Ray Baillie

Teachers as Developers

A School-based Approach to Curriculum in Social Studies

Much of the failure of curriculum reform and educational
change has been attributed to lack of local participation in
the process of curriculum elaboration. Solutions to problems of
program implementation often include a return to the school as
the most fruitful focus of action. While Baillie's article
illuminates the dynamics of local curriculum development, it is
poignant in its juxtaposition with the highly prescriptive
program d'etudes that are emanating from the Ministry of
Education. Will there be room for sufficient curriculum
elaboration and adaptation to permit its ownership at the local
level?

Ray Baillie has worked over many years to build a
school-based team of teachers who continue to generate a social
studies curriculum of high quality. Their self-built
instructional materials are specifically geared to the needs of
their learners and not of the local educational community. This
article portrays the essential elements of a view and process of
curriculum in which the teacher is a prime creator or developer
as well as a user.

The Ministry is centralizing curriculum planning. The school
population is shrinking. Board schedulers are squeezing out option
courses and teachers are at a dangerously low motivational level. In
the midst of these constraints should we forget about local curriculum
development? If the term curriculum means solely the description of
new course content, then it is true that curriculum development at
the local level is somewhat limited. However, if curriculum is

perceived in the broader sense, as a process of many interacting forces involving students, learning resources, facilities and teachers, then development and change is constant and should never end. In the Social Science Department at Chomedey High School we believe in the latter definition. Thus, the elaboration of curriculum design and its implementation remains our responsibility.

Since the mid-sixties, change in our social science program has been continuous. In the first five years, the staff initiated significant transformations in our total program. Obsolete courses were replaced with new designs. The single textbook was phased out and replaced with multiple resources. Classroom design moved from rows of desks to seminar arrangements promoting student and teacher inter-action. And the staff learned the many new pedagogical techniques which grew out of the sixties. Since this initial period, other new courses have been introduced and developed, but more importantly, the original changes have been closely monitored by teams of teachers through constant review of teaching resources, learning activities, teaching methods, and student evaluation.

The design stage is important since it sets the direction of a course. Nevertheless, we have found that the success or failure of a new program depends more on the implementation stage which may take place over a number of years. This article will deal with some of our experiences and the operational concepts that functioned as we worked through both stages.

Five key concepts are essential to the design and development of our curriculum. Motivation of the human elements - teachers and students; Sharing of decision-making, classroom methods, ideas, and resources; the Organization of staff and curriculum materials; Change that is constant whether it be in administration personnel, staffing, or curriculum needs for the students; and finally, Evaluation and revision that are critical if a sound and rational curriculum is to be produced.

Motivating the teacher

The Ministry, the community and the school community should all participate in curriculum development. Nevertheless, the most important component is the person in the front lines - the teacher. Today, communication between the Ministry, school boards and teachers is so fragile and the bureaucracy so omnipotent, that the necessary co-operation is impossible. Teachers are really the only group in a position to move with change and provide for the on-going curriculum needs of their students. However, there is a qualification: teachers must be willing to develop the competence to act as curriculum developers as well as users. This is not easy.

Teachers must be motivated to spend time and energy on designing and implementing curriculum. Too many teachers see themselves solely as technicians. "Give me the tools, and I will do the job." This attitude results within a system that once distrusted

the competence and motives of teachers. Curriculum was imposed from the top. In the late 1960's this burden was somewhat relieved. However the easing of control was not enough to bring lasting success. Leadership and training was needed but was not forthcoming. Many potentially good programs died in their infancy. Now, we are returning to the situation where curriculum is being developed at the top and imposed upon us. This tends to produce a situation where teachers become alienated toward courses which quickly become out of date. This leads to teacher withdrawal from accountability. It is easy to place blame when you are not responsible. Teachers need good tools with which to teach. Furthermore, they must participate in the making of the tools.

Where has the system gone wrong? It's simple. The powers that be have taken too much for granted. Designing curriculum takes time and energy - commitment. This commitment comes from motivation. Where does the motivation come from?

Released time and similar forms of remuneration are only temporary incentives. They should exist but cannot be relied upon to produce a lasting form of motivation. The latter grows within the teacher himself. Our experience tells us that self-motivation comes as a result of positive feed-back following the utilization of personally developed curriculum. Success reinforces a feeling of competency. Then the possibility of work becoming enjoyable can be expected. Reaching this stage, the teacher can become unstoppable.

