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Peter M. Meehan
University of Windsor

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**FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY:
THE BASILIAN FATHERS AND ASSUMPTION,
1950-1963**

by

Peter M. Meehan

**A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the Department of History in Partial Fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor**

**Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1991**



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Dedicated to my father, Dr. Joseph E. Meehan.
For my mother, Yvonne Meehan, Laura, Joseph, Anne Marie, Thomas,
Paul and Michael.

ABSTRACT

FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY: THE BASILIAN FATHERS AND ASSUMPTION, 1950-1963

by

Peter M. Meehan

The following is a study of Assumption College and the Basilian Fathers who administered it during a period of unparalleled growth and change, 1950-1963. Assumption began this period as an affiliate college of the University of Western Ontario, claimed autonomous status as a college with university powers, and finally achieved its century old dream as Assumption University of Windsor. The goal once achieved proved unsustainable; forces unleashed by postwar educational growth and strategies adopted by the Basilians to cope with their expanding services contained the seeds of yet another transformation - the creation of the University of Windsor, with Assumption University in federation.

As Assumption College transformed itself from a college into a university, the Basilian Fathers found strength in their beliefs, tradition and denominational approach to education. This approach, which had served them well for almost 100 years was found wanting in the dynamic environment of the 1950s, forcing the Basilians to take stock of themselves as they sought to accommodate numerous needs and demands.

While it is possibly too soon still to render a satisfactory history of the University of Windsor, that of its

predecessor is not. For those who felt too much had been sacrificed that the dream continue, a sign bearing the words "The University of Windsor is a False Assumption" greeted incoming students in 1964. But those who accepted the resolution - even perhaps welcomed the challenge of adapting - Assumption University of Windsor lives on in the minds and hearts of its alumnae, and in the mission of the Catholic Campus Community of the new Assumption University.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completed form of this thesis would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of individuals. I would like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. L.L. Kulisek for the countless hours he devoted to guiding both my research and writing. His keen interest in this project coupled with his patience and approachability made working with him an absolute pleasure. Thanks too to the other members of my thesis committee, Dr. Ian Pemberton and Dr. Norman King, for their carefully considered insights and suggestions.

Although my original interest in this topic was the result of a number of factors, I must credit Fr. David Heath c.s.b., President of Assumption University, for his assistance at most stages of my work. It was during a discussion with Fr. Heath that I first relayed my interest in this particular period and institution. He then provided me with office space and free run of the Assumption University Archives. Fr. Heath regularly took time out his schedule to discuss my progress as well as offer his own reflections on the period. For his graciousness and interest I am eternally grateful.

A study of this nature is made particularly valuable in light of the personal insights that are possible due to its relatively contemporary setting. For these I have a number of

people to thank. Fr. Norbert Ruth c.s.b. and Professor John Whiteside were particularly giving of their time and energies to this project, through personal interviews and analyses of the manuscript in its various stages. Fr. Matthew Meehan CSsR and Fr. Edwin Garvey c.s.b. also provided me with invaluable insights to this period. To Fr. Meehan I am particularly indebted for having brought me to visit Windsor and Holy Redeemer College for the first time as a boy of thirteen. I also credit him for inspiring to a large degree my interest in Canadian religious history. Dr. J.F. Leddy, in the process of working on his own memoirs, took time away from his work to offer his insights to this period that he was involved in as a member of the original N.C.C.U. delegation sent to investigate Assumption in 1954.

I would also like to thank Fr. Kevin Kirley c.s.b. of the General Archives of the Basilian Fathers for his cooperation in both opening and leading me to valuable source materials within the Basilian Archives in Toronto. On that same note, thanks go out to Fr. Gerry Pettipas CSsR, Principal of Holy Redeemer College, for opening the Holy Redeemer Archives to me.

To Professors Patricia and Maurice Taylor go my warmest thanks for all they have done. As well as opening their home to me during the course of my two years in Windsor, their interest in my work and progress spurred me on through many of the difficult periods in my research. Through numerous discussions with them on my various findings, they were both able to lend factual insights that enabled me to establish the milieu for this

period.

Finally, I would like to thank Miss Angela Donnelley for her patience and diligence during the editing and organizing of much of this project.

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INTRODUCTION

The history of Assumption College and then Assumption University of Windsor during the 1950s and early 1960s is a study of conflicting interests: the interests of a religious order through its age old denominational approach to provide university level instruction in a changing world. New demands created an identity crisis at Assumption, where constant change necessitated constant re-evaluation to determine what it meant to be a Catholic university in a secular society.

Assumption University is, and always has been a Catholic institution. As one of its future presidents would remark, "partly by choice and partly by circumstance, a metamorphosis saw Assumption change from a self sufficient institution to a 'Catholic College on Campus'."¹ This change would not take place without the proactive participation of the various members of the religious order responsible for Assumption's administration, the Basilian Fathers. Members of this order would play key roles in determining the fate of the institution, even though the greater metamorphosis may have been beyond their control. The conflict of interests came into play when this Basilian identity, dating as far back as 1858, was assailed by less traditional, more pragmatic forces, as Assumption entered perhaps the most vital period in its history.

¹The Windsor Star, January 3, 1981.

Beginning with Fr. LeBel, who had been the Dean of the College since 1946, and joined by Bishop Cody in 1950, the Basilian resolve for university status for Assumption seemed destined for success, even in the wake of often formidable opposition.

Once empowered as a university, Assumption faced the financial turmoil that would follow it for the remainder of its history as a degree granting institution. In 1952, as the largest city in Canada without a university, Windsor became an interested partner in Assumption's growth. The university charter passed on its behalf in 1953 was gained in the full knowledge that a policy existed in Ontario against the public funding of denominational schools. The subsequent creation of Essex College, originally as a means to circumvent provincial policy, temporarily provided Assumption the economic relief it needed.

The next period finds both Assumption University of Windsor and the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich at their operational peak. Although a steadily increasing student body would put additional strains on the new affiliation with Essex College, Assumption was able to draw in new affiliates. Canterbury College, the first affiliation of a Protestant college to a Catholic university, and Holy Redeemer College, the new seminary for the Redemptorist Fathers, affiliated to Assumption at this time. Holy Names College, involved in an informal affiliation with Assumption since 1934, gained legal incorporation at this time. This period was capped in 1959 with the creation of three

new faculties for the university, including: Applied Science, Graduate Studies and Theology.

The final section depicts the Basilian Fathers negotiating the transformation of Assumption to a public university with the provincial government and ex-premier Leslie Frost. The idea of a "University of Windsor" had been suggested as early as 1954, but the Basilians had resisted and maintained their control over the direction of the school. By 1962 both the Basilians and Premier Robarts recognized that the dramatically increased student population expected by 1970 coupled with the already exorbitant budget submissions channelled through Essex College meant that the creation of the University of Windsor could no longer be avoided.

A lesser order and school may have been overwhelmed by the changes Assumption was forced to address, but men like Eugene Carlisle LeBel and Norbert Joseph Ruth were able to guide the institution through a period of constant change without sacrificing its Catholic educational approach. Circumstances made them ingenious and resourceful if reluctant innovators. Assumption was opened to all denominations; the unprecedented affiliation of an Anglican college was successfully negotiated, and a public college was added. Clearly change had to come to Assumption, but in all matters pertaining to their school, the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich persisted. Extensive negotiations, culminating in the Assumption University Act of 1964 solidified

the place it holds today as a federated university with the University of Windsor.

Chapter One

GROWTH OF THE BASILIAN COLLEGE IN SANDWICH

The history of the Basilian Fathers is one steeped in education. In a France still reeling from the after-effects of the Revolution, Bishop Charles D'Aviau of Vienne in 1798 began a school for young men considering the priesthood in the small village of St. Symphorie de Mahun.¹ When the popularity of this college caused its move to Annonay, a few years later, it was located in the parish of St. Basil, a renowned fourth century educator. The order of priests that came forth from this college, appropriately named their new congregation in honour of St. Basil on November 21, 1822.²

As the century progressed, it became apparent that the former students of these early Basilians, strictly dedicated to pre-formation and scholastic instruction, were rising to positions of prominence. One in particular, Armand Francoise Marie Comte de Charbonnel, had emigrated to Canada, where in May of 1850 he was consecrated the second Bishop of Toronto.³

¹Charles Roume c.s.b., A History of the Congregation of St. Basil to 1864 (Toronto: The Basilian Press, 1975), p.36.

