GROWTH OF NON-FISA CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: 1975-1985

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the growth of small, church-related Christian schools in British Columbia, in particular those schools, largely non-funded, outside of British Columbia's Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA). The early chapters provide an overview of the history of private schooling in Canada and examine the social context of the growth of Christian schools. They show the importance of private alternatives in both Canadian and British Columbian educational history. They demonstrate that the growing disenchantment with public education is a by-product of societal changes in the last twenty-five years.

Later chapters examine the Christian school parent's concern with the perceived lack of Biblical values and with the "secular humanist" philosophy of the public school curriculum, as well as the rationale underlying the growth of Protestant evangelical day schools in British Columbia. Although derived from a wide range of sources, much of the information was obtained from primary sources such as reports, directories, enrollment statistics and, in particular, oral interviews and questionnaires with principals and others involved in the Christian school movement in British Columbia.

Private Christian schools in Canada have built their reputation on an increasing popular dissatisfaction with public education, its "secular humanist" philosophy and its perceived lack of Biblical values. This study demonstrates that the church-related Christian schools are not a phenomenon of any one
urban or rural area but rather are spread quite consistently throughout many communities of British Columbia. The majority of these schools (64%) were founded between 1977 and 1981 and are small, employing one to two full-time teachers. Government funding for private schools began in 1977 but as this study shows, had little to do with the founding of these schools, a significant finding since 80% of the schools were founded after 1977.

The Christian school's popularity can be traced to the philosophic convictions of the parents who view these schools as a bastion of Biblical truth and morality in a secular world. In elucidating this philosophy, the thesis points out the diversity of the Non-FISA Christian schools on such issues as government funding and control, teacher certification and curricula. The unifying theme is that religion was the raison d'etre for the founding of the schools and that the home and the church were the preferred places in which to teach children how to live. It is evident that the private schools, particularly the Christian ones, meet a need for advocates of family choice in our pluralistic Canadian society who have become disillusioned with the public school system, and desire a more traditional education suited to their philosophy.
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PREFACE

It is difficult to divorce oneself from one's political bias in research. Research is based on a set of assumptions embedded within a particular context or system. This thesis is written from the perspective of an advocate of freedom of choice in education. This caveat will help show the reader where this writer is politically located. Since many Christian day schools advocate this sort of choice, it is important to make clear any possible bias in the text of this study while at the same time acknowledging that the principles of academic scholarship have been adhered to.

This writer wishes to acknowledge the advice and support of Dr. J. Donald Wilson of the Department of Social and Educational Studies of the University of British Columbia. Many thanks to Susan for her time and encouragement.
Chapter I

PRIVATE SCHOOLS: SETTING THE CONTEXT IN CANADA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA

Research on formal schooling in North America has all too often focused on public schooling. This is particularly evident in Canada where educational studies have displayed narrow institutionalism and "public school triumphalism." Such works as Charles E. Phillips' *The Development of Education in Canada* (1957) and F. Henry Johnson's *A Brief History of Canadian Education* (1968) are prime examples of the traditional narrative approach to educational studies. Their preoccupation with the rise and achievements of the public school system has "tended to obscure the existence of very real private alternatives." They saw the development of the public school system and of mass compulsory education as essential and inevitable consequences in the history of Canadian education.

The problem with their accounts, as with contemporary historians of their time, is that they "tended to accept quite uncritically the conventional wisdom equating the expansion of formal schooling with progress." While providing an extensive account of education in Canada in the traditional sense they minimized the importance of historically based private alternatives and failed to examine the interrelationship of education and society. As Wilson, Stamp and Audet point out: "educational history should be regarded as social history... education is at all times and everywhere a reflection of the social order." This thesis is an attempt to examine the private
school movement in general and Christian schools in particular, within a social context.

Private alternatives, particularly in the last ten years, have attracted increased attention from scholars and those involved in formulating educational policy. The government of Ontario in 1984 found the issue of private schools significant enough to warrant a Royal Commission. The private schools, while accounting for only a small proportion of Canada's elementary and secondary enrollment since Confederation, have represented a distinctive choice for various elements of Canadian society, including British Columbia. Considering the appeal to special groups of these private based alternatives, private education deserves a place in studies of Canadian educational history.

As public education experienced enrollment declines, the growth of private education increased dramatically (See Table 1). From 1971 to 1985, enrollment in private schools increased 70.2 percent while public school enrollment fell by 17.5 percent. Translated numerically, this means an additional 100,176 students educated in private schools while public education enrollment declined by 990,546 students in the same period. This amounts to an average growth of 7155 students per year in the private schools of Canada. Further, the private school enrollment of approximately 242,776 students in 1984-1985 is an increase of 6.2 percent over the preceding year as compared to a 0.6% decline in the public school enrollment. Enrollments in private schools have risen steadily from 2.5 percent of all children in school in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Public Schools</th>
<th>Private Schools</th>
<th>Private as % of total*</th>
<th>Percentage Change from 1970-71 to 1984-85</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>5,655,400</td>
<td>142,600</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>5,628,200</td>
<td>139,900</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>5,570,300</td>
<td>151,600</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>5,491,900</td>
<td>157,900</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>5,416,400</td>
<td>175,300</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>-4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>5,372,000</td>
<td>182,000</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>-5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>5,384,200</td>
<td>188,300</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>-6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>5,178,800</td>
<td>189,400</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>5,059,000</td>
<td>193,400</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>4,944,700</td>
<td>198,900</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>-12.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>4,855,800</td>
<td>209,400</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>-14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>4,770,300</td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>-15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>4,726,600</td>
<td>225,500</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>-16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>4,700,400</td>
<td>231,844</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>-16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>4,664,854</td>
<td>242,776</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>-17.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Total does not include Federal and Blind and Deaf Schools.

1970-1971 to 5.2 percent in 1984-1985. It is clear that private education has been an increasingly popular choice for parents in Canada since 1971.

The province of British Columbia has been no exception to this recent phenomenon. In 1981 alone, an additional 1600 students were educated in the private schools of British Columbia, an increase of 6.2 percent over the previous year. British Columbia's proportion of students attending private schools stands at 6 percent, second only to Quebec. As well, the increase in enrollment has been 41 percent over the fourteen year period from 1971 to 1985. Since the passing of the Independent Schools Support Act (Bill 33) in 1977, the number of pupils qualifying for support under the terms of the Act has risen from 16,817 to 27,119 in 1986. As of December, 1985, there were 247 known independent schools in British Columbia enrolling approximately 30,000 students. Of these schools, about 115 enroll close to 5000 students and either do not receive any government grants or receive minimal support. These are mostly Protestant evangelical day schools with a thoroughly Bible-centred curriculum.

The two forms of curriculum most often used in these schools are individualized learning packages, namely Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) and Alpha-Omega. The ACE prevales in most schools. These "packages," originating in the United States, are written from a Christian perspective. The individualized learning aspect is the paramount mode of instruction, with the emphasis on mastery learning. It is with
these schools, mostly small, church-related schools (i.e., operated and/or funded under the auspices of the church) of fundamentalist persuasion, that this thesis is concerned.

Private school attendance has increased significantly in B.C. since the passing of Bill 33 in 1977. However, the most dramatic growth has been in the Christian schools, in particular those church-related schools that are not part of the Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA) and are largely non-funded. The tendency in B. C. for private school students to attend recently founded schools based on religious values is representative of the overall Canadian scene.

The purpose of this study is to investigate why fundamentalist Christian schools in British Columbia have grown so in numbers. This thesis proposes reasons for their growth, particularly for schools founded in the last ten years. Why were these schools founded and what larger social forces in the last twenty years have contributed to their growth? Did the passage of Bill 33 lead to or encourage their founding? What is the religious nature of these schools? Why did they choose their particular curriculum? Do they attempt to hire certified teachers? Do they limit their enrollment to members of their own denomination or to particular ethnic groups? What grade levels do they offer and have their enrollments increased since their founding? Are these schools more likely to be found in particular geographic areas? Do they attract a normal cross-section of Canadians or cater to one economic group? These questions warrant consideration and answers should provide
valuable insights into understanding the growth of these non-funded Christian schools.

An extensive examination of the proliferation of these small, church-related fundamentalist schools (Protestant evangelical schools) has not previously been undertaken. Perhaps this is due to the lack of pertinent resources on the subject and the fact that it is such a recent phenomenon. There is, in fact, a general lack of research on many aspects of British Columbia's educational history. This study may provide a foundation upon which further research could be conducted. The passage of Bill 33 in 1977 and its provisions for funding private schools prompted interest in this study. An understanding of the rationale for non-funded religious-based schools and of their attitudes towards Bill 33 will prove valuable to those interested in this recent significant development in British Columbian education.

**Brief History of Private Schooling in Canada**

Private schooling is a long tradition in the educational development of Canada. As Barman points out: "Fee-supported educational institutions at the primary and secondary level not under direct government control have existed in Canada from the earliest years of white settlement to the present day." For the first two centuries of European settlement in Canada, schooling was not considered an established mandate of the state. Education was carried out by parents, the church, philanthropists and even business entrepreneurs. Among the earliest schools in Canada were those operated by the Jesuits to teach Indian boys in
New France (Quebec) as early as 1633. *Petites écoles*, established by parish priests, taught children the "3 R's or reading, writing, and religion." The Ursulines established schools for girls in New France in 1642 as did the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Montreal in 1659. In 1735 the Notre Dame sisters "opened their first school in Nova Scotia at Louisburg, and in 1749 the Society for the Promotion of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent a schoolmaster to Nova Scotia." In Upper Canada (Ontario) private-venture schools were established in Kingston (1785), Frederickburgh (1786), Ernestown (1784) and York (1789) to name a few. "By 1816, rudimentary private schooling had become widespread throughout the province" as evidenced by an American traveller who reported twenty-three schools in Norfolk County alone; another estimate placed the number of schools in operation at close to 200.

Secondary education in Canada may trace its roots back to New France in 1636 when the Jesuits opened a *collège classique* or academic secondary school in Quebec City. At these *collèges classiques* the *Ratio Studiorum* or classical curriculum of the colleges in France was offered. The church had a virtual monopoloy over education in French Canada. "The role of the state was merely to encourage and support the church in her endeavours by providing occasional subsidies and giving legal sanction to ecclesiastical activities." In Atlantic Canada King's College School opened in 1788 and the Halifax Grammar School in 1789. In Upper Canada, Rev. John Strachan established a grammar school at Cornwall in 1803 and by
1812 a handful of grammar or district schools existed. These schools were denominational in character. Their schoolmasters were invariably clergymen and they "were firmly in the Simcoe tradition of establishing schools for the 'sons of gentlemen'." Thus, for those who desired or could afford a secondary education, there were a handful of grammar schools and denominational institutions which served this select minority. The private schools have been criticized for this elitist approach to education. However, private initiative was responsible for founding and operating the schools which existed as it was not until the mid-nineteenth century in Canada that the idea of mass public schooling for all children became reality. In the early history of Canada education was not valued as highly as life skills and was essentially utilitarian in nature.

Education, it was held, should be practical so as to solve everyday problems. A premium was placed on immediate action rather than theory. In the face of practical needs, a certain scepticism, if not contempt, existed for book learning, academic training, and intellectual pursuits.

The influence of the frontier on society may have reinforced a practical orientation to life. Consequently education was appreciated "only to the extent that it proved useful in this practical sense" and secondary education was not considered an alternative for most people.

By mid-nineteenth century private education came under sharp attack by public school promoters whose "vision of what could be accomplished by educational reform has perhaps never before or after been paralleled." School reformers such as Egerton Ryerson in Upper Canada and his counterparts in Western Europe
and the U. S. "were spearheading change made necessary by widespread social and technological advance and increasing urbanization." They argued that this urbanization and industrialization "needed a more highly schooled citizenry in order to advance the public good." This movement away from reliance on private education was rooted in the belief that universal education would provide solutions to certain societal problems and that the state should be involved in this venture. Gradually, during this period, children were schooled for longer and longer periods of time.

There was a growing recognition in the nineteenth century, known as the century of schooling, that all children, not just a few, should receive a formalized education and that it should be free and compulsory. The common or parish schools soon were entirely supported by provincial and municipal funds (local taxation); parents no longer had direct responsibility to educate their children; normal and model schools were established to train teachers; and in some jurisdictions schooling was declared compulsory for children up to a certain age. Most common and grammar schools were soon under full public control as private approaches to education diminished.

As provincial departments of education and local administrative structures emerged to control the burgeoning schools and school systems, government funds were increasingly channeled only to those institutions accepting the controls, and the modern distinction between public and private education was gradually forged. Private education, either in the old sense of tutoring in domestic surroundings or in the modern sense of schooling supported independently of taxation or other government fundings, was experienced by the end of the century by very few Canadian children.
Funding of Private Schools

The advent of free public schooling did not signal the collapse of the private school system. Section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 declared that the provinces were to have exclusive legal responsibility for education. Section 93, subsection I further provided that all legally established denominational schools prior to Confederation remain in place and be not subject to official discrimination. Because of the provisions of the B. N. A. Act, "the provinces were free to forge their own educational statutes, subject to the guarantees for denominational schools already legally established." These schools were in effect safeguarded for future generations as they were assured of public funds and constitutional protection.

