

ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT
AND EDUCATION IN CANADA

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Institute of
Intergovernmental Relations
Kingston, Ontario

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ISBN 0-88911-443-9

CANADIAN CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Paquette, Jerald E., 1946-

Aboriginal self-government and education in
Canada

(Aboriginal peoples and constitutional reform.
Background paper ; no. 10)
ISBN 0-88911-443-9

1. Indians of North America - Canada - Education.
I. Queen's University (Kingston, Ont.). Institute
of Intergovernmental Relations. II. Title.
III. Series.

E96.2.P36 1986

371.97'97'071

C86-093967-7

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PREFACE

Section 37 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (as amended) requires the holding of a series of conferences by 1987 to deal with "constitutional matters that directly affect the aboriginal peoples of Canada." Discussion leading up to and during the First Ministers' Conferences on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters quickly focused on the task of making constitutional provisions for aboriginal self-government. Many involved in the process openly questioned the meaning of "aboriginal self-government".

In view of the importance of this subject, in May of 1984 the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations launched a research project on "Aboriginal Peoples and Constitutional Reform". Phase One of the project responded to concerns that emerged at the outset of the constitutional negotiating process. As indicated by its title, "Aboriginal Self-Government: What Does It Mean?", Phase One examined various models, forms and proposals for aboriginal self-government. This included an exploration of the citizenship rights of aboriginal peoples, the experience of aboriginal self-government in other nations, and a review of Canadian developments over the past few years. The results of these investigations were compared to the positions taken by parties to the constitutional negotiations, in an effort to identify areas of emerging conflict and consensus. These findings were elaborated in five Background Papers, a Discussion Paper and a Workshop, which was held two

months prior to the 1985 First Ministers' Conference (FMC).

Developments in 1985, subsequent to the First Ministers' Conference, may have a dramatic impact on the constitutional negotiation process. At a meeting of government ministers and aboriginal leaders held in June, 1985, several governments indicated their intention to pursue the negotiation of individual self-government agreements, and then to consider their entrenchment in the constitution (the "bottom-up" approach). This contrasts with the proposal, which has thus far dominated discussions, to entrench the right to aboriginal self-government in the constitution, and then to negotiate individual agreements (the "principles first" approach). The result is that, in addition to multilateral negotiations at the national level, negotiations will now proceed on a bilateral or trilateral basis, at the local, regional and provincial/territorial levels.

Phase Two of the project is entitled "Aboriginal Self-Government: Can It Be Implemented?", and responds to concerns now emerging in the negotiations. This phase of the Institute's project therefore will focus initially on arrangements for the design and administration of public services by and to aboriginal peoples. The research will examine the practical problems in designing mechanisms and making arrangements for implementing self-government agreements. Clearly, the "bottom-up" approach could have a major effect on the process of constitutional reform as it relates to aboriginal peoples in Canada.

As the 1987 FMC approaches, attention will become more concentrated on the multilateral constitutional forum (the FMC). The 1987 FMC may consider the constitutional entrenchment of individual agreements previously negotiated, or it may attempt to reach agreement on a "principles first" approach for defining and entrenching aboriginal rights in the constitution, especially those relating to aboriginal self-government. The research agenda in the second year of Phase Two anticipates this shift in preoccupation, with the focus turning to the search for a constitutional accommodation in 1987. If this search is to be successful, it will be

necessary first to inquire into, and then to resolve or assuage a number of genuine concerns about aboriginal self-government and its implications for federal, provincial and territorial governments. Research in this part of the project will explore these concerns.

The Institute wishes to acknowledge the financial support it received for Phase Two of the project from the Donner Canadian Foundation, the Canadian Studies program (Secretary of State) of the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, the Government of Alberta, the Government of Manitoba, the Government of New Brunswick, the Government of Yukon, the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Committee on National Issues, the Metis National Council and the Native Council of Canada.

To date, discussions have failed to address how aboriginal self-government might be implemented in various policy sectors. Jerry Paquette's background paper on *Aboriginal Self-Government and Education in Canada* presents a "state of the art" analysis of the challenges and opportunities of implementing self-government arrangements in this field. He provides a comprehensive and incisive review of current policy, including the forms, financing and control of aboriginal education, as well as the policy-making process itself. He concludes with an examination of the options and choices for implementing aboriginal self-government in the education sector, and, as he puts it, with "making the real-world trade-offs".

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May, 1986

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the cooperation of a variety of individuals and organizations, this paper would never have been possible in its present form. I wish to acknowledge the cooperation and help of the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, and especially of David Hawkes, for the sponsorship, encouragement and criticism out of which this paper grew. The financial support for Phase 2 of the project from the participating aboriginal organizations, governments, and, of course, from the Donner Canadian Foundation, are also gratefully acknowledged.

Special thanks are due those in governments and aboriginal organizations who have provided me with valuable data and perspectives on the issues dealt with in this paper. Finally, the shape of this paper has undoubtedly been influenced by those who have provided me with the opportunity to work and conduct research in the aboriginal arena in the past. To them as well, I owe thanks for their indirect contribution to this work.

Jerry Paquette

ABSTRACT

This paper integrates a comprehensive review of the *status quo* in Canadian aboriginal education policy with extensive analysis of critical issues in that educational arena. It does so in light of the current constitutional reform process in regard to aboriginal rights, and by the relevant literatures in curriculum, educational administration and finance. Considerations of governance arrangements, finance, educational program policy, environmental factors, and the political economy of contemporary Canadian aboriginal education lead to a review of available policy options. These options are measured against the criteria of perceived legitimacy, feasibility and political supportability. The paper seeks to provide a comprehensive policy analysis framework against which to evaluate steps aimed at improving both the quality of aboriginal education in Canada, and the degree of control exercised by aboriginal people over their children's education.

SOMMAIRE

Cette étude est l'intégration d'une révision détaillée du statu quo en ce qui concerne la politique d'éducation des autochtones au Canada et d'une analyse approfondie de questions critiques sur cette scène éducationnelle. C'est à la lumière du processus actuel de réforme constitutionnel en ce qui a trait aux droits des autochtones et par voie de lectures pertinentes au programme d'étude, à l'administration et au financement éducationnels qu'est effectué cet examen. L'étude des mesures gouvernementales du financement, de la politique du programme éducationnel, des modifications produites par l'environnement et de l'économie politique de l'éducation actuelle des autochtones au Canada mène à une révision des options de politique parmi lesquelles un choix peut aujourd'hui être fait. Ces options sont juxtaposées aux critères de la légitimité telle que perçue, de la faisabilité et de la tolérance politique. L'étude cherche à fournir un cadre pour l'analyse détaillée de

la politique qui puit servir de guide dans l'évaluation des démarches faites dans le but d'améliorier la qualité de l'éducation autochtone au Canada et le degré de contrôle exercé par les autochtones sur l'éducation de leurs enfants.

1 THE GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE OF CANADIAN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

By its very nature, policy analysis demands consideration of where we have been and where we are now in that arena. A knowledge of the past and present is a necessary prerequisite for embarking on the task of comparatively analysing future options (Dunn, 1981). While true in all cases, the need for an understanding of the policy precedents in an arena is especially great when major departures from the normal incremental policy-making procedures of government are contemplated (Sharkansky, 1970). The unique considerations of public-sector policy-making¹ tend to make identifying the nature of the problems that afflict a public policy arena much more difficult and tentative than is frequently the case in the private sector. Education has always been one of the most troublesome public sectors for policy analysis. A lack of consensus about learning objectives has, until recently, combined with general agreement that education is a service sector burdened by a particularly indefinite technology – and consequently an intrinsically unknowable production function (Benson, 1977; Gurwitz, 1982).² This combination of perceptions has earned education its reputation as a difficult sector in which to forecast the impact of various policy options. Nowhere is the uncertainty associated with educational policy-making greater than in the area of aboriginal education.

Not only have "simple" solutions to narrow problem definitions in the Canadian aboriginal education arena tended to produce outcomes totally unintended by their architects, such policies have also generated outcomes that have been much less than helpful for Canada's aboriginal peoples. Neither has the official abandonment of assimilation as the overarching goal of aboriginal education,³ nor the more specific policy adjustments which have flowed from that policy watershed, drastically altered the educational achievement, socio-economic status or contentment of Native people with their lot in Canadian confederation. A necessary first step, then, toward analysing the potential policy impacts of various options available in Canadian aboriginal education today, is a review of the major structures and agencies which have been and are responsible for the delivery of educational services to Canada's aboriginal peoples. Only with a clear overview in hand of the current forms of aboriginal education governance and their policy outputs and impacts, can meaningful analysis take place of potential policy options in this most difficult arena. The first section of this chapter seeks, then, to meet this need for a comprehensive review of the *status quo* in Canadian aboriginal education, as a necessary prelude to the analysis which is the main business of this study. The second section looks at the resource conundrum shared by nearly all systems of governance in Canadian aboriginal education today.

1.1. Structure and Agency

1.1.1. Current Forms of Governance in Canadian Amerindian Education

INAC Community Schools

Still the most common and distinctive form of governance⁴ in aboriginal education is the INAC⁵ "community school", the successor to the church-operated residential school which was the basic unit of Indian education in Canada until the late 1960s. INAC community schools are on-reserve schools created to serve reserve-resident status Indians,⁶ and are administered by the Education

Branch of the Department through its regional and district offices. While Indian Affairs has, since the late sixties, encouraged the development of local school committees to provide community input into the operation and educational programs of the federal schools, these bodies were and are purely advisory, with ultimate fiscal and policy-making discretion residing in the Department hierarchy and in the federal Treasury Board, which approves the Departmental operating budget. As early as 1971, an attempt was made to establish a National Education Committee (Yuzdepski, 1983), and various districts have attempted with varying degrees of success to organize district-wide school-committee amalgams.

The school committees differed greatly both in their level of activity and in their stability over time. Some were still-born from their inception, others were initially active, but have gradually lost interest, while a relatively small number have been and remain active contributors to good school-community relations and to the shape of programs in their reserve schools. The more consistently active school committees have, not unexpectedly, become the nuclei around which "band control" has crystallized in many communities. All, however, have suffered from the limitations imposed by their status as advisory client bodies whose preferences and decisions are of no effect unless ratified by INAC. Since the concerns of the INAC bureaucracy are often systemic and inward-looking and since they are, in any case, only partially focussed on education, the local concerns of Native people with respect to education frequently fail to penetrate the INAC policy process. A sense of powerlessness, then, has led many local school committees to lose interest in trying to influence their school programs, while it has led others to redouble their efforts to gain substantive control of the schools on their reserves.

A balanced view of the current status of federally-operated schools in Canada requires recognition that, despite the overall trend toward band control, not all communities with federal schools wish to take over the management of their schools at this time. Some communities express a "wait-and-see" attitude, founded

in the belief that the quality of support and supervisory services might decline even further if they were given immediate control of their schools (Paquette, 1986). A few communities that were quick to embrace a local-control model have subsequently returned control to the federal government (Indian Education, 1981). However, most communities have opted to take over some aspects of the operation of their schools, typically the operation and maintenance programs. The general trend away from direct federal control of the reserve schools does not appear to be in doubt. In this sense, at least, a general movement is discernable in the direction of the principles of parental responsibility and local (Indian) control set forth over a decade ago by the National Indian Brotherhood (National Indian, 1973).

Territorially-Operated Schools for Indians

The Yukon and, until recently, the Northwest Territories have operated a system of schools for Indian bands within their respective boundaries for some time. While these schools are generally a more recent arrival than their "federal-school" counterparts in the ten provinces, they were very similar to INAC (then DIAND) day schools. The funding for such schools was, and still is, channelled through INAC to the territorial governments. The schools for aboriginal peoples in the territories tended to be controlled and administered centrally, and worked consciously for the assimilation of their student clientele. Extensive use was made of residential schools for Indian students in both territories (and for Inuit students in the NWT) at the elementary as well as the secondary level. The territorial aboriginal schools lacked, however, the long-standing tradition of irrelevance and central authority which for so long buttressed the Indian Affairs schools in "southern" Canada from the logical consequences of perceived ineffectiveness. The Territorial schools, like the federal schools in Quebec, also lacked the minimal legitimization of being included, explicitly or implicitly,⁷ in a treaty arrangement, since no treaties were ever signed between the Territorial and Quebec Indians and Canada. It was no accident that the first experiment with band control

in Canada occurred in the Northwest Territories at Rae-Edzo in 1971 (Yuzdepski, 1983).

Band-Operated Schools

Approximately one-third of on-reserve schools in Canada are now nominally under band control (Indian Education, 1981). Most of these Authorities operate complete elementary programs and a growing number are providing on-reserve secondary programs for some or all of the secondary grades. Some of the larger eastern reserves operate large schools with diverse program offerings. Band-controlled schools are operated by Band Education Authorities that may be appointed by a Band Council or directly elected. In some cases such Education Authorities have chosen to work together for certain purposes, either through an exclusively educational umbrella organization, or through tribal councils with a broader political mandate. Such cooperation for educational purposes among autonomous Band Authorities, while quite prevalent in certain areas of the country (e.g., Manitoba), is much less common in others (e.g., Quebec). Band Education Authorities vary greatly both in the extent of their nominal control of school programs (the control which they exercise "on paper") and in their substantive influence on school operations, program and capital projects. The range of control possible under INAC regional policies is typically quite great, in theory ranging from virtual autonomy to a modest share of self-determination.⁸ In some of the larger, more fiscally and administratively experienced bands, some degree of authentically independent policy-making appears to be the rule. For the majority of bands who are less managerially well-endowed, however, substantive control in education may be largely illusory, even where the degree of nominal control accorded to them by INAC is relatively high.

Band Education Authorities, for the most part, have begun their organizational lives with handicaps that would severely impair the ability of any educational jurisdiction to provide a reasonable quality of education. Though there are exceptions scattered across the country, such Authorities have tended to inherit the

cumulative effects of chronic underfunding spawned from a generations-old perception that Indian education ought to be, as Egerton Ryerson conceived it, "a plain English education adapted to the working farmer and mechanic" (Tschanz, 1980). Specifically, the newly created Band Authorities have, aside from their inexperience in educational policy, generally inherited the following systemic inadequacies along with their former Indian-Affairs schools:

a. substandard and run-down physical plants, the cost of whose upgrading to provincial standards may run to \$200 million (Indian Education, 1981);

b. substandard or non-existent program support services (Indian Education, 1981; Yuzdepski, 1983);⁹

c. an operational (non-capital) budget base which fails to provide either for the generally higher costs associated with Native education, or differences in the non-instructional salary costs of delivering comparable programs to Native peoples in different areas; and,

d. in many regions, a lack of budgetary provision for the *incremental costs associated with the assumption of control by a Band Authority*¹⁰ in the initial funding level accorded an Authority, tends to exacerbate the chronic underfunding of operating expenses.

By any standards, the Band Authorities have tended to inherit a legacy of inadequate facilities and funding. The most fortunate Authorities have frequently tended to be those whose creation coincided with the construction of a new on-reserve school facility. The most fortunate of these are likely those that had no previous federal day school in their community, and thus started with a clean slate.

A potentially significant and often controversial development associated with an enhanced local voice in

Indian education has been the evolution of a number of early childhood education programs. In some cases, such programs are joint ventures mounted by several bands or a whole treaty area. Some of these programs are deliberate attempts at intervention in parenting practice, and focus on educating parents in a mode of parenting that combines the best of what is known about traditional Native parenting with the best current practice in conventional early childhood development (Mayfield, 1983). Other programs are simply day-care programs patterned directly after their counterparts in non-Native society (Paquette, 1986). However, early childhood programs tend to be mounted by band councils and not by education authorities. In some cases, such programs have become a focal point in the debate over cultural and language preservation because of their potency in establishing the basis of long-term language and cultural dominance in the children affected by them.

Tribal Council Participation in Educational Governance

A first level of interband cooperation in education has frequently occurred under the aegis of an area tribal council. While tribal councils have a range of political and program concerns that extends far beyond education, they have, in some areas, served as the nucleus of coalescence in Native education. Tribal councils involved in education frequently act as umbrella organizations for a group of independent Band Authorities. While the functional relationships of tribal council education arms to their Band Authority constituents is varied and evolving, a substantial degree of independence is retained by the Authorities in many cases, so that the tribal council role in education is typically more that of a loose federation than a functional amalgamation. Tribal councils are, however, gradually assuming a larger role in program matters, in negotiations with government (notably INAC) and in public relations.

The strength of the tribal councils in educational matters is also, from one perspective, their weakness. Because of their broad political agenda, tribal councils offer the possibility of integrating the local educational debate into the broader local dialogue on overall social

policy for Native people. The same broad political agenda, however, means that education must share a diffuse and shifting political focus with a wide variety of competing concerns and issues.

Native Education Councils

Another much less common nucleus of coalescence in Canadian Native education is the Native Education Council. These are so few in number¹¹ as to call into question the wisdom of discussing them in a paper with a national frame of reference, were it not for the significant impact they have had on educational program delivery in the districts where they operate and their nature as bodies whose mandate is exclusively education.

The Education Councils derive their mandate from the council of chiefs in their districts and their funding from INAC. They do not function as supraband boards of education, but as service agencies to administer the delivery of specific educational programs to area Native students. While their mandate is limited, one such Council in the largest INAC district in Canada operates an array of student-counselling, boarding-student and post-secondary-funding programs accounting for an annual budget of five-million dollars. Education Councils are the successors, albeit with a much more specific mandate and full-time professional staffs, to the district-wide "school committees"¹² which preceded them.

Regional Native Boards of Education

In a very limited number of instances, regional governance bodies similar in form and, theoretically, in function (though different in fiscal resourcing) to conventional school boards have evolved. One such body, the Cree School Board, was created in the aftermath of the James Bay hydro development in Quebec. It is a board whose constituent communities are diverse in their geographical location (both coastal and inland), in their mix of home and community languages (Cree, French and English), and in their degree of enculturation into the larger Quebec and Canadian society around them. The necessity to cope with such broad-spectrum diversity has presented the Cree Board with educational

program development challenges which may be important precedents for other aboriginal jurisdictions (Tanner, 1981).¹³

Large-scale regional Native boards seem to be drawn from the crucible of social and political trauma. The Cree Board was spawned from the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the James Bay hydro project. Another large-scale Native board appears to be taking shape on the opposite coast of James Bay, after a period of considerable dissension and turmoil in regard to the provision of educational services for Native people in that area (Long, 1985). After a long, complicated and occasionally acrimonious history of experimentation with various combinations of INAC, band-controlled and (in Moosenee and Moose Factory) provincially-operated schools,¹⁴ a school-board-like Muskegog Cree Council appears to be in the making. This particular development is important, not only because it confirms that one possible outcome of political confrontation which focuses on education is the creation of a regional Native board, but also because it underscores how the legal distinction between status and non-status Indians can come to permeate the whole fabric of educational (and, of course, of broader social and economic development policy) decision-making in an area (Long, 1985). For communities and areas whose history, educational and otherwise, has been dominated by the status dichotomy¹⁵ and the intractable polarization it frequently cements, *Bill C-31*¹⁶ provides the prospect of some relief from a major historically-rooted social and political cleavage,¹⁷ with strong implications for educational governance arrangements.

Participation in Provincial Boards

Over one-half of status-Indian children in Canada and the vast majority of non-status Indian and Metis children are enrolled in the provincial school systems. Reserve-resident status Indian children typically attend a provincial school under the terms of a tuition-cost agreement between INAC (or their Band) and the provincial board or district (or the province) where they attend school. A large proportion of such

reserve-resident status-Indian students are secondary students, who either commute by bus from their reserve or "board out" in order to participate in a secondary program. Because of the strong objections registered by Indian people in **Indian Control** (National Indian, 1973) to their lack of voice in the decision-making process of boards of education,¹⁸ who frequently provided educational services to large numbers of Indian children, some provinces introduced legislation providing for Indian trustees to represent such parents. Typically the number of such Indian trustees was keyed to the number of status-Indian children from reserves actually enrolled in a board or district's schools.