²Ibid., p.155

³Ibid., p.314.

Mandated to arrange for the education of young Catholics, he petitioned the Basilians in Annonay, to send representatives to aid in this project. The four priests that came to Canada in 1852 then were the first wave of a movement that would see this order flourish across North America.⁴

Toronto's sister diocese of London was also in the early stages of its own formulation. It had been established on February 29, 1856,⁵ and already boasted of a college, albeit in the process of construction. "Assumption College" was originally a Jesuit creation on the grounds of Assumption Church, the first Catholic mission in Upper Canada.⁶ After opening its doors to students on February 10, 1857, the Jesuits decided in August of that year that they would be unable to continue staffing the college.⁷ As his counterpart in Toronto had done seven years previously, Bishop Pierre-Adolph Pinsoneault of London turned to the Basilians for help. His specific target in this quest would be the Basilian treasurer of the new St. Michael's College in Toronto, Fr. Joseph Malbos. Without informing Charbonnel, Malbos accepted the offer from Pinsoneault to be the new Superior of

⁴See James Hanrahan c.s.b., The Basilian Fathers (1822-1972) (Toronto: The Basilian Press, 1973) for a detailed analysis of Basilian activity in both France and North America during this period.

⁵Michael Power, Assumption College, 1855-1870 - Years of Uncertainty (Windsor: 1987), p.xxiv.

⁶Ibid., p.xxxv.

⁷Ibid., p.xxxv.

Assumption College in November of 1857.⁹ His departure a year later for France left the college temporarily without a Basilian presence,¹⁰ but with official incorporation in the Province of Canada. On August 16, 1858, "An Act Incorporating Assumption College" passed through the Canadian Legislature empowering it with the academic freedom that it would enjoy under its next and subsequent Basilian administrations:

Full power to make and establish such and so many rules, orders and regulations as they shall deem useful or necessary, concerning the system of education in as far the conduct and government of the said college, and of any other institution or school connected with the same.¹¹

Beginning with the return of the order to Assumption under the Superiorship of Fr. Denis O'Connor in 1870, Assumption would enjoy for the next thirty years various programs of building and consolidation of purpose. All academic instruction was entered into with sufficient concern for Catholic relevancy as to lead students towards theological studies.¹² During this

⁹Ibid., p.xxxv.

¹⁰Assumption College, following Fr. Malbos' departure, was administered by a series of Benedictine and diocesan administrators before the reinstatement of the Basilian Fathers with the arrival of Fr. O'Connor in 1870.

¹¹"An Act to incorporate Assumption College in the Diocese of London", chapter 136 of the statutes of Canada, 1858.

¹²D.J. Mulvihill c.s.b., "Aspects of Early Education as Reflected in the Early Development of Assumption College (1857-1900)", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 39, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

period, high school and pre-college courses were offered, including the first two years of university level philosophy.¹²

The next twenty years established the educational policies and philosophy that Assumption would espouse for the remainder of its history as an educational institution. This period witnessed a gradual change in the purpose and curriculum of the college which resulted in its realization as more than a minor seminary. With increased demand for a Catholic college for lay students, the Basilian Fathers affiliated with Western University, later the University of Western Ontario, in 1919.¹³ By this affiliation, the college became a member of the larger university's Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and began to concentrate on moulding "as many students as possible into integral human beings, oriented to God and to a right conception of society,"¹⁴ by offering instruction in a broad range of courses in the liberal arts.

Assumption College enjoyed all of the benefits of connection with a larger and more established university during this thirty-four year affiliation from 1919 to 1953. Fr. Joseph Muckle C.S.B., who succeeded Fr. Francis Forster as president of the college, completed the final affiliation negotiations with

¹²Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 11, File 39, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹³"Assumption College and Western University - Articles of Affiliation", Record Group 1, Box 2, File 41, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁴"Assumption College Desiderata", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 40, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Western, allotting for the president and registrar of the college to be ex-officio members of the University Senate, which ultimately set all course programs and conferred all degrees on behalf of the university.¹⁵ As a result, Assumption students followed the same course program and wrote the same examinations as did the students of Western, and also took with them the more prestigious Western degree.

These were relatively happy times for Assumption College, as its students and the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich, embarked on several changes that would allow both the Order and the college to enter into a new era. The affiliation was based on what would be later known as the "Toronto Plan", from the origin of this practice of affiliating colleges to a central university begun at the University of Toronto in the 1890s.¹⁶ During this time, Assumption expanded its role as a minor seminary to a college with a high school division, offering general and honours level instruction in an expanded arts and science curriculum. As for the Basilian Fathers, the order had recently consolidated itself and its resources with a separation from the French community in 1922, and the resulting closure of

¹⁵James J. and Ruth Davis Talman, "Western" - 1878-1953 (London:The University of Western Ontario, 1953), p. 130.

¹⁶Although references to such a plan are made throughout the correspondence of Assumption's President Fr. Joseph Muckle during this early affiliation period, a better perspective on this phenomenon is to be found in John R. Gwynne-Timothy, Western's First Century (London:The University of Western Ontario, 1978), p. 90.

their St. Thomas College in Chatham, New Brunswick released more Basilians for an expanding Assumption College.¹⁷

The College and its curriculum continued to progress into the 1930s under the leadership of Fr. T.A. MacDonald. During these years he negotiated the first of what would be several conjunctive programs between Assumption and several of its American college and university counterparts.¹⁸ With Western's consent, he worked out an arrangement with the nearby University of Detroit, under which Assumption students could enrol in a preparatory engineering program not offered at Western.¹⁹

During this time too, a Professor of English, Fr. J. Stanley Murphy C.S.B. brought world wide attention to Assumption through the creation of the Christian Culture Series in 1936.²⁰ The Series boasted among its speakers many of the leading scholars and philosophers of the day, such as Etienne Gilson,

¹⁷James Hanrahan, The Basilian Fathers, 1822-1973 (Toronto: The Basilian Press, 1973), p. ?.

¹⁸This practice has continued to flourish at the University of Windsor through cooperative programs with nearby Wayne State University and the University of Detroit. Here students in graduate studies and law are able to enrol in American courses, and in some cases even proceed towards American degrees while working towards similar Canadian designations.

¹⁹Letter of R. Willis to C.P. McTague (undated), President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, File P-8, "Affiliated Colleges", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

²⁰"Correspondence, Rev. J.S. Murphy", Record Group 1, Box 9, File 49, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Jacques Maritain and then Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen.²¹ It continues to this day to provoke both thought and discussion on a number of topics for the university and greater cultural community of Windsor.

Fr. MacDonald's administration began the process of admitting female students to degrees at Assumption with the help of Mother Mary Electa of the Holy Names Sisters and the subsequent creation of Holy Names College in 1934.²² Although the original terms of this affiliation were somewhat restrictive, with Holy Names students not being allowed to take classes on the Assumption campus, but rather receiving instruction from both nuns and priests at St. Mary's Academy in South Windsor, this step was key for the college to progress into a new era.

The period of the 1940s and the Second World War would provide new people and new problems for the college. Fr. Vincent J. Guinan had succeeded Fr. MacDonald as president in 1940,²³ and was immediately faced with a swelling enrolment and the incumbent problems on an institution when both space and funds were at a premium. Returning veterans had created an intolerable lack of space, and it was due to the ingenuity of Fr.

²¹Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 5, File 49, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²²The history of Holy Names College is extensively outlined in Mona L. Gleason, "A 'Separate and Different' Education: A History of Women at the University of Windsor, 1920 to the Present", M.A. Major Paper, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, 1991, chapter 1.

