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SPECIAL REPORT

The Reform of Collegial Education:

**A STEP
BACKWARDS
FOR THE
POPULATION
OF QUEBEC**

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* This report based on a Bulletin published by the Syndicat du personnel enseignant du Collège Ahuntsic has been produced by the Comité École Société (School and Society Committee).

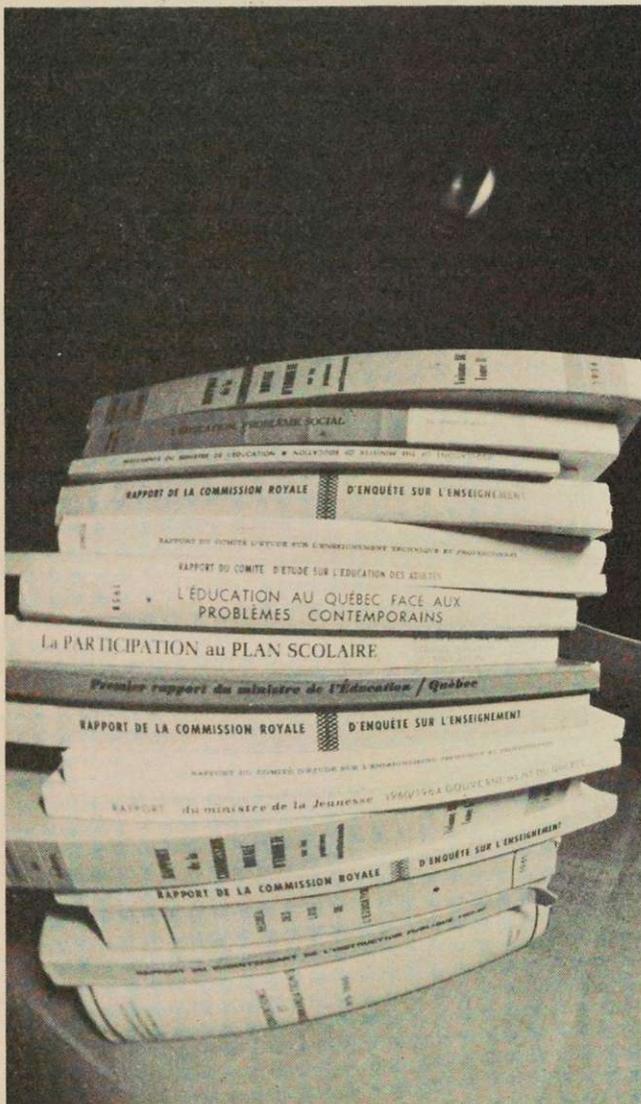
(1) Bulletin de liaison, novembre 1982, La "réforme" de l'enseignement collégial: un recul pour le peuple québécois.

INTRODUCTION

Fall of 1982 did not only bring 60,000 pages of decrees. Several major documents based on a new, reoriented concept of professional education gave the government project to reorganise Quebec's schools a more concrete form. The government has been developing this educational counter-reform for several years. Let's look back on its major stages.

1974: Nadeau Report

1975: GTX



- 1965: Formation of GIPEX (the Inter-Ministerial Group on Programs and Exams)
- 1978: White Paper on Colleges
- 1979: Bill 24-25 — Bill concerning Colleges
College Councils
The Commission on Professional Training
Evaluation Commission
- 1980: Green Paper on Professional Training
Project of Settlement for Collegial Studies (PREC)
- 1981: Beige Paper on the Professional Education of Youth
- 1982: White Paper on the Professional Training of Youth
The Laurin Plan for Scholastic Reorganisation
New Teaching Structures at the Secondary Level
Semi-Official Version of Rules for Collegial Studies
Canada-Quebec agreement on Adult Professional Training
The Decrees.

Through the years, statements of policy have been followed by specific acts including:

- administrative evaluation techniques,
- watering-down of content in certain programs,
- trusteeship control over provincial coordination of course content,
- general directives,
- school-work committees
- and finally the expected transfer of secretarial training to the secondary level.

However, the working conditions established by our collective agreements have prevented government from completely carrying out its projects. This year, by taking advantage of the social climate created by the "crisis", the government has used the decrees to create the administrative conditions necessary for the application of its "counter-reform".

From the position in which we find ourselves, understanding the coherence and objectives of the counter-reform is more important than ever in order to better come to grips with it and block the application of its most destructive elements.

1- THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COUNTER-REFORM

The objective of the educational counter-reform is linked to the present situation of the labour market in the Western World. In order to increase their profit margins and their ability to compete (capital yield) large companies have used three major strategies:

- * Use of Third World labour maintained militarily in a state of oppression,
- * A new worldwide division of labour, which leads to the creation of cartels and accelerated monopolisation through policies of high interest rates,
- * Development of advanced technology (use of robots, office automation, and video technology) in order to create machines capable of replacing human work.