Competency comes from external as well as internal factors. It starts with teacher education in the university. The school or department in which he works then becomes critical. This is where he will put his learning to the test. This is where he could receive his most important feed-back - from his students. His peers will make an important impression. If a professional climate of experiment and self-criticism exists, the individual will be inspired to produce and grow himself. Competence is accelerated by informal and formal in-service sessions. These external motivating factors are important. But they are wasted unless they can draw out the internal abilities of the teacher, which become the lasting motivation and which, in the final analysis, are what really count. If principals or department heads are not willing to risk giving teachers the environment to make mistakes and grow, then the teacher as curriculum-maker will disappear.

Motivating the student

Curriculum-makers must consider the intellectual capacity of their students when designing and implementing curriculum. Our experience putting students of all abilities together in the same classroom has proved unsatisfactory for both the superior and slow students. Superior students can elevate the learning environment for the average student. However, students with acute learning or personal problems require a different curriculum, a different approach.

We decided to design a national history course which we hoped would serve these students better than the provincial course. The bottom line of motivation is success. Thus, it was important to re-direct the objectives and content of the course to ensure the greatest chance of success. As the course was implemented, it was important that learning activities be created which could be performed by these students. Moreover, we had to re-orient our expectations in order to allow students to achieve a reasonable success.

The first thing we did was divide the course into many short units. Each would include some form of evaluation. Heavily-weighted political topics such as the rebellions of 1837 and responsible government were eliminated, and social topics such as pioneer life and the Depression given priority. New topics such as the Northern Pipeline issue were designed. Dates and constitutional events lost precedence to stories of people and more exciting events.

Simple skills are now stressed while less emphasis is placed on interpretive skills. Students learn from resources that consider both intellectual level and interest potential. Time, always a factor in curriculum planning, is expanded for some units in order to increase understanding. For example, the Americanization unit is covered in about three weeks, while in the regular course the same information can be covered in one week. Learning activities are now being developed which give the students an opportunity to perform skills and to learn with success. Student evaluation also evolves around a realistic expectation of the students' potential. Once the curriculum designer willingly accepts the condition that confronts him, a realistic direction can be set which holds a chance of success. This success may lead to a degree of satisfaction, which in turn, motivates more learning.

Course design

When designing or changing a course, what kind of product are we seeking? Some key questions are: Is the content worth learning? Will the concepts help the students to grow intellectually? Will the attitude development help the students to adapt better to the world in which they live? Are the skills really what they will need after high school? Will the course educate the student to participate in and improve society? In simple terms, does the course serve the needs of the students and the society in which they live?

Thus, a course or program must have real substance. The curriculum developer must believe that what he is producing is worthwhile. There must be a coherent wholeness to the course. All parts of the course must be inter-related and together they must have some definite direction to them. Furthermore, it is critical that the people teaching it fully internalize this wholeness. Otherwise, the direction taken will be dominated more by procedures than substance. This can lead to alienation on the part of both the teacher and the student.

Many educators are so buried in the pressing and practical details of dealing with students every day that they tend to forget the real purpose of their jobs. This is why it is essential to articulate general objectives for a course. Not only should objectives be stated, but they must be internalized by the teacher. Each strategy or daily technique should reinforce the general direction. There are times when dry content or difficult skills result in some resistance by students. If the teacher believes it is essential for learning in the course as a whole, he is more willing to deal with this resistance and carry on with the job. Coherent general objectives, internalized by the people who work by them, can lead to a course that has lasting quality.

General objectives set the direction of a course. They are difficult and sometimes painful to define. Nevertheless, they are crucial, as they should have a direct effect upon the implementation of a course.

If one examines the desired outcomes in the Secondary V World History course the impact of objectives upon curriculum implementation can be perceived. One obvious outcome would be students becoming better informed and more interested in the more critical news-making events in the world. This means that time must be allocated, resources made available, and learning activities designed. Discussions are not enough to develop the various arguments in an issue. Since the text is inadequate, we have developed study packs on modern concerns such as Iran, South Africa, the Middle East, Zimbabwe, El Salvador and so forth. These studies were not necessarily part of the original design. However, they are a product of the original objectives.

Students should come out of such a course with much improved historical and social science skills. However, when deciding on which skills to stress in the course, we identified the skills being emphasized in the Secondary IV National History course. We believe that skills must be reinforced and expanded each year. Only then can one decide to introdce new skills. A few years ago, the department staff designed a skill progression chart from Secondary I to Secondary V which can be used by a teacher as a guide to develop skill objectives for his course.