²³Lawrence K. Shook., Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English Speaking Canada (Toronto, 1971), p. 286.

Guinan that Assumption was able to generate the funds necessary to begin construction on the Memorial Science Building in 1947, as well as arrange for the transfer of the now famous "pre fab" airforce huts onto the Assumption grounds in order to house excess students.²⁴ These were years of growth and expansion, but also years of consistency in outlook. Although "change, growth and development are normal and real, and it is the absence of change, growth and development that is imperfection, decay and stagnation",²⁵ the changes experienced during the 1940s required no deviations in the college's understanding of itself as a Catholic college. It served the Catholic community of the Windsor-Essex County area first, under the auspices and munificence of the Bishop of London. Those of other faiths were free to share in this communion, with the clear understanding that this was no public institution. Swelling enrolment at the college, in these war and post-war years changed this outlook, and forced Assumption to struggle with its own identity.

The administrative years of Fr. J.H. O'Loane and his First Councillor, Dean and Vice President Fr. E.C. LeBel begin a period of unrest for Assumption in its affiliation with Western. Born in Toronto in 1897, Fr. O'Loane was a veteran of several

²⁴The various details surrounding development and growth at Assumption at this time can be found in "Correspondence, Building, Memorial Science, Construction, 1947-48, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 15, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁵Report of the President, 1961-62, "The Challenge of Change", Assumption University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, p. 1.

Basilian institutions before assuming the presidency of Assumption College in 1946.²⁶ After attending St. Michael's College School in Toronto and Assumption College as a student before his ordination in 1923, he then filled a number of superiorships at St. Thomas High School in Houston, the Aquinas Institute in Rochester and St. Basil's Seminary in Toronto.²⁷

Even as an experienced Basilian Superior, Fr. O'Loane was not prepared for the demands that university administration would place on him.²⁸ His experience as superior and master of novices had left him relatively unacquainted with the position that befell him in 1946. He would come to rely heavily on his second in command, Fr. LeBel, in the running of Assumption College for the course of his one and only six year term.²⁹ Hence, Fr. LeBel, newly appointed dean of the college in 1946, was set to the task of investigating this new growth at the college level, and the growth potential in the near future. His findings, outlined in his report, "Brief Facts of Civic

²⁶Robert J. Scollard c.s.b., Dictionary of Basilian Biography (Toronto: The Basilian Press, 1969), p. 116.

²⁷Ibid., p. 116.

²⁸Interview with Fr. N.J. Ruth c.s.b., November 12, 1990. Fr. Ruth maintained very strongly that Fr. O'Loane, although a well respected Basilian Superior and administrator, was not a "university man", and never claimed to be.

²⁹The meetings of the General Chapter of the Basilian Fathers prior to O'Loane's appointment in 1946 confirmed the standard terms for Rectors and Superiors to be six years, with any subsequent changes to be at the discretion of the Superior General of the order.

Importance Pertaining to Assumption College",²⁰ combined an outline of the growth and growth potential for Assumption in the midst of a burgeoning Windsor, along with a plaintive appeal for the funds needed to carry out a much needed program of expansion.

While affiliation was not being debated to any extensive degree at this point, the overriding theme of Fr. LeBel's report was clear: Assumption was quickly surpassing its physical capacities, and a public appeal would be necessary to achieve the funds required to carry out this expansion. For the first time in its seventy-five years of existence, Assumption was appealing to the City of Windsor for money, \$750,000.00 to be precise,²¹ for the construction of a new arts and science building. LeBel saw the immediacy of this problem as resting with the existence of 1,000 students in both the high school and college divisions, and the 200 day students and 50 boarders, creating a "well-nigh intolerable friction of space and time."²²

More specifically, these added numbers created abhorrent conditions for both learning and teaching. Extra

²⁰"Brief Facts of Civic Importance Pertaining to Assumption College", 1946, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²¹Lawrence K. Shook, Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English Speaking Canada (Toronto, 1971), p. 286. (Please note: this drive was announced by Fr. Guinan and implemented by Frs. O'Loane and LeBel).

²²"Brief Facts of Civic Importance Pertaining to Assumption College", 1946, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

curricular facilities were almost wholly lacking, and programs in drama, the arts, literature, science and engineering had less than one third of the necessary space and equipment.³³ Fr. Lebel made specific reference to the fact that the science department had only three labs at its disposal, in order to accommodate twenty to thirty students in an average class of sixty.³⁴ The option of shifting class and lab hours was rendered wholly inadequate as the increased numbers had already forced class times to go from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm daily.³⁵

The focus of Fr. O'Loane's public appeal would be on Assumption as a unique civic entity, serving the Windsor community's educational needs:

Expansion is essential to provide higher education to the young men of this community who cannot afford the expenses of college training outside of Windsor.³⁶

This public appeal was seen in response to needs which had become "far too great, far too sudden and far too violent to be met

³³"Brief Facts of Civic Importance Pertaining to Assumption College", 1946, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁴"Brief facts of Civic Importance Pertaining to Assumption College", Record Group 1, Box 9, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁵Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 9, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁶Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 9, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

gradually in the normal manner."²⁷ Further, the fact that the Basilians, who had endured serious financial strains at the college before,²⁸ were forced to go public in an appeal for funds, would begin to destabilize its years of self-assuredness as a Catholic college, funded by and for Catholics.

The LeBel-O'Loane report then, (as it was prepared by LeBel for use by O'Loane) issued in conjunction with an appeal, cited three of the most urgent problems for Assumption at this point:

1. The rapid population growth of Windsor.
2. The unprecedented expansion of local business, making Windsor the most heavily industrialized city in Canada.
3. And finally, the educational emergency brought on by the war and the rapid release of young servicemen.²⁹

It is on this final point that Fr. LeBel was a particularly effective spokesman to the post-war Windsor community. Since 1942 he had served as chaplain to the Canadian Armed Forces

²⁷"Brief Facts of Civic Importance Pertaining to Assumption College", Record Group 1, Box 9, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁸For a more detailed understanding of some of the earliest financial pressures felt by Assumption College, see Michael Power, Assumption College 1870-1890 - The O'Connor Years (Windsor, 1986).

²⁹"Brief Facts of Civic Importance Pertaining to Assumption College", 1946, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 2, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

detachment of Windsor-Essex,⁴⁰ making him personally acquainted with the plights of many of these young men. Most of those who might not have had this opportunity under normal circumstances wanted to make up for this time lost to them through war by attaining a university education. His estimates for 1947 then foresaw an additional 1200 men and women per year that would come to depend on Assumption for their educational needs.⁴¹

Clearly he saw the responsibility for caring for these people as befalling Windsorites, through the work of Assumption College:

This city cannot ignore these demands without doing inestimable harm to the future of our youth, without denying many local servicemen the chance to recover at least what they had lost so far in their education, and without setting back the cultural and economic advancement of this community by decades.⁴²

LeBel then made reference to four specific points regarding the accommodation of these servicemen, founding his argument on their need of Assumption College:

1. For married soldiers, education is less expensive in their home town.
2. After being away for so long, servicemen want to stay at home.
3. A local college can work with families to provide special care for veterans, and

⁴⁰"Correspondence, etc., Canada, Army, 1946-53", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 13, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴¹LeBel brief to O'Loane, undated, p. 3, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴²LeBel Brief to O'Loane, undated, p. 3, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

4. Many Colleges are already overcrowded, and will be even more so in a year.⁴³

In appealing for public support then, Frs. O'Loane and LeBel chose to present Assumption to the community as an integral component of its life that should be supported accordingly.

