

4. The principal of each school would regain some of the authority and prestige he lost when County School Board came into effect. Without the restrictions placed upon him by executive councils with whom he must consult before making virtually any decision, he would be free to interpret the wishes of the community he serves. This in itself would go a long way towards re-instating the confidence of the public in their school system.
5. Last, but not least, the responsibility for the direction of education in an area would to some degree be returned to each community where the people are vitally affected by how their schools operate. Many more people would be involved in decisions regarding the education of their children.

It is clear that revamping the educational system would be difficult but not impossible. However, it would take considerable political courage.

3. A further idea for controlling the escalating costs of education in Ontario would be to exercise some control over the numbers of teachers entering the profession. It is a well-known fact that Ontario has a vast surplus of qualified teachers because for years, and in spite of falling enrolment, colleges of education have been turning out B. Ed. graduates at an alarming rate - graduates for whom there are no jobs available in the field of education.

Colleges of Education are expensive to operate, not only from the plant aspect, but also from the large numbers of senior staff employed. It would appear reasonable that in this time of falling enrolment, and with a large unemployed mass of qualified teachers, some of these institutes should be phased out so the supply and demand factor would come more into line.

4. Another saving in educational costs might occur if the Ministry of Education would stop trying to be all things to all men.

The proliferation of school boards for French students and for Roman Catholic students with their accompanying educational hierarchies place a terrific strain on the taxpayers' dollar now that all feed at the same public trough. Not only does this proliferation encourage bigotry and divisiveness among the young people of our communities, but it is bound to increase our taxes to keep these three parallel systems in operation.

School Boards must be encouraged by the ministry to take a tougher approach to the closing of schools where student numbers are not sufficient to keep the operation viable. The Leeds and Grenville County Board of Education has such a situation at present where they are adding a \$200,000 addition to a small high school of some 300 students and whose enrolment is predicted to be even less by 1989.

The irony is that there are two larger, secondary schools, within a reasonable distance whose present enrolment would allow them to absorb these students, and more, quite readily. The miracle is that the Ministry has supported the addition to the small school. One begins to doubt the common sense exercised by the Ministry in approving such projects.

By closing the one school where costs are almost twice as much per student to operate than any other school in the system, a substantial saving on plant and personnel would be accomplished. We are sure this is not an isolated situation across the province of Ontario. Boards MUST be encouraged to take these tough decisions.

6. Although many recommendations in the Report of the Commission on Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education makes sense, the language is frequently difficult for the layman to comprehend. However, our Council is prepared to support the following recommendations in particular:

- a) That provincial wide bargaining of salary and employee benefits, including the number of days worked be instituted, and that all other matters be negotiated between the Board and its employees (#9 and 10)
- b) That each school board conduct regularly a comprehensive evaluation of the system using EXTERNAL personnel - preferably people not closely connected with the local educational scene, and supported by a number of successful business people on the committee.  
The educational scene in Ontario is so in-grown that educators cannot be trusted to evaluate the system they have created. They are too concerned with "covering their asses" to be critical - or realistic. (#12 with variations)
- c) That subsection 126(5) of the Education Act be amended to require corporation assessment in a municipality not designated for public school purposes be assessed for public school or separate school purposes in the same proportion as residential and farm assessment bear to each other. (#19)
- d) That the province employ a phase-in strategy to guard against undue shifts in the tax burden; (#'s 21 and 22)
- e) That the government of Ontario affirm its financial commitment toward the financing of education, and that it move forward toward contributing AT LEAST 60% of the approved costs: (#23 with stress on "AT LEAST")
- f) That the Ministry increase the per capita grant ceilings to more realistic levels with additional legislative grants. The Ministry must get it through its collectively thick skull that in spite of falling enrolment, fixed costs in the schools remain fairly static and that by financing on the basis of student enrolment, they are unloading excessive costs onto the shoulders of the municipal tax-payer. (#25)
- g) That the province continue with the concept of block grant and respect the freedom of school boards to set their budgetary priorities and allocate their funds, including general legislative grants, according to local needs.  
This does not negate our feeling that when a Board of Education is completely unrealistic the Ministry should step in and say "NO". (#28)
- h) That the Program Review Committee be established to review proposed new programs forced on local Boards be paid for in whole by the province. (#29 with variations)
- i) That the ministry revise the calculation of average daily enrolment for grant purposes, having due regard for any financial impacts on school boards; (#31)
- j) That the funding of adult basic education programs be maintained and that boards continue to provide such programs and where expedient co-operate with colleges of applied arts and technology, community groups, and other ministries. (#49 - these programs are PARTICULARLY useful in Eastern Ontario)
- k) Other recommendations we would strongly support in the Report are #'s 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47.
- l) We further support recommendations #51, 52 and 53, but have some reservations about #54 because most task forces which have developed comprehensive plans have been proven wrong time and time again. A ministry which failed in the 1960's to predict the changing enrolment patterns of today leaves one with little confidence in their forecasting abilities or in the abilities of the people they select to peer into the future.

It is quite obvious that a written response to a report such as THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE FINANCING OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ONTARIO must necessarily be somewhat reactionary.

We have neither the time nor the expertise to consider all the implications of such a document and as a result can only give a "gut" feeling towards many of the recommendations.

We believe, that with the outstanding exception of how taxes could be controlled, the Commission has done a commendable job.

Don Warren, Deputy-Reeve  
Township of South Crosby

cont'd from page 3

A Single Death by Eric Wright.  
It is close to Christmas and Inspector Charlie Salter of the Toronto Police is happily making present lists until his first wife Gerry appears in his office demanding more police action in the apparently unsolved case of a woman found strangled several weeks before. Salter is assigned to the job of reviewing every aspect of the case, Gerry goads him and finally helps. He finds the answer in time to enjoy his Christmas with an unexpectedly joyful family party.  
BS

Gram Negative by Barbara Weiner.

Gram Negative septicemia is a form of blood poisoning, very dangerous, which the central character is struggling to overcome. This novel is a fast moving tale of a hospital; patients, doctor, nurses come and go amid fierce rivalries and emergencies in the Intensive Care Unit of Sprague General Hospital. Romance blooms of course. The author is an I.C.U. nurse and often detailed descriptions of emergencies have a ring of truth about them.  
BS

The Long Way Round by William Moore.

Not all surviving members of the British Expeditionary Force reached the beaches of Dunkirk at the time of the fall of France, June 1940. A small group of Seaforth Highlanders, a Lieutenant, a Sergeant and six of their men were trapped in a heavily occupied coastal area near Roven. Refusing to surrender, they headed inland and found themselves in rabbit hutches, convents, brothels and prisons and in Paris, Marseilles and Spain before getting back home eleven months later and miraculously still intact. Tribute is paid to the soldiers and to the regimental system of the Seaforths, to Lt. Richard Broad's leadership and to the courageous French men, women and children who often risked their lives to help them escape. Let us not forget.  
JR

cont'd on page 25

Can YOUR Water Pass the TEST?  
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- Soaps & detergents not sudsing  
- Rusty stains on sinks, fixtures  
- Mineral deposits on chrome fixtures, bathroom tiles, etc.  
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