These strategies affect education on at least two levels:

- 1- Firstly, a reduction of state budgets for social services. Funds thus saved are poured into the military industry, capital reorganisation and the financing of advanced technology.
- 2- Secondly, a reduction in the quality of professional formation in order to adjust to deteriorating employment conditions. This deterioration of employment has several effects:
 - a) Destabilisation of employment — high unemployment rates and loss of job security accounting for:

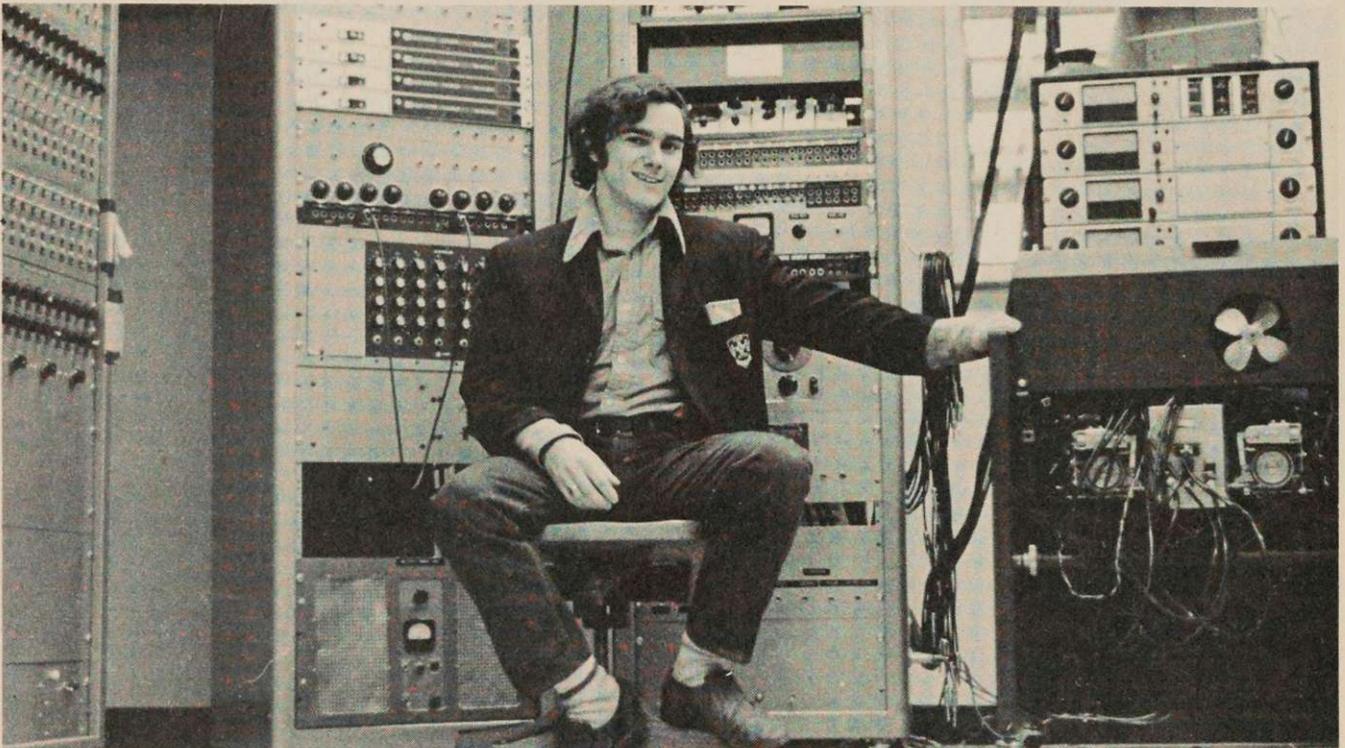
- * lower manpower costs;
- * higher productivity through part-time work, work done at home and piecework instead of hourly wages.

- b) Permanent retraining to fit new specialisation needs on a national level and technological innovations to insure that, as management expressed it in France, "people will no longer identify with the position that they hold, but rather with the specific task that they are carrying out."

The political project of the P.Q. is in line with these strategies set forth by the monopolies. In "**Bâtir le Québec I et II**" (Building Quebec, I and II) (Volume II is subtitled "Advanced Technology"), the government explains the economic conditions into which the Quebec educational counter-reform is inserted: reduce the cost of labour in Quebec and develop the specialisations which will make Quebec's industries more "competitive."

This counter-reform is organised around three key areas:

- a) Profitability
- b) Collegial instruction made to serve private enterprise
- c) Increased state control through new administrative techniques.



2- THE MAIN THRUST OF THE COUNTER-REFORM

a) Profitability

To speak of profitability or "rationalisation" means, first and foremost, **reducing costs**. The White Paper on Colleges had already announced that, due to the economic situation, the government would have to redefine its budget priorities. Concretely, education could no longer "evolve under the sign of abundance." (French version, p. 34)

Thus, in the 1979-1980 Parizeau budget we see a drop of 1.3% in spending on education while the governments total budget rose by 12.2% (corresponding to the rate of inflation). The same trend was evident in the 1980-1981 budget. In the same period, the budgets for "economic services" from the state rose from 18 to 20%.

As explained above, the Quebec government is cutting back expenditures for social services (health and

education) and the public service while, on the other hand, "stimulating the economy" through subsidies to private enterprise. These budget cuts in the public sector clearly lead to hundreds of personnel cutbacks and fewer services.