A number of shortcomings are evident in this arrangement as an expression of "Indian control of Indian education." First, with rare exception, only *reserve-resident* Indian parents, whose children attend a provincial school under some form of tuition-cost agreement can avail themselves of such provisions for Indian representation. This arrangement specifically excludes any distinctive representation for off-reserve Indian parents whose children are sometimes more numerous in a school system than those of their on-reserve counterparts. While it can be argued that many of these people are represented by the board trustees they may be eligible to vote for (if they reside within a board's boundaries, for instance, instead of on crown land outside such boundaries), the demographics and issue orientations of such boards frequently suggest that off-reserve status-Indians may have very little voice in the decision-making of the boards of education which serve their children. As in so many other areas, the issue of protecting any presumed rights of off-reserve status-Indians *as a group* in the area of education has run headlong into the dominant tradition in western jurisprudence that the law exists to protect individuals rather than groups. In terms of their lack of specific representation in provincial governance forms, then, off-reserve status Indians are on a par with their non-status and Metis counterparts, that is, on precisely the same footing as non-aboriginal parents.¹⁹

A second caution with regard to the authenticity of the Native voice in provincial boards serving reserve-resident Native students is the recurrent question of the voting mandate of Indian representatives who serve under such specific statutory provisions for Indian representation. Should they vote on all issues before their board or only on issues deemed to be of significance to their particular constituents, and if the latter is decided, who will determine which issues are of significance to Indian parents and which are not? These are by no means simple questions and constitute important qualifiers to the limited representation of Native people on boards of education provided under current provincial statutes.

At best, the current representation of Native people on provincial boards of education is a limited and flawed presence. For the most part only reserve-resident status-Indian parents are represented under such arrangements and there exists the ever-present question of which issues they ought, in any case, to be allowed to vote on. The representation provided by such statutory arrangements is typically only that of a very weak minority voice in the political fabric of board decision-making. Non-status Indians and Metis are totally excluded *as groups* from even this minimal voice. Finally, Native people of all legal categories who do not live on a reserve and are not recognized as residents of a school board are completely disenfranchised from a voice in the governance of the schools that educate their children.²⁰

All provinces confront the problem of offering educational services to small communities. Such communities range from aggregations of one or two extended families to small unincorporated towns which provide (or provided historically) a small human resource pool in a remote area for a resource extraction operation or transportation service. Many such marginal communities are mainly Indian and Metis, and many have a sufficient number of school-age children to warrant, by prevailing standards, a small elementary²¹ school. Provinces have answered the problem of governance for such small communities in various ways. Ontario, for

instance, has its District School Area Boards which are, in theory at least, instruments of local control. In the case of largely Native communities, they are, therefore – again theoretically – also vehicles of Native control. While the image of such local Native control may be much more pervasive than any substantive reality, the basic intent to invoke a local voice in the governance of such schools is at least reflected in the form of the relevant legislation (Ontario, 1983). Saskatchewan created its Northern Area Branch as early as 1945, Manitoba its Special Services Branch in the mid-fifties and Alberta its Northland School Division in 1960 (Allison, 1983). All of these tended to be relatively centralized branches created to *provide* education for people in outlying areas.²² The evolution of the current Frontier Schools Division in Manitoba (from the former Special Services Branch) represents an advance in local control, in that the current Official Trusteeship arrangement there at least operates through a regionally organized administration, and has provision for an advisory committee which is largely Native (Canadian Education Association, 1984).

Purchase of Service from Provincial Boards

The purchase of educational services from provincial boards (except for the purchase of a complete educational program provided off-reserve) by INAC or bands has been a rarely exercised option in the repertoire of governance forms possible under existing legislation. Nonetheless, the possibility exists of doing what the Lac La Croix Band in Northwestern Ontario has done – to purchase an on-reserve educational program from a local board of education. A traditional stumbling block to such arrangements, the statutory inability of provincial Ministries of Education to fund capital projects on an Indian reserve, is easily bypassed if the physical plant is provided by the band or INAC. For bands who value highly parity with provincial boards of education in program and standards, buying a program from a local board may be an attractive way of availing themselves of the expertise and economies of scale afforded by participation in a larger system. Of course, for such

an arrangement to become a reality, the terms of any service-purchase agreement must be sufficiently attractive to capture the interest of provincial boards very much concerned with their own problems. Nevertheless, declining real revenue growth, increasing costs, and the problem of teacher redundancy being experienced by provincial boards across the country, would seem to offer a window of opportunity for bands wishing to pursue such an option so long as they are able to negotiate a sufficiently attractive funding package for their purchased educational service program.

Cooperative Management with Provincial Boards

The history of attempts at cooperative governance of Native schools has not, in general, been a happy one. The complex political impasse that evolved with regard to educational governance in the Moosenee-Moose Factory area in the early eighties demonstrates all too clearly how lines of communication can get crossed, and a spirit of competition and suspicion can undermine the potential benefits of cooperation (Long, 1985). On the other hand, where cooperation, mutual accommodation and shared growth are the overarching goals of a cooperative governance structure, the results can defy the odds and become satisfying to both the Native and non-Native constituents (Woloshyn, 1984). While successful joint ventures are rare and run against the mainstream of movement toward distinct units, if not distinctive forms, of governance for Native education in Canada, they illustrate the danger of fixating on separateness in governance, programs and facilities. If such a fixation excludes consideration of the benefits of cooperative structures, facilities and programs in certain circumstances, important opportunities for enhancing quality and efficiency may be missed.

Special or Alternative Programs

With the emergence of a rapidly growing urban Native population in Canada, urban school boards and districts have been forced to confront the ineffectiveness of conventional educational programs for many native students. In some cases, particularly in those provinces

where urban Amerindians have become a highly visible disadvantaged minority, special or alternative programs have been created to provide both alternative program content and an instructional environment more in tune with traditional Native values than the typical public school environment. They seek to remedy what Breton called the "social, socio-psychological, and organizational needs" of urban people of Indian ancestry (Breton and Akian, 1978). Such "survival schools," it is argued by their proponents, constitute the last best hope of alienated Amerindian youth for coping with the realities of being an Indian in urban Canada.

In some cases, alternative schools have been formed under the aegis of an assessment-rich urban board, with little or no direct provincial funding. The Wandering Spirit School in Toronto is such a creation of the Metro Toronto Board. Intended to provide an alternative educational experience for disaffected Amerindian youth in Toronto, it has, for a variety of reasons, attracted only a very small number of students from a Metro Amerindian population which may currently approach 50,000. In other cases, direct provincial aid has made possible programs such as the Sacred Circle, Ben Calf Robe and Calgary Survival School programs in Alberta (Campbell, 1983) or the Saskatoon Native Survival School (Canadian Education Association, 1984). At their very best such programs have managed to pool the resources of Indian professional people (both those inside and outside the field of education), Indian elders, and the local board of education to produce far-reaching alternative learning experiences and environments under the control and direction of a program-specific Native board of directors.

1.1.2. Current Forms of Governance in Canadian Inuit Education

Territorially-Managed Schools

Until very recently, schools for Inuit people in northern Canada were run by territorial Ministries of Education. In general, however, the arrival of schools in the Canadian far north has been a much more recent event

than it has been even in the remoter areas of most provinces. Thus, although the same pattern of central control developed quickly in the Territories and in northern Quebec, it lacked the legitimization of a long tradition of direct central control which pervaded the Indian education arena south of the Territories. In Labrador, however, Inuit and Indian education has been the responsibility of community-based school boards established for that purpose.

Except for their relative recency, then, and the geographical and climatic environmental factors imposed upon them by the far north, the territorially-managed schools for the Inuit resembled nothing so much as the federal day schools on the reserves of the ten provinces. They were centrally managed, staffed and funded by outsiders, and substantially assimilationist in their overall program orientation. Above all, they shared the propensity of the INAC schools in "southern" Canada to be frequently and wildly out of tune with the reality experienced by the children they enrolled (Northwest, 1982).

Area Inuit Boards

As Native people, Indian and Inuit alike, came to have a greater voice in Northwest Territories politics in the late seventies and early eighties, the questioning of the centralized Ministry-dominated educational "system" for Native people there reached a crescendo. The Territorial Legislative Assembly established a special legislative committee with a broad mandate to investigate educational program and governance in the Territories, and to make recommendations for changes in both to the Assembly. The result was a blueprint for the complete overhaul and redesign of the Territorial educational system from the ground up (Northwest, 1982). Based on the two overriding principles of local control and the integrity of in-school and out-of-school learning, the committee report called for a complete reorganization of the governance of education in the outlying areas of the Territories.

Specifically, the report called for and the Assembly subsequently approved (Northwest Territories, 1984),

the creation of area boards as the basic unit of educational governance for Inuit people in the outlying areas of the Territories. These jurisdictions were to be large enough to command sufficient human and fiscal resources for a quality educational program, yet small enough to be responsive to an area's cultural and linguistic realities. In a number of ways these boards will be unique in the Canadian aboriginal education mosaic. They will be part of a constellation of area Native boards with similar functions, interests and problems, though with culturally and linguistically diverse constituencies. They will exist in the context of a larger political environment whose demographics allow Native issues to be "big-ticket" items politically. Provided this extensive experiment in aboriginal-governance reform does not run aground on the Territorial division question, it portends to offer a most interesting test of what structural reform, when coupled with a view of education as an instrument for the permanent maintenance of Native languages and cultures, can accomplish. As a test case, it is perhaps most interesting because of its *relative* lack of encumbrance with a long-standing tradition of bureaucratic aloofness and situational irrelevance.

Aside from the general revision of aboriginal education governance being attempted in the Northwest Territories, the most striking example of an area Inuit board is the Kativik board in Quebec, another example of an aboriginal school board recognized by provincial statute and funded jointly by the provincial and federal governments. Kativik, like the Cree School Board, was an important byproduct of the James Bay Hydro Development process. The Labrador Inuit boards are community rather than area boards. A Federal-Provincial Co-ordinating Committee supervises educational programs provided in accordance with the Canada-Newfoundland Native-Peoples of Labrador agreement (Canadian Education Association, 1984).

1.1.3. Metis and Non-Status Indians and School Governance

In general, there has been little in the way of distinctive units or forms of governance in education for Metis and non-status Indian people in Canada. Perhaps owing to their lack of statutory recognition as a founding people, they have tended to be regarded simply as part of the public school population. Program modification in respect of the particular needs of Metis and non-status Indian children, relatively rare as it has been, has been more frequent than governance adaptations recognizing any specific right or need of these groups to have a distinctive statutory voice in the education of their children. Nonetheless, some provisions for the expression of such a voice have been made.

Metis people have participated in the governance of the provincial education systems in essentially two ways: by activism within the structural and political constraints of conventional public school boards and districts; and, in some areas where distinct Metis settlement areas are recognized in provincial statute, by running school districts coterminus with such settlement areas (Allison, 1983). In these cases, distinct units rather than distinctive forms of governance are allowed - that is, a province (as Alberta has done) creates school districts which are *de facto* Metis districts because of the nature of their boundaries, but which are in theory much the same as other school districts in form and function.

1.1.4. Cultural Centres, Institutes and Native Communication Societies

In 1981 the federal government supported 61 Inuit and Indian cultural and educational centres across Canada, with a total INAC budget allocation of \$6.2 million (Indian Education, 1981).²³ In the same year the Department proposed establishing a National Steering Committee of the Cultural/Educational Centres Program, which was seen to be the logical vehicle for transferring control over the program to aboriginal peoples. Cultural and educational centres vary tremendously in the type and scope of programs which they operate, and in their level of involvement with aboriginal education jurisdictions.

In general, they develop and offer programs relating to aboriginal languages, cultures and heritage, and are managed by aboriginal people. Some centres, however, have a much wider purview of activity, and have been involved in general curriculum resource material development projects designed to be relevant to the experience and worldview of aboriginal students. A few have become involved with teacher inservice as well.

Various federally-funded "institutes" have been created to meet specific learning needs in local aboriginal self-government, some specifically related to education. Typically these institutes have been run by bands and sometimes they have carried university-level accreditation under an agreement with a recognized university. Such institutes have depended, unfortunately, on discretionary funding, and current restraint measures in federal fiscal planning have greatly reduced the availability of such funds.

Native communication societies of various types exist across the country, some as distinct entities and some as arms of regional Native governments. While these societies are not typically regarded as part of the educational governance structure, they can and frequently do have a profound effect on the view that aboriginal people have of the worth and "preservability" of their languages and cultures. Not surprisingly, the publications and programs of such groups frequently target children as an important segment of their reading, listening or viewing public.

1.1.5. Post-Secondary Education Programs for Aboriginal People

The vast majority of aboriginal post-secondary students attend programs provided by the provincial universities, community colleges and CGEPs. INAC's Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program provides tuition and living-cost benefits for students attending recognized post-secondary degree or diploma programs normally requiring successful completion of a secondary diploma as an admission prerequisite. Funding is also available for Mature Matriculants (adults lacking normal prerequisites for a program), Credit Programs (degree

or diploma courses not taken as part of a degree or diploma program), Special Programs²⁴ (programs established by universities specifically for aboriginal people) and University and College Entrance Preparation Programs (transitional-year programs for students who need additional study to meet university or college regular-program entrance requirements). In addition, a number of institutions established by and for aboriginal peoples have received direct INAC support. Specifically, INAC has shared equally with Saskatchewan the costs of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (an institution whose courses are accredited by the University of Regina), and funded the Blue Quills Native Education Centre (affiliated with Athabaska University), and Old Sun College (affiliated with Mount Royal College and the University of Calgary) in Alberta. Funding for such programs has been on an interim basis. Indeed, the entire adult education budget of the Department lacks any statutory sanction and is therefore essentially discretionary in nature. Not surprisingly, therefore, adult education has been one of the INAC educational-program areas hardest hit by restraint over the last decade (Charles, 1981). In the past, the principal criterion in use by the Department in determining student eligibility for post-secondary programs has been that any qualified student who wished to attend an eligible program would be funded. The intensive restraint efforts of the federal government appear to be making the continued application of this eligibility criterion very uncertain.²⁵

The Gabriel Dumont Institute in Regina is an aboriginal institute operating a variety of post-secondary programs as well as curriculum resource-material development services for the elementary and secondary panels. As such it is a hybrid, combining the functions of a cultural centre and an aboriginal college. It is, moreover, actively involved in research into the Metis heritage.

Unlike the other specifically aboriginal post-secondary entities discussed in this section, Gabriel Dumont receives no funding from INAC since its mandate is not directed to status-Indian people. The Institute is funded

by the Government of Saskatchewan with supplementary federal funding for certain of its program offerings. Post-secondary program areas offered by the Institute include the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program and the Saskatchewan Training for Employment Program. All programs are accredited and certified by the province and, by using an outreach delivery mode, the Institute makes its programs available at satellite training centres in Native communities throughout the province.

1.2. Resourcing: A Fundamental Conundrum

A commonly accepted assumption in educational finance, and indeed in the broader realm of public finance as well, is that power and control tend to gravitate toward the perceived locus of fiscal resourcing. It is for this reason that jurisdictions (provinces, states and so forth) that value local autonomy in education have opted for some form of cost-sharing between local and secondary levels of government in the area of education (and in most other areas of municipal public-service provision as well). Much evidence has been accumulated to suggest that local autonomy in educational decision-making is directly related to the proportion of the educational bill paid at the local level (Benson, 1977; Gurwitz, 1982). Consequently, many provinces and states have been loathe to decrease the local share of the educational bill below one-third of the total cost, even though the most perfect equalization of financial resources for education can usually be accomplished by "full-funding",²⁶ that is, when the total educational bill is paid by the central authority.

The soundness in the Canadian context of this assumption that local control is inevitably related to the level of local financial contribution to education is not, however, beyond question. With two provinces providing full funding for their schools (New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island) and two others at very high levels of provincial funding (Newfoundland and Manitoba) (Brown, 1984), Canada clearly offers precedents in which interest and participation in education at the local level has not evaporated with the loss of substantial local contribution

to the financing of education. While such situations do offer hope that some degree of local control in education may be possible in the absence of local taxation for education, they do not offer perfect analogies to the situation of aboriginal education where, in virtually all cases, resourcing is completely external, coming from a remote source with no direct accountability to aboriginal people. *In all non-aboriginal Canadian jurisdictions, at least some of the resources for education are provided through taxes and rates of various kinds.* This contribution may be an extremely miniscule portion of the actual educational bill, as it is in the Atlantic region where federal transfer payments provided the lion's share of all provincial government operating revenues, but a contribution is nonetheless made through provincial sales, property and (in Newfoundland) poll taxes. Moreover, citizens of Atlantic Canada have a sense of contribution (however proportionally small a part of the actual cost of their provincial governments that contribution may be) to the federal transfer scheme through their federal income taxes. In short, there exists everywhere in non-aboriginal education in Canada an ongoing sense on the part of wage-earners and taxpayers of contributing to the costs of education.

It is precisely this *ongoing* sense of contributing to the fiscal resourcing of education which appears to be lacking from most forms of aboriginal education governance. Nor is this lack of a day-to-day sense of shouldering the financial burden of education altered by the abstract argument (however morally, and in some cases legally justifiable the argument may be) that educational resources are "owed" by Canada to aboriginal people, either in respect of treaty commitments or in respect of the revenues that have accrued to the federal and territorial governments from land "expropriated" without treaty sanction. The reality experienced by most aboriginal people, who are not ratepayers in a public system, is one of an educational system all of whose capital and operating revenues, and most of whose human resources as well, come from the "outside".²⁷

1.2.1. Finance Models

INAC Funding of INAC Schools

Since the most common form of governance in education for reserve-resident status-Indians is still the INAC community school, direct and complete federal financing of Indian education is likewise the most common mode of resourcing aboriginal education situated outside the jurisdiction of the provincial boards and districts. In the case of the INAC community schools, a portion of the funds allocated by Treasury Board to the Department in respect of education are distributed through INAC Headquarters and Regional Offices to the District Offices, where amounts available for school operating budgets are determined. While audit efforts by the Department to "track" educational spending down through the various levels of INAC budgetary decision-making have apparently been generally unsuccessful,²⁸ some cautious generalizations seem warranted about the INAC educational funding mechanism.

A general consensus exists that, by almost any standard, current funding levels for such schools are low. Despite Departmental recognition that Indian education is intrinsically more expensive than public-school education, funding levels for INAC schools lag behind provincial norms (Indian Education, 1981). Aside from an accumulated, aggregate physical plant need estimated at up to \$200 million for INAC and band-controlled schools jointly (Indian Education, 1981), the annual operating budgets of the federal schools tend not to reflect the realities of the needs and costs these schools confront. Even the Departmental proposal contained in "Indian Education Policy Review, Phase 1" might leave the federal schools underfunded relative to the needs and costs they confront when compared to the provincial schools. This report on an internal review of INAC educational policy has been much criticised by Native organizations because of the in-house nature of the policy review process underlying it. "Phase 1" proposed, in essence, taking the national average per-pupil tuition cost paid by the Department on behalf of reserve-resident status-Indians enrolled in provincial

schools, and incrementing it by ten percent as a base-line estimate of the cost of a "reasonable" quality Indian education program in the federal (and band) schools (Indian Education, 1981). Though relatively generous when compared to the per-pupil expenditure levels characteristically recognized in provincial grant plans, such a computational basis is less generous when measured against with actual provincial average per-pupil expenditures, which tend to be weighted heavily in the direction of the more populous and "assessment-rich" urban jurisdictions. Above all, such a basis for funding is suspect because of its ostensibly arbitrary character.

If the funding of INAC schools scores poorly on adequacy (the first criterion against which any educational finance plan must be measured) it does, as a result of recent improvements, apparently score slightly higher ratings on the other two traditional criteria of excellence in school finance - equity and efficiency. While a full discussion of the equity issue deserves - and will get - a separate section of its own, the basic direction of INAC's handling of the equity issue in the case of the federal (and band) schools is noteworthy. Because of the extreme accountability pressures to which it was subjected in the 1970's both from Native organizations and the federal government, most notably the Auditor General's Office (Auditor, 1980), INAC, then DIAND, undertook a complete overhaul of its planning and budgeting process in education. A standardized and computerized data-base was introduced which made possible a greater equalization of per-pupil operating expenditure allocations than was previously possible. The data-base provided INAC with a previously impossible ability to project and relate personnel, material resource and capital spending requirements to enrolment. The data-base proved to be a most useful tool, both in equalizing per-pupil expenditures among federal (and band) schools and in capital needs forecasting and planning.

At the same time, the improvement in equalizing per-pupil spending among federal and band schools has been accompanied by a general lack of attention to cost and need differentials among federal schools, districts,

and regions. An important exception to this general focus on equalized spending has been the isolated-post living allowances paid to teachers in areas with a high cost of living. These allowances, indexed by a specially created Statistics Canada data base on the cost of living in remote areas, are obvious examples of differential spending across schools and districts. Their impact, however, is only on teachers' salaries and not on any of the other environmentally contingent costs of education.