Assumption served a preparatory role in such professions as medicine, engineering and dentistry by providing the first few years of training in these programs. Its students were in most cases given advanced standing for these subjects once they were admitted to professional schools across North America.⁴⁴

Assumption also served the community by way of providing the opportunity for continuing education at both the high school and university levels with the implementation of its newly established night school program. Vocational guidance too was provided to the community at a cost of over \$5,000.00 annually.⁴⁵

Fr. LeBel realized early on in this campaign that the key to its success would be in appealing to non-Catholics as well as Catholics. Even at this stage in its history he felt there could be made room for a non-denominational element to this institution that did not interfere in its apostolate to be served

⁴³Ibid., p. 3, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁴More information on this program and this practice can be found in "Correspondence Detroit University of, Engineering Co-op Courses, 1951", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 3, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁵LeBel brief to O'Loane, undated, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

by Catholics for Catholics, and at the same time broadening Assumption's base of support. Quotes of 30% in the day school and 58% in the night school enrolment as being non-Catholic would certainly settle the minds of people wanting to give to a non-denominational institution.⁴⁶ Scholarship offers to incoming students had been made to non-Catholics in 60% of the cases,⁴⁷ causing Fr. LeBel to foreshadow the direction he would take the college himself years later:

We hope that no one in this advanced age believes that religion is the enemy of a broad, liberal minded education, or that one is bound to become a Catholic by attending Assumption any more than one is bound to become a Baptist by attending McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.⁴⁸

The final point for the Basilians in promoting Assumption College to Windsorites was to point out its economic viability. By the mid 1940s, Basilians made up 65% of Assumption's faculty, the salaries of whom, totalling \$125,000.00 were not carried by the taxpayers, but rather were channelled back into the running of the college.⁴⁹ Even more importantly, Fr. LeBel estimated that of the monies circulated

⁴⁶"Dominion Bureau Statistics, 1947", Record Group 1, Box 9, File 22, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁷LeBel brief to O'Loane, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁸LeBel brief to O'Loane, undated, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁹"Basilian Fathers, Assumption College - Local Rule", Record Group 1, Box 9, File 7, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

through Windsor as a result of Assumption College, an average of \$1.00 circulated sixteen times which rendered the roughly \$240,000.00 spent by Assumption annually to be valued at \$3,840,000.00 in spending power to the City of Windsor.⁵⁰

Fr. LeBel's first public appeal that was directed towards the creation of what would be a new science building was indicative of his broader concern for support of the college by addressing the greater Windsor community. The inclusion of prominent Windsor businessmen in this cause too, such as Eli Goldin, James Barth and William Furlong gave secular clout to the appeal, and reinforced its ecumenical approach.⁵¹

On August 25, 1948, after the drive had been on for a year the Memorial Science Building, named in honour of Assumption alumni, both Canadian and American who had given their lives to the defence of their countries in World War Two, was dedicated by John Kidd, Bishop of London.⁵²

⁵⁰LeBel brief to O'Loane, undated, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵¹Lawrence K. Shook c.s.b., Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English Speaking Canada (Toronto, 1971), p. 286.

⁵²"Programmes, etc., Building, Memorial Science, Blessing and Dedication, 1948", Record Group 1, Box 9, File 18, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario. This file also contains information pertaining to other monies raised at this time in order to carry out a number of much needed repairs and renovations that would serve as temporary cures for the many ills that plagued Assumption. Smaller sums raised, such as that given by the Assumption College "Dad's Club" allowed for renovations of the gymnasium to take place, including the addition of new bleacher seats, and the reconstruction of its handball alleys.

Fr. LeBel had a strong grasp of the direction that the college was moving as it progressed into the post war era. Despite the public response to this cry for help from Assumption, Fr. LeBel's work had only begun, and the degree to which this college was going to change had yet to be defined.

Eugene Carlisle LeBel was a native of Sarnia, Ontario, from whence he himself came as a young high school student in 1912 to Assumption College.⁵³ Many avenues were open to the young LeBel in these early days, not the least of which was to follow his older brother Arthur into the practice of law. After a distinguished career as a Sarnia attorney, the elder LeBel proceeded to sit on the bench of the Supreme Court of Ontario.⁵⁴ Young "Nig" however, as he was referred to by his classmates, seemed destined for a career in professional sports. He excelled especially in football at Assumption, and then later at St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto as an undergraduate arts student. As with others before him however, LeBel took to his vocation early. He joined the Basilian Fathers first as a scholastic in 1917, and later took his first vows towards the priesthood on August 10, 1918.⁵⁵

His love of English literature and drama along with his priestly vocation drew LeBel away from the limelight of his

⁵³David Heath c.s.b., "E.C. LeBel c.s.b., Biographical Sketch", 1981, Assumption University Archives.

⁵⁴Interview with Fr. N.J. Ruth c.s.b., November 12, 1990.

⁵⁵David Heath c.s.b., "E.C. LeBel c.s.b. - Biographical Sketch, 1981", Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

undergraduate days, into the Basilian Fathers. After receiving his B.A. in 1924, he was ordained to the priesthood at St. Basil's Church on the grounds of St. Michael's College in Toronto on December 19 of that year.⁵⁶ He then spent the next seven years in a variety of teaching capacities at Assumption High School in Windsor and St. Michael's College School in Toronto, while working on his M.A. in English Literature at the University of Chicago, which he received in 1931.⁵⁷

Once a Basilian accredited at the university level, Fr. LeBel would now engage himself in the work of post-secondary education for the rest of his active life. After a brief stint as a professor of English at the Basilian College of St. Thomas More in Saskatchewan from 1939 to 1941,⁵⁸ LeBel returned to Assumption College for the beginning of what would be over twenty years of service to the communities of both Assumption and Windsor.

As Assumption entered the period of the late 1940s and early 1950s, it became clear that spatial problems were only the "tip of the iceberg" with regard to its difficulties. Under Fr. LeBel's deanship, the college stopped to take stock of its long standing affiliation with the University of Western Ontario. A report issued in 1951 by the "Committee of Aims for Assumption

⁵⁶Ibid., Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁷Ibid., Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁸David Heath c.s.b., "E.C. LeBel c.s.b., - Biographical Sketch, 1981", Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

College" under Fr. LeBel's guidance,** stressed various philosophical differences with Western that caused it to suggest putting an end to affiliation and working towards independence. Here the primary aim of the college and hence of the order that ran it was the promotion of their Catholic orientation to education. The multi-denominational claims of the college's makeup of only a few years previous seems to be somewhat eradicated as the institution now strove to outline its main function in serving primarily the Catholic community. Assumption was on the verge of some kind of radical change, and at the same time it was realizing that in raising funds for the Memorial Hall project, it had alienated itself from the role it had long known as a Catholic college. By re-assessing itself in its state of affiliation, it was better able to see just what the role of a Catholic college entailed. The aims of this report then were the maintenance of the standard brand of Catholic educational fare which Assumption felt Western was leading it away from:

1. Abolish, except in a very limited range the credit system, and its multitudinous disadvantages, declaring ourselves a liberal arts college.
2. Teach, as Newman says a university should, all knowledge with a continual eye on its relevance within itself and to life.
3. And finally, to encourage a perpetual critical attitude to the political, financial and cultural

**"Report of the Committee of Aims for Assumption College", Record Group 1, Box 12, File 155, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

bases of the current environment.⁶⁰

How were these theoretical goals to be carried out? Surely independence and autonomy in a university setting would be desired; Assumption had thrived as an independent institution under Basilian control for almost fifty years before affiliation with Western in 1919. These broad points of Catholic educational philosophy though were not enough in and of themselves to justify such a radical measure. In re-assessing their affiliation, Assumption would be looking to ensure that the courses it offered based on Western's curriculum were formulated so as to ensure an infusion of overall relevance in a Catholic perspective. In short:

...we need parallel courses in Literature History, Philosophy and the Sciences, compulsory for all students, constantly related to everyday experience and to one another, so as to comment upon one another continually.⁶¹

With this determination began an ongoing struggle between Assumption and various non-denominational adversaries that would pervade the rest of its history as a teaching institution. This determination was rooted firmly in the notion that to fulfil its mandate as a Catholic college meant having autonomy over its staff, students and curriculum. Western now posed a threat to that autonomy.