If skills are considered important, the course must be organized so that students are given the opportunity to perform them. Students must be given ample instruction and time for research. Role-play simulations have become an important medium for us in the development of various skills. Adequate resources are needed. An effective debate cannot be carried out without resources for both sides of the argument. Thus, devising a list of skills is only the initial step. The implementation stage, which also involves the testing and feed-back process, is more crucial.

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Conceptual understanding and sequence

Again, defining the main concepts of a course is only the first step. In fact, in World History, the concepts were already established. Nevertheless, when identifying concepts one must look at both the nature of the course and the Secondary I to IV concept scheme. What the student learns during his high school experience will influence his thinking and conceptual understanding. We have developed a strategy where common directions have been established for the whole social science program from Secondary I to Secondary V. A common strategy is necessary if conceptual understanding is to grow and reach its potential. It takes time for the understandings to fall into place. Thus, we are attempting to build and implement a system based on the spiral process of learning, reinforcement, and expansion of concepts from Secondary I to Secondary V. The design stage, therefore, must go beyond the course itself. It should include the program strategies established in the total program.

Once the design is made, the more difficult process of implementing it into the curriculum process must be developed. Strategies must be planned and techniques devised which will allow students to expand their own conceptual understandings. First, the components of the concept must be defined. Then, a course strategy should be planned. For example, in World History, components of nationalism are taught with the study of the origins of World War I. Then the concept will be reviewed, tested, and expanded during the study of various topics such as the rise of Hitler, Castro's Cuba, India between 1918 and 1947, and Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in the late 1970's. This re-cycling process is necessary as conceptual understanding develops over a period of time. Only when the curriculum-maker understands this will he include it in the design stage.

A student will not understand post World War II Soviet policy in Eastern Europe without previously studying Western intervention in the Russian civil war and the Russian experience in World War II. Hitler's Germany must be preceded by a study of the responsibilities for World War I and the Versailles Treaty, if there is to be any expectation of understanding why the German people supported him. The Colonial period in 19th Century Africa must be studied before one can understand the frustrations which have led to bloodshed in recent times. The examples are endless. Bright young minds, tainted with prejudice or bias, can be re-directed if curriculum is well-planned and if teachers utilize objective-oriented activities with their students.

The unit

Organizing a course into sections has many advantages. Content can be set up in a rational sequence. Skills and concepts can be more easily highlighted. Resources can be organized for more efficient use, and continuous evaluation can be implemented more effectively.

There are many criteria which can be used to divide up a course.

In the social studies we use topics, such as Early Man. In Canadian history we use time, such as the Laurier era. In Personal Development we use the stages of human life. In Canada and the World (Sec.III), we use issues, such as Hunger and Over-population. It is preferable that a guide be written for each unit. Included in the guide would be objectives, a sequence of the topics covered, key skills and concepts, learning activities, and the resources used by the student.

The guide is just that - a starting point for staff who are teaching the course for the first time. It promotes consistency in the program. This is especially important where there is no text book. The teacher-developed curriculum system is fragile and can easily crumble if there is no structure built in. The structure, however, should be flexible enough to allow for change and revision. Most important, the unit sets for the teacher a framework which promotes resource and activity design as well as more effective integration into the course of concepts and skills. This leads to more coherence in the program and further understanding of the direction of the course for both teacher and student.

The teaching team

Teachers tend to protect their own good ideas and materials. This is a barrier to progress in curriculum. A competent teacher serves his student well, but when he leaves so do many good ideas. Groups (teams) of teachers working and sharing together can be a positive factor in the development of ideas, activities, resources and test items.

There is no question that the individual teacher can develop excellent curriculum ideas. However, there are advantages to the team approach. It promotes the exchange of ideas, which not only aids the individual in his daily and weekly planning but also helps activate him to produce more of his own learning resources. The individual working in isolation tends to become too 'me' oriented, while the team approach promotes more consideration for other teachers and the students in general. Groups of teachers working together are more likely to pass on their ideas to the teachers that follow them. When individuals face particular difficulties, the team can act as a valuable support. More learning materials and resources are available. Admittedly, not all individuals are suited to working effectively with others. But, most are, if the traditional barriers can be broken. Sharing can become a positive force in the development of curriculum and of people.

