would appear feasible particularly in view of the current availability of surplus teachers.

An example of what might be done in an Educational Lunch Programme may be seen through the work of Barbara Soren. As a volunteer teacher, she developed and implemented a six-week creative movement programme at Earl Kitchener Public School. Although her programme received little recognition by the school authorities (possibly due to its classification as extra-curricular) she claims that her efforts were well received by both participating students and their parents. Her initiative in providing a programme content consisting of music, art and dance, is commendable. It is unfortunate in this case, that the trial nature of the programme, its lack of curricular backing and financial support caused it to be discontinued. Her work indicates that further development of this type of programme could be of value in the development of Educational Lunch Programmes.

In addition to the use of itinerant personnel, community involvement in Educational Lunch Programmes could be derived through the use of resource people. These individuals would work under the direction of the teaching staff and they could add vitality and depth to Educational Lunch Programmes. For example, the participation of senior citizens might prove to be a rewarding experience for the school-aged child without

grandparents.

Furthermore, lunchtime presents an ideal opportunity to effectively reinforce rules for nutrition and fitness. Community nurses, dieticians or home economists can be instrumental in helping children establish healthy nutritional careers early in life.

Recently, high school students have been active participants in pre-school nursery and day care programmes as a required part of their child development coursework. This, "...course is...seen as a preventative measure when it comes to child abuse..."⁸ because high school students, both male and female are exposed to an opportunity to learn by direct contact, "...about children and about themselves."⁹ The participation of senior students in Educational Lunch Programmes presents another area ripe for further exploration.

Conclusion:

The development of teacher organized, Educational Lunchtime Programmes is a concept which needs serious consideration and considerably more design research than is feasible in the scope of this project. While the conception of lunch programmes as an integral part of the school curriculum may seem somewhat idealistic, I suggest that the development of Educational Lunch Programmes is an essential and realistic expectation for changing contemporary lifestyles.

There is a major benefit to be derived for our society in applying strengthened attitudes and realistic approaches to lunchtime programmes. By exposing our children to the investment of one more hour of the best educational activity, there will no doubt be a decline in social deviancy--an aspect of our society that now more than ever requires our fullest attention.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER V

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2. Research Fieldnotes, November 8, 1979, comments by the H.E.L.P. co-ordinator.
3. Hamilton Elementary School Lunch Programme brochure, p. 3.
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5. Hamilton Board of Education, information sheet, April, 1981.
6. Ministry of Education, Ontario, Education in the Primary and Junior Divisions, 1975, p. 3.
7. Ibid., p. 4.
8. The Burlington Post, March 10, 1982, "Female Environment welcomes males", p. C4.
9. Ibid., p. C4.

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- Clukero, L., (correspondence), Department of Education, Yukon Territory, April 4, 1977.
- Evaniuk, S., (correspondence), Province of Manitoba, Department of Education, April 6, 1977.
- Fitzgerald, G.E., (correspondence), Executive Assistant, Catholic School Centre, Calgary, Alberta, April 14, 1977.
- Fisher, H., (correspondence), Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Ontario, January 10, 1980.
- Gaasenbeek-Eisen, Nancy, Research Fieldnotes, September 1979 to March, 1980.
- Gillies, (correspondence), Manager, Public Information Section, Ontario Ministry of Education, April 7, 1977.
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APPENDIX

1. Names and Addresses of Canadian Ministries of Education, Schools and Boards for questionnaire mailings (mailed March 1977)
2. Names and Addresses of Foreign Educators to whom letters and questionnaires of inquiry were sent - April 1977
3. Letter of Enquiry
4. Short Questionnaire
5. Long Questionnaire

1. Names and Addresses of Canadian Ministries of Education, Schools and Boards for questionnaire mailings (mailed March 1977)

Department of Education
Yellowknife
XOE 1H0
Attention: Department of Programme Development
Chief - Mr. Brian Lewis

Department of Education
Trade Mart Building
Brunswick at Cogswell
Halifax
B3J 2S9
Attention: Director of Reference Research
Mr. R.A. Simpson

Ministry of Education
Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2
Attention: Communication Services, Director Mr. J.C. Boynton

Department of Education
Provincial Administrative Buildings
Box 2000
Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Attention: Communication Services

Department of Education
10105 - 109 St.
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2V2
Attention: Public Affairs Officer Ms. Mary Layman

Ministry of Education
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C.
V8V 1X4
Attention: Information Officer, Mr. Dave Roach

Department of Education
1181 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
K4J 6G7
Attention: Mrs. Lynn Faulder, Department of Evaluation,
Research and Policy Analysis

Canadian Addresses Continued

Whitehorse Elementary School
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Attention: Principal, Mr. R. Carr

The Robert Service School
Box 305
Dawson City
Y0B 1G0
Attention: Principal, Mr. David Meanear

Amherst Board School
Box 516
Amherst, Nova Scotia
B4H 4A1
Attention: Principal, Mr. V.M. Parrett

Pictou Board School
Box 640
Pictou, B0K 1H9
Attention: Principal, Mr. Dan English

Stellarton Public School
Box 2200
Stellarton, N.S.
B0K 1S0
Attention: Principal, Adrian Pearson

St. Vital Board
255 St. Anne's Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2M 3A5
Attention: Superintendent Gordon Newton

Transcona-Springfield Board
118 Regent Street East
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2C 0C1

Brandon Board
603 Eleventh Street,
Brandon, Manitoba
R7A 4K5
Attention: Superintendent, Mr. J.L. Milne

Department of Education
Centennial Building
Fredericton, New Brunswick
E3B 5H1
Attention: Office of the director of Program, Development
and Implementation, Mr. L.B. Barlett