Full-Funding by the Territorial Governments

The Territorial governments have fully funded their schools for Indian and Inuit students in a manner generally similar to that in use by INAC for the schools it funds. Indeed, the ultimate source of such funds is the federal government itself (Nielsen, 1986), and INAC is responsible for determining the amounts allocated. The recent introduction of "board status" for area Inuit and Indian boards in the NWT will, of necessity, change the mechanics - but not the nature - of the Territorial funding for education in outlying areas.

Service Purchase Arrangements with Provincial Boards

Just over fifty per cent of status-Indian students in Canada attend provincial (and private) schools (Indian Education, 1981), the vast majority of these being enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools. All such students who reside on an Indian reserve attend school by virtue of some form of tuition-cost agreement. In most provinces such agreements are negotiated between INAC district offices and local school boards or districts, though in Manitoba, New Brunswick and British Columbia blanket agreements are negotiated at the provincial level, and tuition levels for reserve-resident status-Indian students are thus standardized across such provinces. Newfoundland, as well, receives direct federal funding to support its Indian and Inuit school boards in Labrador. More recently individual bands²⁹ and, in at least one instance, a Native Education Council, have taken over the direct sponsorship of tuition-cost agreements. Typically, a tremendous variation exists in

the range, specificity and quality of educational services contracted for under tuition agreements across a province.³⁰ Outside of the three provinces with centralized negotiation of such agreements, the cost-benefit relationship of tuition-cost agreements for Native people is a function of the tenacity and negotiating skills of the bargaining partners involved at the local level. Many of the students currently attending school under tuition-cost agreement arrangements are secondary students who must "board out" in order to obtain a suitable secondary-level education program.

A major component of many tuition agreements is a capital cost-sharing arrangement. Between 1955 and 1980, DIAND entered into 678 such joint federal-provincial capital cost-sharing arrangements, for a total equity investment of \$103 million in school facilities whose ownership resided (subject to provincial statutory regulation of school-facility ownership) in the school boards and districts where Indian "tuition-cost-agreement" students attended school. The general principle adopted by provincial school boards and districts in negotiating such agreements was that additions or improvements to facilities made necessary by the attendance of tuition-cost-agreement students should be entirely paid for by the federal government, since the families of such students could not be considered as contributing to board revenues either through local rates or provincial income and sales taxes.³¹ One-hundred percent recovery of capital expenditures was thus the operative goal of school boards in all such capital agreements.³²

With the growing interest in Indian control and an increasing number of bands electing to take over the administration of their educational programs in the late seventies, a major and previously unconsidered potential accrued federal liability in Indian education came to light. As an increasing number of bands that had previously sent their children to provincial schools sought the construction of new on-reserve schools, two painful cost components of this trend toward phasing out tuition-cost agreements (especially for elementary students) confronted INAC and the federal Treasury Board. The

most obvious and by far the largest cost was a potential capital expenditure requirement of up to half a billion dollars to create the necessary on-reserve facilities (Indian Education, 1981). A second very real cost, however, was the almost certain complete write-off of federal equity in provincial facilities constructed for tuition-cost students who would be transferring to on-reserve schools. At a time of extreme financial restraint and declining enrolments in the provincial systems, it was and is simply unrealistic to expect provincial school boards to "buy-out" the federal interest in such facilities (to the extent that they would, in any case, be empowered to do so under provincial statutes). The magnitude of such a liability resulting from the application of a policy of encouraging Indian control of Indian education was clearly not foreseen by a federal government that endorsed the principles of Indian Control of Indian Education *provided Indian control cost no more than federal control*.

One final variation on the service-purchase theme deserves to be noted in regard to elementary and secondary programs for reserve-resident status-Indian students. While it appears to move against the general trend toward on-reserve "band-controlled" education, the possibility exists, and has in fact been tried in communities such as Lac La Croix, Ontario, of purchasing a complete on-reserve educational program from a neighboring board of education. For communities whose primary interest is parity with the provincial system, such an option can take the form of a service purchase through INAC or an agreement negotiated by a Band Education Authority or Council.

Post-secondary education for status-Indian students is frequently paid for, up to a certain maximum number of semesters in attendance, by INAC. About half of such post-secondary student-aid program funds are still administered directly by INAC through its district offices, while the other half are directly administered by bands (or, in one case, by a Native Education Council). In addition to the cost of academic and incidental fees, transportation and living expenses (typically at very parsimonious levels) are provided

under such programs. In all cases, such programs exist to enable status-Indian students to purchase tertiary education, rather than to create specifically "Indian" university or college units. Some post-secondary programs for Indian students have, however, received special program funding from INAC. Most notable among these are the numerous Native Teacher Education programs which have evolved across the country.

The Native and Inuit Cultural and Education Centres across Canada are fully funded by INAC. Attempts have been made to transfer the administration and policy-making role for the Centres to a Native umbrella organization, but federal full-funding for such Centres is unlikely to change under such an arrangement. The Centres have a supportive role both for Native education at the elementary and secondary levels, and for tertiary Native-studies programs which have traditionally attracted a large segment of the total Native university enrolment in Canada.

Cost-Sharing with Provincial Board of Jointly Operated Program

In very rare cases, such as the Kitaskinaw School (Woloshyn, 1984), a reserve and a public board or district have undertaken a joint governance arrangement for the operation of a jointly-owned school facility. In such cases, costs are, quite logically, shared on a basis proportional to on- and off-reserve enrolments. The band continues to derive the funding for its share of the educational bill from INAC, and the board or district involved derives its revenues from the usual combination of local rates and provincial foundation program. Such an arrangement, it should be noted, requires meticulous attention to detail and a deep commitment to equal treatment of all students if a "two-caste" system is to be avoided within a school (Woloshyn, 1984). If, for instance, the Indian students in such a school continue to receive all the benefits traditionally associated with their special "educational rights" (e.g., free stationary products of all types issued by the school), with no countervailing arrangement for the non-Native students,

the seeds of many invidious comparisons may be inadvertently sown.

Funding of Off-Reserve Education Through Standard Provincial Finance Arrangements

A growing number of status-Indians reside off-reserve and within the boundaries of a public board or district. Such persons are, in respect of the financing of primary and secondary education for their children, on the same footing as all other citizens of their area - that is, they pay educational property taxes (except in the fully-funded provinces) and realize the benefits of provincial equalization-plan grants and special categorical grants that may apply to programs in which their children are enrolled. A relatively small number of urban Indian children are the beneficiaries of special provincial funding for alternative Indian education programs, such as the Sacred Circle program in Alberta. INAC has, to date, managed to avoid any financial entanglement with the cost of providing elementary and secondary education for off-reserve status Indian children. There is one important exception to this rule, the case of status-Indians residing on crown land. In some cases INAC reimburses provincial authorities (boards or provincial Ministries of Education in the case of blanket tuition-cost agreements) for providing educational programs in an isolated Indian community on crown land. The precise status of the governance and potential funding arrangements for such communities is further complicated by the fact that many such communities are seeking both band status and reserve land of their own.

While Ontario and Alberta have published curriculum documents dealing with Native education in the provincial schools, the only province to provide additional incremental funds in respect of Indian education in its provincial schools is British Columbia. British Columbia has recently gone through a series of complex revisions in its method of financing education. The final product of these revisions is a modified resource-cost model grant plan which, among its unique features, includes a program service level for Indian education (Anderson, 1984; Anderson and Fleming, 1984).

Special Financial Arrangements

Finally, there are at least two aboriginal jurisdictions whose funding arrangements are a unique sharing of federal and direct provincial operating grants. The federal government provides 75% of the approved budget of the Cree School Board and 25% of the approved budget of the Kativik (Inuit) Board. The balance of the approved budget is, in each case, paid by the Province of Quebec (Council, 1985).

1.2.2. Finance and Control: The Basic Paradox of Self-Governance in Canadian Aboriginal Education

If there is one generalization to be made about the financial arrangements underlying aboriginal education in Canada, it is surely the externality of the funding source to the service recipients. Aboriginal education in Canada is unique more in its complete dissociation of fiscal accountability for education from the intended beneficiaries of the educational service provided, than for its operational funding levels. At all levels and across all governance variants, the rule of external resourcing is virtually unviolated. If the general assumption which pervades the educational and public finance literature – that only a sense of contribution can develop authentic stewardship and the functional control that comes with such stewardship – the problem of establishing meaningful aboriginal control of aboriginal education in Canada is unlikely to be resolved by merely establishing nominally autonomous units of aboriginal governance in education (whether or not these units are part of a larger governance structure).

It is not at all obvious what political and policy alchemy might, within the constraints imposed by the sense of legitimacy, fairness and feasibility of the Canadian body politic, transform this fundamental dependency of aboriginal education in Canada. The vast majority of aboriginal communities in Canada have, after all, neither an average income level nor real property wealth sufficient to make extensive local taxation conscionable, *even if Native people were favourably disposed toward surrendering their tax-exempt status to support Native governance.* Even the most radically

redistributive proposals for resourcing Native governments (Penner, 1983) leave many important questions unanswered. It may not be necessary for aboriginal educational jurisdictions to contribute directly to the financing of their educational programs in order to gain substantive control over them. The evidence of full-funding provinces suggests that local commitment and involvement can be sustained to a certain extent in the absence of direct local funding. There is, however, simply no precedent against which to measure the prospects for meaningful local control in the absence of *any* contribution to the financing of education.

2 THE ABORIGINAL POLICY MOSAIC IN CANADA

Traditional systems-theory analyses of the policy cycle have fallen prey in recent years to damaging critique by those who advance more political-bargaining oriented views of policy-making (Allison, 1969) and who insist that policy is a negotiated reality melded out of the interests of those affected – especially out of the political economy of the bureaucracies involved in that arena (Aucoin, 1973; Boyd, 1975). The tenuousness of the link between formal policy and school-level practice is, in any case, virtually axiomatic in contemporary thinking about curriculum and implementation and, for that matter, in the broader literature in educational administration. Because a policy intended to affect in-school practice exists, is no assurance that corresponding in-school practices are occurring. Finally, the diversity of governance structures and environmental situations in aboriginal education in Canada make it especially difficult to analyse the operative policy processes and their relationship to educational practice in that arena.

There are, however, some significant consistencies in aboriginal education policy and practice across geographical regions and governance forms. While the very diversity of the arena ensures that every consistent pattern in policy and practice will have exceptions, an analysis aspiring to a comprehensive view of the arena

as a whole must focus on patterns, regularities and consistencies rather than on anomalies. If there is one certainty about aboriginal education policy in Canada, it is the generally uncertain nature of the policy process across that arena. While the tide of central control has ebbed and flowed in Canadian public education over the years, there has generally been some sense of how and where decisions were and ought to be taken. The public and participants in the educational process have demanded that it be so. Exceptions provoke controversy and occasionally public outrage on the part of affected parties.³³ Everyone expects to know, within reason, the rules of the policy game.³⁴ A lack of this sense of how policy decisions are and ought to be taken has helped to make aboriginal education a particularly troubled and uncertain educational arena. Consensus has failed to emerge both about the current existential realities of decision-making in aboriginal education or about how decisions ought to be made in the future.

Although a theme which deserves more elaboration in connection with the bilingualism and biculturalism issue, the function of education as a primary mode of cultural transmission ensures that it will always be a politically sensitive public policy sector. The more divergent the cultures represented by interest groups concerned with an educational arena, the more difficult the choices to be made. Education is a fundamental political reality, and it is fundamentally and unalterably political.

In the aboriginal arena, the political face of education has only recently begun to assert itself with the official abandonment of assimilation as its *raison d'être*. Given the confluence of a tradition of centrally-controlled, culturally alien educational programs for Canadian aboriginal peoples, and the recent strong assertion by aboriginal peoples of the right to control education as a right flowing from their unextinguished sovereignty,³⁵ it is easy to understand the current uncertainty and turmoil in Canadian aboriginal education.

2.1. Policy, Program and Practice

2.1.1. Policy Mechanisms in an Uncertain Arena

Top-down and Bottom-up in Aboriginal Education Policy-Making

Since its earliest origins, aboriginal education in Canada has been predicated on the belief that its purpose was to eradicate and replace the languages and cultures of Canada's aboriginal peoples. A logical consequence of such a belief was the expectation that Canada's Native peoples have no voice in the governance of the schools established for them. Throughout most of the history of aboriginal education in Canada, Native people had no say in the education provided for them. The evolution of the early church schools for Native people into church-affiliated but governmentally funded day and residential institutions and finally into federally and territorially-operated community schools, has been well documented elsewhere and need not be retraced here. The separate but similar history of provincial provision for non-status aboriginal people living on crown land also has a long tradition of central direction by provincial Department of Education personnel. The historical evolution of Native education is of interest in the context of this policy analysis for two reasons: the formation of divergent attitudes among Native peoples about the proper role and content of education (a matter best left for the bilingualism/biculturalism discussion); and the legacy of a strong tradition of central and external control throughout the entire aboriginal education arena.

With the assertion of their right to control the education of their children embodied in Indian Control of Indian Education, Canada's status Indians, and subsequently all Canadian aboriginal peoples, began to try to influence the educational programs their children participated in. The first mechanism for such influence was often the local school committee. Such committees, of course, were and are purely advisory, and their lack of familiarity with schooling as understood by the professional educators who staffed and administered their schools often set severe limits to their ability to influence

the course of events in their schools. Nonetheless, some committees grew both in their knowledge of how school policy could be influenced at the local level, and in their desire for effective power to do so. These committees became the foci for the first Native "Education Authorities." The best of the school committees served (and occasionally continue to serve) both as effective liaisons between the worldview, values and educational preferences of the Native community and those of the school community. In a few instances, functional mechanisms for carrying local concerns (both those of the community and the school) up the educational hierarchy have evolved. Even where the form of local control exists in the guise of an Education Authority, however, the influence of such units of local governance on the fiscal and educational policy-making activities of the central authority is highly questionable.

The recent demand for quality education by aboriginal people has put considerable pressure on INAC Regional Offices, and other central agencies involved in the delivery of educational services to aboriginal peoples, to exert much more prescriptive central control over educational programs than in the past. Thus, the tradition of salutary neglect (letting schools and teachers pretty much to their own devices, so long as an occasional inspection revealed some minimal effort to do what is done in public schools) in the schools for aboriginal peoples is currently subject to considerable pressure from the center to standardize educational programs across a region (Paquette, 1986). The irony of this tightening up at the center, just when the goal of transferring control to Native people is theoretically dominating the policy agenda of Canadian aboriginal education, will be explored in more detail later. What is of interest here is simply the recent tendency of the central aboriginal education authorities to take a much more active policy role in educational programming. In the past such authorities tended to be preoccupied with managing and standardizing the non-educational aspects of their systems. INAC, for instance, has long had the most meticulously detailed and complete policies on such matters as rental of crown-owned teacherages and the

calculation of isolated-post allowances, while classroom practice has traditionally been the domain of the teacher as "practicing professional".³⁶

Despite the recent tightening up at the center in educational program matters, aboriginal education continues to be an arena in which policy-making in areas of educational significance is a much less defined and coherent process than it is in many other educational arenas. In the absence of extensive research into policy and practice in aboriginal education, then, how can existing school-level practice in aboriginal education be accounted for? How are policies made and practices established? Who, if anyone, controls aboriginal education? While a few larger reserves are able to bring substantial fiscal and administrative expertise to the management of their schools, most Native communities currently lack the expertise necessary to assert substantive control over an educational program. With the exception, then, of a few administratively well-endowed communities, four modes of policy-making tend to pervade the Native education arena as a whole.

In certain curriculum areas and in a limited number of jurisdictions, the tightening up at the center previously referred to has resulted in definite educational program policies buttressed by appropriate inservice and supervision provisions. In an even more limited number of cases, such centrally-initiated policies may be the result of a consultative process involving both Native people and school-level educational staff.

Policy by Administrative Fiat

Policy-making by administrative fiat continues, however, to be a major process by which formal policies are established in Native education. Whether at the local or area level, a policy vacuum is typically perceived to be having intolerable effects on educational program delivery. This perception frequently arises as the result of one or more crises which appear to demand "immediate action." A line administrator - principal, district superintendent of education or other - steps into the breach and issues a new policy statement from his or her desk which (s)he believes will rectify the apparent

problem. More collegial-minded administrators will consult with their professional constituents before issuing such a policy, but ultimately the line administrator takes the formal initiative and responsibility in such cases.

What follows depends on the nature of the new policy, its perceived impact on the Native and school community and, to no small degree, on the history of and beliefs about local control in the community. In the case of a school being run by a Band Education Authority, such an administrative fiat is a sure sign that the Authority has been unable or unwilling to deal with the problem that evoked it (or does not perceive it to be a problem). Given the fact of such unilateral administrative action, an Authority has three choices: ignore it (at best a temporary expedient if it is a matter of any import); endorse it; or rescind it (and thus visibly second-guess its administration), perhaps designing an alternative policy in its place. Totally aside from the merits of a given policy measure instituted in such a way, there exists a tendency for newly "independent" Band Authorities to resist policy-making by administrative directive, and a strong likelihood, therefore, that such measures will be rescinded by an Education Authority. If a local Educational Authority either refuses to deal with a problem perceived by school staff to be crucial, or develops unilaterally a solution the staff sees as inadequate or inappropriate, a standoff of the type described in the role-strain research into local control is the usual result (King, 1981; Wyatt, 1985). A tense truce evolves with each side openly or secretly blaming the other for the impasse. The staff looks to the authority to "show leadership," while the authority expects the staff to "use their professional expertise" and solve the problem.

Policy-Making by Default

In educational matters, the dominant historical policy-making mechanism in aboriginal education has been default, in a word, the non-decision. In part as a result of the pervasiveness of the assumptions that:

- a. aboriginal education existed to replace the Native languages and cultures, and
- b. the best way to accomplish such a replacement was by doing whatever was done in most public schools,

and in part because of a fatalism about the efficacy of Native-education in the first place,³⁷ classroom practice and policies were generally left to the individual teacher's discretion. With no pressure or motivation to do otherwise teachers would, after all teach as they were taught³⁸ - which is precisely what was desired. In the case of policy-making by default, school practices solidified into unwritten policies because of a generally accepted belief among staff that such practices were right and appropriate - or at least inevitable. Policy-making by default, then, is the sum total of the contributions of precedent, habit and preference to established in-school practices. While an element in the policy mosaic of the larger educational arena as well, default was and is, at least in educational matters, a much larger part of the total policy picture in aboriginal education than elsewhere. Much less, in short, is left to chance in the public schools than in schools for aboriginal people.

While partly a function of the size and remoteness of many schools for Native people, the persistence of great uncertainty about in-school policy in many Native jurisdictions is lamentable, in view of its tendency to inhibit a reasonable integration of educational programs across the grades and divisions. Ultimately, to be excellent, an educational program must be coherent, and must be formulated on the basis of something more substantive than the sum of the uncoordinated teaching instincts of individual teachers - all the more so in a situation where most teachers are cultural and linguistic aliens.³⁹ The historical problem of high teacher turnover (Barnwell, 1978) in aboriginal education has contributed to the tendency to leave educational programs as a matter for teachers to extemporize in their classrooms, but the current tight teacher job market has, not unexpectedly, been accompanied by a slowing down of teacher turnover

in many aboriginal jurisdictions. A window of opportunity has thus opened on the possibility of more coordinated, better integrated educational programs in aboriginal jurisdictions.

As in the case of policy-making by administrative fiat, default policy-making frequently takes place in areas tangential to, but significant for the educational program. Perennial problems regarding discipline, in-school and out-of-school work expectations, attendance, respect for school property and a whole host of education-related issues may be either left untouched by formal policy, or dealt with only by administrative directive. Lacking the legitimacy of ratification by representatives of the Native community itself, such "policies" will go only so far as the tolerance of the community allows.

Implementation and Conflict: Policy in a Turbulent Arena

The central theme of the burgeoning implementation literature in education seems to be the difficulty of implementing educational innovations, indeed, the virtual impossibility of doing so in the absence of teacher belief that the innovation is both feasible and desirable. What is true in the larger educational arena is certainly true in the turbulence and uncertainty surrounding most aboriginal education in Canada today. Central directives are heeded only where they meet the perceived local needs and desires of school-level staff. It is, after all, even easier to "close the classroom door" - and, by extension, the school door - and do as one wishes when a school is visited only rarely by a supervisory official. Alternatively, in the situation of a locally controlled school, principals and programs may frequently be left with no evaluation at all. This situation can arise either because a local authority has no official with supervisory responsibilities, or because of the inherent awkwardness of having one official supervise one principal in one school.