⁶⁰"Notes, Spiritual Life (no date)", Record Group 1, Box 12, File 155, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶¹"Minutes, Assumption College Staff Meetings, 1947-54", May 13, 1948, Record Group 1, Box 12, File 159, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

The period of the 1940s had, for the most part, proven to be congenial years of affiliation with the University of Western Ontario under the presidency of Dr. Sherwood Fox and his Registrar, Dr. K.P.R. Neville. Assumption was treated as a natural outpost of Western in the same manner that it treated other satellites such as Alma College in St. Thomas and Waterloo College in Waterloo. Curriculum concessions were made to Assumption such as permission to offer the pre-engineering course (a program not yet offered at Western), and in the same spirit of co-operation, Assumption put up no argument with regards to sending its graduates to London for convocation.²²

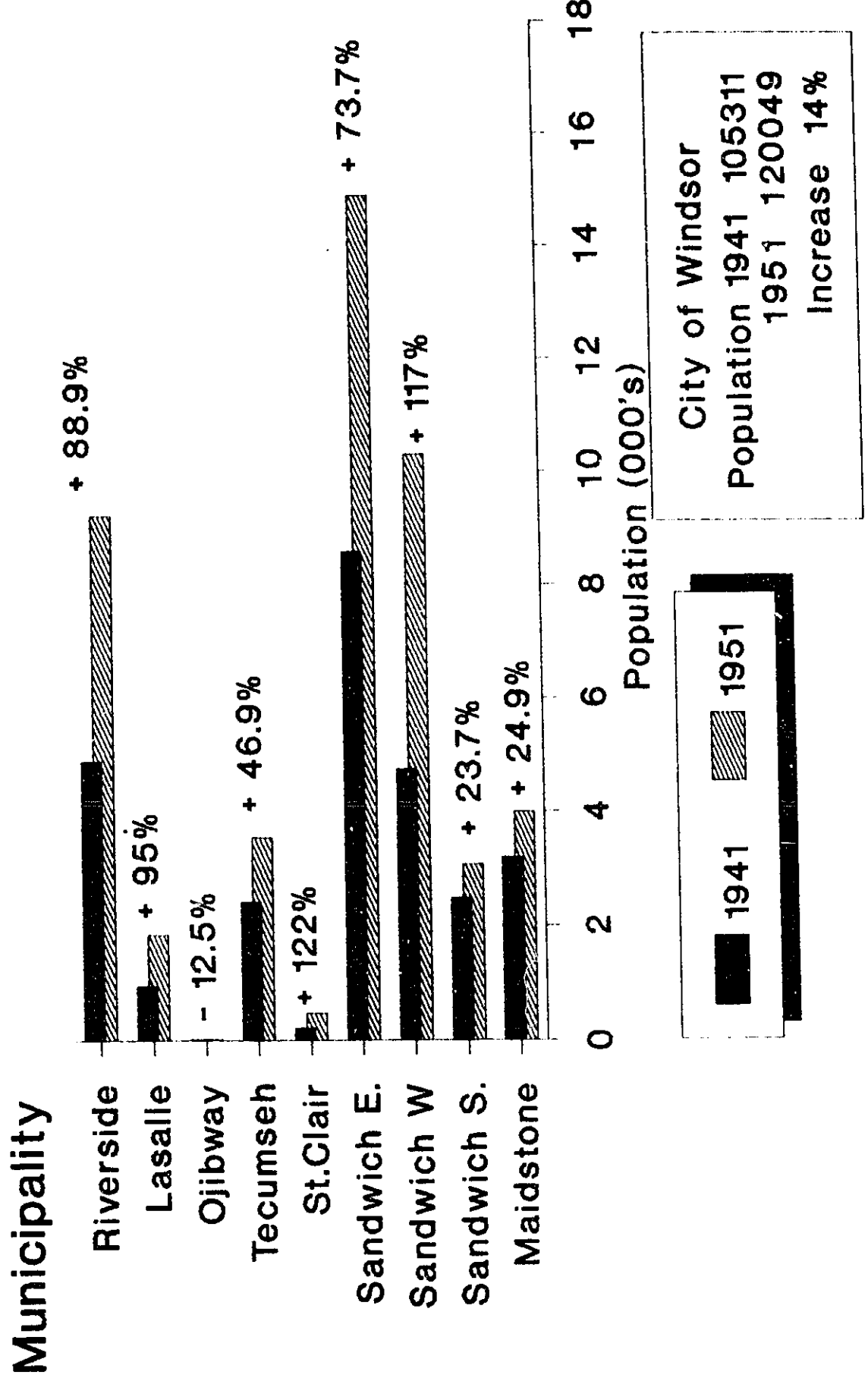
Assumption's heightened demands on the University Senate in the early 1950s and the role played by its new administrator and President, Dr. G. Edward Hall, would change the spirit of this affiliation. From the dean's chair in 1949 however, Fr. LeBel mused over the state of affiliation, showing little of the concern and hesitation that would plague this partnership only a year later:

Assumption has a great future in college possibilities. It is nearly free to shape its own curriculum. Staff expansion and improvement will be a vital demand from year to year. Honour courses in English, French, History and the Liberal Arts begun this year will necessitate a larger and better trained group of professors each coming year.²³

²²Interview with Fr. N. J. Ruth c.s.b., November 12, 1990.

²³"Correspondence, Superior General, 1947-51", October 16, 1949, Record Group 1, Box 13, File 167, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Population Growth Windsor Area 1941-1951



As Assumption strove to handle its increased student body, which had risen to 924 by 1948,⁶⁴ the difference in the new Western administration began to show itself. New academic constraints imposed by Western began to pose a problem to the moral latitude and freedom which the college felt it required in the reshaping of its identity. The setting of curricula and writing of standard examinations had been common practice through the tenure of the affiliation agreement.⁶⁵ Where Assumption was able to provide this Catholic element of instruction and guidance however, had been most clearly shown in its graduate program in philosophy. This program, begun by former Assumption President Fr. Vincent Kennedy in 1928, had received the approval of Western's Senate, and allowed the Basilians to freely guide their graduate theses, mostly dealing in Catholic philosophy. Western's new policy however, as this excerpt from Fr. LeBel's Quarterly Report to the Superior General of the Basilian Fathers, E.J. McCorkell C.S.B. indicates, began the process of squeezing Assumption out of affiliation by constraining this graduate program:

The University of Western Ontario supervised more carefully the Assumption College M.A. theses this year. After considerable discussion by letter and interview, three thesis subjects were changed after considerable work had been

⁶⁴"Dominion Bureau Statistics, 1947-51", Record Group 1, Box 9, File 22, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁵"Assumption College and Western University - Articles of Affiliation", Record Group 1, Box 2, File 41, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

done on the subjects, one thesis was summarily rejected, one was accepted heartily, three were vigorously debated, being passed after a few changes, and one, after a long and heated debate, was not accepted.⁶⁶

Dr. Hall's response to this issue was to quote the minutes of the Senate sub-committee on graduate studies that permitted such close scrutiny.⁶⁷ Clearly Hall was unconcerned with this problem, sparking fears that he, unlike his predecessor, was unwilling to acknowledge Assumption's autonomy in this area:

If exception is made for Philosophy at the graduate level at Assumption, other affiliated colleges will want the same privileges, thus lessening the responsibility of the faculty of graduate studies in its own field.⁶⁸

A vital part of Assumption's identity was now, for the first time in its affiliation with Western, being called into question. As a minor seminary, Catholic doctrine was a vital part of Assumption's academic agenda, and with the expansion of its curriculum in 1919, the matter of Catholic relevancy to subject work, especially in philosophy, was the College's safeguard to maintaining the spirit of the original school. Hence, Fr. LeBel addressed this new problem of non-denominationalism, a policy

⁶⁶"Correspondence, Superior General, 1947-51", June 1950, Record Group 1, Box 13, File 167, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁷Letter of Dr. G.E. Hall to Fr. LeBel, May 27, 1950, (where he cites Western senate meeting of October 24, 1947), President's Papers,, Dr. G.E. Hall, File P-8, "Affiliated Colleges", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

⁶⁸Ibid., President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, File P-8, "Affiliated Colleges", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

that would loom still further ahead for Assumption at different levels as "a threat to the principle upon which affiliation was built,"⁶⁶ namely, Assumption's unique status as a Catholic college.