Although the provinces had the freedom to create their own individual educational systems they cannot be viewed as merely independent and isolated entities. In Canada, five different administrative arrangements for denominational schooling emerged among the provinces. Table 2 shows five categories of private schools: non-denominational, administrative leeway, separate schools systems, dual confessional system, and denominational. In the separate schools arrangements in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta, there is normally a Protestant or Catholic segregated system along with common non-sectarian public schools administered by a Department or Ministry of Education. The Maritime provinces and Manitoba (from the late 1960's) have adopted informal arrangements for funding denominational schools. Officially, there is a single non-sectarian public school system
### TABLE 2

**LEGAL STATUS OF SEPARATE, CONFESSIONAL AND DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Denominational (Public Systems)</th>
<th>Administrative Leeway</th>
<th>Separate School Systems</th>
<th>Dual Confessional System</th>
<th>(True) Denominational System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>(Manitoba up to 1890)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward</td>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(from late 1960's)</td>
<td>Territories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Territories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

but political compromises and administrative leeway have allowed Roman Catholic schools to receive provincial funds with varying degrees of supervision attached.\[^2^4\]

The dual confessional public school system in Quebec is composed of two separate and independent streams, Catholic and Protestant. The dissentient schools in each school district have essentially shared a common curriculum since 1964. The truly denominational system of Newfoundland provided support almost exclusively for denominational schools up until the late 1960's. In March 1969, various churches signed a "Document of Integration" whereby "each church relinquished its right to operate its own school, but retained an executive secretary to advise the Department of Education on denominational questions."\[^3^5\]

Finally, and of particular relevance to this study, is the province of British Columbia which was the only province not to fund, in some form, religiously based schools. This situation changed in 1977 with the passing of the Independent Schools Support Act (Bill 33). Some educators in the United States have erroneously assumed that the government of British Columbia, with the passing of this Act, had set up a voucher system for its independent schools. They failed to recognize that the "passage of Bill 33 brought the province closer to a long-established Canadian practice of funding separate and denominational schools"\[^3^6\] and amounted to no such thing as a voucher system. The separation of church and state inherent in the American educational system stands in marked contrast to the Canadian
pattern of funding, where possible, separate and denominational schools. This is a key construct to understand especially when considering the similarities of the growth of the Protestant Christian day schools in both countries. Therefore, "educational comparisons between the two countries must be made with care" although they may be highly instructive both in the academic sense and in the study/execution of public policy.  

Private and Independent Schools in British Columbia

As in other regions of Canada, private schooling was most widespread in the early educational history of British Columbia. Private, particularly church initiatives, account for the development of the early schools in B. C. With the assistance of the Anglican clergy, the Hudson's Bay Company established the first school at Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island in 1849. Ontarian missionary Miss Emily A. Woodman opened a (Methodist) school at New Westminster in 1860. Other church-sponsored denominational schools in operation at this time, included Indian mission schools at Hope, Mission City, and Nanaimo on Vancouver Island.  

In 1860 secondary education became available under the auspices of the Church of England with the establishment of two private, fee-paying institutions, the Collegiate School for Boys and the Ladies Collegiate. In the mainland schools "social class had little bearing on education; on the Island, under Company rule, it was quite prominent, with one kind of schooling for the well-to-do and another for 'the labouring and poorer classes'."
This distinction reflected the Hudson's Bay Company's scheme of selective colonization on Vancouver Island:

...should be a colony of British landholders who would hold high the social and ethical standards of mid-Victorian England and who could be counted on to despise the crasser values of 'the irregular squatters' who flocked to new lands in search of material benefit.*

With the end of Company rule in 1858 and the accompanying gold rush on the mainland an influx of prospectors and others combined not only to increase the populations of the Island and the mainland but to make it multi-racial as well. Consequently the religious- and class- based schooling gave way to non-sectarian (non-denominational) and free (non-fee-paying) schooling.*

In 1861, a young Ontario school teacher, John Jessop, opened a private school "conducted exclusively on non-sectarian principles...according to the admirable system of Canada West."* Another non-sectarian school was opened at New Westminster in 1862 by Reverend Robert Jamieson, a Presbyterian minister. This move away from a church-based education in the 1860's was "characterized by the persistent efforts of a vocal, Canadian-born contingent, including Jessop, to undercut Anglican influence over education in favour of the practices found in Ontario and the Maritimes."* Their campaign led to the Common School Act (1865) which officially recognized the practice of denying state aid to denominational schools and "culminated in the passage of the 1872 Public Schools Act which provided for a centralized, publicly financed system of non-denominational schools."*
This by no means signaled the collapse of private schooling in British Columbia although the establishment of a public system made many of the non-Catholic religious schools unnecessary. Private education now consisted mainly of two independent streams, Catholic schools and private schools based on the British "public" school. The Catholic schools have remained a strong tradition in British Columbia from the opening of their first school in 1858 by the Sisters of Saint Anne to the present day operation of 72 schools. During the first half of the twentieth century, Barman reports the existence of "fifty to sixty non-Catholic private schools for boys, as well as an equivalent number for girls." She attributes the growth of these private boys' schools to three factors:

...the survival of a small but well established support group within the province; the enormous popularity in Britain of an educational model amenable to replication; and the settlement in British Columbia of a large ethnic community deeply committed before their arrival to that model.

Initially identified with the British born in the population, these private boys' schools based on the British "public" school model broadened their clientele during the interwar period "to encompass families at the centre of the province's socio-economic structure." "The existence of private alternatives to British Columbia's public system of education must not, then, be discounted," as families supporting private education have been a distinctive element in British Columbia society since the early days of settlement.

Except for the Catholic school controversies of the 1950's in Maillardville/Coquitlam on the issues of busing and
taxation, the private schools of British Columbia had been virtually ignored until 1977 when the provincial government offered financial assistance to those private schools willing to meet certain conditions of operation. British Columbia recognized officially three types of schools after 1977: public, private and independent. Independent schools qualify for aid under the Independent Schools Support Act. They must meet prescribed standards and are classified as either Group I or Group II schools for grant purposes. Group I schools may receive nine percent of the per-pupil operating cost for the previous year in the public schools of the district in which each is located. Under the Act, Group II schools may receive 30 percent of the per-pupil operating cost. These subsidy levels did not change between 1978, when the first grants were paid out, until March 1987, when the B. C. government announced increases to ten percent and thirty-five percent for Groups I and II schools respectively.

Group I schools must meet certain minimum requirements to be eligible for the subsidy level of ten percent. The criteria are: 1) absence of any program, existing or proposed, which fosters racial or ethnic superiority, religious intolerance or persecution, or social change through violent action; 2) adequate facilities; and 3) operation of the school for at least three consecutive school years, including the school year immediately prior to the date of application. Originally, a school could not apply for assistance until it had completed five consecutive years of operation. Recent government legislation in June, 1987
has now reduced the waiting period to qualify for support grants from three years to one. The B. C. government believed that three years was too long considering usages in other provinces such as Quebec (no waiting period) and Alberta (one year waiting period). Both provinces, according to Education minister Tony Brummet, have "shown a good record of orderly growth without undesirable proliferation."  

The second level of funding may be extended to schools which meet the following additional criteria: 1) the establishment of a curriculum which meets minimum instructional time requirements for course subject areas designated by the Minister of Education; 2) agreement to participate in an external evaluation committee which examines and assesses programs, operations, and administration in the school; 3) agreement to participate in the provincial learning assessment program; and 4) assurance that all teachers are certificated within five years.  

It is evident that Group II independent schools must meet more stringent requirements than Group I schools but in return they receive more generous grants. One can see the intimate relation between the total subsidy payments granted to independent schools and the public school per-pupil operating costs. Obviously, budgetary restraints applied to the public schools automatically affect the independent schools the following year since the independent school grants are tied to the public school costs of the previous year.  

Schools which do not come under the provisions of the Independent Schools Support Act are known as private schools.
These are mostly small, church-related schools of fundamentalist persuasion. The term private is not to be confused with the long-established, academically-oriented schools best described as modern Canadian versions of the traditional British "public" schools. (The British public schools would be considered private schools in Canadian terms.) These are a group of ten schools, seven of which are boarding institutions, known collectively in British Columbia as the Independent Schools Association (ISA). Therefore, the term private schools in this study shall designate fundamentalist church-related schools which do not belong to FISA, known as the Non-FISA private schools. FISA, as mentioned previously, is the Federation of Independent School Associations, an umbrella organization for the independent schools of B.C. which in 1987 represented 28,600 students in 130 schools. (See Table 3 for clarification.)

The Catholic Public Schools Inter-Society Committee (CPS-ISC) is the largest association of FISA comprising 72 schools and an enrollment of over 16,000 students in 1987 situated in five Catholic dioceses. The Independent Schools Association (ISA), composed of the traditional private schools based on the British tradition, consists of ten schools with an enrollment of over 4000 students. While representing only 7.7 percent of the FISA independent schools and 15.5 percent of the total FISA enrollment, the demand for places in the ISA schools is particularly strong at the present time with most schools reporting long waiting lists.
## TABLE 3
ENROLLMENT STATISTICS: BRITISH COLUMBIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AND NON-FISA PRIVATE SCHOOLS 1977-1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CPS-ISC Catholic</th>
<th>ISA Private</th>
<th>SCS-BC InterDen</th>
<th>AMG Mixed</th>
<th>FISA Total</th>
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| %age increase over 1977 | 27.7 | 25.9 | 87.7 | 88.9 | 38.6 | 44.5 | 84.3 |

CPS-ISC: Catholic Public Schools Inter-Society Committee  
ISA: Independent Schools Association  
SCS-BC: Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia  
AMG: Associate Member Group  
FISA: Federation of Independent School Associations  
The Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia (SCS-BC) consists of 32 schools enrolling over 4000 students at present. These are locally autonomous schools controlled by an association of parents, vigorously Bible-centred, and members of the Society of Christian Schools International. The SCS has enjoyed strong growth since 1977 (87.7 percent increase) in part due to the availability of funding, a contention to be argued later in this study. This growth in the SCS-BC along with that of the non-FISA Protestant evangelical day schools suggests that a Christian-centred education has become an increasingly popular alternative in British Columbia since 1977.

The Associate Member Group (AMG) has sixteen schools "which do not belong to an association of their own and collectively have the same rights as an association with full membership." Some examples of these schools are Credo Christian High School in Langley, Vancouver Talmud Torah, Mennonite Educational Institute in Clearbrook, and Zion Lutheran School in Surrey. Located in the Lower Mainland or Victoria, they have varying educational philosophies but all meet provincial curriculum requirements.

The Non-FISA schools include two associations, the Association of Independent Church Schools (AICS) and the Seventh Day Adventist schools (SDA). The schools in AICS are primarily church-operated and use the ACE curriculum. The SDA consists of twenty-seven schools throughout the province which offer an educational program from a SDA perspective. As well, other schools of varying educational philosophies such as the Vancouver Montessori School Society, Discovery School (for learning
problems), and the Vancouver Oral Center for Deaf Children, to name a few, operate as individual entities. For the most part, the Non-FISA schools are composed of small church-related fundamentalist schools using a self-paced curriculum. In 1985, the closing date of this study, there were approximately 5300 students and over 100 schools which fell into this category. The Non-FISA school enrollment further peaked at 6434 students in 1986 and then dipped to 5604 in 1987. There are no exact figures regarding these schools and little is known about them since many schools are informally organized and don't appear on any listings. Further, some of these schools are paranoid about "interference" and do not wish to release any information. From 1977 to 1985 there was a remarkable 63.9 percent increase in attendance in these schools. The remainder of this study is an attempt to explain the growth of these schools through 1985.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I


8Ibid.


13Mastery learning, according to Alpha Omega (curriculum publishers), is based on the premise that optimum learning occurs when students truly "master" the content or skills taught in one-learning experience before progressing on to the next one. Mastery is usually evidenced by a minimum score of 80 percent in the tests given.

14For clarification of the term FISA, refer to "Independent and Private Schools in British Columbia" in Chapter I.


19 Ibid., pp. 8-9.


23 J. D. Wilson, "Education in Upper Canada: Sixty Years of Change," p. 194.

24 Ibid., pp. 192-193.


26 Prentice and Houston, p. 55.

27 J. D. Wilson, "The Ryerson Years in Canada West," in Wilson, Stamp and Audet, eds., p. 214.


30 Prentice and Houston, p. 1.

31 Ibid., p. 1.

Ibid., p. 101.

Ibid., p. 103.

Ibid., p. 103.


Ibid., p. 2.


M. R. Lupul, "Education in Western Canada Before 1873," in Wilson, Stamp and Audet, eds., p. 250.


M. R. Lupul, p. 252.


J. Barman, "Marching to Different Drummers," p. 3.

Ibid., p. 3.


Ibid., p. 53.

Ibid., p. 51.


Chapter II
"OURS IS CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION...THEIRS IS MAN-CENTERED":

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL GROWTH

(Dr. Paul A. Kienel)

Education in the Sixties and Seventies: The Appeal of the Private School

In the last decade the impact of the private school movement, in general, and Christian schools, in particular, has led to growing interest in non-public schooling in Canada. Parents are increasingly opting out of the public school system in favour of private alternatives, particularly those schools of more recent origin, the majority of them founded since the late sixties and based on religious values. This chapter seeks to explain this recent phenomenon and to analyze the appeal of the Christian day schools. The growth of private schools in both number and enrollment is not simply due to their supposed focus on traditional values and academic rigor and disillusionment with public schools. Albeit important, there are larger changes in society which have brought about the growth of the private school in Canada.