If policy-making is inescapably a matter of bargaining and mutual adjustment between those who are formally responsible for making policy and those who are charged

with carrying it out (Allison, 1969; Aucoin, 1973), the prospects for improved decision-making in aboriginal education will depend, among other things, upon a much improved process of interaction between Native governance bodies and the staffs they employ. In part, such improved communication will depend upon the availability of suitably trained administrative staff. Without, however, mutual trust and respect between authorities and their staffs - and a mutual commitment to eliminating the current policy "standoff" between authorities and staffs in the interest of efficient, high-quality educational programs - even the best trained, local-level policy analyst-cum-administrator will be hamstrung in his or her efforts to facilitate a more orderly, effective and harmonious policy process.

2.1.2. Program and Practice: The Curriculum, Community and Classroom Realities

A number of commonalities full of significance for the quality (and equality) of aboriginal education appear to transcend governance forms, local cultural variations, and environmental circumstances. There exist, to be sure, exceptions to each of these common features, but the overall pattern seems difficult to challenge. Some of the significant features common to the educational environment in aboriginal communities are shared in varying degrees with neighboring non-Native communities. In many cases, it is these shared characteristics which are most difficult (and potentially painful) to discuss. To ignore them in a policy analysis which aspires to be both comprehensive and useful, however, would be both dishonest and self-defeating.

Curriculum: Prospects for Development and Renewal in a Difficult Environment

The aboriginal education arena poses many special problems for the development and renewal of educational programs, in addition to the problems endemic to development and renewal efforts everywhere. The universally experienced tension between top-down and bottom-up curriculum development and implementation efforts⁴⁰ are often exacerbated in aboriginal education

by the cultural incongruence of governance bodies, administrative units, and the people they serve. Teachers and school-level administrators not infrequently believe that they are the victims of inappropriate or non-existent curriculum policies, while administrators often pursue a vision of educational equality firmly rooted in the traditional policy problematic of cultural and linguistic replacement.

The size of band-controlled jurisdictions typically precludes sufficient resourcing for a functional curriculum development and implementation process, and educational programs often become the sum of the uncoordinated and unintegrated teaching instincts of classroom teachers. While trade-offs must inevitably be made in any educational jurisdiction between the need for program coherence and consistency on the one hand, and the need to encourage teacher creativity and responsibility on the other, the scales have arguably been tipped drastically in favour of individual teacher discretion in the aboriginal education arena. *To the degree that special programming is necessary and appropriate in aboriginal education*, such a situation does not well serve the interests of aboriginal peoples. Left to their own devices as individual classroom teachers, most teachers will inevitably attempt to teach as they were taught. If such pedagogy fails to produce satisfactory results, the cause is often seen to reside in the students and their social circumstances.⁴¹

Another limitation posed by the circumstances of Native education is the critical lack of people, culturally congruent with evolving aboriginal societies, who have professional expertise in curriculum and educational administration. Avoiding the mistakes of the past in a particular educational arena is inevitably dependent, among other things, upon knowledge of those mistakes. A cadre of people who combine an in-depth knowledge of specific aboriginal cultures, and professional expertise in curriculum and educational administration, is urgently needed if aboriginal-governance bodies are to realize their potential as a vehicle of instructional improvement. By the same token, the professional training currently being provided by Native teacher education programs

ought to be critically re-evaluated against the educational needs of aboriginal people (Allison, 1983). The cultural congruence (or at the very least, compatibility) of teachers and pupils, while desirable and important, is only part of the slate of qualifications requisite for effective teaching in aboriginal schools.

A number of aboriginal jurisdictions, both federally and territorially-operated and those operated by aboriginal governance bodies, have made impressive strides recently in improving their curriculum development and renewal capabilities. Some larger eastern reserves and a few federal districts have begun to develop curriculum processes from which many important lessons can be learned, if a vehicle for widespread information-sharing in Native-education (similar, perhaps, to the evolving provincial educational data-banks - perhaps as extensions of them) can be designed. The Northwest Territories has long been involved in extensive Native-language curriculum projects which antedate any serious efforts in this area in "southern" Canada. A general and critical need exists for widespread information-sharing in aboriginal education if needless and costly inefficiencies are to be avoided. Accordingly any large-scale rethinking of aboriginal education should include, as a bare minimum, provision for the development of a nationally-accessible Native education data-base. The same argument - namely, the advantages in efficiency to be obtained from the widespread availability of information about Native education programs and policy - strongly suggests the need for an Institute of Aboriginal Education with a national mandate and perspective. The current array of tenuously funded Institutes of various sorts aimed at improving the capacity of Native peoples to control their educational programs are laudable in intent, and many of them may offer programs that deserve to be maintained and expanded. The proposed Clearinghouse on Language in Native Education is also an initiative worthy of the most urgent support in the particular area of its mandate. Efficient and effective education, however, entails a range of concerns much greater than those addressed by such organizations. Given the relatively

small size of aboriginal education program enrolments in relations to overall provincial public-school enrolments, a strong case can be made for a national institute to conduct research, and collect and disseminate information on all aspects of the aboriginal education enterprise. Such an investment would, if properly funded and utilized, provide the same kind of returns in improved efficiency that provincial research institutions (especially the graduate schools) make available directly and indirectly to public education in Canada. If the educational and policy sins of the past are to be avoided, meaningful aboriginal control is an absolute prerequisite to the success of such an institute.

If the combined thrust of the professional-development and implementation studies of the late seventies and early eighties, and the school-improvement research movement (Odden, 1983) suggest anything for the aboriginal education arena, it is surely that a successful curriculum renewal process will, of necessity, involve practicing teachers. A top-down process based exclusively on "disseminating" centrally produced guidelines is unlikely to produce any outcome except teacher resistance. Such resistance can range from non-use to open hostility (Wolcott, 1977), and is especially likely in the psychological (and frequently physical) isolation of the Native education arena. Aboriginal governance bodies will require access to skillful and sensitive curriculum coordinators, who are able to bring comprehensive knowledge of curriculum theory and practice to bear in a collegial development process.

Community and Classroom Realities

The community and classroom realities confronted by teachers and administrators in the aboriginal arena vary greatly. Some eastern reserves, after all, are close to large metropolitan centres and share much more than geographical proximity with them. Some of the observations which follow will apply to these less typical situations; some will not or will apply only to a lesser degree.

There are many educationally significant ways in which aboriginal communities may diverge from

non-Native communities. The divergence, of course, is greatest when the comparison is between aboriginal communities and the urban centres in which the vast majority of Canadians make their homes. Perhaps none is more fraught with significance than the erosion of the traditional aboriginal work ethic, which has occurred as the economic viability of traditional pursuits has been undermined. While the work ethic(s) of Canada's Native people was clearly not the nine-to-five punch-clock work ethic of the industrial workplace, Native people worked hard to acquire and practice the skills required for their survival and prosperity, and typically set high standards of learning for their young. A respect for and encouragement of excellence in traditional competencies survives in the wisdom and folklore of aboriginal elders and, in some cases, is embedded into the everyday usages of aboriginal languages.

With the decline in the viability and attractiveness of traditional pursuits that followed widescale urban and agricultural development, the disappearance of game, the relative decrease in the marginal profitability of trapping, and the introduction of various forms of welfare payments, Native people found that the skills and excellences which they possessed were no longer of direct usefulness in providing daily sustenance. More significantly for education, many Native people came, for a time, to accept the view of those who ran and staffed the schools which enrolled their children, namely, that their cultures and languages were primitive and unworthy of preservation. The denial of self, however, in such an abandonment of one's heritage, proved more than most Native people could embrace. The result of this confluence of circumstances was a decoupling of the traditional Native work ethic(s) from the act of learning. Far from being supported and encouraged by their elders to learn well and deeply, Native children were often pitted against the learning their schools proffered to them. Such was the inevitable price of a cultural incongruence and irrelevance compounded by inappropriate pedagogy.

The legacy of this widespread decoupling of aboriginal people's work ethic and the natural desire of all children

to learn from the formal educational process is still a prominent feature of the aboriginal education scene. That the perennial policy problems confronting aboriginal jurisdictions are attendance, discipline, in and out-of-school work habits and, in not a few instances, vandalism, is no accident. These problems do not automatically disappear with the assumption of control by aboriginal people. In some cases they may actually become worse for a time.

The relative recency of the evolution of class distinctions among most Canadian Native peoples (Shkilnyk, 1985), which is the inevitable result of the development of local government and commerce in areas with extremely limited short-term economic potential, offers within it a partial explanation for the disengagement of so many Native people from the education they are offered. Those who have found their formal education to be of some practical value in improving their socio-economic circumstances frequently champion the cause of schooling in aboriginal communities. Those who have seen little or no practical benefit and, in fact, may have seen a *relative* decline in their socio-economic well-being with the advent of schooling, local government and commerce, may foster very negative perceptions of schooling for their children. These problems are raised here because they are real, widespread and of great importance to education. They also emphasize the educational importance to be attached to improvements in general governance, that may lead to a decent standard of living and a sense of self-sufficiency for a much broader base of the aboriginal population. They tend, therefore, to underscore and add urgency to the broader issue of Native self-government.

Among the much more widely-recognized and discussed current situational constraints upon aboriginal education are the prevalence of cramped and inadequate housing, high teacher turnover rates (Barnwell, 1978) (though retention has improved in many jurisdictions as the general teaching market has tightened up), and, in some instances, chaotic social conditions. Culturally inappropriate learning materials have long been identified

as a limiting factor in aboriginal education, though some of the federally-funded cultural centres have begun to create attractive and pedagogically-sound alternative learning materials for Native students. More recently, much attention has focussed on the pervasive impact of television on aboriginal communities. Television, in both its network and satellite incarnations, is now available virtually everywhere in Canada, and is having a rapid and profound impact on the cultural and linguistic integrity of aboriginal communities. While some efforts at Native-language broadcasting are under way, especially in the Arctic, and more are under study by the CRTC (Canadian Radio and Television Commission), the overwhelming media presence in Canada's North today is commercial, English-language television. All of the factors discussed here apply in varying degrees to all categories of Canadian aboriginal peoples.

With rare exception, the curriculum response to these community realities continues to be an attempt to "do what they do in the public schools," to teach provincially-mandated curricula without systematic modification to recognize the cultural and linguistic milieu students come from. In particular, the consistent use of appropriate teaching techniques for aboriginal students whose first language (or first dialect of an official language) is not a standard official language is still relatively rare. Authentic bilingual education, while much talked about, is virtually non-existent; only in the rarest cases has a jurisdiction attempted to implement a bilingual model in the aboriginal arena (Tanner, 1981) - though the Northwest Territories appear to be moving in that direction (Kusugak, 1978).

A Delicate Balance: Native and Non-Native Curriculum Content

Establishing a desirable balance between Native and non-Native curriculum content is at once one of the most elusive and most crucial questions in Native education today. That there is no one right balance for all aboriginal peoples argues the necessity of diverse educational programs for the varying needs of a diverse people. Several factors, however, have tended to tilt

the balance in most aboriginal education jurisdictions overwhelmingly in the direction of non-Native content.

The first is a pervasive believe in a direct linear trade-off between the two general content areas across all possible combinations of program emphasis and without regard to the quality and appropriateness of pedagogical technique. In this view, 10% more Native language and culture means 10% less non-Native content learned. Obviously there is a trade-off. In the extreme case of an all-Native curriculum, no non-Native content would be learned (at least as a direct result of the formal education program). In the converse case of exclusively non-Native programming, Native-language and culture are not transmitted by the school. Unfortunately, there is no room in such a view for the proposition that bilingual education, far from being an intellectual liability, may enhance second-language learning (Cummins, 1981). While attractive to unilingual teachers and administrators, the ascription of poor achievement to bilingualism is not consistent with a significant body of research in second-language learning.⁴² It is, however, understandable that unilingual teachers and administrators, totally aside from the political economy of aboriginal education, would tend to view bilingualism in a Native language and bilculturalism in a Native culture as intellectual and social liabilities rather than as assets. An obvious corollary to such a belief is the linear trade-off perspective mentioned earlier: the more Native content, the less non-Native; and conversely - for all proportional combinations of such content and without regard to the type or quality of instructional techniques involved.

The political economy of aboriginal education, however, is also a very significant factor in setting the balance between Native and non-Native content. The present incumbents of teaching and administrative positions in aboriginal education across Canada have a vested interest in the preservation of official-language dominance in that system. Ironically, as Tanner points out (1981), Native teachers trained to teach in official-language classrooms are, *de facto*, part of this unilingual constituency. Individual teachers, to be sure,

often express an altruistic perception that more emphasis on Native language and culture should be part of the overall educational program for aboriginal people, and that a more bilingual approach is not only more humane, but potentially more efficient.⁴³ However, the weight of the political economy of aboriginal education is currently on the side of an overwhelming focus on non-Native content.

Other very potent considerations exist, of course, in the bilingualism/biculturalism debate in aboriginal education, some of which will be explored in a later section devoted specifically to that issue. What is intended here is a preliminary sketch of the basic dimensions of one of the central and omnipresent issues of contemporary Canadian aboriginal education.

2.2. Control and Power in Aboriginal Education

Neither occasion nor space offer themselves here to anthologize the diverse literature on power and control in formal organizations. No simple answer exists to the query, "What is power?" or "What is control?" – much less to the issue of how to obtain and exert influence, power and control. Because of the broad focus of this paper, the conceptual treatment of power will be confined to the few unesoteric aspects of power, about which there is some agreement among traditional (Pfeffer, 1981) and radical (Lukes, 1980) definitions. Power, and its conceptual derivative control, implies an assertion of will in which one social actor regularly influences or compels another social actor to do what he would not otherwise do. One important body of power theory suggests that in any exercise of power, there always exists some form of exchange between those who control and those who are controlled (Blau, 1974), that is, those who control must inevitably give something in exchange for compliance with their wishes.

2.2.1. The Meaning of Control in Aboriginal Education

What does control mean in the aboriginal education arena? The call for "Indian Control of Indian Education" issued by the NIB in 1972 was formulated in terms of two basic criteria – parental responsibility and Indian control.

The document leaves no doubt that it envisions significant positive impacts on educational programming for Native students from the application of these two principles. Native control of aboriginal education, in this sense, fulfils the requirements of a simplified power model. A social actor, aboriginal people, will have control of their education when they can influence or compel another social actor, their schools, to do what they would not otherwise do. Such a definition, of course, leaves at issue what it is that the schools might thus be compelled to do, and what might need to be given in exchange for such compliance. But it does presume that schools for aboriginal people ought to do some things they have not normally done in the past. This definition also establishes the inevitable, if potentially unsettling, criterion for recognizing aboriginal control - an aboriginal educational program that does what it would not otherwise do.

Fleshing out that "something different" that Native-controlled schools ought to do with concrete expectations - educational goals and objectives - is a necessary first step in bringing meaning to the concept of aboriginal control. The "what" and "why" of educational planning are always the most recurrent, troublesome, problematic, and also the most fundamental, issues in educational policy. They are so precisely because they involve directly the values, beliefs and convictions of all actors in the educational drama about what is right and desirable, in a way that the technical issues surrounding policy formulation and implementation (the "how" issues) rarely do. Ill-conceived solutions to the "how" questions, the technical embodiment of educational policies, can, of course, mute or even invert the intended impact of a policy. Ways-and-means questions, therefore, command respect and interest, and demand a high level of technical competence among those charged with formulating and implementing educational policies. Any satisfying answer to the question of what aboriginal control in education means will ultimately have to address both substantive ("what" and "why") and process ("how") issues.

2.2.2. "Local" and "Aboriginal" Control: On the Meaning of the Terms

An underlying assumption of the 1972 NIB paper on Indian control was the synonymy of local and Indian control. Indian and, by extension, aboriginal control would become a reality through local Native governance bodies. In particular, local governance was seen to ensure Indian (aboriginal) control. Unfortunately, the possibility that local and aboriginal control may not be synonymous in all circumstances was not explored in the NIB paper.

Several reasons exist for questioning the proposition that local and aboriginal control are one and the same. The first and potentially most significant reason is that very small units of governance cannot hope to command sufficient resources to provide program support and supervisory services adequate to ensure any meaningful control over educational programs in their schools. Such units are extremely unequal bargaining partners in their negotiations with federal and provincial authorities for scarce educational resources. Regional amalgams of small units clearly have more bargaining "clout" than the sum total of the bargaining power of the separate units. Small jurisdictions cannot take advantage of economies of scale, which can free up some portion of per-pupil expenditures for program activities which are the underpinning of meaningful educational control. Individual band and community Native schools can hardly hope to influence significantly provincial curriculum, accreditation and teacher-education policies, whose form and evolution impact greatly upon the possibility of meaningful aboriginal control. Lastly, there is the question of form and function. Small units of governance are subject to the same diseconomies of scale in administration as in program. It is much more difficult, for instance, *even if compensatory funding is available*, for very small jurisdictions to attract and retain the type of administrative expertise necessary for effective local policy-making.

The identification of local and Indian control may be much more valid in the case of large eastern Indian reserves, that are able to command sufficient fiscal and

human resources to overcome many of the limitations suggested above. Much less justification can be found for such an equation in the situation of the much more numerous aboriginal jurisdictions that are so small as to render meaningful local autonomy in education only marginally feasible.⁴⁴ To say this is not to suggest that local representative governance bodies are not a vital part of aboriginal control in all circumstances. It is rather to insist that, in the absence of cooperative affiliation in educational matters with a larger unit, small aboriginal jurisdictions will not only have access to little or no program services, they will exert little meaningful control over their schools. In such a situation, the history of both Native and non-Native education practice conspire to suggest that teachers will simply continue to "teach as they were taught." The widespread trend toward the coalescence of small aboriginal jurisdictions throughout the provinces of Canada, as well as the shape taken by the recent reforms in aboriginal education in the Northwest Territories (the regional board model), suggest a nascent recognition of the limitations of a control embodied exclusively in small aboriginal jurisdictions.

2.3. Form and Function: The Image and Reality of Control

The distinction between the image and reality of control hinted at in the preceding section is a crucial one in the aboriginal education arena. Function does not automatically follow form, in aboriginal education or elsewhere. Some provincial boards exercise effective control of the educational programs in aboriginal schools; the energies of other boards are sapped by a variety of concerns and circumstances only marginally related to the educational programs they nominally manage. Much depends on the quality of administrative expertise a board commands, not a little upon the background knowledge, experience with schools, and access to relevant information of trustees. A clear, shared vision of the fundamental mission of education can only find expression through informed awareness on the part of

those who are chosen to set policy for a community's school(s).

Throughout much of the INAC literature on transfer of control to bands, a facile assumption frequently surfaces that transfer of nominal control is transfer of substantive control. Against this view are arrayed the combined strengths of the literature on the political economy of formal organizations (both inside and outside the educational forum), the educational and public finance literatures, and common sense. Aboriginal education authorities are in an especially difficult position with regard to developing the capacity to control their schools. The details of the handicaps they face, and possible solutions thereto, are reserved for separate treatment in a more appropriate context. The present discussion is intended only as a *caveat* against equating the form of control with the reality. No one enthralled by the proposition that formal ("on-paper") and real control are synonymous can hope to understand the paradoxes, in intent and effect, of the current policy of "devolution" of control to local aboriginal governance bodies.

2.3.1. Control Toward What Ends: On Goals and Objectives

Before policy-makers at any level can hope to design policy instruments likely to have the impacts they desire, they must above all agree on what those impacts ought to be. The "what" and "why" of educational policy inevitably precede the "how" questions. No public commission, for instance, charged with looking into the mechanics of public policy administration can long avoid the issues of the appropriateness of the policies in question. In the aboriginal-education arena as elsewhere, the primacy of purpose is unavoidable.

Homogeneity in goals and objectives are no more likely or desirable across the aboriginal-education arena than across the public-education arena. Beyond a doubt we live in a time of increasing diversity in culture and education. Nonetheless, the issues of fundamental intent are unavoidable, both at the local and national level. Two key and interrelated problems of purpose in

aboriginal education are the issues of parity with public school programs and the desirability of bilingual and bicultural education.

The Parity Paradox: A "Crisis of Purpose"⁴⁵

The quality of aboriginal education has for many years been a source of criticism both from within and without. If teachers, administrators, Native peoples, and politicians (both Native and non-Native) agree upon anything in regard to aboriginal education, it is upon its generally inferior quality when compared to prevailing standards in public schools catering primarily to non-aboriginals. The agreement among the actors involved in aboriginal education rapidly dissolves, however, when the questions of why such widespread lack of achievement exists, and what might best be done to rectify it are raised. Conflicts in belief and interest rapidly surface, and proposed solutions range from renewed efforts at total submersion in a majority culture and language educational experience, to completely bilingual and bicultural education.