This "rationalisation" has other effects: higher worker productivity, especially from support staff and non-teaching professionals who must take over the tasks of those whose positions have been cut or done away with. It also implies increased "profitability" on equipment and resources at the expense of service quality. College libraries cannot develop without an adequate budget; broken or outmoded equipment is not replaced; costs seemingly or actually rise (for example, parking, class notes sold to students). Registration and admission fees for adults are rising. However, these rising costs represent absolutely no improvement in services.

b) Collegial Instruction at the Service of Private Enterprise

The transition in collegial instruction designed to meet the new employment situation involves the following strategies:

- * the regionalisation of the options presented in the White Paper in order to "revive" professional education (p. 67, French version). How far can this regionalisation be pushed without chaining the youth of a given area to local industry?
- * by creating "college-work" committees in all regions of Quebec, the state creates structures that allow employers to decide which programs should be developed, restrained or eliminated. These committees could even propose the creation of institutions specialised in a particular technology that is useful to local industry.
- * the specialised schools proposed in the White Paper and in Bill 25 will not only serve to teach young people, but will also be used for applied research in areas of technology useful to local industry. Teachers could be trained via initiation to the production techniques of a company, its problems, its objectives, etc.
- * the redefinition of professional programs by employers would lead to an emphasis on "opera-

tional" rather than general understanding. The introduction of "cumulative credits" would allow the presentation of certificates worth less than a "DEC". It would suit any boss to have workers who, while receiving less pay, would be trained for his immediate needs and would not have enough general knowledge to move or change occupations.

The White Paper on **Quebec's Policy for Cultural Development** is very clear on this issue:

"We should probably expect to see employers who receive young workers after CEGEP taking charge of the specific professional formation that they require (...) In CEGEP (...) we must consider this area, examining the possibility of education shared with private enterprise and create a pedagogical approach appropriate to this kind of instruction."

(Vol. II, pp. 431-432, French version)

As you see, it is professional education that is in danger here. In fact, the reorientation of professional instruction at the secondary and collegial levels is the cornerstone of the counter-reform. A later chapter of this text deals with this issue.

c) Increased State Control

The counter-reform of collegial education increases state control considerably in all areas of college life: centralisation, evaluation and limitation of pedagogical freedom are included in the general orientations of the "reform." In fact, if the government wants to rationalise and respond to the needs of business, it must give itself coercive powers to insure control.

The administrative techniques proposed by the government are being billed as "decentralisation." Decentralisation is a management model in which the state defines the general orientations and then gives local authorities strong administrative powers, allowing them to apply concrete local measures that adhere to the general objectives. Local authorities are introduced to the style of cooperation that they are to use with local representatives who, incidently, will not come from unions.

This management model has been applied through Bills 24 and 25; establishing the college councils and various commissions, including the evaluation commission. Institutional assessment is the method used to insure cooperation at a local level.

The publishing of the "PREC" in 1980 confirmed this form of administration.

The "PREC" introduced greatly increased powers for the "DSP" (Director of Pedagogical Services). In contrast, departmental meetings and individual teachers were reduced to a far lesser role, especially in the assessment of students (clause 34, PREC). The "DSP" could, for example, verify the criteria, the instruments and the overall process of assessment. He would have the right to grant a student "the credits attached to a course if he (the said student) has fulfilled the objectives of the course to his (the DSP) satisfaction" (PREC, clause 23). The "PREC" mandates the "DSP" to judge detailed study plans for each course in order to insure that they are conform to the general directives of the "DGEC" (Director General of Collegial Studies). Through the 1979 collective agreement and the decrees this department becomes an administrative authority of evaluation; a change guaranteed by the annual directives of the annual report and by the "RCD's" (departmental coordinators) conversion into foremen.

On a provincial level, course definitions have been centralised at the Quebec Ministry of Education thanks

to the gradual disappearance of consultative mechanisms at provincial course content coordinating bodies. These bodies imposed the general directives for sciences and english (french) language instruction.

At the heart of efforts to reinforce governmental control of education we find the infamous question of assessment. We should not be fooled by either the constructive statements in the White Paper about assessment as a means to stimulate the quality of education (pp. 38 and 55, French version) or by the bad cliches such as "evolve through evaluation." Assessments handed down by the "boss" will not lead to any improvement in the quality of education.

The similarities between the position held by the Council of Colleges on assessment techniques and the decreed teaching structures and layoffs tend to confirm the double role of assessment as proposed, or imposed, by the "boss": the trusteeship of teaching structures and the pre-justification of cutbacks.

On a pedagogical level assessment will insure "conformity." It will undermine initiative, stop experimental teaching methods, and lay down the groundwork for the standardisation of our teaching programs. This form of evaluation will destroy the creative aspects of education, condemning teachers to a well defined, routine task. It is clear that this assessment/standardisation process is a means of ideological control aimed at insuring that Humanities, English and Sociology courses remain strictly "apolitical." This could apply to any field which is designed to prepare graduates for future work experiences. And what about the apolitical status of courses on Quebec's History or Economy who's contents are directly defined by the Ministry of Education?