"The recent trend towards increased enrollment in private schools as well as public financial support of private schools has its origins in the late sixties." The decade of the sixties was characterized by considerable debate about education, with educational criticism and radicalism rampant. "Monographs, collections of readable yet scholarly essays, even textbooks and
church-sponsored works appeared, making it easy to be well informed of forces affecting education in a radically changed society." Royal commissions such as the Hall-Dennis Report (1968) in Ontario advocated sweeping recommendations "in the mainstream of traditional progressivism such as had been espoused by American reformers in the 1920's." This John Dewey-type progressivism signaled the emergence in the late sixties of the child-centred regime which replaced the subject-centered orientation of the early sixties.

More radical alternatives emerged such as that espoused by Ivan Illich, the Catholic educator, who advocated the deschooling of society where schools would be abolished altogether. Another radical and unique reaction to traditional education was the establishment of the "free school" movement in the late sixties. "Inspired by the model of A. S. Neill's Summerhill and drawing inspiration from Rousseau and Tolstoy, the "free school" made a distinct impact upon education in Ontario and British Columbia with lesser spillover effect in other provinces." These schools attempted to search out new approaches to learning and one of its best known, Everdale Place, outside Toronto, published Canada's lively educational journal, This Magazine is About Schools.

Television and popular magazines like Maclean's and Saturday Review "brought regular educational criticism to a large proportion of the public by pointing to weaknesses in existing schools and by publicizing new alternatives." Combined with the influence of similar developments in the United States, "Canadian
educators adopted a more revisionist perspective than ever before."

Pitman has referred to the sixties as the watershed decade in Canadian education characterized by "enthusiastic initiation and experimentation rather than evaluation." In the belief that public education was the panacea for society's problems, a large infusion of public funds entered the educational system. In the period between 1960 and 1975, nationwide expenditures on public education sky-rocketed from $1,706,000,000 to $12,228,000,000. Spending was increased in the early sixties to provide vocational training and a concentration on math and sciences so that Canada, as a reflection of the United States, could keep pace in terms of her capacity to become a modern industrial state. Expenditures in the late sixties went more to providing for the needs and interests of the students, whereby "a cafeteria of subject choice and a multi-level system which would accommodate the capacity of every student" was attempted. However, by the late sixties the "exponential" growth of schooling costs had reached its limits as education budgets captured an increasingly larger share of the provincial revenues.

The inevitable reversal came and the euphoria of the sixties was replaced by the cynical seventies. Accountability became the watchword of the new decade, but no one was very clear about how schools and teachers could be held accountable in the most intelligible use of that term. Accompanying the concern over costs was the clear sense that the schools had failed in their promise to create a new society.

Despite a decade of rampant educational change, the job market tightened, youth unemployment was higher than in other western countries, and Canadian industry was faltering. The anticipated
demand for trained and educated manpower as forecast in the sixties had given way to the realities of oversupply and unemployment in the seventies. In the wake of this growing conservatism, many of the innovations of the sixties had dissipated. The radically and socially permissive philosophy of many of the free schools led to their downfall as "almost all of them had disappeared by 1973, or else been absorbed into the public system." It is interesting to note that, at the same time, church-run private schools persisted and began to flourish during the seventies. They rejected the secular liberal values of society in favour of conservative religious and moral values. It was increasingly apparent that the parents choosing these private church-run schools found public education sufficiently tasteless as to seek succor elsewhere.

Private schools, particularly religious ones, have benefited from the growing cynicism and conservatism of the 1970's and early 1980's. These schools profit from a swing to the right due to their conservative stance. With the economic base restricted, a tightening of the belt has occurred in public school spending. Consequently, some parents believe that their child is not receiving the best education that can be afforded them and private alternatives seem attractive especially where they recognize the special needs of children and parents. Some private schools offered training in "such specialized areas as dance and remedial education at a more intense level than is generally available in the public school system." Christian day schools offered a Biblically-based religious education and
private schools, often of the British tradition, offered a strong academic education. These alternatives to public education were appealing to those parents who felt that their child's unique needs could not be met within the public system. Parents had become better educated, more critically aware and thus more apt to seek alternatives more in line with their values and beliefs.

A study carried out in British Columbia in the late seventies revealed parental choice for private schooling was motivated by the following reasons: 54.4 percent for religious reasons, 51.2 percent for strict discipline, 30.4 percent for academic quality, and 13.1 percent for the individual attention offered by a smaller school.¹⁸

The study, *Public Attitudes Toward Education in Ontario* (1980) revealed that "lack of discipline" was the most commonly perceived problem in the public schools; there was a "correlation between the rapid growth in private school enrollments and the emphasis of most of these schools on student discipline."¹⁹ Dr. James Coleman found similar results regarding the key problems facing U.S. public schools in the seventies; the extreme loss of the schools' authority, particularly in maintaining discipline; and reduced levels of academic achievement were cited as two major problems.²⁰

By the end of the seventies the value of investing in public education was questioned. "Critical works by Christopher Jencks in the U. S. and Basil Bernstein and A. H. Halsey in Britain contributed in the seventies to an increasing sense of uncertainty about the positive impact of schools."²¹ Public education was closely monitored and its inadequacies made painfully evident. The cry for more academic structure and
firmer discipline measures in education had become more pronounced. This "back-to-basics" movement was characterized by an emphasis on a "formal, ordered structured mode of teaching with the 'basics'" -- in effect a return to a subject-centered orientation around the "Three R's" of reading, writing and arithmetic and a distaste for the alleged permissiveness of the public schools. Private schools, both academic and religious, became an increasingly popular alternative for many parents who insisted that their children be trained in the "basics." In British Columbia and Ontario some public school supporters were sending their children to Catholic and Christian schools.

Wilson reports that the "alleged undermining of standards" in the public schools has become one of the distinguishing themes of the public debate about schools. Critics were alarmed over the pervasiveness of functional illiteracy in Canada among those over the age of fifteen. "In 1974 nearly half of the population of Canada over the age of fifteen had eight or fewer years of schooling, that is to say, by North American standards, they were functionally illiterate." The failure rate on university entrance English compositions has become a convenient measuring stick in Canada for assessing the results of public school graduates. According to Wilson, 46 percent of 3500 first-year students at the University of British Columbia writing the two-hour English composition examination in the fall of 1980 failed. Many failing students had not only passed high school English but some had done quite well. This concern over the alleged decline in literacy led to a move in the public sector towards
greater accountability of schools. This is best exemplified in British Columbia by the reintroduction of province-wide grade twelve examinations by the provincial government in 1983. Although met with open hostility by the B. C. Teachers' Federation, the examinations were instituted supposedly as a response from concerned citizens that high school students in B.C. should be achieving more rigorous academic standards.²⁷ Obviously, there is more to schooling than results on standardized tests and entrance examinations. Such aspects as critical thinking, mental health, positive self-image, and democratic ideals, for example, are very important but difficult to measure. The point is that more and more parents wanted the basics of a strong academic education in a disciplined environment and were willing to pay for it.

This dissatisfaction with public schooling is reminiscent of the 1930's in British Columbia.

Particularly in the early years of depression when culprits were being sought to explain seemingly uncontrollable social and economic disruption, the availability of private schools gave wealthy British Columbians a ready educational alternative and made it easy to hold the public system responsible for society's ills.²⁸

The traditional elitist independent schools emphasized academic excellence and character development. They have survived the lethargy and low enrollments of the post-World War II era and have enjoyed renewed popularity in the last twenty years. Ontario elitist schools were established with increasing frequency--St. George's College (1960), Rosseau Lake School (1967), and the Country Day School (1972).
The traditional schools retained a certain popularity through their age-old emphasis on small classes and dedicated teachers, plus the implied social advantages of children rubbing shoulders with others from privileged backgrounds.  

These traditional elitist schools are but a singular aspect of private education in Canada which has experienced a quantitative growth.

Catholic schools, particularly at the secondary level, have enjoyed modest growth, in part due to a revolt against a perceived Protestant bias in the public schools and a desire to ensure a commitment to the Catholic faith in its young. Fundamentalist and evangelical Christian groups, inspired for example by the success of the Alliance of Christian Schools in Ontario (a Protestant group with Dutch Reformed roots) increased their private school involvement. Since the early seventies these types of schools have become an increasingly popular alternative for many parents. What is the rationale underlying this appeal?

The Search for Traditional Values: The Appeal of the Fundamentalist Christian School

Prominent among the first Christian schools established were those of Christian Reformed immigrants from the Netherlands in the late 1940's and 1950's. "Parents often started Christian schools because of the unarticulated and unproven perceptions that public schools were ungodly" and to ensure a "protected environment that inculcated Calvinist morality." Other Christian schools, often fundamentalist, were "established as a protest against the supposed absence of religious and moral
Those who founded such schools had become increasingly dissatisfied with the secular liberal values espoused by the public schools and their emphasis on "secular humanism." The *Humanist* magazine defines humanism as: "...a product of this world—of evolution and human history—and acknowledges no supernatural purpose." Secularism is defined as "the belief that morality should be based on the well-being of mankind without any consideration of religious systems and forms of worship." Secular humanism, then, is a philosophy rooted in a belief that ignores or denies the existence of God which is the tenet of atheism.

Some Christian parents believe that atheism has usurped Christianity as the religion of the public schools and often cite the 1961 Supreme Court ruling in the United States of *Torcaso vs. Watkins* which declared that secular humanism was a religion. In effect, they argue, the Bible, prayer and Christian influence in the public classroom and curriculum have been eliminated and replaced by secular humanism. This attitude is shared by many conservative denominations in Canada who argue that the public schools, as a reflection of secular society, have become less acceptable to many parents. Whether by parent or church initiative or linked with similar denominationally-based educational movements in the United States, the Christian schools that emerged were "premised on the belief that a Christian atmosphere should permeate all aspects of schooling." They insisted upon the "primacy of God and Judaeo-Christian values" and the centrality of the Bible in the school curriculum. The
public school, with its underlying secular humanist philosophy, was viewed as a worldly institution not concerned with God which is unacceptable to the fundamentalists, since education for them, is being trained in the ways of the Bible.

The desire for a more traditional education based on Biblical values is evident both in Canada and the United States. The alleged lack of religious and Christian moral instruction in the public schools has become a springboard for advocates of a "Christian" based education. Of particular concern to Christian parents is the Values Clarification education approached used in many state and provincial social studies curricula. They suggest that there is a "moral vacuum" in our society, partly attributed to the teaching of values clarification in our schools. This concern is shared by prominent educators such as Dr. Kathleen Gow who writes:

The developers of Values Clarification maintain that the fundamental failing of traditional approaches to such behavior as lying, cheating, and stealing is that they deal in "indoctrination": asserting to children that there are "right" and "wrong" ways of thinking and acting. These traditional approaches, they say, have the effect of arresting the development of a child's rational judgement, and can only be described as "totalitarian".

Proponents of Values Clarification prescribe a seven step valuing process to free children to choose and create their own values. "Right" and "wrong" are relative depending on the situation and the child's point of view. Critics of values clarification claimed that the absolute standards and religious values of traditional Canadian and American society had been supplanted by relative standards and humanistic values. Humanism, they argued,
had severed the influence of Christian morality from education and often challenged and repudiated the values taught in the home and church. Secular humanism has been blamed for the destruction of fundamental beliefs, moral standards and religious convictions of the traditional American family through the mode of school curricula and programs. The public school curricula is perceived to be the vehicle for humanist propaganda and indoctrination against parents' beliefs and values. In Canadian education this concern over values education and moral instruction has been an ongoing topic of debate. The early school promoters of Canada realized that common schooling represented a critical compromise. "Religious instruction was central to Victorian concern for moral training and preparation for civic and Christian responsibility. What would be left to Christianity if it were stripped of its sectarian identity?"

This concern with religious and moral instruction has been renewed with increased fervour by evangelical and fundamentalist Christians in the seventies and eighties in their efforts to combat secular humanism. How did secular humanism become such an integral component of the public school curricula?

The crux of the matter lies in the growing secularization of society. According to Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer, society has undergone a fundamental change in its world view, from one that was at least vaguely Christian "toward something completely different--toward a world view based upon the idea that the final reality is impersonal matter or energy shaped into its present form by impersonal matter." Henry Blemires, in his book The
Christian Mind, states that the Christian mind or world view has been eradicated and the "modern Christian has succumbed to secularization." He believes that the religious perspective of life "which sets all earthly issues within the context of the eternal" has been rejected.

The influence which evangelical Protestantism held upon nineteenth century society declined in the early decades of the twentieth century as it no longer was the "moving force behind cultural and behavioral patterns." By the 1960's, "the once dominant evangelical strain in American civil religion had been superseded by the more secularistic Enlightenment theme." Evangelicals, in both the United States and Canada have gradually become disturbed over this growing influence of secularism. Bombarded with this secularist philosophy in the public schools and the media and concerned over the eradication of the Christian world view, Christians of evangelical and fundamentalist persuasion have in militant fashion voiced their concern over such issues as permissiveness, pornography, homosexuality, the breakdown of the family, and abortion. Perhaps, the area of greatest concern has been the growth of secular humanism in the public schools, particularly in the United States.

