

EDITORIAL

The decade in which we find ourselves gives increasing evidence of being a period of detailed and intensive scrutiny of Canadian education. From the intense introspection of the 1960's apparently has emerged a calmer and more deliberate analysis of the rationalizations, structures, procedures and objectives of the various levels of education.

The calm may be deceptive though. What has seemed to emerge are two polar ideologies, each with its set of beliefs. One ideology is of strong "humanistic" persuasion and the other is concerned with "human management" control. The former argues for more individual freedom, while the latter decries its excesses. An example would be the role of "systems management experts". Under the rubric of "accountability", systems such as education are being forced to justify expenditures of human and financial resources. Undoubtedly, some benefits will accrue. But to say that more data (even if the data have validity) are sufficient for educational and administrative decisions is to ignore the substance of the problem. The significance of the information lies in demonstrating that certain conditions are necessary for achieving specified objectives or outcomes. Without the establishment of these kinds of relationships between necessary conditions and specified objectives, decisions will of necessity be based upon unsupported convictions. Accessibility, especially in post-secondary education, is another case in point. There are those who argue that university education is the right of all; others plead for the university to return to its classical role of detached, scholarly pursuits.

In "Canadian Education and the National Identity" Robert M. Stamp turns the focus of analysis to the question of why Canadian schools have not addressed themselves to the task of bolstering Canadian nationalism. After examining the historical influences and the current dissension, Stamp indicates that our strength might be in a trans-national identity savored with the essence of Canadian individuality.

Bernard S. Sheehan, in "Proposal for a National Information System for Higher Education", criticizes Canadian higher education for failing to specify its objectives and failing to evaluate its procedures and practices. He maintains that it is now necessary for higher education to justify its demands with "cold, hard data". Sheehan proposes a mechanism by which such information can be acquired, data which he considers

to be basic to good management. His analysis, like that of Stamp's raises many procedural, practical, and moral problems.

The analysis of the value and the form of post-secondary education is continued in Murray G. Ross' "Models for University Government". Ross makes two points: the need to examine alternative systems of university government and the relations between differing programs and systems. He calls for a systematic sorting and weighing of alternatives before administrative and constitutional changes in universities are made.

The debate undoubtedly will continue. Its course should prove to be exciting, if tumultuous at times.

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