As for the cutbacks, we are asked to codirect the restructuring, the layoffs, the placement of teachers on availability, etc., in a clear bid to "divide and conquer"; to create disunity at departmental meetings, within Unions and between different Unions in our Federation. The decrees create a situation (with budget restrictions on one hand and the absence of general policies for the distribution of resources within the network on the other) which seems to indicate that the government hopes to cause competition between different colleges on the basis on their "institutional vocation."

3- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING: CORNERSTONE OF THE COUNTER-REFORM

The key links in the governments proposed counter-reform of professional education are the White Paper on "the professional training of youth"; the Laurin Plan for Scholastic Reorganisation; the new teaching structures at the secondary level; the Canada-Quebec

Agreement on Adult Professional Training; and of course the working conditions imposed by the decrees. However, canadian policies on education also play a very important role.

a) The Canadian Plan and the Canada-Quebec Agreement on Adult Professional Training

On June 22, 1982 Bill C-115 of the Canadian Chamber of Commons created the "National Professional Training Program." This program is being billed publicly as "Tomorrows Skills." The program intends to define professions which are needed throughout Canada first, filling in the list afterwards via negotiations on regional or provincial shortages of manpower with the provinces.

Professions thus defined as having national importance would then be supported through training programs in school, on the job, or both. The chosen professions should correspond to the economic areas in which Canada has (or wishes to develop) some competence within the overall international reorganisation of capital.

To date there are 42 choices on the list of professions deemed to have national importance. Most are on the

level of "mechanics," or "specialised technicians."

The Canada-Quebec Agreement on Adult Professional Training was signed after the adoption of Bill C-115. Through this agreement the government of Quebec has sanctioned federal control of all major areas of professional training in the province. One of the key aspects of this agreement (see para. 2.1.1, French version) is the recognition of an adult (C-115, para. 2) as: "a person who is not legally obliged to attend school in his province of residence." In Quebec, anyone 16 years of age or older will be treated as an adult with respect to the educational system. All CEGEP students are automatically eligible for adult training. The full significance of this fact can only be understood in light of overall government plans for the system of professional training.

b) The Quebec Connection for Professional Mis-Training

The P.Q., faced with high levels of school dropout and unemployment among youth, does not plan to create a more interesting educational system or to create more jobs. They seem to prefer the creation of a system of social injustice. School dropouts would be sanctioned through partial certificates, making young people more useful to private enterprise at very low wages. This is how they will proceed:

*** at the secondary level**

As the last level of obligatory attendance, secondary

school would provide "basic training." From now on this training will include technological rather than scientific instruction. Presentations on professional careers that are in demand at the secondary III level would complete the students technological initiation and orient them towards such careers. Through obligatory technological courses at the secondary III level, and other optional courses in III, IV and V, a "DES" (diploma of secondary studies) could be granted with as many as 28 of 130 credits in technological initiation. Through no provincial content has yet been defined for such courses, we can assume that local industries will be involved and that available manpower will be taken into account.

At the end of secondary V, a student is 16 years old and thus considered to be an adult. The road is open to enter a training program on the job (without pay, but possibly with gratuity) and/or at school. Another possibility would be to enroll at a "center of excellence" where one could follow a program of professional training as a "qualified worker" for a period of up to two years. These programs would also include alternating periods of work and school, with payment in the form of gratuity. Programs offered at the "centers of excellence" would be planned and assessed at bipartite school-industry committees which, together, would form a "national professional steering committee." This steering group would insure regional application of available programs (Quebec is divided into 11 regions). This regionalisation links in with Laurin's reformed school commissions where representatives from schools and industry as well as elected representatives of regional municipalities would sit. The danger of an important drop in the number of options open to students in any given region is very real, as is the possibility of complete dependence of professional training on regional industry (where training does not already take place in the factory).

Civil servants who were involved in the fall 1982 "consultative" regional tours on the professional training of youth have said that the Quebec Ministry of Education plans to create local bipartite committees (school-industry) which would assess professional training programs. Specifically, the teachers of a particular skill will be grouped in joint associations with businessmen who employ the said skill. At a conference given to teachers specialised in printing (November, 1982) Paul-Henri Lamontagne, an upper

level civil servant, explained these joint associations in the following way:

"And if you could work together with the association which Mrs. ... represents (owners association), it would no longer involve just teachers. It's the whole printing sector, owners and teachers, who would tell the government: here are our needs; here are our proposed changes to the program; here are the necessary criteria for assessment. That looks less like a union demand or I don't know what else. It is important that you work together with the association of employers in the area of printing in such a way that, while you will basically get the changes you want, the request for change is not transmitted by someone who, left on his own, would defend his own interests but rather by a body that defends the development of the whole sector. We are very anxious to see this type of coordination between professional teachers associations in a given sector and the corresponding employers association."

That is the "normal" development of professional secondary training. Yet many young people reach 16 years of age before finishing secondary V. For them there is the special "connection" starting in secondary III and continuing through years IV, V and VI. An alternating school-work system will be introduced, possibly including gratuity, to attain a "DES." However, this would be a special program uniting basic scholastic objectives with "an initiation to active life" (work in plain english). This program would produce "non qualified workers." In this group of students there are many special cases; difficult to follow and requiring special resources. You can bet that school will quickly be dropped by most.