Historically, Canada has been heavily influenced by the educational innovations, curriculum practices and teaching strategies emanating from the United States. Although educational comparisons between the two must be made with care, Canada cannot be viewed as an isolated identity unaffected by similar happenings to the south. Proponents of Christian
education trace their dissatisfaction with the public education system back to the progressive educators of the 1930's who supposedly were heavily influenced by John Dewey. They believe that the progressive educators of the time "promised Social Salvation through the elimination of Biblical presuppositions and traditional values." However, in the 1950's in the U.S. "the Christian ethic--absolute, God-derived moral values--was still acknowledged in the handbooks and publications of teacher-training institutions and schools."  

By the 1960's, common morality which acknowledges concern for others and society but eliminates divine authority had replaced absolute Christian morality. This shift was reflected in the United States Supreme Court decisions in 1962 and 1963 which ruled unconstitutional mandatory prayer and Bible reading in public schools. This development marked the culmination of over a fifty-year long process of the "de-Protestantization" of public education--a move seen by many evangelicals as "yanking" God out of the schools and contributing to the establishment of secular humanism as the religion of the public schools. Most evangelical Protestants "who had always found the public school sufficiently Protestant in values and orientation to make private schooling superfluous," now viewed public schooling "as sufficiently godless and valueless to seek succor elsewhere."  

This "de-Protestantization" of public schooling was not as evident in Canada. Since Confederation, some Canadian provincial systems made special provisions for the protection and funding of
some denominationally-based schooling for those who found the public system unacceptable for religious reasons.

The concept that church and state are partners, not hostile and incompatible forces..., has made it possible for educational authorities in Canada to subsidize Jewish schools in Quebec and Hutterite schools on the prairies, to condone Amish schools in Ontario, and to permit the Salvation Army to develop its own public schools in Newfoundland.  

However, by the late sixties in Canada fundamentalist Christian groups as with their counterparts in the U. S. "charged that the public system had become too secular." Evangelical Protestants who had been avid supporters of the public school system had become increasingly aware of secular liberal values in society and the alleged dominance of humanism in the public school curriculum. Wanting "schooling for their children firmly grounded in evangelical and fundamentalist Christian values," they criticized the child-centred, permissive and progressive approach of the public schools and charged that the convictions underlying the public schools were based on secular humanism.  

The expansion of Christian schools in the 1970's followed a period of disillusionment with public schooling and the new morality. Crime and vandalism were on the increase; young people were drinking more and the drug problem had extended downward to the elementary school. The abandonment of traditional family values was manifest in the increased divorce rate, the number of common-law marriages and the near epidemic proportions of venereal disease. The education system, which is perceived to shape society according to one commentator, "has come under increasing scrutiny and attack" in the past twenty years, not
only by Protestant fundamentalists but by Jews, Catholics, and other groups who "feel that the present philosophy and organization of public education is not giving religion, as they know it, a chance to survive."\textsuperscript{55} Since schooling for longer periods of time has become the norm, the schools have an even greater opportunity to mold children. "If religion is only taught in the home, church, or synagogue" many fear that it will become "discounted or second class in the minds of youth."\textsuperscript{55} Therefore sectarian schools which allow for the transmission of particular religious values have enjoyed increased popularity in Canada with Christian schools enjoying the most rapid growth. In effect, a pervasive critical spirit and disillusionment with the nature and function of public schooling in Canada developed. This disillusionment was particularly manifest in the criticisms of public schooling which has been characterized since the 1960's as secular, irreligious, academically and socially permissive.\textsuperscript{60} Consequently, Christian schools with their emphasis on Judaeo-Christian values, the importance of the family, and a disciplined, orderly environment have become an attractive alternative for many Christian parents.

The availability of self-paced curriculum packages produced in the United States is a factor which has promoted the growth of fundamentalist Christian schools. The most prevalent curriculum used is Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) which is an individualized learning package which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. The primacy of God and Judaeo-Christian values in these schools is reflected in their usage of
a Christian curriculum. They believe that moral absolutes have been "undermined by an evolutionary framework and situation ethics."1 Thus, they deplore the values clarification and evolutionary theory since these teachings do not recognize the supremacy of God and His creation of mankind. In the Christian school, educators teach all matter from a Christian context and the students are exposed to the centrality of God in all of life. The popularity of these self-paced learning packages can be attributed to four main factors: they are built upon fundamental Biblical principles; they are inexpensive to implement; they are suitable for small classes with many grade levels; and they have been perceived to be academically superior by the schools utilizing them.2

Alan Peshkin, professor of education at the University of Illinois believes that the "increasing availability of textbook and instructional materials from Christian publishers" is evidence of the vitality of Christian schools in the United States.3 Many of these textbooks and instructional materials are available in Canada as well. In British Columbia, many of the fundamentalist Christian schools in this study utilized curriculum materials published in the U. S. This is one of the distinguishing features differentiating these schools from the Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia (SCS-BC) who teach the B. C. Ministry of Education core curriculum supplemented with Christian materials and suggested course outlines. For the fundamentalists, the use of a humanist-centered public school curriculum is, of course, unacceptable.
British Columbia and the Independent Schools Support Act (Bill 33)

Since 1977, Christian day schools in British Columbia and their enrollments have grown at a phenomenal rate. The two complementary strands, SCS-BC and the Non-FISA fundamentalist schools both emphasize "a secure, religion-based alternative to a public system that is weak on discipline and moral values." The SCS-BC schools are by-products of postwar Dutch Calvinist immigration; virtually all of them receive Group II funding, and have increased their enrollment from approximately 2500 in 1977 to just over 4600 in 1987. The smaller church-related fundamentalist schools have enjoyed the largest growth in terms of the number of schools established. Between 1977 and 1980, sixty-five Protestant evangelical schools were established; yet paradoxically, these schools do not receive funding since many are ideologically opposed to government control. While both the SCS-BC and Non-FISA private schools each enroll over 4500 students, the former consists of 32 schools and the latter of over 100. Fundamentalist Christian schools are proliferating without the use of government funds while the SCS-BC with its smaller number of schools has enjoyed large increases in enrollment made possible, in part, by government subsidies to its existing schools. The infusion of government monies into the private school system of British Columbia in 1977 through the passage of Bill 33 not only provided financial support for independent schools but served notice that the government intended to recognize alternatives such as Christian schools and
to support some freedom of choice in education," a declared government goal from the election of 1975.

The goal of the Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA) at its inception in 1966 was "to create a political climate in the province hospitable to the existence of independent schools and supportive of their public funding" through "the dissemination of information and political activism." FISA's increased political activity in the 1960's and early 1970's had important ramifications. First, this active politicking gave credibility to the plight of the independent schools and second, led to the historically significant passage of Bill 33 in 1977. However, as L. W. Downey points out, the active lobbying of FISA was only one of several contributing factors which allowed Bill 33 to succeed. Other factors included the leadership and determination of the Socred Education Minister, Dr. Pat McGeer, who became the chief architect of the bill; the effective functioning of FISA, the supporting lobby and the "not-so-effective functioning" of the BCTF, the competing lobby; "divisiveness in the ranks of the [NDP] Opposition" as the issue of public support of private education "is not one which takes shape along the lines of traditional party ideologies"; and finally, a decided shift in the public attitude toward schooling whereby "hostilities toward non-public schools had given way to greater tolerance." This tolerance was a reflection of the growing diversity in Canadian society and its "corresponding acceptance of pluralism in values." Gerry Ensing, former Executive Director of FISA, believes that this increased
acceptance by society of a pluralism in values was not only one of the main factors which allowed the passage of Bill 33 but also contributed to the opening of Christian schools."

Many Protestant evangelicals had become concerned over the use of drugs, sexual permissiveness, rebellion, and values advocated by the counter-culture movement of the 1960's. With the opening of "socially permissive" free schools and the perceived growth of secular humanism in the public schools, many conservative Protestants felt a need for schools where the environment was more in line with their beliefs and values. As mentioned, they rejected the secular liberal values of society for more conservative religious and moral values. As a result, a chain reaction was created: because of the shift from Christian ethics to secular humanism and the fundamental questioning of traditional values and beliefs, Protestant evangelicals wanted a change in the education of their children which was manifested in the opening of Christian schools. It is ironic in that the acceptance of a pluralism in values that decreased public hostilities towards private schooling was exactly what the Protestant evangelicals were protesting. Mr. Ensing makes a valid point on the Christian protest against the secular liberal values of society. However, he overestimates the influence of the counter-culture movement as it did not have as strong an impact in Canada as it did in the United States. Perhaps a more satisfactory explanation for the increased tolerance of values in Canadian society is cultural pluralism.
Cultural pluralism in Canadian society became official in October, 1971 with the development of a federal multiculturalism policy. Multiculturalism, then, is associated with pluralism, diversity, and variety, which, it is confidently maintained, are the essence of Canada's national identity. The creation of a federal multiculturalism policy by the Trudeau government and the "Liberal government's consistent advocacy since 1967 of entrenching individual rights in the Constitution" cultivated a consciousness of ethnicity and a greater awareness of minority rights. Perhaps this was one of the factors that gave credibility to the wishes of various minority groups to establish schools based on their religious and cultural identities. Stamp, in his analysis on the schools of Ontario, argues that multiculturalism was one of the major forces that produced the "private school explosion." He explains that "the increasing ethnic and religious diversity of Ontario's post-war population was no longer content and comfortable within the confines of a public school system that was seen as serving the cultural needs of only the traditional WASP mainstream." Consequently, these ethnic and religious groups, such as members of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Jewish religion, for example, sought educational alternatives outside the mainstream of public education. They "saw their own private schools as essential in preserving particular religious and cultural values in the midst of a multicultural North American milieu."

The perceived lack of some kind of "fundamental moral content" in the public system persuaded many parents to opt for
private alternatives such as the traditional elitist schools and Christian schools with their emphasis on discipline and conservative moral values. The growing disenchantment with public school education is essentially a by-product of societal changes in the last twenty-five years. It is impossible to give one major reason why Christian schools are flourishing as their growth is a result of a combination of factors. The back-to-basics movement, the growing secularism in society, the perceived lack of religious and moral values in the public school system and its emphasis on secular humanism, and the multicultural definition of Canadian society were especially important. It is within this context the evangelical and fundamentalist Christian groups, with increasing fervor, have promoted Christian education beyond the home and the Sunday School in their "religious war" against secular humanism and in fulfillment of the scriptural command to "train up a child in the way he should go."
NOTES TO CHAPTER II


3. Ibid., p. 104.


11. Quoted in J. D. Wilson, "From the Swinging Sixties to the Sobering Seventies," p. 197.


13. Ibid., p. 22.

15J. D. Wilson, "Religion and Education," p. 104.
16Ibid., p. 104.
18J. D. Wilson, "Religion and Education," p. 104.
19Quoted in ibid.
22J. D. Wilson, "From the Swinging Sixties to the Sobering Seventies," p. 206.
23J. D. Wilson, "Religion and Education," p. 105.
30Ibid., p. 203.

34 Quoted in Paul A. Kienel, Reasons for Christian Schools, p. 23.


40 Kathleen M. Gow, Yes Virginia, There is Right and Wrong! (Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, 1980), p. 14.


47 Ibid., p. 112.

48 Information Pamphlets (Dallas: Basic Education, 1986).

50


51 Ibid., p. 116.


53 J. D. Wilson, "Religion and Education," p. 100.


55 Ibid., p. 201.


57 J. D. Wilson, "From the Swinging Sixties to the Sobering Seventies," p. 206.


66 Ibid., p. 313.

67 Ibid., pp. 320-321.
Ibid., p. 321.

Personal communication from Gerry Ensing, Executive Director of the Federation of Independent School Associations, March 1985.

J. D. Wilson, "Religion and Education," p. 110.


Ibid., p. 204.

Chapter III

"TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO AND HE SHALL NOT DEPART FROM IT." (Proverbs 22:6)

CURRICULUM: AN INTRODUCTION

From 1953 with Hilda Neatby's "polemical, root-and-branch indictment of Canadian education," So Little for the Mind to the more recent A Common Countenance by George S. Tomkins, the history of curriculum in Canada has become an important field of academic inquiry.¹ Harro W. Van Brummelen in his book, Telling the Next Generation, provides an extensive account of curriculum developments in North American Calvinist Christian Schools.² Accounts such as these have provided a better understanding of how the course of Canadian curriculum development has been affected by the changing political and social climate of the last century.