One of the most oft-repeated demands of aboriginal parents and the organizations that represent them is in the insistence that the quality of aboriginal education be raised to provincial norms, in order that aboriginal young people may have equal access to further education and the general job market. Parity with provincial schools has come to be a goal in all aspects of aboriginal education, in physical plant as well as in educational program, in provision for special as much as for regular educational needs. The goal of parity, of course, is inevitably counterpoised to the goal of distinctiveness. A program which seeks to address unique social, cognitive and affective needs considered to arise from the "Nativeness" of aboriginal students is to that degree different from mainstream public school programs. An alternative program is by definition different, and it may not be reasonable to expect outcomes from it identical to those produced by mainstream programs. The omnipresent tension between the desire for parity with the public schools, and the desire for linguistic and

cultural preservation, clearly constitutes a crisis of purpose in Canadian aboriginal education.

In education, moreover, the shortest policy distance between two points is often not, in any case, a straight line. The case of bilingual education for Hispanics in the United States is instructive because Congress, after many years of resistance to the idea, has been forced by a long history of the failure of English-only education to raise the achievement standards of Hispanics, to fund bilingual education (albeit in the name of smoothing the transition into the majority culture and language).⁴⁶ If submersion in an educational process designed as a facsimile of public education were the best route to educational achievement for Native peoples, a large proportion of Native Canadians would by now have achieved educational parity with the general population. An abiding paradox of aboriginal education has been its intended role as primary cultural assimilator, and its frequently separate governance. In its church and federal-school incarnations, aboriginal education was intended to be separate (in governance) but the same (in program).

Another flaw in any over-simplistic concept of the parity goal resides in the diversity of standards to be found in public education of all types and levels across Canada. Presumably when Native people say they want equal educational opportunity, they mean that they want standards equal to those in the better (and typically higher-spending) provincial boards and districts. Not only are standards unequal among boards and districts with unequal spending power and unequal demand for educational services, great differences in standards frequently exist among the schools in a single jurisdiction. Unless specific learning objectives are specified as targets, it is very difficult to know when parity with public education has been reached. One possibility (where these exist) is to use provincially-normed, achievement assessment instruments as a means of determining congruence of achievement patterns across subjects, grades and levels of instruction in aboriginal jurisdictions, with those in the larger public arena. Certainly the use of a general, typically

culturally-biased, achievement test, which is not keyed to the learning objectives specified in provincial curricula, is an indefensible basis on which to compare the quality of aboriginal education programs with their provincial counterparts. The comparison, in such cases, is much more of cultural congruence than of educational achievement.

The objective of parity with the public systems, however, insofar as it symbolizes a determination to enhance the overall quality of educational achievement among aboriginal peoples is both a reasonable and praiseworthy objective. As aboriginal Canada is increasingly drawn into the "credentialling society" in which employment prospects are dependent upon, among other things, formal educational achievement, it will become increasingly important that core official-language curricula be defined in aboriginal jurisdictions, and that standards comparable to those in "good" provincial schools be set and maintained in such core areas.

Ultimately, however, the justification for distinctive governance mechanisms in any area of public policy turns to some degree on the distinctiveness of the programs it generates. Aboriginal control, as noted earlier, implies that aboriginal peoples are able to influence or constrain their schools to do things they would not otherwise do. Two readings are possible of what that "something else" might be. On the one hand, the argument has been made by some Native communities that Native control ought to bring absolute parity of achievement - doing the same things that the better provincial schools do and doing them equally well, a level of performance unachievable, such communities argue, under absentee governance by cultural aliens. On the other hand, many Native people see Native control as a vehicle for linguistic and cultural preservation. To the extent that the latter is an operative goal in the aboriginal education arena as a whole and in any given jurisdiction, the program generated will inevitably differ from the program in the mainstream public systems. Different programs, other things being equal, will have different outcomes. Different forms of governance take on an enhanced legitimacy when they generate different types of

programs, approaches to program delivery or, at least, different proportional combinations of program emphases *Aboriginal control aimed at exact program congruence with public educational systems inevitably contains within it the seeds of its own demise.*"⁷

The Bilingualism and Biculturalism Issue

No issue in aboriginal education is potentially more intractable and emotional than the issue of bilingual and bicultural education. Its difficulty and volatility emanate from conflicting convictions about who and what Canada's aboriginal peoples are and ought to become. A crisis of belief exists about the role of Native languages and cultures in the future of Native Canadians. Stirring affirmations abound of the need to preserve, renew and, where necessary, revive Canada's aboriginal languages and cultures (Ontario Bilingual/Bicultural Conference, 1984). When asked to identify the aboriginal rights which they believed to constitute their unextinguished sovereignty, for instance, the Assembly of First Nations included among them rights which unmistakably imply bilingual and bicultural education:

6. our right and freedom to practise our own religions;
7. our right and freedom to practise our own customs and traditions; and
8. our right to use, retain and develop our own languages, and to retain and develop our own cultures (Diamond, 1983).

Many, though by no means all, of the aboriginal groups that have lost their language and culture believe that education ought to be a means toward revitalising their unique linguistic and cultural heritage. While no one advocates trying to turn the clock back by devising an educational program that is geared to yesterday's realities, the case for cultural and linguistic preservation has been powerfully argued in terms of potential social and learning benefits (Burnaby, 1979; Cummins, 1981).

Many of the large eastern reserves, and increasingly the west coast and prairie reserves as well, have effectively lost their ancestral language and much of their cultural heritage as well. In such places, the cultural debate centers on what constitutes a viable cultural essence, and on the desirability and feasibility of restoring Native languages as living tongues. Some eastern reserves have developed exemplary Native-as-a-Second-Language programs on extremely slender human and financial resources. Others have chosen to leave Native languages out of their definition of a viable cultural essence to be fostered in the school.

A large number of Canadian aboriginal communities are poised on the brink of linguistic and cultural extinction. The process of linguistic and cultural erosion has taken a quantum leap in recent years, with the arrival of satellite television in even the remotest regions of aboriginal Canada. While some aspects of this newfound "window on the world" are doubtlessly beneficial both educationally and socially, others are definitely not. The logic of such an electronic cultural and linguistic invasion is, however, relentless. The very availability of low-cost earth-station technology means that it will be used, and program choice in remote communities may be exceptionally concentrated on easy-to-understand and sensational offerings that offer little positive potential in terms of standard-English language development, cognitive development or socially cohesive affect. Although the enhanced availability of Native-language programming is a useful and, if native languages are to survive, much-needed antidote to the current overdose of lowest-common-denominator official-language commercial programming in many aboriginal communities, it can hardly be expected to compete on an even footing with commercial television addressed to the larger North American market. The egalitarian underpinnings of traditional native cultures ensure that the role of censor would be even less tenable in most aboriginal communities than in non-Native communities, and the only hope for mitigating the negative influences of television on the integrity of aboriginal cultures and languages is ultimately the hope

that attempts to promote a reasonable balance and intelligent choice in program selection will be effective.

The number of aboriginal communities, then, in which the Native language can be considered as essentially intact is rapidly decreasing. The number in which it can be considered as "not at risk" is also declining rapidly. Bilingual education programs cannot reverse this trend in the absence of community and family use of the maternal tongue. A living language must, after all, live outside the school. Nonetheless, a powerful belief exists among a wide cross-section of Native-speaking aboriginals that education ought to be an important vehicle of linguistic and cultural preservation. If Native languages and cultures cannot survive only in the school, they cannot, in the realities of late-twentieth century aboriginal Canada, survive without it.

Two conflicting views, then, tend to emerge of the role of education in Native-speaking communities. One view is that the school ought to concern itself with what it traditionally has identified with, the teaching of English-language non-Native curriculum. The counterview posits a key school role in cultural and linguistic preservation. Nor is this cleavage in belief about the mission of the school in such communities a division between opposing factions. It is, in fact, a cleavage within as well as among individuals. The same persons frequently express contradictory beliefs, at different moments, about the school's mission in regard to language and culture (Paquette, 1986). Such ambivalence is, in part, the legacy of a long tradition of excluding Native languages and culture from the purview of formal education, and from the view of the educated person which underlay it. In part, it stems from a deep-seated fear, especially among those who have benefited economically from their education, that attempts to use education as an instrument of linguistic and cultural preservation may adversely prejudice the economic prospects of their children. All too often the result of such ambivalence with regard to the mission of the school in respect to native languages is a compromise solution, so far short of bilingual education as to ensure

only the most marginal impact on maternal-language preservation. More importantly, if the lessons of a substantial body of research on bilingualism can be applied to Canadian aboriginal peoples, lack of language development in the mother tongue, which is a byproduct of early submersion of Native-speaking children in an official-language instructional program, severely constrains the prospects for development in the second (official) language. The logic of such a situation is that clinging to unilingual official-language instruction, especially in the primary years, may undermine rather than enhance children's subsequent competence in an official language.

Unfortunately, experiments with authentic bilingual education in the Canadian aboriginal arena are next to non-existent. With the exception of a very few documented efforts (such as those of the Cree School Board⁴⁸ (Tanner, 1981)) to move toward a substantially bilingual program, we are left to infer and transfer from research done elsewhere. One of the great potential advantages that could be realized from a substantive aboriginal voice in Native-education policy and finance, at the national and regional level, is serious research into bilingual aboriginal education. The minimal commitment of fiscal resources to Native-language education at present precludes meaningful research in this area.

The questions of mandate and resourcing have bedeviled the development of Native language programs since their inception in the early seventies. Concerns about the feasibility of bilingual educational programs tend to revolve around these two issues. INAC and provincial Ministries lack program resources and expertise in native languages (although the Ontario Ministry is currently attempting, in a project jointly funded by that ministry and the Ontario Regional Office of INAC, to develop a curriculum guideline for Native language courses). Despite a recent move from bare toleration to official encouragement of Native-language instruction, INAC has generally not provided funds for Native-language program-development and instructional improvement activities. Most Native-Language Instructors work in complete professional isolation and,

except for an initial training program in some cases, are left completely to their own devices in the design and evaluation of the programs they teach. A double standard appears to have been at work in the matter of curriculum and instructional improvement programs as they pertain to Native and official language instruction. While the overall track record of Indian Affairs in the curriculum and program support areas has been, according to the Department's own review of its activities (Indian Education, 1981) abysmal, some districts have recently begun to work vigorously in the areas of curriculum development and instructional improvement. The attention in such cases, however, has been to the non-Native side of the curriculum. One reason given for this lack of attention to the Native side of the curriculum is mandate (Paquette, 1986). INAC officials believe that Native communities and the cultural centres ought to undertake such "Native-side" program development and implementation. Cultural centres, for their part, can serve, and in some cases have served, as mechanisms for Native-language materials development, but they lack the direct access to schools and an ongoing inservice process to provide meaningful direct program support for practicing Native-Language Instructors. Without specifically earmarked and accountable program funding, moreover, it is difficult to ensure that such Native-language development and inservice activities actually occur.

Several certainties emerge from the general lack of direction which currently pervades the Native-language education issue. Effective program development and instructional improvement processes are beyond the resource capabilities of most aboriginal communities and schools in isolation. This is as true of the Native as of the non-Native side of the curriculum. The political economy of most current aboriginal education administrative structures, totally aside from the issue of local aboriginal preferences, portends a continued one-sided emphasis on the non-Native side of the curriculum and, in particular, on official-language instruction. Ironically, as Tanner points out (1981), incumbent aboriginal teachers *trained and certified to*

teach in an official-language become (sometimes unwittingly, occasionally unwillingly) part of the unilingual official-language instruction constituency. Enhancing Native-language instruction has, after all, the inevitable consequence of reducing employment and advancement prospects for non-Native-speaking staff and administrators in an aboriginal school or system.

Another certainty is the abiding difficulty for instructional material development and improvement posed by the multitudinous dialects of Native languages, and the lack of standardization in orthography in written forms of those languages. Here the needs of efficient resource utilization will inevitably necessitate cooperation if vital Native-language instructional programs are to emerge and survive. That such cooperation is possible as well as desirable is illustrated by the recent orthographic standardization process in the arctic (Kusugak, 1978).

As in all important questions of educational policy, the primacy of belief and purpose asserts itself in the aboriginal bilingual-education question. "What" and "why" inevitably precede and underpin "how" questions. Problems with the effectiveness of Native-language programs in Canada are not merely technical and fiscal, though these exist in abundance. Even more fundamentally they are problems of belief. In the past, the effectiveness of such programs has been constrained by a culturally alien administration who saw little value (as well as considerable threat) in an enhanced Native-language role in aboriginal education. In a future of aboriginal control in education, and ultimately in other areas of governance as well, the effectiveness of such programs will be decided as much by the beliefs of aboriginal people about them, as by technical improvements in them.

Current World Trends in Minority-Education Policy

A recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) study of minority-education policy throughout the western world assembled data which cumulatively point toward a world-wide trend away from cultural colonialism, and toward tolerance and esteem for

minority cultures and languages (Churchill, 1983). Through a series of stages, OECD countries appear to be moving inexorably away from minority-education problematics which focus on majority-language and majority-culture learning deficits as the cause of poor achievement among minority students, to problematics which focus on mother-tongue deprivation and the estrangement of minority children from their own cultural heritage. Policy problematics which "blame the victim," and generate policies that simply intensify efforts to submerge minorities in the majority language and culture, are giving way to problematics which blame an insensitive and alien educational process, and produce educational policies focusing on the intrinsic importance and value of minority languages and cultures in the education of minority children. Closely aligned with variations in the perceived validity of the claim of minority languages and cultures for parity of place in the educational program, is the issue of the right of minorities to control their own education. "Lower" stage problematics (those aimed at cultural replacement and assimilation) obviously have little room for minority self-governance while higher stages typically couple a right to self-governance with the right to cultural and linguistic preservation. While Churchill (1983) points out that such stage-wise progress in problem definition and policy product is not uniform, the overall trend appears not to be in doubt.

The recent progress in the Canadian aboriginal education arena, from overtly assimilationist educational policies aimed at the fastest possible eradication of Native languages and cultures, to policies of tolerance and at least nominal support for Native languages and cultures in the school, reflects a world-wide trend toward tolerance and esteem of minority cultures. The progress, however, is qualified and restrained both by the inescapable political economy of organizations presently involved in aboriginal education, and by the mixed beliefs of aboriginal peoples themselves about the wisdom and feasibility of cultural and linguistic preservation efforts in the aboriginal education arena.

The countervailing argument against an enhanced role for Native-languages and cultures in the schools is

ultimately identical to the argument advanced against all minority languages and cultures in the schools – against all departure from homogeneous educational programs – the threat to social cohesiveness posed by cultural and linguistic diversity (National Council, 1985). While the spectre of apartheid tragedy in South Africa argues caution in going so far in pursuit of separateness and distinctiveness (in educational programs and the larger social policy arena as well) as to prejudice adversely the freedom of movement and future economic mobility of those aboriginal people who wish a less traditional lifestyle, the available evidence suggests that strong, well-planned, mother-tongue instructional programs tend to raise – and certainly do not detract from – school achievement in a second language. The operative key, in all cases, it would seem, is commitment to – and belief in the possibility of achieving – excellence in aboriginal education. Commitment and belief are as crucial in those communities that wish a bilingual program aimed at long-term language maintenance, as in those that wish an official-language-only program.

2.4. Centrism, Devolution and Coalescence

Following the 1972 NIB reponse (National Indian, 1973) to the federal White Paper on Indian affairs, the federal government accepted Indian Control as its policy on Indian education in Canada. The embodiment in federal policy, of the call for transfer of control of Indian education to Indian people, was the policy of "devolution" developed by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In essence, the federal government called upon the Department to facilitate the transfer of control of Indian education programs to Indian people – with one very important and debilitating proviso – that it cost no more than the existing provisions for Indian education through DIAND (Indian Education, 1981). As the primary goal for the education branch of DIAND, the transfer of control objective tended to work at cross purposes to the political economy of that branch. In effect, it had been given a mandate to work itself out of a job. As Darnell points out in the case of Alaskan aboriginal education (1084), such a mandate tends to

result in a view of the transfer of control as a "trend" rather than a definitive "event."

Many qualifiers are necessary if the Darnell argument is to be applied to the Canadian aboriginal arena. The most important will be dealt with in a separate section. Even a zealous and altruistic bureaucracy, if such an anomaly existed, cannot transfer control where the intended recipient does not currently possess the *capacity for control*. The form of control can, of course, always be granted on paper - but the reality is not so easily conveyed. The result of too much haste in transferring control can easily be not control, but its exact opposite, chaos. Some aboriginal communities, recognizing this danger, do not want immediate control of their schools (Paquette, 1986). Lastly, a confidence may exist among senior administrators in INAC that whatever the future of aboriginal education, a need will exist for continuity in the movement toward increased aboriginal control. To the extent that such administrators believe that their own professional futures are relatively secure, whatever the fate of their subordinates, they will be able to act in a facilitative rather than obstructive manner with regard to the transfer issue.

Despite these qualifiers, however, only the rashest of analysts would underestimate or dismiss the role and magnitude of the political economy of incumbent organizations in the aboriginal education arena. In particular, Darnell's caution about the wisdom of charging an organization with responsibility for transferring its own mandate and power to another group must be given careful consideration.⁴⁹

At the same time that the transfer process generally subsumed under the banner of "devolution" proceeds by fits and starts across the country, another trend is evident in many regions and areas - a rapidly evolving centralization of educational policy and program. In an arena historically characterised by inconsistency and crisis-management, a sudden drive for consistency and long-range planning in aboriginal education is evident in the INAC regional offices and in some provincial Ministries. From one point of view, such a tendency is

a laudable, if belated, response to the long-standing demand of Native people for substantial improvement in the quality of education available to their children. Any transition to enhanced aboriginal control should seek to preserve and nurture the more appropriate and deserving improvements accomplished by this round of centralization.

From another perspective, however, such a last minute rush to put the policy house of current aboriginal education structures in order can be viewed as a final effort to create dependency on those structures. The degree to which such efforts occur in the absence of consultation with affected Native people is an important clue to the appropriateness of such a perspective on recent central policy moves in aboriginal education. What is increasingly certain is that such unilateral policy moves, whether their focus is on a specific curriculum program, special education, finance or any other aspect of aboriginal education, are becoming progressively less palatable to Native people. Non-endorsement by Native people is the increasingly inevitable fate of educational policies planned *for* them, rather than *with* and *by* them.

As incumbent aboriginal education organizations (with the exception of the recent radical decentralization of aboriginal education in the Northwest Territories) draw together at the centre, individual aboriginal bands, boards and districts have been coalescing into units sufficiently large to command greater resources and a broader constituency from which to negotiate. This tendency is national in scope and results, at least in part, from a growing recognition of the limitations on control inherent in the nature and situation of very small jurisdictions. The foci of coalescence vary from place to place - in a few places (such as Manitoba) a provincial Education Association, in many places tribal councils, occasionally a regional school board, in one case a Native Education Council. The degree to which local committees or authorities delegate functions and power to such umbrella organizations also varies considerably. The basic trend, however, is quite clear. The proposition that in numbers there is strength - and an enhanced potential for control - is a major assumption underpinning

the behaviour of aboriginal education governance bodies
in Canada today.

3 SELF-GOVERNANCE IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION: ISSUES AND DIRECTIONS

A necessary prelude to any consideration and evaluation of available policy options in Canadian aboriginal education is a review of some of the major outstanding issues in that arena, and the directions with regard to those issues implied by the *status quo*. The present chapter is an effort to provide such a review in a compact and readable format.

3.1. The Resource Question: A Final View

The major problems as well as the central dilemma of aboriginal education finance have already been discussed. A chaotic history of *ad hoc* funding commitments eventually led to the creation of the INAC data-base which, in turn, has been much maligned by Native organizations, especially Band Authorities, as leading to an unreasonably inflexible funding arrangement. The exact basis for translating data-base figures into capital and operating allocations is complex (Charles, 1981), but appears to emphasize equality in per-pupil expenditure provisions. The only exceptions tend to be in the case of teachers' salaries, where isolated-post allowances compensate teachers in areas with unusually high living costs. Recent cutbacks in INAC budgetary allocations from Treasury Board have impacted heavily on those

educational programs whose funding was partially or mainly discretionary. Hardest hit have been adult education and training programs.