*** at the college level**

First we must recognise that, in the eyes of the Ministry of Education, collegial instruction should be aimed at creating technological proficiencies. The objectives of the counter-reform are to lower the cost of manpower in Quebec through lower level education and to limit access to post-obligatory studies to areas "in demand" from private industry. This it becomes necessary to decrease participation in collegial education while lowering the amount of instruction given in the vast majority of fields presently available.

To lower enrollment, the government is counting on the "centers of excellence" and offers of gratuity. Even then P-H Lamontagne explains the Ministry of Education's view as foreseeing a "true danger" that students would move massively from secondary V to college. To avoid this there will be a clear, exclusive program in both secondary VI and VII and college.

Many programs presently available in college will be completely returned to the secondary level. Secretarial training is one such field, as is nursing (presently divided between secondary and university). Other possibilities include "motorised equipment," "pre-flight training," "developmental technology," "forestry," "accounting," and "day care technology." Some elements of data processing programs may also be moved to a secondary level.

In order to insure a lower level of collegial studies the Ministry of Education has already cut course content. Sciences are definitely effected. The ministry also foresees the presentation of certificates of collegial studies which include almost no generalised instruction. It foresees "unspecified" DEC's which could turn out to be "dead end" DEC's.

The greatest reduction in course content can be seen

in the sciences. This year the disappearance of all pre-requisites for college level science programs will mean that any student having 200 hours of instruction in science (one math course and one physics or chemistry course) could register for a science program. Present pre-requisites call for a minimum of 750 hours of scientific studies. This new policy will undoubtedly lower the level of instruction. In the fall of 1982 the regional science coordinators circulated a petition aimed at denouncing the dequalification of scientific education in Quebec. This dequalification leaves us well behind Ontario and the United States in the sciences, and confirms the will of the P.Q. to develop educational programs which will create a pool of cheap labour in Quebec.

The process of regionalisation is also part of the collegial counter-reform with the same effects on accessibility. In the image of the "centers of excellence" on the secondary level, "centers of specialisation" will allow the development of skills chosen to fill the needs of local industry. Studies therein would be subject to strict control, planning and assessment by local businessmen.

Moreover, teachers on staff at "centers of specialisation" would be expected to do "applied research" in support of local industry.

Lower attendance of colleges due to lower registra-

tion (as a result of disciplines transferred to a secondary level), or due to the shorter period needed to complete a program, and linked with the regional specialisation of programs could eventually lead to the closure of some CEGEPS (source: the president of Valleyfield CEGEP to his board of directors).

According to the Ministry of Education, the period required for professional training programs need no longer be three years in all cases. Course length could vary, and be tied into an alternating work-school program under the supervision of bipartite school-industry committees.

Even if professional training is the key element in the reorganisation of schools to serve the labour market, so-called "general" or "pre-university" programs will also be shaken up. Most English (and French), Humanities and Physical Education courses will be removed from professional programs leading to a "CEC." Some key courses, such as Business French, could be maintained. Programs leading to university will be revised, shortened, or phased out. Present cut-backs at universities could lead to the closure of entire departments according to Mr. Paul Lacoste, Director of the University of Montreal (Le Devoir, Wednesday, Jan. 19, 1983, p. 3).

All this will surely reduce the content of, and registration in, pre-university programs.

4- SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE COUNTER-REFORM

In the preceding pages we have spoken at considerable length about the effects of the counter-reform on people working in the field of education: Union rights attacked; job security undermined; less scholastic freedom; etc. Yet the damaging effects of the

counter-reform don't stop there. Students and the general public have much to lose.

Aside from jeopardising certain recognised rights of teachers, the counter-reform attacks the public's right to education in two areas: quality and accessibility.

a) The Dequalification of Teaching

Statements made in the White Paper on the "quality of education" don't change the facts. Aside from the serious effects of government budget cuts on the scholastic system, important modifications of teaching

structures and course content are being implemented. These modifications clearly dequalify collegial education.

In general english, humanities and science courses the directives and overall study plans which the DGEC is trying to impose lead straight to secondary level instruction. The proposed science program makes this extremely clear: lower standards for content, fewer hours, and the elimination of secondary pre-requisites.

In the professional sector, fewer specialised courses and less general instruction (for a C.E.C.) linked to the establishment of very general common branches will lead to a dequalification of the students training.

“Bargain basement training will deliver students tied hand and foot to private enterprise, leaving little hope of finishing their education in the future” (1)

Professional training must take the real job market into account, that much is true. But there is an enormous difference between “taking into account” and being “subservient to.”