Private Christian schools in Canada have built their reputation on an increasing dissatisfaction with public education, its "secular humanist" philosophy and its perceived lack of Biblical values; some parents have adopted Christian schools as a viable educational alternative: a bastion of Biblical truth and morality in a secular world. At the root of this alternative is the curriculum, as embodied in the textbooks utilized and the methods by which the children are instructed. What should be taught to children and who should determine what is taught are two fundamental questions whose responses hinge
upon one's philosophic underpinnings. Christian school supporters believe it is their right as parents to determine what is taught to their children and consequently utilize curricula which are more in line with their beliefs and values. Their concern with the more liberal, secular, and critical views of society is remarkably similar to the shift that occurred in British Columbian society between 1872 and 1925. During this period the "universal moral authority of Christianity" gradually deteriorated and was replaced by a more secularist perspective reflected in Canadian and B.C. textbooks of the time. "The curriculum, both overt and hidden, as detailed in policy and as implemented in classrooms is the vehicle society has used to pass on its heritage and to prepare its citizens for the present and future." With the gradual breakdown of the Judaeo-Christian imperative in education, many Protestant evangelicals no longer feel that the Christian heritage is being imparted in the public schools.

By the late 1970's in Canada "monolithic anglo-conformity and traditional Protestant middle-class morality no longer represented required norms in a secularized pluralistic society." This was reflected in the schools and their curricula in ways ranging from multicultural programs to values education. Evangelical and fundamentalist Christians who felt that Christian morality was no longer evident in the public school curricula took solace in the religious haven offered by the emerging Christian schools of the 1970's. In British Columbia, the most popular alternative among the church-related Christian schools
were those utilizing the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) program, an individualized learning program. This chapter will focus on the ACE curriculum because of its more widespread usage in relation to other Christian curricula and its emphasis on the primacy of God and Judaeo-Christian values.

The Essence of the ACE Curriculum

ACE's first school was founded in Texas in 1970 by Dr. Donald Howard, an American fundamentalist preacher. The first ACE school in British Columbia was established in the Lower Mainland in the early 1970's. Since then, ACE claims that approximately 5000 schools have taken up their materials enrolling one-half million children in over 50 countries. To meet this demand "an editorial production staff of over 100 people with a serving staff of over 250 experienced personnel" was employed in 1986." In British Columbia, almost half of the (church-related) private Christian schools surveyed in this study were ACE schools. This writer was able to obtain some audio tapes of a five-day "crash" training program for the establishment of an ACE school in the early 1970's in British Columbia. The following is a summary of those tapes and the key principles highlighted along with promotional materials from ACE's publishing centre. The seminar was conducted by Dr. Donald Howard.

Those proponents of Accelerated Christian Education believe that educational philosophy must be structured upon a sound theological base in order to develop academic excellence and, more importantly, moral absolutes. Another key concept is that
parents are ultimately responsible for the education and development of their children. The general purpose of the schools utilizing ACE is to assist parents with this "God-given" mandate and to assist the child in discovering and developing his individual uniqueness and talents. Therefore, an individualized learning format is quite often the paramount mode of instruction. The rationale underlying this tenet is the recognition that God has created each person as a unique individual, endowed with special talents for "serving and glorifying God." There is a strong emphasis in the curriculum on the mastery of the basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic along with the development of Christian moral character and productive citizenship. In effect, the objectives of these curricula are threefold: 1) to return the education of the child to the control of the parents in the local community; 2) to master the basic skills of learning; and 3) to build values of character, responsibility and knowledge of right and wrong so that the child may develop to his or her full potential as a productive citizen.

There are certain presuppositions which constitute the theological base around which the attributes of Christian character building and academic achievement are developed. The first presupposition is that God has created all things; therefore the educational philosophy of ACE is based on man as a spiritual being. According to Psalm 24:1 "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." Man is given dominion over the earth as charged by God and told to subdue the earth. He
therefore must be educated and trained in the ways of God so that he may act wisely in this capacity.

Second, God has communicated to man through the "Written Word: the Bible" and the "Living Word: Jesus Christ."

Consequently, the Bible as God's word to man is viewed as the main textbook of the ACE system since it communicates the truths and principles necessary for godly living. This is reminiscent of the early pioneer days in the United States and British North America. For Egerton Ryerson, the first Superintendent of Education in Upper Canada (Ontario), religion and morality were equated with the "general system of truth and morals" as taught in the Holy Scriptures and "the schools were proper vehicles for the dissemination of Christian principles."

The third presupposition declares that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, understanding and wisdom; thus, all knowledge must be placed within the context of Biblical truth. Finally, a relationship with God must be established by the individual through salvation in Jesus Christ as man is born with a "sinful" nature which he needs to be "redeemed" from. The primary purpose of ACE is to "save" young people and have them become subordinate to God and His will for their lives. In this vein, the teacher must reflect the teachings of Jesus Christ so that the "created beings" (students) of God may be brought to fulfillment in Christ. ACE believes in "training lives for eternity" and that man has a responsibility to learn wisdom which comes from God--the source of all knowledge.
The evangelistic nature of ACE is paramount as the goal of its program is to "create a nation-wide revival that will make fundamental Christians the dominant force in the culture." Each student is to bear witness in the world to accomplish his or her evangelical mandate. Therefore, schools are a means to an end with both an educational and evangelical function. "The Christian school is part of the church in action, not a separate entity." 

In order for an educational program to be academically sound and instructionally effective, they argue, it must be founded upon Christian educational principles that recognize the true nature of God. They believe that the Christian school curriculum should provide a learning experience which prepares the student for a life committed to God. Accordingly, each subject is presented in the light of God's truth from a Biblical viewpoint which implements a Christian world and life view. Therefore, their curriculum emphasizes that all life's values come from absolute presuppositions based on God's Word, the Bible.

The methodology utilized in the ACE system is "mastery learning" with the emphasis on mastery of the basic skills. This methodology extends through both elementary and secondary education. The curriculum consists of Reading, Math, Social Studies, and Science with various electives for high school students. The program specializes in individualized instruction with pupils working at their own level of ability rather than by chronological age. This "personalized" approach to learning utilizes universally prescribed tests in English and Math to
determine the academic level of the student so that they may work at their appropriate level until a mastery score (80%) has been achieved. The student then progresses to the next academic level which could conceivably be different in each subject. The curriculum is viewed as an academic prescription of the students' needs as they may by-pass material they already know and progress in sequence through the curriculum skills they need. The program provides for systematic review of the learning materials through reinforcement within each learning unit and review of the subject material at higher grade levels. In this way the concept of mastery learning is based on the premise that optimal learning occurs when students truly "master" the content of skills taught in one learning experience before progressing on to the next one. Each unit of learning or "self-text" contains sufficient instruction and activities so that the students can continue through each chapter alone at their own ability and speed. ACE claims that through a combination of explanations, examples, activities, drill, and review a maximum of learning and achievement can be provided, sufficient for achievers and under-achievers alike.

There are some problems with this approach. ACE's concept of individualism enables students to proceed through the curriculum at their own rate. This strategy could possibly accommodate individual differences in rates of learning. However, no attempt is made to individualize the scope of the curriculum or the approach to learning. The system is geared to controlled, motivated learning, with emphasis on a "uniform and
strict system of discipline" to insure compliant behavior. "ACE, it seems, is very concerned with appearance, behavior, and end-product"14 rather than personal growth and development. Although systematic review of the curriculum occurs, no subject is studied intensively beyond objective recall. The higher level cognitive processes such as analysis and synthesis are neglected. Finally, under-achievers may have difficulty assuming responsibility for their own learning and working independently with minimal guidance.

The education that the public schools provide is considered to be academically inferior to that provided by the ACE curriculum according to its promoters. They firmly believe that the academic skills of American students have eroded rapidly, particularly over the last fourty years and that the American educational system is suffering from academic anemia as they put it. The evidence for this theory is rooted in the information supplied by American studies such as the Coleman (1981) report which showed that students in private schools scored approximately two grade-levels higher on standardized achievement tests than their public school counterparts.15 Coleman maintained that only half of this achievement difference was attributable to selection of pupils. The other half was "attributable to the fact that, in general, private schools exhibit more of the characteristics that make a difference in achievement than do schools in the public sector."15 A further study conducted by McGraw-Hill and ACE in May 1983 concluded that students from the ACE curriculum "scored well above the national
[U.S.A.] average on standardized achievement tests. "Whether the high scores were based on factual recall or reasoning is not stated. Along with many other Christian schools, ACE promotes the concept of academic excellence in the wake of the "academic lethargy" supposedly besetting the public schools. ACE promotional literature features information which exposes the alleged academic problems besetting the American educational system. Consider some of the following examples:

The need [to improve educational standards] is seen in the eight to fifteen percent of American's teenagers and 23,000,000 of her adults being classified as functionally illiterate.

'If an unfriendly power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might have viewed it as an act of war.'

ACE counters this information with impressive academic results of their students and the consequent positive learning experiences achieved. This, of course, is quite attractive to parents, particularly those whose children have had difficulty in the public school system and those with a fundamentalist Christian outlook. While ACE's criticisms of the academic achievement levels of public schools is leveled at the American educational system, it would appear that many parents have assumed that some of these same problems exist in the public schools of British Columbia.

ACE seeks to instill discipline and self-control in its students through "proper" training—a controlled, motivated learning environment. The mode of training is one of obvious behaviourism—a system of rewards and punishments based on demerits. Their philosophy is based upon the premise that a
child needs control through continuous and consistent discipline. Control and love are considered the two key ingredients; self-control must be learned by the child in an atmosphere of discipline and love. The rules established for each school are "debatable, not negotiable" and are viewed as a scriptural imperative. ACE advocates the use of the "rod" or corporal punishment when a student's behaviour represents a direct challenge to authority and in keeping the child in subjection to his or her parents so that the student's "will can be brought under control." They claim that a child with controls is happier and more self-confident; the key to effective training is respect which must be earned and maintained through consistency and strong character. The students must learn to submit themselves to those in authority and become subordinate to God in order to discover "their distinctive purpose for serving God"--the ultimate purpose of the ACE school.

Some sound educational principles underlie the ACE philosophy on discipline. Principles such as not ridiculing or embarrassing the child especially in front of his or her peers, never punishing in anger, and never "talking down to a child" are stressed. The recognition that each student is an individual and the desire for the development of his or her full potential in an atmosphere of love and learning are admirable traits. However, ACE's motives are somewhat questionable given further material presented in the tapes. For example, they dramatize the problems of the public school with such statements as, "they bring witches into classes and expose students to seances." ACE proponents
stress the individuality of the child yet advocate the wearing of uniforms and strict adherence to the "system". ACE is a very regimented system with demerits recorded against the child for disruptive behaviour; serving a detention is deemed "serving their sentence" for committing an "offense"; and a student's desk is referred to as his "office". If the offense is serious enough, then "punishment" occurs in the form of "licks"—a frequently used term to describe the strap. The speaker made it clear that students at an ACE school should not dance, listen to rock and roll, or drink, and boys should have "proper" haircuts, as these common types of youthful behavior are not consistent with Christian principles. This regimented approach to learning was characteristic of the material presented and somewhat overshadows the goal of character development although they would argue that the controlled, restrictive environment fosters character building.

ACE does not claim to represent any particular denominational viewpoint in its curriculum but provides for "character development based upon traditional values and Biblical principles that are acceptable to a wide range of Christian backgrounds." Basic Education, a sister production of ACE, makes this claim as well. Although claiming non-denominational status, in actual practice this is not very realistic since it is hard to imagine this type of curriculum and overall atmosphere as acceptable to the average United Church or Anglican parent in Canada. Rather, these types of curricula would appeal more to right wing fundamentalist denominations. ACE is more than a
curriculum; it is a complete learning package which dictates the educational philosophy and structure of the school. To use ACE, the school must enter into a contract with the organization in Texas and agree to abide by its rules and regulations. ACE is not available to schools which refuse to do so or to the general public. Basic Education is a second edition ACE with identical philosophical and methodological bases but a contract is not required and it is available to the general public.

Currently, grades one through nine utilize the third edition of ACE curriculum. In grades ten through twelve, both ACE and Basic share the same curriculum. They purport to offer a quality education in basic values and skills from a non-denominational Biblical perspective in an effort to help bring education back to the control of the parents in the local community. This is ironic in that the curricula are pre-packaged in another country and those parents who choose ACE are subject to strict rules and regulations by which they must agree to abide. For those churches or groups of parents wishing to start a school, start up and operational manuals, consultation, training in classroom procedures, curriculum and in-service training will be provided. Basic Education materials are designed in the self-instructional, individualized mode with support material so that parents can use them to teach their children at home. The Basic Education curriculum is intended as a supplement to existing curriculum, an aid to teaching gifted and learning problem students, and as a home study program.
The ACE curriculum is built upon a Scope and Sequence that consists of major topics generally covered in most state and provincial school systems. However, the basic pedagogy is rote memorization, fill in the blanks, and true-false tests. The Scope and Sequence provides a section-by-section breakdown of the curriculum content in each subject area from grades one through twelve. Modeled after the general objectives of various state curricula in the United States, many schools using ACE in British Columbia claim that it more than meets the provincial curriculum requirements except in the area of social studies. A government evaluation of curriculum in the private schools of Alberta found that the ACE curriculum contained "significantly less content and development of required learning skills than the approved Alberta curriculum in language arts and mathematics."\(^{21}\) Content in science and social studies varied widely from the Alberta curriculum.\(^{22}\) In Alberta and British Columbia, the American social studies program has been replaced by some ACE schools with a "comprehensive" Canadian program that has been integrated at various grade levels. This program is self-instructional and is published in Edmonton, Alberta by Stonehouse Educational Consultants, a Christian-based publishing company. The program is not based on the Alberta Social Studies curriculum but is an attempt to provide a regional analysis and comprehensive overview of Canadian history and geography. It is a workbook curriculum as well with a heavy emphasis on simple recall and memorization. In effect, the ACE curriculum claims to incorporate basic skills,
learning principles, and academic concepts with fundamentalist Biblical beliefs.