Course organization

In the early 1970's we were faced with the problem of implementing Quebec's poorly-designed Canadian History course. Following the course outline would have bored the students with the

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study of their own country. The course really offered nothing new - the same old topics slightly re-organized. What the course needed was new blood, a new direction which would excite the young student in the study of Canada. So the Canadian History staff formed a team, with a mandate to revise and improve the course.

The first move was to set up the organizational framework with which to promote systematic development over the next decade. We then divided the course into era units. Using these units as our base, we established a filing system around six key resource components: 1) printed student hand-outs, 2) student activities and projects, 3) overhead transparencies, 4) slides and film-strips, 5) teacher references, and 6) test items. Each unit in the course is divided into the six components above. Whenever new materials are developed they are filed accordingly. This system, if followed consistently, accelerates the sharing of ideas and facilitates quick and easy retrieval of resources. It has been an invaluable aid to staff teaching the course for the first time. And, particularly important, successful learning activities do not disappear when teachers move on. They are still available for teachers to use or to develop further. None of the original three teachers are now teaching the course. Yet nine years later, the files are still expanding and the course continues to evolve.

Course evolution

Design is only the first stage of curriculum development. In fact, design continues throughout the implementation stage. There is no such thing as a completed curriculum. Students change, ideas change, society changes. Thus, curriculum must change. Educators must be prepared to meet the changing needs and harness the motivational forces to up-date curriculum. Once we sit back and state that we have completed the program, we have already taken our first step back.

In the late 1960's, we recognized that the Secondary II Ancient-Medieval History course was meeting the needs of neither the students nor the community. Here we were teaching young teenagers about empires more than 2000 years old while they were learning nothing about human life today. It turned them off. Being history teachers, we recognized that ancient history has much value; nevertheless, we decided that a major overhaul of the curriculum was necessary.

The staff began what was to become a long and arduous task of transforming this course into a more interesting and worthwhile social studies program. In the next few years, the staff experimented with and developed many ideas. Some ideas had lasting quality, sometimes we chose the wrong path. During this somewhat painful period of trial and error, administrative support was crucial if teachers were to participate in curriculum improvement. Those who are involved with making change must be given the privilege of making mistakes as long as they carry out a truly intellectual review of what they are doing.

or a time, history was abandoned in favour of current issues. Course content began to play a minor role compared to skill development. Concepts were over-emphasized. Each teacher experimented with and taught his or her "own thing". Mistakes were being made and we did not really know where we were or where we were going. New teachers joined the team and questioned the purpose and direction of the course. Strenuous meetings were held to deal with the role of history, skills, concepts, and content in a course. Gradually, the form and content of the course began to appear. The invigorating and sometimes arduous task of experiment, review, and development was paying off. The relentless search for a new direction, which took seven years, resulted in the discovery of a pedagogy and curriculum that are both unique and valuable. The process of discovery was crucial. It led the staff to believe in what they were producing, which in turn has resulted in extreme commitment to improvement.

The present Social Studies course has reverted to history with an emphasis upon content - however, in a much different form. Our exploration with new methods, skill development, and conceptual understanding has changed both the form and content of the original course. The program uses ancient history to study the development of early man. It is centred around topics such as evolution, cities, government and democracy. Historical examples are highlighted; however, the social science method of learning is emphasized. Students learn how the archaeologist, anthropologist and historian work. Skills and concepts are vital but they do not dominate. And there has been a return to concrete information as the basis of skill development and conceptual growth.

We do not believe we have found the only answer. Other people have developed Secondary II courses that are different and just as suitable. The process of grass-roots development is what has been so vital. Teachers grow, curriculum improves, and student learning is greater. The Social Studies course, which is unique in the Laurenval Board, has met much opposition from traditionalists. However, it has become one of our strongest and most successful courses. It has passed the test of time. It is still evolving, although at a slower rate. This evolution allows the new teacher joining the team to become involved in the process of change, which is so important to the growth of the teacher. The school administrators have supported these changes chiefly because they realize that the teachers involved know the direction in which they are taking their students and can justify it on educational grounds.

Harnessing motivational forces

The Physical Education teacher uses professional sports. The Vocational teacher uses the labour market. The Geography teacher uses volcanoes and earthquakes. And the History teacher uses elections and world crises. The surrounding world abounds with exciting events and new knowledge that can be used to accelerate

learning in the class-room. The teacher as curriculum-maker misses an important opportunity to motivate students if he fails to plan for the harnessing of these forces.