Right now the labour market needs more “flexible” manpower, tightly adapted to the means of production in use in a given business. By depriving students of **generalised** professional training which would give them some measure of independence from their employer, we are creating economically dependant

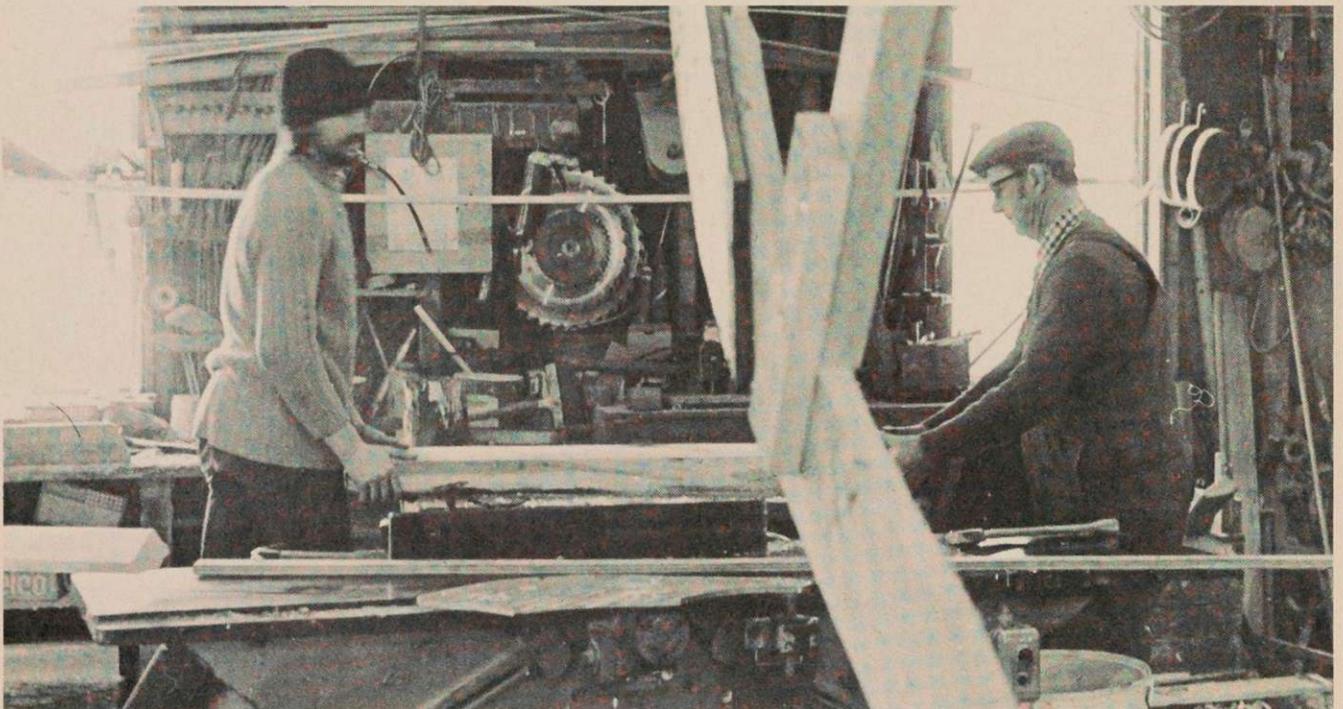
workers; prisoners of their regions; prisoners of the industry that employs them; prisoners of their job. The proposed counter-reforms may turn colleges into “founderies,” where workers will be “moulded,” not to fill their own personal or collective needs, but rather to fill the needs of productive laws and skills over which they will have less and less control, thanks to their lack of adequate education.

The dequalification of student’s education will be accentuated by the increasing number of certifications. New certifications for regular collegial training (CEC and AEC), as well as creating various strata of students, could well be used to officially sanction incomplete studies, encouraging people to drop out before the end of the college cycle.

Certain people see a way to “democratise” collegial education in multiple certifications. For them, lowering the standards of collegial education would allow young people to enroll who would not do so under the present system. Nothing could be farther from the truth. From our point of view, those who oppose the quality of education to accessibility only succeed in proving that ancient aristocratic concepts still survive today. Higher quality and greater accessibility are two objectives which can (and must) be pursued together.

Moreover, every day experience shows that it is not the quality of instruction, but rather the social origin of students which determines scholastic choice. In this sense, if multiple certificates open certain CEGEP doors, they can only be the ones marked “EXIT”!

GF(1) HAMEL Thérèse (1982), *L'enseignement professionnel au Québec: vers une soumission plus étroite de l'école à l'entreprise?*, texte préliminaire, INRS-Education, p. 143. FNEEQ translation.



b) Diminishing access to education

Although in words the government claims that the “democratisation” of education is one of its objectives, the proposed “reform” not only fails to increase access to CEGEP, it actually tightens the bottleneck!

The regionalisation of programs (concentrating a given program in one region or in one CEGEP in a given region), while lowering the cost of education and linking the CEGEP to regional business, will stop a good number of students from continuing their studies in the area of their choice (transport and housing costs, quotas, etc.). Moreover, the creation of “college-work” committees paves the way for a general policy of quotas and closed programs.

Quotas are the main means through which the government coordinated its budget cuts. Claiming that the job market is saturated and that openings in many areas are limited, the government has denied the right of thousands of young people to an education. What the government forgets to say is that it is actively limiting openings in some areas. Quotas imposed on health technology are a direct result of government cuts in health care. Thus, the government neatly attacks the right to health care and education at the same time.

Anything goes if it will help restrict access to education: budget cuts; fewer loans and bursaries; quotas; tighter admission policies; etc. And adult training is the hardest hit area of collegial education.