There was a strong fundamentalist approach evident in the tapes. ACE proponents believe it is their responsibility and opportunity to fill the void left by both the public education program and the moral vacuum in society. The home, church, and school must speak in one consistent voice, they argue, in relation to absolute value patterns that come from God. Since the students are "destined for eternity" each generation must be trained diligently in the principles of God's Word. ACE believes that humanism has replaced the Bible, that Biblical principles have been all but destroyed in the public schools and that the importance of the Bible is recognized only in the pulpit in America. This concern over the apparent eradication of the Bible and its precepts in American society is a key to understanding the ACE mission of training children in "they way they should go" and why its proponents pursue this endeavour with such fervour.

In British Columbia the success of ACE schools may be due to the influence of American fundamentalist pastors who started many of the schools and effective promotional and marketing techniques by ACE. The religious aspect of ACE (life after death) has superceded its American orientation for many private schools in British Columbia.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III


5George S. Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 437.

6Ibid., p. 437.

7Basic Education, "Information pamphlets" (Dallas, TX: Basic Education, 1985).


10Ibid., p. 82.


13Basic Education information pamphlets.
Ibid., p. 224.


James Coleman as quoted in Larry Breitkreutz, "Parents have a right to Christian Schools," Canadian School Executive (February 1984): 31.

Larry Breitkreutz, "Parents have a right to Christian Schools," p. 31.


Ibid.

Personal communication from Dan Severtson, Academic Distribution Center, New Westminster, September 2, 1987.


Ibid., p. 15.
Chapter IV

"THE HOME AND THE CHURCH ARE THE ONLY DESIGNATED SPHERES OF TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO LIVE"¹: NON-FISA CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

The rise of church-related private schools, many of which do not receive government funding, is a recent phenomenon in British Columbia with many of the schools being founded in the last fifteen years. The exact number of these schools is unknown since many are not registered with any particular organization such as FISA and do not report school statistics. However, it is estimated that there are approximately 115 schools in operation, the majority of which are listed as Non-FISA schools. A listing of these church-related private schools was obtained from FISA which publishes an annual list of its members as well as those private schools which do not belong to an association affiliated with FISA. Consequently, evidence for this chapter was obtained from questionnaires sent out to principals of 100 schools whose addresses could be obtained from the Non-FISA list.

A covering letter (Appendix A), questionnaire (Appendix B), and self-addressed postage-paid envelope was sent to each of the subjects in the study. A follow-up phone call was made to schools not responding within four weeks of posting. In a previous smaller study employing a similar methodology, 13 of 20 questionnaires were returned, representing a 65% return rate.² This suggested that this procedure was viable. This earlier
pilot study provided some valuable information on the rationale of these schools, their philosophy towards government funding, the curriculum used, and teacher certification. The questionnaire for the current study was expanded to include items that addressed the number of students enrolled, the grade levels offered, the number of full and part-time teachers employed, and whether the school was open to members of other denominations. As well, fifteen oral interviews were conducted in person and by phone with individuals related to these schools. These individuals were selected randomly and from those contacted by mail and were asked questions relating to the political, economic, social, religious, and education motives for the founding of their schools. (See Appendix C)

Therefore, the evidence forming the basis of this study has been obtained primarily from primary sources. Additional information was gathered from reports, bulletins, response documents from the Ministry of Education, articles and books in an attempt to synthesize the various factors contributing to the growth of these church-related Christian schools. Additional correspondence was received from 53 schools.

Due to the variety of responses and for the sake of clarity each item of the questionnaire will be dealt with separately. The interrelationships between the responses will then be discussed, followed by a synthesis of the information collected from the oral interviews with that provided by the questionnaire. The results obtained from this study corroborate many of the findings of the pilot study conducted by the writer in 1985.
Of the 53 returned questionnaires, 3 disclosed that their school had ceased operation in 1986. Respondents represented a wide sampling of schools ranging from Greater Vancouver, the Lower Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island, Central British Columbia, and into the Okanagan-Kootenay region. From this fact alone, it is evident that these church-related Christian schools are not a phenomenon of any one urban or rural area but rather are spread quite consistently throughout many communities of British Columbia. It is difficult to determine whether this sample is representative of the entire population of Non-FISA Christian schools since some schools may choose not to be listed in the FISA Directory. Additionally, respondents were guaranteed anonymity in order to encourage frank responses. This was done at the expense of determining whether the respondents represented the group sampled. The following results should be examined with this in mind.

Only three of the schools which responded were founded before 1970 and two of these schools were from the Canadian Reformed and Seventh Day Adventist churches which have a history of providing Christian education to their youth. Between 1977 and 1981, 64% of the schools were founded. Only 18% of these schools were established before 1977, the year of the passage of Bill 33. Since 1981, the number of Christian schools that are church-related have been established at a much slower rate. Added to this is the discontinued operation of these types of schools each year as evidenced by the closure of 5.7% of the responding institutions.
The majority of these schools were small, often variations of the one classroom situation although there were other schools in the sample which did not fit this description. The mean number of students enrolled in these church-related private schools was 47, ranging from a low of 5 to a high of 227 students. Twenty-four percent of the schools enrolled less than 20 students while only 10% of the schools enrolled more than 100 students. Table 4 shows the mean number of students enrolled according to the curriculum used.

Only four schools or 8% of the sample did not offer either kindergarten or grade one. Twenty schools (40%) offered kindergarten and 30 schools (60%) enrolled students right through to grade 12. There were nine schools (18%) which provided instruction through to grade 10 only. There were a variety of reasons given why grades 11 and 12 were not offered and included lack of expertise in the subject area and lack of resources, such as money and equipment. However, one of the main considerations was the requirement of provincial examinations for university entrance in British Columbia which would mean the adherence to a provincial curriculum. It would seem that those students in grades 11 and 12 who wish to pursue university education do so at Christian schools utilizing the British Columbia core curriculum or transfer to a public school. Those schools that offered grades 11 and 12 suggested that university-bound students enroll at a community college for a year before university entrance or attend a Christian-based institution such as Trinity Western University.
### TABLE 4

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CURRICULUM USED AND MEAN STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>No. of Schools</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
<th>Mean Student Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C. Provincial</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Beka</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha Omega</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>47.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To give credence to the statement that the majority of schools were of the one classroom variety or variations thereof, 56% of the schools had 2 or fewer full-time teachers with 32% having only one full-time teacher. The mean number of full-time teachers employed per school was 3.14. Only 26% of the schools surveyed had more than 3 full-time teachers with the largest school having 18, which was, incidentally, a funded school. The mean number of part-time teachers employed was 1.86 with 30% of the schools employing no part-time help at all although volunteer assistance was used at some of these schools. Fourteen percent of the schools employed more than 3 part-time teachers which suggests a matter of cost-efficiency and expertise for subject matter in areas such as music and physical education.

Less than half (40%) of the schools had some form of graduated fee level that responded to the parent's ability to pay. Some of the schools which stated they had no graduated fee level had special provisions. Examples of these special provisions were free attendance for children of church members if the parents could not afford the fees or in large families, the fourth and fifth child may attend tuition-free. There were four schools which were completely church-supported and charged no tuition fees whatsoever.

As anticipated, the majority of the schools (80%) were evangelical Christian. Some examples were Baptist, Evangelical Free, Full Gospel Christian Fellowship, Mennonite, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and the Church of God. Closely related to these churches and comprising 10% of the sample were schools led
by the Seventh Day Adventists (S.D.A.) who believe in the imminent return of Jesus Christ and the Bible as the Word of God. Therefore, only 10% of the schools belonged to denominations other than those classified as evangelical Christian or S.D.A. Some of the schools represented in this study identified themselves as non-denominational. These statistics substantiate the statement that the majority of the Non-FISA schools are Protestant evangelical church-related day schools. Eighty-six percent of the schools surveyed enrolled children of other denominations. Some of the schools had a stipulation that the parents would have to accept precepts taught in chapel and the statement of faith espoused by the sponsoring church if they wanted their children to attend. Of the 7 schools which were not open to children of other denominations, 2 said they were not averse to the idea and would consider it.

The significant question of whether the passage of Bill 33 (initiation of government funding for private schools in 1977) had any influence on their decision to found their school provided an interesting response. Of the 50 schools which responded, 40 had been founded since the passage of the Independent School Support Act in 1977 yet, ironically, all 50 of the schools stated that Bill 33 had nothing to do with their decision to start their school. Examples of the reasons cited for the founding of the school were:

No, the Academy was founded because of Christ's love for people. Train up a child in the knowledge and discipline of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4)...

No, our church felt a need to provide our children with a Christian education.
No, [it was] founded upon a Biblical conviction that the home and church are the only designated spheres of teaching children how to live.

Of the responding schools, 34 (68%) were not currently receiving any form of government funding and 29 of these 34 schools were not planning to seek any government aid in the future. Consider some of the responses:

With government funding comes government curriculum. We desire to provide a humanistic free curriculum based on the Bible and Christian morals and standards.

We wish to retain our identity and freedom of operation as long as we can on our own system.

We have always felt that funding and control would ultimately evolve to a disagreeable conclusion.

The question of seeking or not seeking government funding is an interesting issue. There were 16 (32%) of schools who received government funding, of which only two received Group II funding. However, there were 8 (16%) schools who were interested in seeking Group II funding at some point in the future. From this information it can be concluded that a small contingent of the Non-FISA church-related schools are interested in some form of government funding but the majority wish to remain free from any form of government control which is attached to Group II funding.

Regarding certification of teachers, 68% of the schools did not require provincial certification although some schools encouraged their teachers to do so to enhance the school's credibility and to foster high academic standards. This area will be discussed in greater detail in reference to the curricula used.
Table 4 presents the curriculum used in the responding schools. The most prevalent curriculum used was ACE (23 schools) with 8 schools utilizing the British Columbia provincial curriculum and 9 schools using a curriculum designated as "others". Other curricula included self-developed units, Society of Christian Schools material, S.D.A.-developed curriculum, and material from Bob Jones University. The Alpha Omega and A-Beka curricula were used quite infrequently on their own, but were often "mixed" together or used as a supplement to ACE, suggesting that their usage is more widespread than Table 4 would indicate. In effect, they were utilized in one form or another in 20% of the schools.

Examination of teacher certification in greater detail indicated that the response was related to the type of school. First, the ACE schools in general were more lenient in certification requirements than other schools. Consider the following responses from selected ACE schools:

Our preference is that they be certified.

At this point in time, we require our teachers to be certified. But if it came to the place of choosing between an unrighteous certified teacher and a righteous non-certified teacher, we would choose the non-certified.

We require them to be qualified for their area of teaching (no to certification).

God certifies them—not the government. Our teachers exceed government qualifications as related to Biblical standards.

In contrast, here are selected responses from non-ACE schools:

We feel that our teachers need to be certified to give our school credibility. We believe there is value to higher education, teacher training, and wish to have a level of professionalism in our school that comes with the training and experience of certified teachers.
We believe that our teachers should be certified. At present our teachers all hold a permanent B.C. teaching certificate.

Require—no. Desire—yes. We have salary incentives to encourage them [teachers] in that direction. We don't insist because we see spiritual qualifications as paramount. However, our key teachers are certified.

Table 5 shows that 19 of the 23 (83%) ACE schools did not require teacher certification. Not surprisingly, 7 of the 8 schools using the British Columbia government curriculum required their teachers be provincially certified which is a criterion of Group II funding. The ACE schools view certification as secondary to spiritual training and Biblical standards, which is an integral component of the packaged ACE program. Some schools expressed a preference for teachers who had been trained in Christian colleges or universities.

We would hope that more of our teachers—in the future—would have the opportunity to take their training in Christian Teacher Training Colleges or universities; thereafter gaining their certification from a professional organization such as the Association of Christian Schools International...

They [our teachers] are denominationally certified through Seventh Day Adventist Colleges and Universities.

This is indicative of the importance placed on spiritual values and the indoctrination of teachers into their particular school of thought.

Table 5 reflects the ACE schools' strong stance on the rejection of any government funding which is in line with their philosophy of rejecting any form of government intervention in their school. The two ACE schools which expressed an interest in Group I funding were perhaps more aware of the minimum
### TABLE 5
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CURRICULUM, TEACHER CERTIFICATION, AND GOVERNMENT FUNDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Teacher Certification</th>
<th>Government Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Beka</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C. Provincial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha Omega</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
regulations regarding this level of funding and willing to apply for it on those grounds. The ACE schools constitute the large majority of the private church-related Christian schools but seem more reluctant to divulge information relating to their schools. From the information obtained, it can be concluded that schools applying for government assistance under the terms of Bill 33 in the Non-FISA schools are a minority and use a curriculum other than ACE. Of the schools indicating interest in Group I funding, all were quite specific about their conditions for applying:

It would seem that the ____________ Christian School will probably apply for a Group I grant, if it can be received without any "strings attached". We would not want any grant received to affect our local autonomy and right to self-determination in regard to the operation of the Christian school.