Canadian Addresses Continued

Department of Education
P.O. Box 2017
St. Johns
A1C 5R9
Attention: Supervisor, Department of Information Statistics
and Publication, Mr. K. Penny

Education
1035 de Lachevrotiere
Quebec
G1R 5A5

Department of Education and Vocational Training
Box 2703
Whitehorse
Yukon
Y1A 2C6

The above addresses were obtained from:

World of Learning 1975-6, vol. 1 & 2

Hamilton, Board of Education
Box 558, Hamilton
L8N 3L1
Attention: Director of Education, E.A. Hutton

Ottawa Board of Education
330 Gilmour Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 0P9
Attention: Office of The Director of Education A. Cummins

Scarborough, Board of Education
Civic Centre
140 Borough Drive
Scarborough, Ontario
M1P 4N6
Attention: Director of Education, A.S. Taylor

2. Names and Addresses of Foreign Educators to whom letters and questionnaires of inquiry were sent - April 1977

Association for Childhood Education International
3615 Wisconsin Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016
U.S.A.

Catholic International Education Office
rue des Eburons 60
B-1040 Burssels
Belgium

Inter-American Education Association
Room 401
1150 Ave of the America
New York, 36 N.Y.
U.S.A.

Inter-America Education Association
Rio Bamba 1059
Buenos Aires
Argentina

International Association for the Advancement of
Educational Research
Henri Dunamtlaan 1
Ghent, Belgium

U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare
Washington, D.C.
U.S.A.
Elementary School Divisions

Senator John Carrick
Canberra,
Australia

Office of the Minister of Education
Brussels,
Belgium

Federal Minister of Education and Science
Helmut Rohde
Bonn, Germany

Foreign Addresses Continued

Minister of Public Education
Prof. Mikhail Prokofiev
Moscow,
U.S.S.R.

Office of Secretary of State for Education and Science
Rt. Hon. Reg. Prentice, M.P.
London, England

Office of Minister of Education and Science
J.A. van Kemenade
The Hague
The Netherlands.

National Education, Social Welfare Office,
Senator J.P. van der Spuy
Pretoria,
South Africa

Minister of Education
Mr. Bertil Zachrisson
Stockholm, Sweden

These addresses were obtained from the following sources:

The Europa Year Book, 1977

The Inter-Year Book and Statemen's Who's Who



McMASTER UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology

1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4M4

Telephone: 525-9140 Local 4481

3. Letter of Enquiry

March 25, 1977

Gentlemen:

I am interested in obtaining information regarding lunch hour school policies for children aged six to twelve attending schools located in your cities and larger towns.

I am a student at the above university and I am conducting an (inter)-national comparison on the organization of lunch breaks for urban children.

Any information you have regarding general or local policies for your schools would be appreciated.

As a guide for the type of questions I am seeking answers for, I enclose a simple questionnaire.

If there is a wide variety in programming of lunch time periods for the schools under your jurisdiction, please be kind enough to pass along the request for information to the local regions.

Any literature or personal comments on the subject would also be much appreciated. Please reply to the above address and mark the envelope for my attention.

Yours very truly,

Nancy N. Gaasenbeek

Encl.



McMASTER UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology

1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4M4
Telephone: 525-9140 Local 4481

4. Short Questionnaire

Please mail replies to:

N. Gaasenbeek
R.R. #3, Box 12
Dundas, Ontario
L9H 3E5

Elementary School Children - in Urban Schools

Lunch Break Policies

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>OTHER</u>
1. Is it the children's or parents' option to allow the child to stay at school during the lunch break?			
2. Are the children discouraged to stay at school during the lunch break?			
3. Is there facility, in the form of space made available for students to eat lunches? (class-room or cafeteria) .			
4. Is the lunch break one hour or longer?			
5. Is such a facility for eating lunches supervised?			
6. Supervised:			
By a teacher or teacher's aid? (paid by the Board) . .			
7. By a parent or other volunteer? (unpaid)			
8. Is any food provided?			
9. - milk and/or other drinks only?			
10. - cold foods (sandwiches, etc)?			
11. - hot foods provided			
12. Is the food provided (if any) free to the students? . . .			
13. If it is to be paid by the student/parent, is part of the cost subsidized?			

Short Questionnaire Continued

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>OTHER</u>
14. Is the supervision for the entire lunch break?			
15. Is there any other recreational activity scheduled for students during the lunch time?			
16. Is the remainder of the lunch period left to play-time activity?			

5. Long Questionnaire

Please return to: Ms. N. Gaasenbeek
R.R. #3, Box 12
Dundas, Ontario-CANADA
L9H 3E5

LUNCH POLICIES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

1. May students (aged 6 to 12 years) choose to stay at school during the lunch period?

2. If the answer to question 1 is yes, Is any food provided at school during the lunch break?

Is this food provided "free" for the students? _____

If it is to be paid by the student, is part of the food cost subsidized?

Is food provided to supplement the student's nutritional needs?

Are lunches planned by a dietician? _____

Are lunches catered by commercial firms? _____

Do the schools or Boards control the selection of the foods offered to children?

Is the available food, not controlled and merely a convenience for the students?

3. When children stay for lunch-where do they eat their lunch? (in a cafeteria, an empty classroom, etc.)

4. Are the lunch areas supervised? _____

By whom? _____

Is the supervisor paid? _____

Long Questionnaire Continued

Are children supervised for the entire lunch break? _____

If not, what do the children do and where do they go for the remainder of the time?

5. How much time is allotted for the lunch break? _____

6. Approximately how many of the schools in your area offer optional lunch programs - as a percentage?

Comments: _____