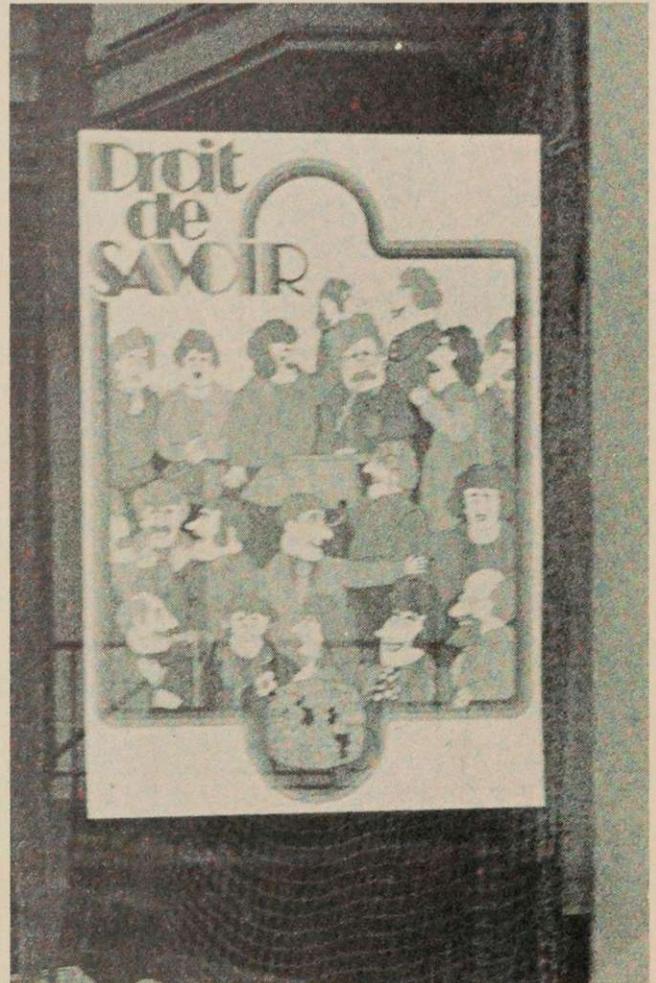
At a time when the population has growing needs in this area (workers who need to improve their knowledge or change skills, women who hope to return to the job market, young workers turned back towards CEGEP by high unemployment levels, etc.) we see important cutbacks in the number of available course groups and large increases in admission and registration fees. Increasing costs for adult students have quickly put a damper on access to adult education.

Then there are quotas. Last year, in an article entitled “a contagious disease,” Lise Bissonnette (*Le Devoir*) revealed that the Ministry of Education was on the verge of launching a new form of financing for CEGEPS which could be called a “demand for quotas.” In the future the ministry would refuse to entirely subsidise any increase in the number of students. For each new student, the CEGEP would receive only 50% of its subsidy. In exchange, CEGEPS lowering the number of students would receive a bonus of equal importance.

Though we cannot confirm this statement we do know that colleges are subsidised for only 90% of their clientel. Several CEGEPS have developed stricter entry standards. In the last two years severe quotas have been imposed on several programs (such as data processing).

What has happened to the objective of “democracy” which the Parent report set out for Quebec’s education

system? How can the PQist government justify its policies when it has been defending, at least in theory, the necessity of catching up with Ontario in the field of education?



c) The Accentuation of National Oppression in Education

The democratisation of the school system that started in the 1960's has not allowed Quebec to catch up in the area of education. There are 600,000 illiterate people in Quebec. Only 45% of 16 year old students receive a high school leaving certificate. The Parent report foresaw over 50% of young quebecois attending college, yet the level of accessibility has passed from 19% to only 26% (compared to 35.4% globally in Canada and 80% in Sweden) today. Three out of four young quebecois never reach CEGEP.

As we have seen, the "reform" in collegial education doesn't intend to increase access to CEGEP. The government is going to personally administer the decline of educational standards: large budget cuts (especially for adult education), higher entry standards, and a quota system have been imposed. Moreover, by dequalifying professional training, the government has built higher barriers to keep students from this area out of university.

Given the present situation where the people of Quebec are still undereducated in comparison to the rest of Canada (and especially Ontario), the counter-reform leads us, at all levels, towards poorer attendance of school and can only hope to increase already overbearing inequalities. "The CEGEP (...) says the White Paper, is the key to our collective future" (p. 8, French version). What must we conclude, if not that the collective future prepared for us through the counter-reform is very dark indeed?

As Lise Bissonnette wrote about the "reform" of professional training:

"It is those of french descendance who, in Quebec are swallowed up disproportionately by the least useful sectors of education; and they are ever more numerous to do so, under the benevolent eye of a government that should be preoccupied but that prefers to sit coldly by and create a «Project»."