What Frs. O'Loane and LeBel did not realize at this point was that the very affiliation agreement discussed here had no legality of itself. Discussions between Assumption and Western produced startling results. The agreement, arranged between Fr. Muckle and Drs. Fox and Neville of Western in 1919 had never been signed, meaning that the agreement had been invalid for 34 years.⁷⁶ Here was Assumption's first opportunity to break out of the affiliation if it really desired to do so. A new University of Western Ontario Act (like the several stages the Assumption College Act would go through) was also in the compilation stages in 1950, being scheduled for submission to the government of Ontario for ratification in

⁶⁶"Correspondence, Superior General, 1947-51", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 167, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁶Letter of Fr. O'Loane to Dr. Hall, April 7, 1951, President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, File P-8, "Affiliated Colleges", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario. This fact was discovered by James J. Talman, U.W.O. Librarian, while researching his "Western - 1878-1953" (London: The University of Western Ontario, 1953), and relayed to Dr. Hall.

1952.⁷¹ Clearly Fr. O'Loane saw the need for close scrutiny of the new Act as:

...consequently, affiliation agreements will have to be made in the Act, and that is why review of some of what it means to us has to be made.⁷²

Inherent to Assumption's feeling of suffocation under affiliation were restrictions laid by Western in the late 1940s on the college's attempt to offer extended credit courses in the modern languages. Assumption had been offering non-credit courses in Polish and Ukrainian since 1948,⁷³ as well as one credit course in Russian. It now sought, in 1951, to offer these courses on a credit basis. This proposal was voted down at a meeting of the Western Senate on June 2, 1951.⁷⁴ One member of the Senate, G.E. McGorman, went so far as to accuse Fr. O'Loane and the Basilians of offering the courses in Slavonic languages

⁷¹Letter of Dr. Hall to Fr. O'Loane, April 2, 1951, President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, File P-8, "Affiliated Colleges", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

⁷²"Correspondence, Superior General, 1947-51", undated, Record Group 1, Box 13, File 167, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷³After a review of the course instruction in the Slavonic languages program, the matter of credit approval was forwarded by the Executive of the U.W.O. Senate to a joint committee of University College and Assumption College on December 27, 1950. A note to this effect can be found in President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, "Affiliated Colleges", File P-8, University of Western Ontario Archives, London, Ontario.

⁷⁴Western Senate Minutes, June 2, 1951, in Box "1952-1953", "Board of Governors - Advisory Committee, 1951-1957", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

for the sole purpose of promoting "subversive doctrines."⁷⁶ On a motion of the entire Senate then, the move for credit courses in Polish and Ukrainian at Assumption was killed to the consternation of Fr. O'Loane, and his disgust at being accused of communist promotion.

The next road block facing LeBel and O'Loane was Western's announcement in 1951 of a doubling in the traditional affiliation fee of \$12,500.00 to \$25,000.00.⁷⁶ Further, Western would not allow the affiliated colleges to take this increase out of their tuition fees. This move caused O'Loane to delve deeply into Assumption's archives in order to determine how, according to the affiliation agreement, such a seeming breach of justice could take place. In reviewing these records he discovered that the Faculty Council for the university had not met since 1946.⁷⁷ This council, which counted among its members the registrars for the various colleges, traditionally prepared material for presentation before the University Senate, which in turn would have the power to pass or deny such

⁷⁶Ibid., Western Senate Minutes, in Box "1952-1953", "Board of Governors - Advisory Committee - 1951-57", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario. The "cold war" here was in full swing in post W.W.II North America.

⁷⁶Letter from U.W.O. Comptroller R.B. Willis to Dr. Hall, September 24, 1951, President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, "Affiliated Colleges", File P-8, University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

⁷⁷Letter of Fr. O'Loane to Dr. Hall, October 10, 1951, President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, "Assumption College", File P-3, University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

proposals. O'Loane was also disappointed with the lack of representation offered here to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences:

...there is too the further disadvantage that the Faculty of Arts and Sciences is deprived of a united voice in the affairs of the University, especially by comparison with many of the close knit faculties.⁷⁶

The seeds of discontent then were sown early for Assumption in these discussions with Western. The Windsor school though possessed in Fr. LeBel a leader with foresight and initiative who would be well suited to the task ahead of him. Obtaining a university charter however would be no simple move. It would involve the collaboration of many different individuals on different fronts, and then perhaps a touch of divine intervention in order to convince first the Bishop of London, and then the General Council of the Basilian Fathers that independence for the college was viable, especially at a point in its history when prior commitments to new projects were already taxing the order.

As the Bishop of London, John Kidd held Assumption College under his jurisdictional and pastoral care. By 1948 the seeming rivalry between the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich and the Bishop of London that had sparked the heated and much lauded battles of a previous era were gone.⁷⁷ John Kidd was a far cry

⁷⁶Ibid., President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, "Assumption College", File P-3, University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

⁷⁷For further detail on this situation, known now as "Fallon vs. Forrester", see Michael Power, Assumption College: The making of a Modern School, 1890-1919 (Windsor, 1989).

from Michael Francis Fallon who had preceded him to the See, and who had battled then Assumption President Fr. Frank Forster and the Basilians of Assumption over the moving of the college to London. In the intervening years he was able to create yet another Catholic college within St. Peter's Seminary, and the harsh battles resulting in the Basilian's steadfast victory in 1919 were seemingly forgotten. Kidd, really an elder statesman in diocesan affairs, was quite content with the absentee control he held over Assumption. He had seen it weather many storms through the Depression years, and unlike his predecessor, he was more than happy to give the Basilians a free hand to guide its destiny. More immediate diocesan affairs filled his agenda, and owing to declining health and increasing age, he had been given a Coadjutor Bishop in the form of John Cody. Thus removed, Kidd would not easily be sold on the idea of independent university status for Assumption, and so the focus of this movement fell upon his coadjutor.

Cody was a relative youngster of fifty-one when he succeeded Kidd to the See of London in 1950,⁸⁸ and he had been aware for quite some time of the growing ferment in Windsor. He knew that for independence to be achieved at Assumption, canon law dictated that diocesan approval was an absolute must. Sensing that Bishop Kidd was on his way out, and that he would be unmoving on this point, it was the coadjutor who laid the

⁸⁸"Correspondence, Bishop of London, 1946-52", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 92, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

groundwork for this great endeavour. Cody's first move was to contact the Apostolic Delegate of the Roman church in Ottawa, in order to sway Bishop Kidd to the Assumption cause:

When I last visited Windsor, which was several years ago, the suggestion was put forward of erecting a Catholic university in order to provide higher educational facilities to our Catholic youth. Time and again I have had the opportunity to take this up with several authorities who are all agreed upon its desirability and paramount importance. I make bold to suggest then that this project should not suffer any further delay, and that positive steps should be taken to have Assumption College raised to the status of a Catholic university.*¹

The delegate however wrote to Cody on the same day in order to remark on the nature of the movement, and how Kidd must be dealt with carefully in order to permit this plan to succeed:

...but I trust you will understand that it is rather delicate for me to approach directly the other parties mentioned in your letter. It is up to the Bishop of London to make the steps and advocate his own concerns.**

With the episcopal support of the coadjutor and soon to be Bishop of London, along with that of the official representative of the pope in Canada, one large stumbling block was removed. Clearly Assumption was a denominational institution with a Catholic mandate for university status. Out of this period of confusion as to its role as a Catholic college,

*¹Letter of Apostolic Delegate to Bishop Kidd, July 1, 1949, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 92, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**²Letter of Apostolic Delegate to Bishop Cody, July 1, 1949, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 92, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

salvation and self knowledge would hopefully come with the equally yet-to-be-defined status of a Catholic university. Coincidentally enough, this would come at a point when the Church itself could play a role in gaining for Assumption some much needed free publicity for its cause. In 1950 Pope Pius XII rendered the long awaited "ex cathedra" definition of the dogma of the Assumption of Mary, body and soul, into heaven.³³ This long held precept of the Catholic Church allowed the pope to speak definitively "from the chair" on matters of infallible truth, a rarely used article of papal discretion.