We will use funds for building maintenance only. We will never put our school (sic) to rely on such funds for its existence.

This school would not consider returning to the curriculum of the public school system at the present time; and that would seem to be a requirement in regard to receiving the Group II grant.

Group II funding with its more stringent requirements and government control was not seen as a viable alternative since it conflicts with their basic philosophy of a Christian curriculum and complete local autonomy.

Of the 8 schools receiving or seeking funding at the Group II level, at least 2 are known to have started with a Christian curriculum (ACE) and then switched to the British Columbia government curriculum. By the strict definition applied to the private Christian schools studied in this paper, these Group II schools would no longer fit into this category of schools because
of philosophical differences. This is important as it shows that a select minority of non-FISA schools are considering increased levels of government funding and moving away from the "isolationist" approach of non-funded Christian schools.

Dissatisfaction has arisen with the ACE-type of approach resulting in the movement of many such schools into "mainstream" Christian schools.

J. Donald Wilson in "Religion and Education: The Other Side of Pluralism" (1981) stated that "in B.C. 65 Protestant evangelical schools were established between 1977 and 1980," and speculated that they were "spurred into existence in part by anticipated government assistance after three years in operation". If this study is indicative of the larger reality of this school movement, then it cannot be said that anticipated government funding spurred them into existence. What can be said is that the passage of Bill 33 gave state-authorized credibility to the plight of the independent school movement, including church-related Christian schools. However, a point may be made that future government funding at the Group I level may have influenced some schools to incorporate, although it was not a stated purpose or objective when originally founded. From the evidence gathered and from the indication that the majority of schools which have come into existence since 1977 are ACE schools, it is very unlikely that anticipated government funding had any influence upon the majority of Protestant Evangelical schools founded in the past ten years.
Oral Interviews

Ten oral interviews were conducted with the principals of a variety of Non-FISA schools representing mainly non-funded schools, some Group I funded schools, and one school seeking Group II funding, which was a reflection of the overall sample group. The main purpose of the interviews was to secure a rationale for the founding of the school in terms of the religious, political, economic, social, and educational reasons. (See Appendix C for a copy of the semi-structured interview format.)

As expected, religion was seen as the major reason for the founding of the schools. Respondents viewed the authority for the Christian school as coming from God—"the 'guiding force of the universe' and that 'all truth is God's truth.'" Children were seen as gifts from God and parents are mandated by God to educate or "train up their children in the way they should go." Biblical verses were often used to support these mandates (e.g., Psalms 127:3-5; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4). The Christian school was viewed as an extension of the home in assisting parents to fulfill their responsibility to "train up" their children. In all instances, emphasis was laid on the strong belief in Biblical standards and principles.

Intimately related to the above is the sphere of educational theory and the reaction against the alleged secular humanism of the public schools. As mentioned previously, the public school is seen as a worldly institution whose goals are set by the state. The public school with its humanist-centred curriculum
simply is not seen as a viable alternative for Christian parents. The centre of the issue, then, lies in the philosophical differences between the humanist-centred public school curriculum and the education of children according to Biblical principles. Consider the following quotations from selected personnel in the church-related private schools:

We had a strong commitment to the belief that education was the responsibility of the parent and wanted our children to be taught Judaeo-Christian values in the curriculum as opposed to a humanist-centred curriculum as is being used in the public school system in B.C.

...This group of parents were determined that their children would not again be faced with the humanistic philosophy of the public system.

Our school was started because of a Biblical conviction to daily train our children according to Godly standards...It is very important that those who teach our children have the right philosophy.

These selected responses were representative of the opinions expressed in the questionnaires and interviews. The responses reflect two of the primary reasons for the founding of the small church-related schools—the mandate from God to instruct their children and the reaction against secular humanism as found in the public school system.

Many of the schools felt that both the means and ends of public education were inappropriate. There was a definite concern over the apparent erosion of the curriculum in the areas of Biblical values and morality. Particular dissatisfaction was expressed with an educational system that does not allow alternative theories of the origin of mankind, such as creationism. Since God is regarded as the centre of all truth
and learning, He must be acknowledged in all subject areas, especially when discussing mankind's origins. Supporters of Christian schools would argue that failure to recognize this basic tenet makes an education not only incomplete, but inappropriate. As well, many schools expressed a definite preference for the individualized goal-oriented mode of learning which recognizes the importance of each child as a "unique individual created by God." Since each student learns at his or her own rate, supporters of individualized Christian curricula tend to consider learning as the constant and time as the variable. The Christian work ethic and loyalty to the home and family are stressed in an effort to produce good, productive citizens. As two respondents put it:

We want our children trained for leadership and good loyal citizenship. We train them to set daily and long-term goals; we stress the importance of making every endeavor to achieve those goals.

...The Christian work ethic is also stressed as the basis of success and fulfillment both in school and in the workplace.

The public school was seen as distancing itself from the family. It was perceived that it had not been responsive to the needs and goals of the family, was failing in the area of moral development, and in some cases, was regarded as academically inferior. In effect, the educational tenets established within the Christian school reflected the parents' wishes for the mode of education they deemed most appropriate for their children—that of a Biblically based, God-centred system recognizing the importance of the individual child and his or her relationship to God.
Politically, the majority of the schools reject the idea of some or any government control of formal schooling although those seeking Group II funding did not have a problem with this concept as they had evolved from the traditional church-related private school. The latter regard formal schooling as the responsibility of the parent, not the government, and therefore feel government control should not be present or at least restricted in their schools. However, judging from the information gleaned from the various interviews, the crux of the problem lies not within an inherent nature to reject government control of formal schooling but rather with an increasing dissatisfaction over the gradual removal of the Judaeo-Christian influence from the classroom and its replacement with a secular humanist philosophy. This "de-Protestantization" discussed earlier provided the mandate to Christian parents to establish alternatives which once again recognized the importance of Biblical morals and values.

...The Bible teaches that our children should be trained by Christians in a godly system; if the government were Christian and had a Christian-based curriculum, government control would not be a problem.

The majority (4 of 6) of the non-funded schools responded that they were organized so as to provide instruction in a uniquely cost-efficient manner. This was particularly true of those schools which have used or were currently using the ACE curriculum. A resource manual which provides step by step instructions for establishing a school is provided along with a detailed description of the approximate cost for each stage of the procedure and the materials required. The curriculum is designed for individualized learning where the teacher is more of
a supervisor and motivator than an instructor. In fact, in the ACE system, the instructor is referred to as a monitor, not a teacher. This can accommodate larger classes and fewer staff and greatly reduces costs particularly where the facility used is the church of the founding school members and thus there is no capital outlay for a building or land.

However, not all of the schools were interested in cost-efficiency. This was particularly evident in those schools applying for government funding. Consider the following responses:

- We don't want to limit students' learning by overcrowded classrooms and inadequate texts.
- We tried a middle of the road approach to cost. Our school uses certified teachers and has small classes. We are interested more in quality than cost-efficiency.

From the evidence gathered, it would appear that cost-efficiency is an important factor with those schools using the ACE curriculum and not necessarily with non-funded schools in general.

The question of whether the school had adopted special programs and educational approaches to respond to parents' ability to pay produced a range of responses dependent on the individual institution selected. A sampling of their replies reveals the diversity and autonomy of the various schools represented.

- There is no tuition charged. The school is completely run on tithes and offerings. The minimum requirement is that the families must be tithing members of our church. (We trust them to pay.)
We don't deny access on ability to pay. There is an informal agreement with parents on what they are to pay on a regular basis. There is no tuition schedule per se.

All our students are from the church; their parents are charged tuition and they must be able to afford it.

In our system nobody is refused admission based on finances, in other words, the poor are not penalized. If they want to attend and cannot afford to, then they come for free. The church provides the facility and utilities and other tuitions subsidize those who can't pay.

We charged parents what they could afford. All students had equal access to all programs whether or not their parents paid full tuition. A special educational fund was established to subsidize families who could not pay the full amount and some students were completely subsidized by the school.

Therefore, it is apparent that the schools were generally quite generous in their admission procedures based on the parents' ability to pay. However, 4 of the 10 schools interviewed enrolled students which came exclusively from their church. This number (40%) is rather surprising since only 14% of the surveyed schools responded that they did not enroll children of other denominations. This discrepancy may be due to the sampling process used to select schools and/or a misinterpretation of the question by selected respondents in the survey. This "misinterpretation" may have been intentional or perhaps the question was unclear. Evidently, the special programs adopted by many of the schools are not only reflective of the parents' ability to pay but represent particular church-demands to which the parents belong.

The parents and staff of these schools feel quite strongly that the costs of the school are justified by the pupils' social and academic achievement. The majority of the schools reported
their students scored, on the average, well above the Canadian norms for their grade levels in both percentile rank and grade equivalent ratings based on the Canadian Achievement Tests (CAT) published by McGraw-Hill and Ryerson. One school stated that its students scored 2.5 years above the norms on the CAT and offered a "superior" education which the parents valued and were willing to pay for. A small ACE school from the Lower Mainland has produced 36 high school graduates over the last 5 years of which 29 have entered a program of higher education. There could be a variety of factors contributing to these unusually high test results such as biased sampling of students or smaller classes, but it is notably evident that the back-to-basics movement in these schools is appealing to many parents. This concern with academic achievement coupled with strong moral training has proven to be an attractive alternative for a growing number of parents.

Socially, this type of environment is what the parents want their children exposed to although two of the schools expressed concern that their school had become somewhat of a "closed society." They both advocated opening their schools to people outside their church in order to foster interaction with other groups of people. Generally, the parents were quite satisfied in regards to both social and academic achievement as reported by the principals interviewed in this study.

High parental involvement in the activities of the school and low teacher turnover were also characteristic of these schools. One of the larger ACE schools reported 95% parent
attendance at parent-teacher meetings and the loss of only 3 teachers in 9 years. Whether the school was funded or not, the staff were described by their respective principals as deeply committed to the cause of Christian education and consequently teacher turnover was almost nonexistent in most cases. This was true whether or not the school employed certified teachers. The duties performed by the teachers were described as their "ministry" or service to the students and parents.

Our teachers, although well-qualified, look upon this teaching assignment as a worthwhile service to parents who are, in fact, paying twice for the education of their children. Accordingly, they do accept wages which are considerably lower than those of the public system.

In all instances, the teachers were remunerated at a level lower than the salaries paid by the public system. In the ACE schools, use of non-certified teaching personnel would not justify equality in wages. The teachers are considered to be devout in their "service" and feel that the benefits of the Christian school outweigh the personal costs or else a higher turnover of teachers would presumably be evident.

In response to whether the respondents felt their school was an expression of an ethnic identity, all stated emphatically that this was not the case in their schools. They replied that their student bodies were composed of various ethnic groups; some were willing to show class lists to substantiate it. From visitation at selected schools, observation of the student population would support this claim. No particular group of people was refused admission to these schools based on their ethnic heritage. Admission to the schools was based on an adherence to Biblical
principles in the training of children and a willingness to pay for this belief. This, of course, would preclude those groups who do not wish their children to be indoctrinated in Christianity.

These schools definitely do not represent an economic "elite" as may be found in schools modeled on the British "public" schools model. All schools reported that students came from the lower to middle socio-economic levels representing a wide variety of groups from labourers to professionals. The non-funded church schools, in particular, were self-described as representing a large percentage of blue collar workers but with no real similarities among occupations and neighbourhoods. Again, the raison d'être for these schools lies apparently among the religious convictions of the parents regardless of occupational status or socio-economic level. However, it appears that parents supporting Christian schools are mainly middle class.

Of the six non-funded schools interviewed, four used the ACE curriculum. One school used A-Beka supplemented with some locally developed units and Bob Jones University curriculum. The other used A-Beka supplemented with the Canadian social studies program from Alpha-Omega. The four funded schools of which three were Group I were split—half used a Christian curriculum and two used the public school curriculum. Incidentally, those schools using the government curriculum were both interested in Group II funding; one had already received it and the other was in the process of applying for it. All these Christian schools were
asked which emphases were to be found in their curricula based on the list provided. (See Appendix C) The consensus was a balanced approach to learning which tried to incorporate all of the areas with a strong emphasis on the mastery of skills. However, certain areas were given priority depending on the school interviewed.

Practice in reasoning is very important although some would debate this in our system [ACE]. We offer chapels and devotions where much decision-making in the religious and philosophical areas must be done.

We stress the moral, religious aspect which recognizes God as the centre of all truth—moral and academic. We want to direct our children to be self-motivated learners and disciplined in their lives.

The schools, in general, were satisfied that their curriculum was meeting their perceived needs. Two schools which had previously utilized the ACE curriculum, however, expressed some serious misgivings over that system. They felt that it was too American in nature and lacked Canadian content particularly in the social studies area. The regimentation of the system with its cubicles and curriculum paces was considered to be too restrictive and a detriment to creativity. Student-teacher interaction and social interaction among the students was felt to be limited. Therefore, these two schools decided to choose a different curriculum which would provide them with more flexibility and freedom in their educational choices.
NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1Survey respondent.


Those Christian schools utilizing the B.C. Ministry of Education core curriculum in grades 11 and 12 quite often belong to the Society of Christian Schools.