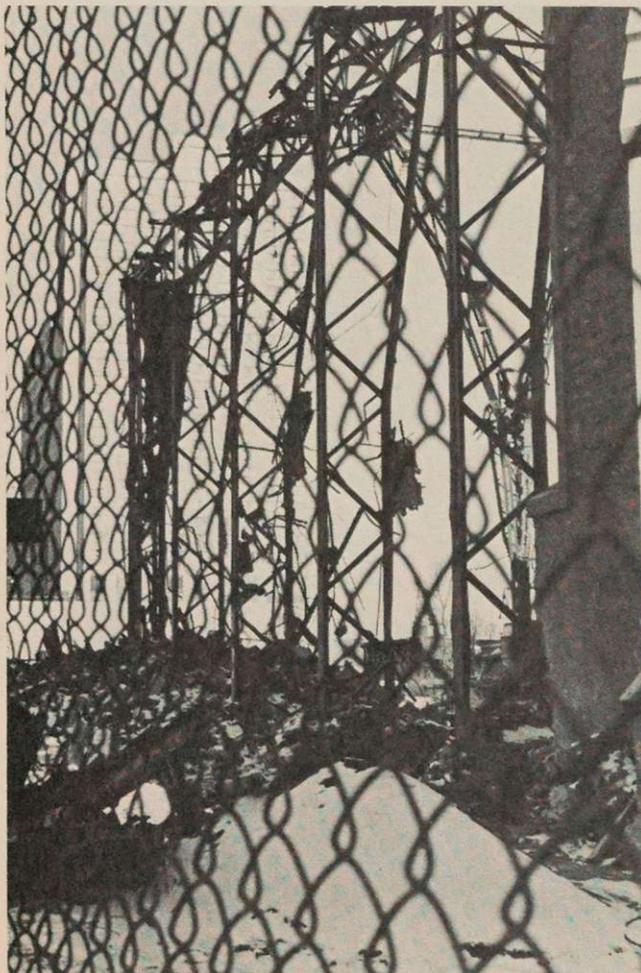
(Le Québec français oublie ses enfants,
Le Devoir, 29 septembre 1980)

What does the White Papers beautiful principle of "equal opportunity" really mean? At this moment access to CEGEP is greater in english areas than it is for young french speaking people. Moreover, in contrast with french speaking students, a large proportion of english students are found in the general area that leads to university.

French students are divided as follows: 47.6% in general studies and 52.4% in professional training; english students: 73.7% in general studies and 26.3% in professional training (White Paper, p. 22). As a direct consequence 12% of english students reach university as compared to 6% of french students. These are overt signs of Quebec national oppression which can only be perpetuated, if not agravated by the crisis measures of the P.Q. government. An incredible performance coming from a government that claims to be the great defender of Quebec's national rights!

Sure... "Building Quebec." But who for? And at what price?

The deeper the crisis, the clearer the governments position: support "our" capitalists while endebting our collective future and sacrificing the public's right to a decent education.



IN CONCLUSION: A STRUGGLE TO BE WAGED

In the struggle that is developing to reclaim acceptable, negotiated collective agreements we must not forget the counter-reform. The negotiations and the counter-reform are closely linked. The government is well aware of this, having profited from the 1979 negotiations to hurriedly adopt Bills 24 and 25 and to create weaknesses in our collective agreements which directly serve the counter-reform (on the departmental level, the yearly work plan, etc.). Today they are trying to impose the normative aspects of the counter-reform by decree.

Didn't Minister Laurin declare, last September, that negotiations in the education sector would not stop him from moving ahead with the "reform," especially after the signing of the agreement on collegial studies? The decrees represent many serious setbacks for a teacher's quality of life (course load, foreman-department coordinator, etc.).

As we have often said, our collective agreements represent one of the best defences that we have against the counter-reform and degenerating services. True, but it is not enough just to say so. Once again we must stand together to protect our acquired rights. This government learned to "bypass" our collective agreements long ago; and when it has not been able to bypass, it hasn't hesitated to unilaterally reopen agreements and impose decrees.

Since the 1979 negotiations, and especially in the last year, the P.Q. government never stopped cultivat-

ing guilt within our ranks. Claiming that teachers (and all public sector workers) are enjoying overprivileged lives at the expense of the general public; that they are responsible for the crisis; that their demands are egotistical, corporatist, etc.

The purpose of this slander campaign is very simple: to isolate us from workers in the private sector and from the general public. This government, itself largely responsible for the degeneration of public services (mainly in education and health care), has had the nerve to present itself as the "Public's Union," while painting Unions as the defenders of the "system's overprivileged." They've got everything backwards!

Careful study of the educational counter-reform shows clearly that the struggle against this so-called "reform" is as much a struggle to defend the public's right to a decent education as it is to defend union rights. It is a legitimate battle involving students and the general public as much as the teachers themselves. It is crucial that each and every FNEEQ member get involved in the present campaign to gain their support.

Remember, the 1960's reform was only won through the struggle of the people of Quebec.

Today, once again, we need the support of the population of Quebec if we hope to stop the erosion of our collective rights.

NOTE: All quotations in this text were translated by the FNEEQ.



IN OUR CEGEPS

- 20 percent cuts in salaries
- 15 percent increase in workloads
- 1500 teachers layed off

WARNING: Mr. Lévesque, Cegep teachers advise you that danger increases amounts taken in.



**FÉDÉRATION NATIONALE
DES ENSEIGNANTS
ET ENSEIGNANTES DU QUÉBEC**

NOTES

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FNEEQ



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