The rarity of such dogmatic definitions made this one all the more timely for this period in Assumption's history. Mary's Assumption held particular significance for the college, as it considered itself to be under her spiritual guidance. In September of 1950 then, Fr. O'Loane sought Bishop Cody's counsel in order to see what might be done to gain for Assumption some special recognition as an independent institution on this particular day. Ironically enough, Cody placed O'Loane in touch with the Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Montini (later Pope Paul VI) who would guide these proceedings. He suggested a "spiritual bouquet,"³⁴ or the presentation of a special document outlining

³³"Programmes, etc., in Honour of the Assumption, 1950", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 52, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁴Letter of Monsignor Montini to Fr. O'Loane, September 11, 1950," Programmes, etc., Mary's Day 1942, and in Honour of the Assumption, 1950", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 52, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

the basic precepts and facts of Assumption College to the Holy Father. Receiving the pope's special acknowledgement and blessing on the school would be an act of its own definition, as it strove to survive as a Catholic college, and later, to exist as an independent Catholic university in the midst of future trials and confusions to that role.

After a series of immigration problems (one involving O'Loane's temporary deportation from the United States on October 11, 1950 - due to a time lapse in his American naturalization papers),⁸⁸ Fr. O'Loane left for Rome in October of 1950. His travelling companion on this excursion was Bishop John Michael Nelligan, titular bishop of Fenice, who had joined the staff of Assumption in 1947 as a professor of history. Upon their personal delivery of the "spiritual bouquet," Assumption's envoy received the official papal assent to special patronage under Mary during this particular year. They then returned to Canada, where a number of spiritual exercises were held. This process culminated on November 1, 1950 in a special procession and benediction in honour of Our Lady of the Assumption, administered by Bishop Cody himself.⁸⁹

Assumption College, given her position as a religious institution managed by a religious order, was able to deal swift

⁸⁸Seizure Notice, U.S. Department of Immigration, October 11, 1950, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 52, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸⁹Ambassador Yearbook (Windsor: Assumption College, 1951), p. 90.

justice to its denominational identity. The next problem would be with the increasing lay element within the Assumption community. Although the full time teaching staff of Assumption at this time was predominantly Basilian, the remaining 35% of the faculty, when combined with other lay-dominated positions in the college such as librarians etc., provided Assumption with the largest non-clerical population in its history.^{•7} Any attempt at de-affiliation then would have to include the sentiments of the lay staff, for which Frs. O'Loane and LeBel consulted the "Confidential Report on Assumption College", submitted by Classics Professor Desire Barath to the president in 1948.^{••}

After what he refers to as "private consultations" with other of the lay faculty members, Professor Barath concluded that as a result of the college's rapid growth in the period of the 1940s, and despite increases in lay staff, lay concerns were still not being adequately dealt with by the administration. Here he took the opportunity to highlight many of the confusions, problems and contradictions inherent to the college's new makeup during this period of change:

In many of our lectures and speeches we have implied and stated that the College is an aggressively and even exclusively Catholic institution, yet we admitted non-Catholic students, asked for them, and even made printed

^{•7}"Lists of Staff Appointments, 1946-51", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 71, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

^{••}Professor Desire Barath, "Confidential Report on Assumption College", 1948, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 6, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

declarations and commitments as if the College were non-denominational. We work on improving our relations with Western, and then we strain our ties to the breaking point. We publicly condemn capitalism as the detestable sore in our life, and then we appeal to capitalists for funds. We openly support in our lectures the labour unions even in their errors, and then put them on our committees just to be ignored systematically as happened during the "drive". We lecture in favour of new radical parties, and then we appeal for municipal, provincial and Dominion funds to the heads of the old-line parties.**

These opinions, not to be taken in opposition to the "Catholicity" of the college, rather show the great confusion ongoing within the ranks of the laity at Assumption, which furthered this seeming identity crisis. Clearly, Assumption was not keeping up with the times. Lay staff members were being hired at a steadily increasing rate, yet they had no presence or voice in Assumption's administrative core. Certainly though for the time being, this lack of an identity could not be dealt with until Assumption had gained its independence, and would finally

**Professor Desire Barath, "Confidential Report on Assumption College", 1948, Record Group 1, Bcx 9, File 6, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario. In this report Prof. Barath touches on the confusion felt by the laity at Assumption in terms of a changing school in the midst of an economically declining city. "The Battelle Memorial Institute Report of Economic Development Opportunities for Greater Windsor - Canada's 10th Largest Community", submitted to Murray A. Elder, Industrial Commissioner for the Greater Windsor area on March 18, 1958 stresses the great changes undergone by the city during this period, and its potential for future development. Problems such as the Ford move from Windsor to Oakville contributed to the economic decline of the 1950s. A consolidation of the problems discussed by Prof. Barath then would be seen by Fr. LeBel in "Assumption University", which would fit perfectly into the revitalization plans for the community.

be in a position to include laymen in key administrative positions.

Having considered several sides to the issue of independence, LeBel and O'Loane began their most arduous task yet, that of convincing the Basilian General Council of the necessity of a university charter for Assumption. It was O'Loane's intention to present a complex plan which outlined this general need. Implicit here was the solution to the problem of the college's identity as brought up by Professor Barath, as well as that of overall relevancy in the course material in a Catholic sense as espoused by the Basilians themselves:

The charter is the legal authorization to teach independently and freely what seems best to those in charge of the institution.**

For the time being however, Assumption's identity was firmly Basilian with some lay support. Any negotiations to become independent would take place at the administrative level among a core group of Basilians, including Fr. LeBel, his future Registrar Fr. Peter Swan, Fr. Dan Mulvihill, Fr. E.J. Lajeunesse, Fr. N.J. Ruth, the future Dean of Arts and Science, and Fr. C.P. Crowley.** These men made up the nucleus of Assumption's administrative team who were united in solemn vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, and a firm resolve to make Assumption

**"Brief re: Charter on University Status, Submitted to Basilian General Council", January 25, 1952, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**Minutes of the Local Basilian Council, February 7, 1952, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 90, Oversize Box 1, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

College a university. Indeed, all discussions on the matter of de-affiliation in the future would be held "in camera," and only passing reference to the move was made at staff meetings where lay staff were present:

He (Fr. LeBel) stated that before this school year ends, developments will likely take place which will have tremendous significance and impact for the future of Assumption.**

As in the case of the M.A. program in philosophy, autonomy was a much sought after commodity for Assumption. The need to emphasize a relevant philosophy or theology was seen by the Basilians as being implicit to their role as Catholic educators. Although this autonomy already existed in theory for undergraduate level courses such as Religious Knowledge and Philosophy, Western's control of the curriculum for programs in History, Economics, English and Sociology for example, often tended towards a strong secularist bias.** This factor seriously hampered the college in its efforts to imbue its students with a uniquely Catholic perspective.