The central dilemma of aboriginal education finance transcends governance forms. In the matter of the externality and remoteness of their immediate funding source, a dubious equality generally exists among all aboriginal peoples in Canada. Most aboriginal education programs in Canada derive all of their capital and operating revenues (with the proportionally inconsequential though symbolically important exception of fund-raising revenues) from one of the senior governments. This fact raises grave questions about the long-term prospects for substantive self-governance both in education and in other sectors.

The difficulty posed by the complete fiscal dependency of aboriginal education governance bodies (and potentially by Native governments as well) has not, of course, gone unnoticed either by aboriginal people or government. The Penner Commission proposed two solutions to this inevitable constraint, one a short-term solution and one long-term. The short-term solution was the payment of block grants to Native governments *deemed accountable to their people* (Penner, 1983). The long-term solution was the "resourcing" of Native governments through transfer of appropriate resource bases to Native jurisdiction. The same methods could be used to fund education in conjunction with varying degrees of self-government in any given geographical area.

The resourcing of Native self-government as proposed in the long-range recommendation of the Penner Commission has much to recommend itself. It also has much in it to ensure the stiffest possible opposition from local non-Native government, and from many resource-extraction industries. Above all, however, the Penner resourcing vision is a long-range solution; just how long-range may have been only dimly appreciated by its architects. A resource base is not the same as a revenue base. For an economic infrastructure to develop, that would yield revenues adequate for the assumption of a significant part of the cost of aboriginal

education by aboriginal governments or educational jurisdictions, could easily take a generation - even in those areas where revenue-generating resources exist. The Penner formula offers no relief from the external resourcing problem in aboriginal education (or general governance) for the foreseeable future.

3.2. On Integration and Organizational Relationships: Clarifying Mandates

Unclear and overlapping mandates are the bane of organizations, especially governments, everywhere. Nowhere in Canadian education does this ambiguity appear to have more far-reaching effects than in the aboriginal arena. In part, the problem emanates from the quickening pace of devolution of control to Native governance bodies. The problem, however, is much larger than control/transfer-related issues. Lack of certainty about the nature of the current division of labour in aboriginal education exists both in regard to the respective mandates of Native and non-Native organizations involved, and in regard to the respective mandates of different organizations of each type. In the crucial area of Native language, as already noted, the "whose-mandate" game involves INAC, local education authorities, Native umbrella organizations, cultural centres, and occasionally even Native communication media. All of these may have a legitimate role to play.⁵⁰ Typically, however, the results of a lack of integrated planning in any policy arena are waste, inefficiency, failure to achieve agreed-upon goals, failure to clarify and mutually understand common goals, excessive concern with territoriality and, not infrequently, mutual suspicion and paranoia. Competition can easily overwhelm and even displace cooperation.

The relationship between aboriginal jurisdictions and the provinces in the area of accreditation are another long-standing focal point for the "whose-mandate" game. The widespread duality of primary educational goals in aboriginal education examined in Chapter 2 (i.e., the tension between Native and non-Native curriculum content) has led to inconsistency on the part of INAC and Native groups in their view of the proper role of the

provinces in on-reserve education. Declarations of independence from provincial curricula and standards have tended to alternate with insistence on provincial accreditation. As more communities have come to operate their own secondary units and as credentialling has become a general concern in even the remotest areas of the country, the focus has tended to shift more consistently in the direction of provincial accreditation with the adherence to provincial standards that such accreditation implies. The provincial Ministries, for their part, have been uncertain of their role, mandate and statutory authority in on-reserve education.

Space allowing, many more examples of confused and overlapping mandates could be provided. The point, however, is not to amass examples but to assess impacts. In any policy arena, the major actors have a need to know "the rules of the game." As a bare minimum, such actors can be counted on to insist that a clear description be available of how decisions *are supposed to be made*, even though everyone may realize that the real decision-making process is quite different from the formally acknowledged one. What is intolerable is the absence of any definite rules to the decision-making game.⁵¹ Currently great uncertainty exists about the decision-making rules in Canadian aboriginal education. A substantial reduction of this uncertainty will be necessary if energies currently devoted to disputing and clarifying mandates - and second-guessing decisions viewed as unilateral - are to be rechannelled into productive cooperation.

The experiments to date with local control in Canadian aboriginal education highlight the inevitable tradeoffs between the separation and integration of education and other areas of governance at the local level. No simple answer is available to the question of whether educational governance bodies folded into the general local governance structure (such as the Local Education Authorities in England) are preferable to bodies essentially separate from general local government (as is the case with the relationship between school boards and municipal governments in Canada and the United States). What is certain is that the issue is a potentially

troublesome one in aboriginal education. Some bands, for instance, have readily transferred budgetary and policy control of education to their Education Authorities. Others have been reluctant even to allow the Authorities access to the band education budget. While the exact pattern of separation and integration of educational and general local government is probably best decided at the local level, the decision should be made in an awareness of the tradeoffs involved. A Band Council, for instance, most of whose energies are consumed by economic development policy concerns, cannot attend wisely to the minutiae of educational policy and planning. Equally, a Band Authority with *no* control of its own budget is hamstrung in its efforts to improve educational practice. Nonetheless, the advantages of close liaison between education and social and economic planning are self-evident.

3.3. Equity, Centrism and Aboriginal Control

It remains to formalize and clarify the preliminary discussion of equity in Chapter 1, to examine the potential impact of the tradition of parliamentary fiscal accountability on aboriginal control, and to assess the merits for changing the face of central control in aboriginal education, before looking at the issue of capacity to control. These topics, in turn, lay the foundation for the examination of policy options that is the main business of Chapter 4.

3.3.1. The Two Dimensions of Equity

Equity in educational finance is a two-dimensional affair. On the one hand, various processes of fiscal equalization have been devised to ensure greater equality in per-pupil spending across jurisdictions. These measures typically form the core of provincial and state educational grant plans. These "horizontal equity" fiscal instruments of the policy of equalizing educational opportunity across differences in local wealth and spending capacity seek to *treat assumed equals equally*, the classic definition of horizontal equity. The development of the INAC data-base was predicated on the need to treat Indian and Inuit students more equally in per-pupil spending, and

it is no surprise that that a fairly rigid equality in per-pupil spending power has been its consequence.

"Expenditure equity" (Williams, 1980), however, is at best a proxy for equality of educational program and outputs. The focus of educational finance plans on expenditure equity is a direct result of the lack of agreement about quantifying educational outputs. Lacking consensus on measuring outputs, the architects of educational finance plans are left with trying to equalize inputs. Equalizing expenditures, however, does not necessarily equalize either outputs or inputs. Costs and needs vary across jurisdictions. The same level of per-pupil spending will buy less educational inputs in some jurisdictions than in others. Some jurisdictions, moreover, will require a much greater per-pupil financial investment than others to achieve educational results comparable to neighboring jurisdictions whose socio-economic environment may be more congruent with and supportive of formal education. Schools and jurisdictions are not, in the last analysis, equal.

Recognition of inequalities in cost and need among jurisdictions has led most provincial and state education authorities in North America to superimpose "vertical equity" measures on the overall equalizing thrust of their educational grant plans. Vertical equity components of grant plans seek to encourage, rather than reduce differential spending *for certain types of students and programs, and in respect of certain geographic and socio-economic variables*. They seek, in terms of the traditional definition of vertical equity, to *treat presumed unequals unequally*. Obviously the desire to encourage differentials in spending power on the one hand (equalization), and discourage them on the other (adjustments in respect of vertical equity), creates tensions and trade-offs in educational grants policies. Both dimensions of equity, however, are real, and the failure of a grant plan to address both inevitably works against equality of educational opportunity, a central educational policy objective of virtually all provincial and state authorities.

The greatest technical weakness in the INAC funding of aboriginal education has been its manifest lack of

provision for differences in cost and need among the jurisdictions whose educational programs it supports. The cost of and need for educational goods and services, for instance, at Six Nations are manifestly different from the costs of equivalent goods and services in Fort Severn. Yet, with the exception of the incrementation of teachers' salaries by the isolated-post allowance, little recognition of such differential costs and need has existed in the INAC funding. Predictably Band Authorities have come to rail against the "inflexibility" of INAC funding criteria.

Even as this paper was in preparation, INAC has begun releasing a new "Draft Formula Funding" proposal through its regional offices. This proposal is a departure in several important respects from the previous INAC funding of elementary and secondary programs. First, it sets forth in clear and unmistakable terms, the criteria by which data-base statistics are to be translated into educational revenues for Band Authorities. Second, and equally significantly, it provides definite vertical-equity adjustments for a variety of cost and need factors. In essence INAC, in response to the recommendations of a consultant's report prepared by Low-Keen and Associates, has copied, with minor alterations, the grant-weighting factor scheme of the Ontario grant plan, and superimposed it on a fully-funded adaptation (all funding from central source) of the same grant plan in the ordinary (regularly recurring expenditures common to all boards of education - principally operating costs) and extraordinary (expenditures which tend to vary greatly with time and among boards - principally capital and transportation costs) expenditure categories (INAC, 1986).

Although the proposed (and soon to be implemented) INAC grant plan is a giant stride forward in its ability to address vertical equity concerns, several shortcomings are evident. The draft has all the earmarks of a document prepared in great haste, and mimics certain aspects of the Ontario grant-weighting factor scheme which seem, at best, inappropriate (e.g., the nature and criteria of the "cultural factor"), and at worst, potential sources of unnecessary controversy. The failure to

differentiate between the nature and type of Native-language programs (i.e., core and immersion second-language versus first-language) is remarkable as well, given the now long-standing distinctions in such program types in the Ontario General Legislative Grant provisions for French language programs. Failure to differentiate among the needs and costs of different types of Native-language programs may invite criticism about the commitment to them embodied in the new proposal. Above all, the document was apparently produced unilaterally by INAC, and thus invites the non-endorsement which so many of its recent policy initiatives have suffered. A potentially useful (though not unflawed) innovation may again be discredited by process rather than substance.

Throughout the aboriginal education arena, there is need for closer attention both to special needs and costs which distinguish aboriginal education from public education, and to needs and costs which differ among aboriginal education jurisdictions. While complete program funding or even a resource-cost-model approach are likely to prove expensive and unmanageable, given the scale and diversity of aboriginal education in Canada, something more empirical than juggling computer simulations of proposed grant-weighting factor schemes seems necessary. Ultimately, some form of educational cost index needs to be created to guide the development of vertical-equity measures, whatever form they may take. Although values and beliefs will undeniably continue to dominate the final shape of such measures, the judgements which they represent would then at least be supported by hard data about costs and needs.

3.3.2. Of Unaccountable Block Grants and Equity: The Inevitability of Allocation

The Penner Commission proposed, as a short-term solution to the external-funding dilemma in Native self-governance, block grants to Native governments. The accountability mechanism suggested by the Commission was a statutory provision for determining the accountability to *their people* of Native governments. Parliament would thus be left with the task of drafting

legislation, under which regulations could be created that determined whether or not a Native government was sufficiently "accountable to its people" to be funded. Aside from the arguable impossibility of designing effective measures to carry out such an evaluation, there exists the obvious possibility - perhaps the necessity - of manipulating the definition of a Native-government's responsibility to its constituents in such a way that the definition would become a proxy for direct budget approval and audit. The end of such an attempt to recast the form of parliamentary fiscal accountability would appear to be deep mutual frustration, mistrust, and perhaps confrontation.

Some hard facts greet the would-be architect of meaningful change in aboriginal educational (and general) governance. None is harder than the strength of the tradition of parliamentary accountability for funds appropriated. At a time when the federal government has, even prior to the accession of the current government, been trying to extricate itself from the lack of provincial accountability for transfers under the EPF arrangement, there can be little likelihood of political feasibility in any plan which seeks to deny some measure of parliamentary control over the funds it appropriates. This is true absolutely - without respect to the merits of any moral, legal or historical arguments for so doing. To insist that Parliament (or the provincial legislatures) do what is politically unfeasible is to persevere in counterproductive and wasteful efforts to promote the impossible or to invite novel and clandestine - if not surreptitious and capricious - accountability mechanisms. Such a stance does not advance the cause of either aboriginal self-governance, or quality social programs for aboriginal peoples.

Scarcity of available resources make inevitable the necessity of a process for allocating and distributing such resources. By whatever means, prioritization must be accomplished and will inexorably ensure that some perceived needs are met while others are left partially or completely in abeyance. Throughout the process of prioritizing competing needs, governments are generally guided by the need to preserve an overall equity (both

horizontal and vertical) in the provision of publicly-funded services. Too much (or too little) government largess in any one social service sector, region or riding, provokes charges of mismanagement.

The proposition of unaccountable block grants to aboriginal governments, then, ultimately fails the test of political feasibility. Allocation and distribution decisions must be made, and Parliament (and, to the extent of their involvement, the provincial legislatures) will insist upon some say in the process and substance of those decisions, as well as upon the right to reasonable scrutiny of expenditures. It is ultimately impossible to separate completely resourcing and control.

3.3.3. An Aboriginal Voice in Central Policy and Allocation

The sober *realpolitik* of the preceding section should not be taken as either an endorsement of the *status quo*, or an abandonment of the principle of aboriginal self-governance. On the contrary, it is precisely because this paper aspires to make a *useful* contribution to the evolution of aboriginal self-governance in education that the political realities discussed in this section have been stated in unequivocal terms. The principle of parliamentary accountability, while a cornerstone consideration in any real-world moves toward aboriginal self-governance, does not mean that Parliament ought to or would dictate the details of either the process or substance of aboriginal fiscal and general policy. It would, to be sure, take an active interest, expect to be adequately represented in the process, and – let us be honest about it – have the final responsibility for global budgetary approval.⁵²

What this state of affairs suggests strongly is the need for compromise. Aboriginal self-governance in education (and in other sectors) cannot, in practical terms, mean total independence. It can, however, mean a very much enhanced role in the allocational and distributional decisions which shape aboriginal education (and, by extension, those which shape other social programs as well). Only the politically obtuse would suggest that the present lack of an aboriginal voice in

central policy-making that affects them has worked in the best interest of Native people and the Canadian commonweal. Much political legitimacy and feasibility exist, I believe, to buttress the concept of a stronger aboriginal voice in central policy-making bearing on aboriginal issues.

Some Possible Mechanisms

While a formal discussion of options in aboriginal education is reserved for the concluding chapter, the nature of an enhanced aboriginal voice in central policy-making deserves some clarification at this point. Much will, of course, depend on the course of general self-governance negotiations. If viable, coherent and broadly constituted aboriginal self-government mechanisms emerge at the regional and especially the national level, much greater latitude can be expected in the fiscal and policy functions Parliament will entrust to them.⁵³ One mechanism, then, perhaps the ultimate and final mechanism for an aboriginal voice in central educational policy-making, is through an integrated and comprehensive self-government (within the overall limitations imposed by resource dependency - ideally a generally declining dependency).

Failing a comprehensive self-government accord, a more sector-specific national aboriginal education policy body could be created to ensure an ongoing and active aboriginal voice in the development of fiscal and general policy instruments in that arena. Such a body would *not* be an advisory body, but would be responsible for developing budgetary procedures and setting policy. Obviously its decisions would be subject to the approval of Treasury Board in the same way that INAC policies are currently, but the plans and policies submitted would bear the imprint of strong Native input in a forum where policies would not proceed without their approval. In this way mandatory and efficacious consultation would occur at the highest policy-making level, and the legacy of "non-endorsement" in aboriginal education policy could potentially be reversed. Such a body would eventually subsume and redesign the operations of INAC according to its own sense of mandate.

A less ambitious modification of the *status quo* would be to create an National Aboriginal Education Directorate, perhaps under the auspices of a federal Indian Education Act. Such a Directorate would again participate in the development of fiscal and general policy, but would do so within the context of a federal department structure. As a less radical departure from current central government practice, this proposal would have both the advantages and liabilities of greater continuity with present practice. If properly constituted, however, it could provide a much enhanced aboriginal voice "at the centre".⁵⁴

Dangers and Opportunities

The greatest danger, from the aboriginal perspective, in proceeding with sector-specific self-governance proposals in education - whether at the local, regional or national level - is the danger of compromising the impetus for a comprehensive self-government accord. If bits and pieces of the self-governance puzzle are put together in the absence of any idea of what the overall pattern might look like, the puzzle may never be completed. On the other hand, the experience of the past First Ministers' Conferences in their quest for a global "accord," and the current emphasis on "bottom-up" negotiations, argue the wisdom of partial solutions where comprehensive ones may not be immediately attainable.

The argument against sector-specific self-governance arrangements in education, that it adversely prejudices the attempts to find a global solution, can easily be turned on end. Successful resolution of the outstanding issues in aboriginal education, which results in substantive improvements in the degree of control exercised by Native people over their education, can as easily be a model and harbinger of future improvement in general self-governance as a hinderance to them.

Two propositions can be advanced, moreover, to support the case for aboriginal participation in central educational decision-making which affects them. First, such central policy-making will neither disappear by some act of political will, nor wither away as long as funding

for aboriginal education continues to flow from central non-Native governments.

Second, the possibility for effecting global reform and positive change is greatest when the aboriginal voice is not diluted by filtration through a many-tiered bureaucratic structure.

Such a central voice in aboriginal education policy will not be without its problems, not the least of which will be determining who will represent aboriginal peoples in such a body. Confronting and overcoming these problems is far preferable, however, to the *status quo* of absentee governance by administrative fiat. At the national as well as the local level, an effective voice is needed for those whose children are directly and deeply touched by aboriginal education policy decisions. The outcomes of such multi-level participation can be those envisioned over a decade ago in Indian Control - enhanced self-image, improved learning, pride and satisfaction in the aboriginal heritage.

3.4. Form and Function: A Final Word on Control and the Capacity to Control

Control cannot be devolved or delegated in the absence of the capacity to control on the part of the would-be recipient. Control of education, while it may well be an authentic, generally surviving sovereign right of Canadian aboriginals, is very different in contemporary Canada from what it was when education was the prerogative and duty of the extended family. Controlling education today involves budgeting and policy-making across the convoluted complexity of multi-level educational governance structures, which interact in countless and difficult-to-predict ways with their physical and organizational environments. There is, in the end, no escape from this complexity.

There exists, however, the possibility of avoiding chaos, of answering the "what," "why" and "how" questions of aboriginal education policy satisfactorily - if Native people can develop the capacity to control effectively. Specifically, practical help as well as structured learning opportunities are urgently needed to assist aboriginal people in developing the ability to

understand and deal with educational budgets, in developing and analysing policy options, and in sponsoring effective curriculum-development and instructional-improvement programs. While rapid development in such skills is desirable if the present opportunities for improved aboriginal control are not to be wasted on a functionless form, even relatively modest gains in the policy and financial acumen of members of aboriginal education governance bodies can yield significant dividends in their ability to influence the educational programs in their schools.

The most promising means for improving aboriginal "trustees'" capacity to control are on-the-job training, and relevant, easy-to-understand inservice programs. On-the-job training, however, will be on-the-job frustration unless the services of someone trained in educational finance and policy is available to work with an aboriginal jurisdiction. The practice of hiring a local "director of education" (in most cases a misnomer for secretary/treasurer) to assist a local authority in understanding its budget and making it an instrument of educational policy should be encouraged and extended. Unfortunately, however, the practice is only as good as the expertise (and ability to understand and relate to Native trustees) of the persons available to act in such a capacity. Because such a combination of skill, affect and understanding is rare, it may be advisable for the most highly qualified and capable of such persons to work with umbrella groups rather than individual communities, so as to effect a more general improvement in the policy capacities of aboriginal jurisdictions. Inservice opportunities for aboriginal trustees and their administrative employees can come in many forms. One inservice forum deserving of encouragement in the field of educational administration are the educational "Institutes" that have been sponsored under INAC discretionary funding and accredited by provincial universities. Another is distance-education, especially high-impact video-tapes on specific procedural and substantive concerns widely shared by representatives serving on aboriginal governance bodies.

As noted in Chapter 2, the justification for separate governance forms turns, to some extent, on distinctive programming. In any case, aboriginal education authorities are generally confronted with a pressing need for overall instructional improvement in their schools. Few aboriginal authorities, in short, will escape pressure to engage in curriculum development and implementation activities. The lesson of the literature in respect to school-improvement is one of great relevance to aboriginal education. Only those authorities that succeed in catalyzing a cooperative, constructive engagement of their staffs in curriculum activities are likely to see much change and improvement as a result. Especially in education, control is cooperation with a purpose - not domination. The need is crucial for information generated by the implementation and instructional-improvement literatures to *reach* aboriginal trustees, at least in its distilled essence, lest rash change efforts - or no change efforts - lead to widespread despair about the feasibility of aboriginal control.