In many of our courses, we attempt to forecast events and crises which are likely to occur during the school year. Then files of learning materials are started, audio-visual aids are produced, and ideas for implementation in the class-room begin to foment. This year we identified Poland, the Persian Gulf, Cambodia, and El Salvador for special study in World History.

Timing is critical if the study is to have its greatest motivational and educational impact. Naturally, the best time to activate the study is when the issue is hot. Just as important is the readiness of the student. For instance, if a student has previously studied Marxism and revolution, the examination of the El Salvador issue will reinforce earlier learning, expand his concept of revolution, and give him an opportunity to use his skills. Thus, studying current issues goes beyond just interesting students with news items. If properly integrated into the regular curriculum, it will reinforce some of the basic learning objectives in the course. This requires foresight and planning on the part of the teacher. In reality, he is designing curriculum during the implementation stage.

Alternative learning opportunities

Students have different personalities; thus, they learn in ways which will be both productive and comfortable for them. When developing curriculum, we must take these factors into account. Teacher-directed lessons remain vital to learning. Nevertheless, individuals should also be given opportunities to learn in other ways - through groups, debate, independent study, and so forth. Since various methods suit different students, the curriculum should be planned so that more than one method can be used simultaneously.

As the teacher further develops a unit over the years, new activities are created which allow for the many learning styles. For example, the 'Industrial Revolution' unit in the World History course provides the student with a choice of whether to 1) debate the question of Industrialization, 2) deal with primary sources from the early industrial revolution, 3) design a visual presentation on the theme, or 4) write a research paper on the topic. Each of these learning opportunities is researched, alternately with regular class-room lessons where ideas, information, and direction are given the students. At the completion of the unit the student will be responsible for both class work and an alternative project, the latter requiring different skills and allowing for many learning styles. Alternative learning requires well-prepared activities, an organized teacher, and multiple resources.

The textbook can become either a useful tool or a destructive factor in the curriculum-developing process. The danger in using the text on a daily basis in the class-room is that the development of new ideas and activities can be stifled. Over-use of the text can result in some of the following effects. Firstly, the same text used year after year produces unimaginative teachers, which in turn, results in unenthusiastic teaching and bored students. Secondly, since each text has built-in objectives, the teacher is relieved of this most important responsibility, to control the meaning and direction of his course. The teacher must internalize the curriculum. It must in some way be moulded around his personality and style. If the essence of the course is produced externally, there is a danger of rote teaching and learning. Thirdly, the knowledge explosion puts texts out-of-date before they are published and marketed. Furthermore, the format of a text makes it difficult to provide both sides of an argument. Without a variety of up-dated sources, we cannot develop the quality of curriculum under discussion.

Using multiple resources can result in problems for both teacher and student. The proliferation of hand-outs can result in confusion and a lack of security for both. We have developed the idea of a study pack, which acts to counter the deficiencies of the text and of multiple resources. The study pack is an organized collection of various learning resources, such as primary and secondary resources, news reports, photographs, political cartoons, and charts, with accompanying questions. It has proved invaluable in our program for many reasons. Its conciseness and attractive format is more palatable than the text. Its flexibility as a teaching tool allows for multi-purpose learning. It facilitates the up-dating of new ideas and information. And both student and teacher are given a greater sense of security. Moreover, the production of such learning packs gives the creative teacher a sense of achievement.

Our Secondary V Man in Society course, which was started from scratch without a text, now has a dozen such packs. The Modern Quebec unit in the National History course, which is inadequately covered in the text, is supplemented with a study pack on the Quiet Revolution of the 1960's. The Third World section of the World History course is bolstered by numerous study packs without which the student would remain totally dependent upon the teacher. Introduction of the study pack into our program has given substance and stability to many of our courses, while allowing them to remain flexible and subject to improvement.

Well-planned multiple resources can still result in counter-creative conditions, as does the textbook. If all these resources are so easily available, the teacher can quite as easily devolve back to the role of technician. Staleness can result as it does with the textbook. And it all requires more work. The motivation to develop new ideas remains a challenge that is essential to the growth of both students and teachers.

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The resource centre

It is easy to stress the necessity for a variety of sources. But how does one obtain them? And how do you organize them so that both student and teacher can use them effectively? Fortunately, our first changes in the 1960's coincided with the period when the educational climate promoted new ideas and the money was available for those who could justify program development.