A-Beka is a Christian curriculum published by A-Beka Book Publications of Pensacola, Florida. This firm is an important source of resources for Mennonite Parochial schools in Alberta.

See Harro Van Brummelen, Telling the Next Generation for a discussion of the "isolationist" approach to Christian schools.

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

The pluralistic nature of Canadian society has been more tolerant of diversity in education than the United States. This is evidenced, for example, by the partial government funding of private schools in Alberta since 1968 and British Columbia since 1977 and the existence for many years of fully tax-supported Roman Catholic schools in five provinces.¹ In British Columbia, it was established private schools such as those started by the Christian Reformed and Catholic schools which gave credibility to the independent school movement and its quest for a share of public funds.² In effect, the passage of Bill 33 in 1977 served notice that the government of British Columbia intended to "support some freedom of choice in education, and to assist the private sector in becoming more competitive in the delivery of educational services."³

This study has demonstrated that almost half of the schools surveyed are interested in some form of government funding, particularly at the Group I level which still keeps them free from government control. Although two of the twenty-three ACE schools were interested in Group I funding, the ACE philosophy has not tolerated any form of government control. It is apparent that the majority of Non-FISA schools are not interested in Group II funding and may continue to remain non-funded. The decision to found their schools was not based on the passage of Bill 33 but rather for reasons such as dissatisfaction with the lack of moral instruction and discipline in the public school, its
emphasis upon humanism, and a desire to provide instead an education based upon Biblical precepts.

The Ministry of Education has remained neutral on the control of these schools since there has been no existing legislation governing their operation. The School Support Amendment Act passed in June, 1987 provides for a voluntary accreditation process for all non-classified, non-funded schools. This is an attempt by the government to provide "a process of evaluation designed to ensure the public and prospective clients that qualifying schools meet an acceptable standard of education in the province of British Columbia"*. Although not specifically designed for the non-funded Christian schools, this system of evaluation would provide credibility for those schools electing the accreditation process. The voluntary nature of this process and the fact that the schools themselves must assume the cost of evaluation should ensure that this government accreditation list in no way poses a threat to the Non-FISA Christian schools. In a move to encourage the teaching of British Columbia core curriculum courses, the Ministry offers free textbooks to schools who wish to instruct their students in one or more such courses. Of course, 35% funding is available to any of the schools who meet the more stringent requirements of Group II funding which includes the establishment of a curriculum that meets minimum instructional time requirements for course subject areas.

Examination of the statistics has shown the increased growth of Christian schools, particularly in the last ten to fifteen years. In 1985-1986 an interesting phenomenon occurred in the
Christian schools of British Columbia. According to the enrollment statistics provided by FISA, the Non-FISA total dropped from 6434 students in 1985-86 to 5604 in 1986-87, suggesting that the private church schools have, perhaps, reached their apex in popularity. However, according to Fred Herst, Executive Director of FISA, the statistics are somewhat misleading. He explained that the figures are not completely reliable as many of the Non-FISA Christian schools do not respond with their yearly enrollment updates. The statistics reported are very conservative estimates and can change dramatically from one year to the next. There is also internal movement occurring as ten schools joined the Federation last year and ten more are joining this year. Many of these are Protestant evangelical schools which join the Society of Christian Schools (SCS-BC) after a two-year associate member period and the Associate Member Group (AMG) which both meet provincial curriculum requirements. Therefore, the drop in the Non-FISA enrollment totals is somewhat compensated for in the higher overall FISA total.

Some critics of private school education have argued that private schools cater to an economic elite. Often the term "private" has been associated with those academically oriented schools in the British tradition. However, this notion has been partially discredited by Donald Erickson's study on the consequences of funding the independent schools of British Columbia which found that private school students in British Columbia come mainly from families with incomes slightly below the provincial average. Erickson's study was roundly criticized
for not being representative as he examined only those FISA Christian schools from the Fraser Valley. This paper would, however, substantiate Erickson’s claim as far as Christian schools are concerned. This evidence gives some support to the independent schools’ claim that a normal cross-section of Canadians are attracted by the alternative of the private schools and that they are not a "haven of privilege for the well-to-do." The exception would be those elite schools offering education in the British "public" school tradition. As for the Protestant evangelical schools, they not only attract a normal cross-section of Canadians but seem to be enjoying success in both the small communities outside the Lower Mainland and larger urban centres as well.

An examination of the private church-related schools and their subsequent proliferation is a multifaceted issue. Clearly, it is the result of a growing awareness of the perceived importance of a Biblically based education coupled with the increasing dissatisfaction with the public school system that has led to the founding of many of these Christian schools. Jean Barman astutely points out that:

The growth of Christian education in British Columbia parallels its burgeoning appeal across North America, such schools being perceived as providing a secure, religion-based alternative to a public system that is weak on discipline and moral values."

The key element in the rationale behind these schools is the Christian philosophy. Christianity is viewed as a total way of life and, it is contended, Christian values must be inculcated not only at home and at church but through formal education as
well. For the fundamentalist Christian, the basic textbook is the Bible, as it is seen as God's word to man and the essence of truth. This influence must permeate all aspects of curriculum since the Christian education is based on a Biblical perspective.

Private religious-based education reflects the origins of Canadian education and has been developed in a pluralistic vein. Canadian society is a cultural mosaic consisting of a plurality of identities—ethnic, religious, regional, to name three—each with its own needs and goals. Freedom of choice in education is advocated by independent school supporters who view the schools as an avenue to teach their children the beliefs and values they deem important and necessary. To support this view, Article 26 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of which Canada is a signator is often quoted. It states that:

Everyone has the right to education: that education shall be free and compulsory: that parents have the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given their children.

Christian school supporters have chosen the type of school and education that best suits their philosophy. They desire an education for their children that parallels the religious and moral instruction offered in the home and church. They have become increasingly dissatisfied with the "secular humanism" that they perceive has pervaded the public schools and what they perceive as the decline in discipline, morals, and standards. Consequently, schools which offer a secure, religious-based alternative are becoming increasingly popular. Their realization that all education is philosophically shaped and directed and the notion that neutrality of values in education is a myth can be
attributable to better education of parents and active lobbying of groups such as FISA and Christian educators. The issue at stake is one of values and who decides which values are to be communicated to their children, be it the state or the parent. Independent school supporters, especially from the Christian schools, have argued that in a democracy, all citizens should be free to choose the educational system and curriculum which communicates their values most appropriately. The need for more cooperation between parents and schools as advocated by independent schools supporters is one of the reasons for their growing popularity.

The theme of quality in schooling was considered the most dominant theme of the 1985 *Let's Talk About Schools* report regarding the status of schooling in British Columbia. Both the public and educators believe that the quality of schooling in British Columbia has deteriorated over the last five years.

British Columbians now feel that the quality of Provincial schooling is not equal to that of other provinces, and ranks even more poorly when compared to what is seen to exist in British Columbia's private or independent schools.  

Coupled with this perceived decline in quality was a concern "about teaching such topics as Darwinism, family life skills, values, and sex education"—topics better left in their view to the realms of the parents and church. Some of the specific suggestions made by respondents to the question, "What aspects of religion, if any, should be included in schools?" included "the need to teach from a Christian perspective, teach Creationism, and have Bible reading and the Lord's Prayer." Obviously, the Christian schools of British Columbia are meeting the needs of
those parents concerned with the perceived lack of Christian values and quality education in the public schools.

Christian schools, in general, will likely continue to grow and expand in British Columbia in the near future provided their supporters continue to perceive the same need for their existence. However, those Christian schools which do not attach themselves to an umbrella organization such as ACE or the SCS often are very small, do not receive funding and are susceptible to premature closure because of small enrollments and/or no government assistance. The exception to this would be the few large independent Christian schools such as Mennonite Educational Institute in Abbotsford and Seacliff Christian School in Richmond. The more successful Christian schools, in terms of stability, seem to be those which are either church subsidized or receive government assistance. The trend in favour of the Non-FISA schools joining FISA in 1987 is a reflection of the acceptance of Group II funding and its contingent use of British Columbia Ministry of Education core curriculum. Whether this trend will continue in the future is an interesting question. It is clear, however, that those schools utilizing the ACE curriculum will remain autonomous and free from government control in the near future whether or not increased levels of funding are made available.

Many of the ACE schools were initiated by church pastors with American backgrounds or whose church denominations have close ties with the United States. Some of these schools are served by U.S.-based organizations and use a large amount of
American curriculum materials. Further, many ACE schools in the U.S. have allegedly switched to different programs and methodologies. Dr. Howard recently encouraged Canadian ACE leaders to be more flexible in their program and government funding approaches. Perhaps this will affect ACE's philosophy towards government funding. Finally, ACE must not be written off as a "passing fancy" but recognized as Neil Bramble suggests, as a "thriving, powerful force in the Christian school scene...."\textsuperscript{14}

Besides the fundamental issue of state versus parent/church control of schooling there are other pressing questions which need to be addressed. Have the Non-FISA Christian schools reached their peak in popularity or will they continue to grow and expand? How well do graduates of these Christian schools in B.C. fare in society and what proportion, for example, attend college or university? If the government provided increased levels of funding to the public schools for areas such as special education, learning disabled and the reduction of the student-to-teacher ratio, would private school enrollments decrease? What effect would the implementation of educational vouchers have on the enrollments of private schools, in particular, the Christian schools?

Clearly, private schooling has developed a niche in the educational configuration of both Canada and the United States and has assumed a significance few would have predicted a generation ago. Despite this, the private schools still constitute only five percent of the total elementary and secondary enrollments in Canada. Although increasingly popular,
private schools are not so great in number or enrollment "that they threaten the viability of public education." Rather, the private schools, particularly the Christian ones, meet a need for those advocates of family choice in our pluralistic Canadian society who have become disillusioned with the public school system and desire a more traditional education suited to their philosophy and needs. The proponents of Christian education have embraced the Biblical mandate to "train up a child in the way he should go."
NOTES TO CHAPTER V


4 Gary Mason, "Waiting period for grants cut for independent schools," The Vancouver Sun (June 25, 1987).


8 Gerry Ensing, "Diversity in Education," p. 5.


15 Gerry Ensing, "Diversity in Education," p. 5.
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ii. Unpublished Sources

a. Interviews

Mr. Gerry Ensing

Mr. Fred Herst

Ten interviews with principals of Non-FISA schools (anonymous).

Five interviews with others (parents, school board members) associated with these schools (anonymous).

2. SECONDARY SOURCES


Gow, Katherine M. Yes Virginia, There is Right and Wrong! Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1980.


Please answer the following questions as completely as possible. If extra space is required, please use additional paper.

1. What year was your school founded? ____________________________

2. How many students are currently enrolled (1986-1987)? ______________

3. What grade levels does your school offer? __________________________

4. How many full-time teachers do you currently employ? ________________
   part-time? ________________

5. Does your school have a graduated level of fees which reflect the parent's ability to pay? YES ____ NO ____

6. A. What religious denomination do your students belong to? ______________

   B. Does your school enroll children of other denominations?

7. Did the passage of Bill 33 (initiation of government funding for private schools in 1977) have anything to do with your decision to found your school?

8. A. Are you currently receiving government funding? YES ____ NO ____

   B. Do you plan to seek government funding in the near future?
      YES ____ NO ____

      Please explain your reasons for seeking or not seeking government funding.

9. Do you require your teachers to have provincial certification?

    YES ____ NO ____

    Why or why not?
10. Which of the following curricula do you use?

Accelerated Christian Education _____ Other (please specify) ____

Alpha-Omega _____

I want a copy of the results of this study. YES ____ NO ____
If yes, please provide your name and address.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION. IT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.
Again, confidentiality is guaranteed.
Oral Interview

1. Why was your school started? Please respond to the following categories of reasons and explain each fully.

A. Political:

Many parents in the Christian private school movement reject the idea of some or any government control of formal schooling. Do you think that this is the case in your school and to what extent?

B. Economic:

i. Was your school organized so as to provide instruction in a uniquely cost-efficient manner? If so, how?

ii. Has your school adopted special programs and educational approaches that respond to your parents' ability to pay? If so, describe their main features.

iii. Do parents and staff in your school consider that the costs of the school are justified by the pupils' social and academic achievement? Please explain.

C. Social:

i. Is your school the expression of an ethnic identity? Please explain.

ii. Do your parents generally share social characteristics (neighborhood from which families come, similar occupations among parents and so on)?

D. Religious:

i. Was religion a motivating cause for the founding of your school and to what extent?

E. Educational Theory:

To what extent does your school and its curriculum reflect positions on the following issues?

i. A particular theory of child development and learning.

ii. Belief that both the means and ends of public education are inappropriate. In what ways?

F. Other:

Are there other reasons why your school was started other than previously specified? If so, explain.
2.

A. Curricula:

Which of the following curricula do you use?

Accelerated Christian Education ______
Alpha Omega ________________
Other (please specify) ________________

B. Your curriculum may emphasize any or all of the following:

____ acquisition of facts in the various disciplines
____ practice in reasoning
____ mastery of skills, e.g., reading, math, cartography, and so on
____ clarification of fundamental concepts, such as academic or moral concepts
____ acquiring of tastes, attitudes, and habits

Indicate if these or some other emphases are found in your school.