4 OPTIONS AND CHOICES: MAKING THE REAL-WORLD TRADE-OFFS

The complexity of the Canadian aboriginal policy arena suggests the need for both clarification and caution. In proposing and analysing policy options in the midst of such complexity, I have been guided by a number of assumptions about the desirability of various policy directions. Among the most important of these assumptions are the following:

- a. Resources are scarce and must be used wisely;
- b. Smaller units of organization free to pursue their own service-delivery arrangements are, other things being equal, more efficient than large centralized bureaucracies (Warren, 1964);
- c. In education, units of organization are desirable whose size allows them to be sensitive to local needs and preferences, but also to command sufficient program and supervisory resources for quality educational programming;
- d. Some degree of central control is implied by central fiscal allocation planning, and is

inevitable in any educational arena where equity and quality are important goals;

e. Any successful arrangements for aboriginal governance in education (as well as in the wider self-government arena) must be perceived by both Native and non-Native political leaders as legitimate, feasible and likely to garner (or at least not diminish) their respective political support (Hall *et al.*, 1975); and

f. Governments have an inherent preference for modest incremental change and that preference can only be overridden by a perception of crisis or of extraordinary opportunity (Sharkansky, 1970).

Within the framework of caution, then, urged by such considerations, I have sought to be innovative and within reason, provocative. The proposals advanced here are not a complete blueprint for policy change in aboriginal education in Canada. They are not intended to be so. Rather they are offered as suggestive directional indicators, whose ultimate combination and shape must be determined by the interaction and negotiation of the parties concerned.

4.1. The National Level

The scale of Canadian aboriginal education, along with the precedent of federal involvement in education for status-Indians and Inuit, suggest strongly a continuing federal presence in that arena. The transfer of responsibility for the education of these groups to the provinces was explicitly rejected by Native people in the aftermath of the 1969 White Paper on Indian Affairs. While individual cases of service purchase from provincial authorities will undoubtedly continue in a variety of forms and at many different levels, abandonment by the federal government of its direct role in the resource provision of Indian and Inuit education would be regarded as unjust, unilateral termination of the special relationship of the federal government with Native people.

recognized under the Indian Act, in treaties, and in the Constitution Act, 1867 (section 91.24). A self-evident corollary of this perception, on the part of Native people, is that some means of allocating and distributing funds in support of such education will continue to exist *at the national level* under any governance arrangement viewed as legitimate by such aboriginal people. Only Native governments with an internal revenue base capable of supporting all the costs of their educational programs could ultimately stand aloof from the inevitable accountability implied in central financing.

The inevitability of some measure of central federal control argues the wisdom of developing – within the limitations imposed by the federal government's sense of representational legitimacy – a strong aboriginal voice in central fiscal decision-making with regard to aboriginal education. This can be accomplished to varying degrees in several ways, some of which are relatively minor departures from the structural *status quo*, and some of which tend toward comprehensive self-government and could provide the fiscal structure for educational-service arms of Native governments.

4.1.1. Incremental Adjustments to the Status Quo

If it were to become apparent that only a relatively limited scope for mutual accommodation exists among Native and non-Native leaders in regard to the radical restructuring of central policy and planning in aboriginal education, then the only possible course is some measure of restructuring the present service-delivery apparatus. While far short of the self-government mark, such an approach to enhancing the aboriginal voice in senior educational policy-making is arguably better than the minimal – often merely nominal – control available when aboriginal people have a voice only at the local level. *In exclusively local control, the impact of Native policy priorities is inevitably filtered either through a multi-tiered bureaucracy or through the general political arena.*

Option 1:⁵⁶

A National Aboriginal Education Policy and Planning Board could be created, composed of joint representation from Native governments and the federal government of Canada, which would be responsible for charting the global policies of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada as it pursues the goal of devolution along the current lines.

While a limited form of self-governance in education, such a structure would have two very considerable advantages aside from an ongoing aboriginal voice at the senior policy level. First and foremost, it would establish a body separate from the INAC administrative hierarchy responsible for creating a policy framework facilitating meaningful transfer of control over aboriginal education to Native people. It would thus avoid the anomaly which Darnell (1974) noted in regard to Native education in Alaska, of a bureaucracy being charged with managing the transfer of its own power and mandate to another group. Second, and equally important, it would provide a policy forum which *requires* cooperation among divergent aboriginal groups to hammer out a mutually agreeable general policy framework, within which regional and local policy trade-offs can be made.

Over time, in a measured and incremental way, such an arrangement could work to reshape the form and function of aboriginal education in Canada. It would do so much less quickly than more radical measures, but has the advantage which continuity of process offers. A primary concern in any modification of aboriginal education governance at the macro-level must be that the final policy outputs and impacts of such revision result in even greater inequities in educational opportunity among aboriginal groups, and between aboriginal groups and the general population. However unsatisfactory the *status quo* may be, some progress has been made in equalizing those educational opportunities, and the possibility exists that radical measures can result in the loss or erosion of what has been gained. The

the value of continuity in a volatile and rapidly changing arena should not be dismissed out of hand.

Option 2:

An Aboriginal Education Act could be enacted, which would spell out in statute much more clearly than the current collage of Indian Act provisions, program circulars, memos, and Treasury Board Minutes, the basis and structure of aboriginal education in Canada.

In effect, such legislation would tend to partition off the education function of INAC from its other functions. Accordingly, it would clarify mandates and relationships. Such legislation could, if desired, incorporate a senior policy and planning directorate with aboriginal representation. A significant advantage of such a statutory clarification of the mandate of aboriginal education is that it might raise the profile and priority of education in the overall mix of policy decisions affecting aboriginal peoples.

In theory such legislation could, depending on its formulation, support widely differing degrees of aboriginal participation and control. An Aboriginal Education Act could be so crafted as to transfer virtually all functions (except the most basic central fiscal allocation and distribution decisions) to aboriginal governments, should these materialize in the course of the constitutional negotiations. At the other extreme, such an Act might do little more than freeze the *status quo* in statute.

Despite the manifest advantages of legislation which spells out the basic "rules of the game" in aboriginal education policy, such legislation would have severe problems being accepted as legitimate by aboriginal peoples, unless it was the product of a mutually agreeable consultation process. The very possibility of such a consultation process, aside from its technical problems, raises the prior question of the proper relationship of Native governments with the government of Canada, specifically the issue of statutory

representation of aboriginal peoples within the Canadian government itself.

Nonetheless, specific federal legislation spelling out the form of global governance in aboriginal education is much to recommend itself. It would change the tenuous basis on which many programs (e.g., adult education programs) are funded and maintained from year-to-year. An Aboriginal Education Act would make explicit the relationships between those involved in aboriginal education, and could provide the clarity required to obtain provincial endorsement for constitutional entrenchment of an aboriginal education right.

4.1.2. Enhanced Provincial Participation

Option 3:

Some or all of the responsibility for the provision of educational services for status aboriginals, currently receiving such services directly through INAC or Band Education Authorities, could be integrated into provincial governance arrangements.

Unilateral abrogation by the federal government of special trust relationship with aboriginal peoples has been explicitly rejected by Native people (National Indian Council 1973). However, the distinction between *funding* and *providing* a public service is an important one, and the federal government can honour its traditional commitment to aboriginal education in ways other than by direct involvement in the provision of services. The existing blanket agreements with the provinces of Manitoba, New Brunswick and British Columbia (as well as current funding arrangements with the Yukon and Northwest Territories) in respect of the provision of educational services for status-Indians provide ample precedent for this approach. In this solution, the problem of effective aboriginal voice in central policy-making is largely transposed to the provincial level. Local and Native governance bodies would be recognized un-

general or special provisions of provincial legislation governing education.

The advantages of such an approach are especially great if parity with provincial standards is deemed to be the dominant educational goal. In such a case, integration into the provincial system offers, in theory, access to more diverse and comprehensive program support and evaluation resources, than can be hoped for in Native jurisdictions whose combined enrolments are small by provincial standards. The counterargument can be made, however, that after years of restraint and retrenchment, those resources are typically overcommitted. Careful bargaining and an effective auditing mechanism would be necessary to ensure that federal monies directed into aboriginal program support, through provincial Ministries and boards (whether "public" or "Native" in composition), did in fact support educational programs for aboriginal peoples. Finally, it should be noted that transfer of the form of aboriginal educational governance into the provincial arena does not preclude the possibility that regional Native governments could operate their own school systems. Special enabling legislation could be designed to recognize the education arms of such governments under provincial statute. The decision to enhance the provincial role in education for status-Indian people would seem ultimately to turn on the strength of the desire of those people for distinctive governance forms in education. Ultimately, as previously noted, distinctive governance forms must justify their existence on the basis of distinctive programs. To the extent, therefore, that distinctiveness in program is a goal, participation in the provincial education mosaic may be less desirable than separate governance arrangements. To the extent, however, that parity is a goal (and is interpreted as meaning "sameness of program"), such participation may have much to recommend itself. Participation in provincial governance, however, is by no means an automatic "cure" for those Native people who want educational programs very similar to those in the larger provincial systems. The educational standards in "isolate" schools run by the provinces but serving mainly Native people suggest that provincialisation will

not, in and of itself, cure the endemic problems aboriginal education.

The limited history of special provisions for Metis and non-status Indian education has been one of provincial rather than federal involvement. It is by no means clear that all of the parties to the constitutional negotiations would like that pattern changed. It seems likely that *direct* federal participation in Metis and non-status Indian education might pose serious questions of legitimacy and political supportability for federal parliamentary action. Metis and non-status Indian education, therefore, must remain within the purview of the education mandate accorded to the provinces under section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 (specific recognition of Metis and non-status Indian self-governance and educational governance arrangements in provincial statute offers the same potential advantages as a federal Indian Education Act). Should agreement be reached, of course, between the Metis, non-status Indians and the federal government in regard to a federal role in the education of Metis and non-status Indian children, these aboriginal groups could be incorporated into any of the governance and financing arrangements suggested here and in the following sections. Even if, however, the governance of education for Metis and non-status Indians remains within provincial jurisdiction, there is room not only for special program support from the federal government (as currently occurs in the funding arrangement for certain programs run by the Gabriel Dumont Institute), but also for enhancement in the level of autonomy available to Metis and non-status Indian communities in the area of education. Should the transfer of some or all of the responsibility for *the provision* of educational services for status Indians to the provinces occur, natural cooperative links between status Indian and other aboriginal education governance bodies might be significantly strengthened.

4.1.3. An Aboriginal Education Confederation

Option 4:

An Aboriginal Education Confederation could be established, which would provide a general policy and fiscal framework within which diverse aboriginal education jurisdictions would operate.

The emphasis in this option is on diversity, and on the ability to provide differing degrees of support and direction for different types of jurisdictions. Above all, this option embraces the permanence of diversity in the aboriginal education arena. It assumes that some areas may continue to want a relatively strong central presence in the provision of support services for their educational programs, while others will want none at all. As in the other options, a central policy body would be necessary to deal with fundamental allocation and distributional questions. An aboriginal voice would likewise be an indispensable, if difficult to agree upon, component of this central policy and planning body. Because of the acceptance of diversity in governance arrangements as a permanent reality in aboriginal education, such an arrangement would be much more tolerant of differences in philosophy and policy among jurisdictions participating in the confederacy. If flexibility and the accommodation of diversity are strengths of such a proposal, then a potentially disruptive breach of continuity with present governance patterns is a definite pitfall to be avoided, as is the danger of compromising the accountability role which will inevitably be visited upon any such body.

If for no other reason than the relative novelty of a confederation of aboriginal education jurisdictions, the plan would seem to offer considerable potential for a fresh start and a fair hearing for the voice of aboriginal people in charting their own educational destiny. Its very flexibility would facilitate the accommodation of any and all levels and forms of Native self-government, as well as regional and national trends in such self-government arrangements. A confederation scheme, however, lacks the comfort and continuity of incremental

change. It takes the whole process of aboriginal education into uncharted, though potentially attractive territory. Ultimately, the perceived legitimacy, feasibility and political acceptability of such an intentional destructuring of aboriginal education will, in the case of the federal government, depend upon a sense of crisis or opportunity. In no case will such a proposal be entertained seriously if it appears likely to reduce efficiency or to increase unreasonably the per-pupil cost of educating aboriginal students. Much will depend here as in the other options, upon beliefs about economies of scale and the efficiencies or inefficiencies of centralization.

4.1.4. Some Financial Options

Option 5:

A general and consistent program of educational grants in support of aboriginal education could be instituted that would more adequately address the equity issues in aboriginal education.

Despite recent improvements in the horizontal-equity dimension of aboriginal education finance made possible by a computerized data-base, the current mode of allocating funds for aboriginal education used by INAC pays little attention to the vertical-equity dimension that is, to the need for differential funding to reflect differences in cost and need among jurisdictions. The only recognition is in the form of isolated-post allowances which are applicable only to teachers' salaries.

A draft formula-funding arrangement has recently been proposed by INAC which would institute a system of grant-weighting factors similar to those currently in use in Ontario. While this arrangement would be a significant improvement in addressing differential needs and costs with differential funding, it is decidedly an INAC product, not a collegial effort of the federal government and Native people. As noted earlier, the importance of consultation, of *an active voice in the determination of educational policy affecting them*, is s

great for aboriginal people that it is doubtful that even the most meritorious policy instrument arrived at without the involvement of Native people will be endorsed by them. More specifically, the current draft proposal is obviously a quickly prepared replica of the vertical-equity provisions of the Ontario General Legislative Grants, a replica which has some curious inclusions and omissions. Only analysis and consultation can fit it to the cost and need realities of the aboriginal arena.

Option 6:

An Aboriginal Education Enrichment and Improvement Matching-Grant program could be used to spur local investment, and a sense of direct ownership, in the educational process.

One component of the allocation of funds for aboriginal education could be a matching-grant program aimed at stimulating some degree of local investment in education. The "foundation" grant program, described in Option 5, would provide to all aboriginal jurisdictions a per-pupil amount for recognized educational programs deemed to provide sufficient funding for a basic quality education program. Under the basic and "universal" plan, actual per-pupil dollar amounts would be adjusted by vertical-equity adjustments for special needs and costs. Thus, the basic structure of a fully-funded finance plan would be provided.

Such a plan, however, does nothing to stimulate local investment in education, and perpetuates the basic conundrum of exclusively external resourcing in aboriginal education. Under the Enrichment and Improvement Matching-Grant program proposal, local education authorities that collected some funds (either by subscription or levy) for approved (or locally initiated and unapproved) educational programs could have those funds matched at an attractive rate by additional grant monies in support of enriched, approved programs. Basically, Native jurisdictions would be given an

incentive to invest in the improvement of the educational programs.

Such matching grants could be structured in various ways, which answer in varying degrees the obvious charge that such a program tends to promote inequities in spending power (i.e., "wealthy" jurisdictions - a few reserves are, after all, relatively wealthy - could attract such matching funds more easily than the more numerous "poor" jurisdictions), and unfairly withholds some funds from general allocation to educational purposes for all jurisdictions. In its simplest, and perhaps least defensible form, such a grant would be an unqualified proportional matching grant, in which each dollar collected at the local level would be eligible for a certain amount in matching grant. This arrangement would probably result in the greatest growth in inequity among the "haves" and "have-nots" of the aboriginal educational world, but would be very simple and inexpensive to administer.⁵⁷

Another procedure which would tend to equalize access to the benefits of such matching grants, would be to index the local contribution in such a scheme to some measure of ability to pay. Since real property ownership in the ordinary legal sense does not exist in reserves and is often difficult to assess in any aboriginal community, a property-value levy does not seem to be an appropriate base for collecting local contributions in a matching-grant arrangement. A poll tax, local sales tax, land or service-use tax are other possible, unlikely, sources of local revenue. A local subscription based on income might prove to be the least objectionable revenue source - though by no means the easiest to administer and enforce. Higher income communities would be expected and required to contribute a greater share to such joint Enrichment and Improvement programs than lower income communities. If jurisdiction A, for instance, had twice the per-capita average income of jurisdiction B, it might attract only one-half as much matching-grants per dollar of local contribution as jurisdiction B. A sliding-scale of matching grant proportions would insure progressivity in the local

contribution, and give poor communities a fair chance to compete for such enrichment dollars.

The Enrichment and Improvement Grant scheme proposed here offers a practical, if limited, answer to the problem of a lack of any sense of ownership in the educational process, insofar as that sense is related to the externality of aboriginal education funding.⁵⁸ It is flexible enough to be made as generous or parsimonious, as neutral or progressive, as desired. It is purely voluntary and does not infringe upon the right of an aboriginal jurisdiction to a funding level representative of a basic quality educational program. The difficulty of assembling and analysing income data is probably not as great as it might appear. In many aboriginal communities a large proportion of available jobs are, in any case, some form of band or community employment. In communities with a more diverse economic base and substantial regional employment opportunities, an identification of individuals within the jurisdiction of an aboriginal education authority would probably have to be included in, and centrally extracted from income tax forms. Despite the potential incremental expenses and administrative requirements of such a program, it does answer the need for providing a sense of local contribution to the education process in aboriginal jurisdictions where education is a sufficiently valued priority.⁵⁹ As such, a matching-grant program of the type described here might make a valuable contribution to a sense of direct ownership in the educational process by aboriginal people. It could apply equally to jurisdictions with or without comprehensive self-government.⁶⁰

Option 7:

The basic "foundation" plan could contain an equalizing mechanism that would require a local share from higher-income aboriginal communities.

Again, this is an attempt to create a sense of ownership in and stewardship for the educational enterprise among a wider cross-section of aboriginal people - not to

transfer surreptitiously part of the cost of a basic quality educational program back to aboriginal people in defiance of specific treaty rights or norms established by historical practice. The basic goal – stimulating a sense of ownership, not transferring the substantive costs of education to aboriginal people – will have to be kept clearly in mind in designing the technical details of an equalization mechanism in aboriginal education financing. In particular, *such a program must not be allowed to interfere with the right of all aboriginal children to basic quality education, regardless of the ability of the community or area to pay for such a program.*

Other things being equal, a sense of local and aboriginal ownership in the educational process would be enhanced by a local contribution to the financing of education. Where local income levels are such that a contribution to the funding of education does not impose undue hardship,⁶¹ substantial dividends in improved education quality may accrue to Native people themselves from their aboriginal share in the funding of education – even if it is proportionally much smaller than that provided at the local level in some provinces. In the case of Native governments which develop an internal revenue based equalization will, in any event, almost certainly become a part of the general social-service program funding package.

4.1.5. Research, Development and Dissemination

Option 8:

A National Institute for the Study of Aboriginal Education could be created, to ensure a much broader base of research into all aspects of Canadian aboriginal education and to facilitate the same type of sharing of research findings and program and material development that exists in the provincial public education arenas.

Whether it be bilingual-education research or research into educational policy and practice in aboriginal education – or any of a host of other potential research

foci - academically credible and practically useful inquiry in Canadian Native education is most notable for its paucity. Because of the *relatively* small scale of aboriginal education nationally, only a national institute could hope to command adequate resources to do credible and practically useful research work in aboriginal education. While such an Institute might well be organized regionally (or by Native-government area), a national mandate and coordination would be necessary if resources committed to aboriginal education research were to be wisely and efficiently utilized.

Such an institute, like the other aboriginal education bodies discussed here, would need a substantial aboriginal voice in its senior policy-making, if it were to carry out research and development programs which Native people would regard as legitimately focussed on their needs and priorities. Like the other aboriginal education bodies proposed here, such an institute would inevitably encounter the reality of governmental accountability and control. Despite the problems, tensions and tradeoffs which such a governance situation implies, the potential benefits of widespread access to reliable information about all aspects of aboriginal education are not to be taken lightly. If typically isolated and widely dispersed aboriginal jurisdictions are to avoid repeating costly errors in educational policy many times over, they require access to sound and relevant research findings and program materials. In a time of great fiscal restraint, this option would have to answer severe challenges in terms of feasibility. Only if a very strong case were made that, on balance, the improvement in efficiency which it promised was at least of equal value to the implementation cost, would such an option be endorsed by governments.