As we started to re-mould our curriculum, we began the development of a resource and planning centre for the social sciences. A system was devised which encouraged the building of curriculum resources. Monies previously used for texts were now allocated toward the expansion of all types of resources. Gradually, with the combination of annual orders and teacher-developed materials, an extensive library of resources which promote curriculum has been achieved. This did not happen overnight. Factors important to our success have been the facility itself, the commitment of our staff, and the organizational system. Teachers could see evidence of progress, which in turn, tended to motivate more action.

The centre is designed primarily for teacher planning and curriculum development, although students make regular use of its resources for research. Each course has its own reference library. Professional journals are available. Course files and materials are set up for quick and easy retrieval. A sign-out system facilitates efficient use of audio-visual hardware. And the tables are arranged to encourage the flow of ideas. Teachers meet here for social interaction, informal discussion of ideas and problems, and formal team review and planning meetings. It is here where new teachers are trained, and where the seeds of much curriculum take root. Without the centre, it would be difficult to use valuable past experiences to build our program.

Curriculum review

Improvement depends upon effective evaluation, followed by action. Review of curriculum must be constant. Below is an instrument we have designed to help us measure where we are and where we want to go in any particular course.

For each aspect, the ensuing procedure is followed:

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

no activities	some activities			almost adequate number		many activities		extensive number allowing alternative learning	

Where we are: _____ (teachers agree on a number above) _____

Problem areas: _____ (staff defines main problem areas here) _____

Goal for the year: _____ (teachers mark in number) _____

Action plan: _____ (teachers agree on target objectives which

will be evaluated at the year's end) _____

The following are examined in a similar manner:

a) General objectives. Are these objectives clearly written, functional, and followed? Are there objectives in both the affective and cognitive domains? (This could include psycho-motor in some programs.)

b) Course content. Is the core content (including concepts) defined? Can we rationally justify this content? Does the course have a wholeness to it?

c) Skills. Is there a core of skills that are stressed? Are these skills co-ordinated with the levels above and below? Are we teaching and evaluating skills? Do our students receive feed-back on their skill progress?

d) Team staff co-ordination. Are the staff communicating with each other? Is the course being planned co-operatively? Is there effective sharing of ideas, resources, activities and test items?

e) Learning resources. Do the multiple resources allow for alternative learning opportunities? Are the reading levels adequate? Do the resources promote interest in the subject? Are there enough Canadian resources? (Resources would include such items as texts, booklets, study packs, print-outs, slides, audio-visual kits, transparencies, films, and so forth.)

f) Organization of course materials and information. Does the organization allow for effective retrieval by the staff? Examples would be files on print-out masters, student activities and test items. Other examples are booklets, print-outs, transparencies, slides, bibliographies and team minutes.

g) Unit guides. Does each unit in the course have a description which includes content, objectives, concepts, skills, values dealt with, and learning activities?

h) ⌐tudent activities. Are there enough activities which promote learning and interest? Examples are simulations, games, group activities, individual studies, and various class activities.

i) Teacher references. Does our professional library include adequate references which support the improvement of the course? This would include reference books, manuals, periodicals and tapes. Do these references allow us to up-date our information, resources, and pedagogy?

j) Student evaluation. Are we effectively evaluating student knowledge, conceptual understanding, skill level and attitudinal change? Do we have an adequate collection of quality items testing these areas?

An instrument for measuring the above is available to the department staff. Although these aspects should be considered constantly by teachers who are developing curriculum from the grass-roots, the above in-depth evaluation should be carried out only periodically - when the need arises.

Conclusion

It is recognized that the key to learning in the schools is the teacher, not the curriculum. A competent teacher may inspire learning even if the curriculum is inadequate, while a poor teacher will rarely make quality curriculum succeed. Ideally, both should grow and improve together.

Education in Quebec today is in trouble. Schools and courses are being compressed. The Ministry is centralizing decision-making. Confrontation and strikes are demoralizing teachers. The public is demanding an over-simplified back-to-basics educational system. Vandalism, which is rife in the schools, is a product of poor pedagogy and curriculum as well as of lack of rule enforcement.

It is imperative that educational policy-makers allow teachers to become more involved in the decision-making process. Curriculum is the obvious place. Teachers are in the most suitable position to create or re-mould a curriculum which will keep up with the changing forces in our society. Keeping teachers as technicians only is a retrograde step. Schools need leadership that is concerned with more than administrivia and discipline. Teachers must be re-trained in pedagogy and curriculum. The environment in the schools must motivate people to participate. Resources and facilities should be made available, and teachers must be given the authority and responsibility to participate effectively in the total curriculum process. Only then will our students benefit most.