To the extent that provincial support for such an institute could be obtained, the feasibility objection would be correspondingly reduced. The requisite negotiations would be very delicate in view of the existence of provincial educational research and development units, but a strong case could be made that no university graduate school of education under an exclusively provincial mandate can have the required national focus

on aboriginal education. The crucial issue of a Native voice in the management of aboriginal education research moreover, becomes extremely problematic in the provincial university arena, with its diverse interests and constituencies. Yet provincial Ministries and school boards, which enrol over half of the status-Indian students in Canada and virtually all of the Metis and non-status Indian students, would be unmistakable beneficiaries of such an institute. If the cost-benefit question can be resolved in favour of such a project, a reasonable case seems to exist for joint federal-provincial funding, however politically and perhaps constitutional (in view of the section 93 provision for exclusive provincial jurisdiction over education) difficult the details might be. Precedents (such as federal funding for some programs at the Gabriel Dumont Institute and a federal-provincial cost-sharing for the complete Federated Indian College program) already exist for federal-provincial cooperation in aboriginal education.

Option 9:

A National Centre for Aboriginal Distance Education could be established to facilitate and coordinate distance-education opportunities for aboriginal people at all learning levels.

Canadian aboriginal communities are typically small and isolated. The possibilities for diverse and appropriate educational programs in each community are limited by the available time and expertise of resource persons in the school and community. The potential of distance education to enhance the learning of both Native and non-Native curricula at all levels is very great. Television and the computer, instead of being agents of cultural invasion, can become instruments of cultural preservation and development, part of the basis for a creative interface with the larger Canadian cultural mosaic.

The potential of interactive television and computers are only beginning to be explored. Their potential is greatest where access to other forms of program delivery

is most restricted. Such restricted access is a fact of life for much of Canada's far-flung aboriginal population. The recent extension of education in many reserve and community schools into the secondary grades offers an excellent reason for creating such distance-learning opportunities. Unless students whose parents want them to remain at home during their adolescence are ultimately to have a severely restricted educational choice, distance-education programs will have to be available in the generally small and isolated aboriginal secondary units. Adult-education opportunities, as well, could be greatly enhanced by distance-education.

To serve the extended and distinctive learning needs and preferences of aboriginal people through distance education would require comprehensive resources that could, as in the case of a research institute, only be obtained on the basis of the national aboriginal population. While regional, indeed cultural and linguistic-area organization would be desirable for such an aboriginal distance learning centre, the investment in technical and human resources required to make advanced distance-learning a reality for aboriginal people is politically unfeasible, if fragmentation seems likely to produce needless duplication of expensive services and facilities.

The adoption of distance-learning techniques presents a potentially difficult value choice for Native people. Cultures, like languages, are not independent of their environments. Indeed, they are the chief instrument by which human beings bring meaning to their environments. Widespread use of distance-learning techniques in aboriginal education, while it opens up many opportunities, is an obvious departure from the tradition of intensively personal interaction upon which Canada's aboriginal people built their pre-contact teaching-learning processes. It is a step in a new direction, which will undoubtedly impact on culture and identity. The television and the computer, however, are realities that will profoundly influence the cultural and educational destinies of Canadian aboriginal peoples. The television has already done so and the computer soon will. The choice is not for or against technology, but

rather what educational use is to be made of technology in the aboriginal arena.

4.2 The Local and Regional Levels

Option 10:

Distinct Native governance bodies could be created within present or extended provisions of provincial or territorial statute.

In this option, Native school boards and districts would be created under provincial statute. This option would provide the governance structure for those Native jurisdictions wishing to become part of the provincial mainstream, but also wishing to retain a reasonable degree of local autonomy within the scope of provincial statute. In the case of status-Indians, federal funding could continue to support such boards, probably through a blanket fiscal arrangement on education similar to the ones already in existence in Manitoba and British Columbia, or as part of a comprehensive agreement on social-service program delivery as in the case of New Brunswick. The relative arguments advanced for and against global transfer of the responsibility for the delivery of aboriginal education services apply at the local as well as at the national level. These arguments are presented in connection with Option 4. It would not, in principle, be impossible for such local boards existing as entities within a Native government structure to be recognized by provincial statute, should conformity with provincial standards and procedures be highly valued by particular Native governments. Alternatively, such boards could become associate boards, sharing facilities and programs with neighboring provincial boards under specific cost-sharing arrangements, but operating as independent governance bodies along the lines proposed by Shapiro (1985) for provincially-funded private schools in Ontario.

Option 11:

Enhanced statutory provision for Native participation in existing provincial school boards and districts could provide a governance mechanism for aboriginal peoples who wish a particularly close link with provincial education, combined with practical participation in the decision-making of their boards.

For aboriginal peoples who want to become part of the educational mainstream, but retain some say in educationally significant decisions affecting their children, enhanced participation in area boards may be an answer. Negotiating the exact terms of such participation will, of course, be a sensitive undertaking. Provincial trustees will expect that the principles governing representation on boards of education in their province not be violated too egregiously. Native peoples so represented will expect a fair and effective voice in decisions effecting their children. In particular, the problem of deciding on what matters Native trustees ought to vote in such arrangements is unlikely to disappear.

Option 12:

The present pattern of incremental, voluntary coalescence among distinct federally- and provincially-funded aboriginal education authorities could be continued and encouraged under any of the national governance options.

This *laissez-faire* solution has the advantages of continuity and incremental change following an established pattern. As such, it will rate high marks on the feasibility criterion, both from government and from Native people. While doubtlessly offering little problem with either perceived legitimacy or political acceptability on the part of non-Native governments, it may be too slow and uncertain a process to be perceived

as legitimate by nascent Native governments anxious to assert their hegemony over social programs.

If the inherently superior efficiency of small autonomous units of governance free to work out their own service-delivery arrangements is assumed, the obvious advantage of such an extension of the current trend in aboriginal education governance is precisely the flexibility and freedom it affords in both form and function. If, on the other hand, the value of allowing regional Native educational coalitions or governments to assert tighter control over education in their area appears to take precedence, the form and fact of such amalgamations for educational purposes may have to be imposed by mutual agreement between such regional groups and the funding source. To do otherwise might be to revisit the long history of resistance by small provincial jurisdictions to functional amalgamation. Whether by voluntary coalescence or imposed amalgamation, the process of linking together small aboriginal jurisdictions into units large enough to command resources for program support and evaluation can occur around any number of foci - tribal council, district education councils, regional governments, or ultimately Aboriginal governments.

Option 13:

Local governance in aboriginal education could be placed under the jurisdiction of First Nations or Tribal Council government. The educational arms of such governments would function like divisional or county boards.

The only distinction between this arrangement, and that described under the "imposed" amalgamation under Native government discussed in Option 12, is really one of time-frame and assumed generality of application. Under Option 13, an immediate, mandated amalgamation of all aboriginal educational jurisdictions within the boundaries of a Native government would occur. All units thus amalgamated would, in effect, become scho-

areas within a unified Native government educational jurisdiction.

This option offers the clarity and finality of immediate structural definition. It also carries an inevitable burden in political acceptability for Native governments wherever local education authorities may not wish to surrender their current prerogatives.

Option 14

Alternative education programs for urban aboriginal students could be operated by an aboriginal board of directors in association with a neighboring public board or district. Such boards would have the status of "associate boards" as outlined in the recently released Report of the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario (Private Schools Commission, 1985).

This option is not a radical departure from current practice. The Sacred Circle project in Edmonton, for instance, has been operated by just such a board. While the possibility exists of creating distinctively aboriginal boards of education in urban areas, many circumstances militate against the feasibility of such an option in most urban areas of Canada. Among the most important of these factors are:

- a. the relatively disparate and diverse nature of urban aboriginal populations;
- b. the small absolute numbers of urban aboriginal children in relation to the overall urban pupil population; and
- c. the very small percentage of urban aboriginal children whose parents send them to such alternative programs.⁶²

The "associate board" option would seem to offer the best combination of flexibility, effective aboriginal voice in governance, and access to facilities and program which

only a large board of education can possibly mount. Under such an arrangement, the parents of participating aboriginal students would have a statutory voice in the educational programs experienced by their children without denying their children access to the diversity of programs and facilities offered by large urban boards of education.

4.3 Conclusion

If a thread of continuity runs through these perceptions of available options in Canadian aboriginal education, is one of political realism, informed by a recognition of the necessity of arriving at financial and governance arrangements which can be perceived as legitimate, feasible and politically supportable by aboriginal people and by the other partners to the constitutional reform process. The solutions of the past have not well served the interests and aspirations of Canada's aboriginal peoples. New arrangements are clearly needed if they are to realize their potential contribution to the overall Canadian social mosaic. The effectiveness of new arrangements aimed at enhancing aboriginal control over aboriginal education, however, will ultimately hinge upon resolving the current crisis of purposes in aboriginal education. Equally, it will depend on the development of the capacity for control of their educational institutions on the part of aboriginal peoples at all levels. Failure to define satisfactorily the purpose(s) of aboriginal education, and to develop among aboriginal people the capacity to channel resources effectively toward the pursuit of clearly articulated goals, will mar even the best-designed structural arrangements and the images of aboriginal control.

NOTES

1. A succinct, if technical, summary of some of the inescapable dilemmas in public-sector policy-making is provided in Musgrave and Musgrave (1980).
2. The challenge, still a tentative one, to this view has come from the "effective schools" research (Odden, 1983).
3. Subsequent to the publication of *Indian Control of Indian Education* (National Indian, 1973).
4. In 1982, 137 of the 573 Indian bands in Canada were "operating their own schools" with some variation of the Band-Education-Authority model (Yuzdepski, 1983; Indian Education, 1981). Currently 28% (191) bands are administering all of their educational programs (Nielsen, 1986). The remainder are, for the most part, served by a federal community school (formerly "Indian day school") or purchase educational services from a school district or board under a tuition-cost agreement.
5. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, formerly DIAND, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.
6. Status Indians are those recognized as Indians under the Indian Act.

7. Only some treaties mention education. None are specific about the scope of educational benefits conferred.
8. For an example of the great range in extent of educational self-governance possible under the "band-control" rubric, see "Program Circular E-100" for the Ontario Region, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
9. In some districts significant strides have been made recently in program support services (Paquet 1986).
10. These incremental costs include costs arising from decreased economies of scale in administration, and from the transfer into the educational budget of items previously covered in non-educational INAC budgets (e.g., administrative photocopying services). While some regions, such as Manitoba, that embarked on local control relatively early, were able to build provisions for such "local-control costs" into their funding levels, other regions were constrained by the premise on which Federal support for local control was first given in 1972, namely, that local control must *cost no more* than the existing federal control of Native education (Indian Education, 1986).
11. Only two such councils are functioning with a significant program mandate at present. Only one, the Northern Native Education Council in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, has a reasonably broad program mandate.
12. District-wide school committees were formed in some districts to advise INAC district-level staff on educational policy. Local school committees were formed in many communities in the late sixties and early seventies to advise their local school staff on matters of concern to the community.
13. See discussions of program and bilingual education in Chapter 2.
14. At one point in the early eighties two District School Area Boards existed in the area, one in Moosonee and one on Moose-Factory Island. Moreover, the Ontario Ministry was funding the operation of the Northern Lights Secondary School which was

virtually boycotted by students from communities outside of Moosenee.

15. In the past such communities tended to be the historical fur-trade centres, but, with increasing contact and intermarriage, more reserves have been confronted with the reality of a strong area Metis presence.
16. *Bill C-31* restored the status-Indian women who had lost their status by marrying men without Indian status. It also restored the status of all first-generation children of such unions. The bill was opposed by many Native groups both on practical and theoretical grounds, but became a logical necessity under section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
17. The extent, of course, to which it does so in any given area depends on the proportion of non-status people in the area who can be reinstated under the terms of the bill.
18. Reserve-resident Native people are not ratepayers and were thus excluded from electing trustees under all provincial educational legislation existing at that time.
19. Such an analysis, of course, while appealing to a sense of equity and fair play, overlooks the possibility that Native people as a group may have bona-fide educational interests which fall outside the purview of the interest consensus among the non-Native constituents who dominate the vast majority of provincial school boards and districts. The problem is by no means a simple one, but the current interest in the public funding of private schools offers some important parallels to the case of Indian people who wish protection as a group in provisions for educational governance.
20. They are, in this respect, of course, no different from a non-Native person who resides outside the boundaries of a public school board or district. The difference is that proportionally, Native people are much more likely to live on crown land outside the boundaries of a public school board than non-Native persons.

21. In rare cases such communities may be allowed mount a minimal and partial secondary program well.
22. Despite its statutory form, the Ontario D.S. arrangement was also, in some regions, quite centralized since the local boards provided for in the legislation were sometimes centrally appointed boards with no connection to the communities in whose name they served. In at least one case, the D.S. boards of a region were, for many years, controlled by a single set of individuals who held overlapping memberships on most of the D.S.A. boards in the region.
23. By 1984 there were 64 cultural centres in operation (Canadian Education Association, 1984). Of these 46 were run by individual Indian bands. Only one Inuit cultural centre is funded directly under the INAC cultural-educational centre program, though a separate program exists for funding such centres north of the sixtieth parallel (Nielsen, 1986).
24. The most popular "special" programs funded by INAC have been the Native teacher training program, social-counsellor programs, and the Program of Language Studies for Native People at the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon.
25. Source: Personal conversation with INAC official involved in the delivery of post-secondary services.
26. Such full-funding completely circumvents variations in local ability to pay and thus avoids any inequities arising from that source (Benson, 1977).
27. It must, however, be noted that reserve-resident status Indians who work off reserve and pay federal income tax can be deemed to contribute to the support of federal educational programs for status Indian people.
28. Source: Personal discussion with INAC official.
29. Bands councils have only had the power to enter into binding contractual agreements for the last three years. It should be noted that currently only band councils and not their educational authorities have this power.

30. Such is certainly the case in Ontario where the results of a recent Ministry review of Native Education in the provincial schools (to which I was party) revealed great differences in the terms and financial provisions of tuition-cost agreements across that province.
31. Reserve-resident status-Indians are exempt from income taxes on income earned on the reserve and from provincial sales taxes.
32. An exceptional case was that of the Kitaskinaw School in Alberta, where true joint ownership of a school facility physically situated on reserve property was desired by a provincial school district and an Indian band. Eventually, special provincial legislation made possible the construction of the desired facility in defiance of the time-honoured norm that provincial boards and districts could not risk contributing capital funds to a facility whose ownership was subject to the vicissitudes of on-reserve real property.
33. The outcry over the 1984 announcement by the Ontario government of its intention to fund Roman Catholic Separate secondary schools through Grade 13 is an excellent example. The criticism was focussed as much on the process of decision-making (viewed by some affected parties as ill-considered and clandestine) as on the decision taken.
34. While the real rules of policy-making may be quite different from the stated rules and process, the various political actors concerned in any given arena will want a palatable statement of a reasonable policy-making process.
35. This assertion, namely that education is an unextinguished sovereign right, has been put forth by treaty Indians (who claim that vague guarantees of certain educational benefits contained in some treaties did not extinguish their right to control the education of their children, and that treaties extinguished only the sovereign rights specifically delineated therein) (Cheechoo, 1985), and by non-treaty aboriginal peoples.

36. Such a view, of course, ignored both the lack of cultural congruence between non-Native teachers and their communities, and the obvious differences in educational need and appropriate pedagogical technique between most schools for aboriginal people and the public schools. Teachers come, for the most part, from teacher-training programs designed to prepare them to teach in "typical" provincial public schools. Currently only two programs in Canada exist to train both Native and non-Native teachers specifically to teach in Native schools (Allison, 1983).
37. A fatalism which had, no doubt, its roots in genetically-linked theories about race and intelligence (Jensen, 1969).
38. Unless and until the futility of doing so became unbearable, in which case teachers might cease trying to teach anything.
39. To insist upon a reasonable degree of coordination and control in the pursuit of agreed-upon learning objectives is not to denigrate the importance of sufficient latitude for creativity and innovation at the school and classroom level - only to insist that such spontaneity be built around a consistent core of educational content and practice.
40. See, for example, the classic American Rand and IDEA meta-studies of professional-development (McLaughlin, 1979).
41. This reflexive victim-blaming is, of course, a common feature of all minority education problematics which aim for cultural and linguistic replacement. For an exhaustive and insightful discussion, see Church (1983).
42. It is also obviously a belief not shared by the growing number of Canadian parents, who choose an immersion experience in the official language not spoken in their homes as a part of the education of their children.
43. See, for instance, Paquette (1986).
44. Jurisdictions so small, for instance, that they are unable to access the resources necessary to mount effective curriculum-development and supervisory programs can hardly be expected to provide the same

quality of educational outputs as larger jurisdictions funded at a similar per-pupil expenditure level. They simply haven't the means to control any of the myriad circumstances which impact on in-school practice. More fundamentally, as individual entities, very small jurisdictions are simply not able to act as effective interest groups and lack the ability to participate actively in the larger world of educational policy-making. By virtue of their size, for instance, they are excluded from any meaningful voice in teacher training or provincial curriculum-making. They are forever denied the means of defining and articulating their needs and preferences in the way an "institutionalized" interest group can (Pross, 1981).

45. For a penetrating discussion of the problem of "purpose" in Canadian minority education, see T. B. Greenfield (1976).
46. Although this is the purpose intended in the federal program, Hispanic peoples have viewed the federal funds as a *magna carta* for bilingual education which they hope will achieve long-term linguistic and cultural maintenance.
47. The same is obviously true of private schools that might seek only to replicate neighboring public school programs. The legitimacy of separateness is always, to some degree, contingent on distinctiveness.
48. The Cree Board situation is particularly interesting because, in some communities, it confronted the need for trilingual education (i.e. the two official languages and Cree).
49. While the arguments presented here are referred to INAC because of its size and prominence in aboriginal education, the same arguments obviously apply to provincial and territorial Ministries of Education that may be charged by their governments with the task of "transferring control" over educational programs to aboriginal people.
50. Tanner, for instance, rightly notes the essential contribution of Native media to language preservation (1981).

51. The recent announcement of full-funding for Roman Catholic Separate Schools in Ontario affords an excellent case in point. The most vehement criticisms of that decision were targetted not on the substance of the decision, but on the invisible process by which it was arrived at.
52. To the extent, of course, that Native governments obtain and develop their own resource bases, the ultimate "parliamentary veto" will be reduced in impact.
53. This argument seeks to leave aside the issue of sovereignty. While an issue of great moral moment, the sovereignty issue tends to obscure the political realities that aboriginal self-government inevitably faces.
54. Throughout this discussion there exists the assumption that central policy-making is inevitable given central funding.
55. This policy proposal sought to end the special status of and special service provisions for Canada's legally recognized aboriginal peoples.
56. The order of presentation of options discussed here is analytical, not preferential. Option 1 is no more or less intrinsically desirable than any other option. The desirability of available options is inescapably linked to the value judgements of those involved about what is legitimate, feasible and likely to generate (or sustain) political support among constituents. The options are, in many cases, interrelated and, in some, overlapping and complementary.
57. A basic service level, of course, would be guaranteed to all under the universal foundation grant.
58. The problem of cultural incongruence and alienation from conventional forms of schooling is an important but separate issue.
59. Two obvious concerns about such a revenue source must be addressed. First to avoid providing a *carte blanche* with very unpredictable consequences to the Matching-Grant program budget, a ceiling amount would have to be arrived at in some manner, perhaps as a maximum per-pupil matching amount indexed

the local ability-to-pay measure. Second, the confidentiality of income tax information would have to be adequately protected.

60. The financial options discussed here—including Option 6—could easily be modified to apply to aboriginal jurisdictions under provincial or territorial administrative jurisdiction. They could be applied in the case of Metis or non-status Indian settlements as well as in the case of Indian reserves. The ownership and stewardship issues are no less relevant to non-status aboriginal peoples.
61. The generally unfavourable economic position of Canada's Native peoples is beyond dispute (Lanphier, 1981). On almost any measure of socio-economic well-being aboriginal peoples are, as a group, at the bottom of the ladder. Nonetheless, the provision of government-subsidized housing for many aboriginal communities suggests that their disposable incomes may be a greater proportion of total incomes than among the general populace. More fundamentally, preserving fiscal arrangements which assure that only those benefiting financially from the operation of a school or school system will have an ongoing interest in it, can only compound school-community isolation resulting from cultural alienation.
62. Meaningful statistics are simply not available to confirm this perception. A counterargument obviously exists, moreover, that parents don't send their children because of the limited number of spaces available in such programs. On the whole, however, the failure over time of such programs to enlist the patronage of any substantial proportion of the urban aboriginal student population suggests that most urban aboriginal parents value an education fundamentally in tune with accepted provincial norms.

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