The second point that Fr. O'Loane would make to his Basilian Superiors dealt with a further complication that had arisen with Assumption's graduate program in philosophy. The Graduate Faculty of the University of Western Ontario was now

**Minutes of the Assumption College Staff Meetings - 1952, December 9, 1952, Record Group 1, Box 10, File 90, Oversize Box 1, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**"Assumption College and Western University, Articles of Affiliation", Record Group 1, Box 2, File 41, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

imposing a residency criterion on all graduate students, requiring them to carry out their studies in London.** This new situation would be intolerable for Assumption, as the highly secularized makeup of Western's department of philosophy provided no one competent to teach the Catholic scholastic philosophy that was thriving at Assumption. Further, this imposed the inherent danger to Assumption's graduate program of removing its only graduate students to London. This would virtually close the door on over twenty years of successful graduate study and instruction at Assumption. Any further hopes of expanding Assumption's program of graduate studies into other fields would be dashed as "only when graduate work is competently directed by Catholics can the best results be obtained."**

O'Loane next referred to the problems faced by Assumption's Slavonic languages program. This situation was far more pervasive than Western shutting down one program at one of its affiliate colleges on groundless fears of the promotion of subversive doctrines. Western was also killing other programs that Assumption was either expanding or trying to start. For example, the heavily industrialized nature of the Windsor area provided numerous opportunities for engineers, yet no provision

**"Brief re: Charter on University Status Submitted to the Basilian General Council", January 25, 1952, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**"Brief re: Charter on University Status Submitted to the Basilian General Council", January 25, 1952, p. 2, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

for degree training existed. Assumption's over twenty years experience in pre-engineering instruction through the University of Detroit was however proving to be beneficial for the college. Assumption students were proceeding to receive advanced standing at many of the more prestigious engineering schools, including McGill, the University of Toronto and the University of Michigan.⁶⁶ This program too seemed destined for the chopping block. In what must be considered a major oversight on the parts of both Assumption and Western, Assumption had never received official Senate approval for this course.⁶⁷ In the amending of the affiliation agreement then, this program, at least in the opinions of Frs. O'Loane and LeBel, seemed destined for non-inclusion.

Western was also showing its reluctance to approve other programs that Assumption felt necessary to provide for the people of Windsor. Courses in laboratory technology, law, education and business administration to mention a few, were all refused to Assumption due to Western's inability to directly supervise their instruction. As well, this blocking of Assumption's expanded academic agenda was exacerbated by an older issue, long bemoaned by Assumption representatives on Western's Senate. The usurpation of the authority of the Faculty Council

⁶⁶"University of Detroit, Engineering Co-op, 1951", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 35, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁷Dr. Hall to Fr. O'Loane, 1951, President's Papers, Dr. G.E. Hall, P-8, "Affiliated Colleges", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

by University College eliminated the voices of the representatives of each arts college, who were to sit on this council and determine the facts of any expansion plans.**

Supplemental to Frs. O'Loane and LeBel convincing their own order of the need to pursue an independent university charter for Assumption, would be an outline of their immediate needs. This would involve consideration of matters of finance, space, manpower, and the economic viability of the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich, and their ability to meet certain goals without overtaxing the entire order. Such a move at this time, should it fail, might have proved disastrous for the Basilians. In 1950, the university preparatory school, St. Michael's College School, located on its traditional grounds of Clover Hill on the campus of St. Michael's College, was being relocated to a new site at 1515 Bathurst Street in Toronto, just north of St. Clair Avenue.** Prior to this, the Basilians had started St. John Fisher College in Rochester New York in 1948, and the University of St. Thomas More, Houston Texas, in 1947. Such ventures involved risks and strains on the Order, as large numbers of Basilians were required to staff both of these locations. O'Loane began promoting Assumption as a stable academic environment that had been thriving under Basilian care for over

**"Brief re: Charter on University Status Submitted to the Basilian General Council", 1951, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**James Hanrahan c.s.b., The Basilian Fathers (1822-1972) (Toronto: The Basilian Press, 1973).

eighty years, and should this opportunity not be taken it might be lost forever: "If we fail to act when we have the opportunity, some other group might anticipate us."¹⁰⁰

The financial prospects for a university charter in Windsor were made even more precarious by virtue of Assumption's status as a denominational institution. When the Fathers of Confederation ceded jurisdiction over educational affairs to the provinces, this spelled the end for what small contributions were made to denominational colleges such as Assumption and Queen's in Kingston.¹⁰¹ At the first session of the Legislature of the new Province of Ontario in 1867, great attacks were made on the funding of such denominational schools, causing Premier Sandfield Macdonald to enact a provisional policy against the practice.¹⁰² Subsequent administrations maintained this policy, and contrary to Fr. O'Loane's wishful thinking, it would not be circumvented.

¹⁰⁰Fr. LeBel would express these same sentiments in 1962 in confronting the provincial government over the matter of Assumption University's future. At this time Fr. LeBel's hand was forced as Premier Robart's government made it clear that a public university would be created for Windsor should the Basilians decide not to let Assumption go entirely public. give reference.

¹⁰¹D.D. Calvin, Queen's University of Kingston (Kingston: Queen's University, 1941), p. 75. Calvin refers here to several grants of as much as \$5,000 made periodically to Queen's between 1850 and 1867 by the provincial government. Fr. N.J. Ruth also maintains that Assumption College receives such grants between 1857 and 1870 before eradicating its early college program (interview, May 21, 1991).

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 75.

Reacting to recent statements from the Premier of Ontario, Leslie Frost, and his desire to offer financial support to institutions of higher learning,¹⁰³ Fr. O'Loane mistakenly thought he saw a way around Ontario's policy of only funding non-denominational schools. In discussing the matter of financing for this new project, O'Loane was under the impression that Frost's government would make an exception in the case of Assumption:

We think that the government of Ontario would perhaps be anxious to do something for Catholics on the university level even if politically it is afraid to do anything at the Separate School level.¹⁰⁴

Fr. O'Loane was clearly responsible for creating a false sense of financial security should the new university get off the ground. The implied promise of provincial funding that Assumption never received imbued Fr. O'Loane with the confidence to present an Assumption College as fully capable of surviving on its own:

¹⁰³Franklin A. Walker, Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario Vol. II (Toronto, 1985), 484-85. Letters to the Basilian Superior General from Fr. O'Loane indicate that his optimism at Assumption receiving provincial grants was furthered by the 1951 release of the "Massey Report". This federal report issued by future Governor General Vincent Massey suggested federal endowment of various Arts and education projects. Although possibly perceived by O'Loane as indicative of a future provincial trend, this report in no way reflected Premier Frost's policies on funding denominational post secondary schools in Ontario.

¹⁰⁴"Brief re: Charter on University Status Submitted by Assumption College to the Basilian General Council", 1952, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 23, p. 7, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Assumption College is already a de facto university faculty of Arts. We prepare our students for graduation in all years and all departments. Western contributes nothing in a positive way to this educational process (save the prestige of their degree).¹⁰⁵

O'Loane did not base his expectations for provincial funding strictly on Frost's apparent willingness to be fair to both public and denominational institutions.¹⁰⁶ Other schools such as Queen's University, Kingston, had undergone a similar struggle for independence amidst financial turmoil in the 19th century.

The Ontario government had been attempting to affiliate Queen's, then a theological college for the Church of Scotland, with King's College in the University of Toronto since 1845.¹⁰⁷ When Queen's formally rejected this attempt to draw public funds into the school in 1891, all seemed lost for the small college struggling to maintain its autonomy. Queen's, as Assumption would do shortly, argued to no avail that it was hardly a denominational college in its student body, where only 46% were Presbyterian and 36% members of the Church of Scotland.¹⁰⁸ Salvation arrived in 1893 when the new

¹⁰⁵"Brief re: Charter on University Status Submitted to Basilian General Council" March 7, 1952, p. 7, Record Group 1, Box 9, File 24, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰⁶Franklin A. Walker, Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario Vol. I (Toronto, 1985), pp. 484-485. Franklin argues that Frost was willing to make more equitable arrangements for Catholic educational needs.

¹⁰⁷D.D. Calvin, Queen's University of Kingston (Kingston: Queen's University, 1941), p. 57.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 75.

university announced it would avoid its denominational problems by requesting provincial funds for teaching courses in the sciences. The Ontario government agreed to this plan, and in 1893, Queen's established "The School of Mining and Agriculture" with an endowment fund left for Chairs in physics and mineralogy, and strong financial support from the government of Ontario, which found a way to aid denominational universities.

No such plan existed in the 1950s, however, to alleviate the financial necessities of Assumption College should it achieve university status. Premier Frost and his government were not only perturbed by Assumption's denominational status, but by its strong contingent of American students. The 30-40% American component here raised questions as to the feasibility of the province funding a new university in Windsor:

...it is still questionable whether an institution which has the tradition of serving such a large proportion of foreign born students should be encouraged to expect provincial grants.¹⁰⁰

Without provincial funding an independent Assumption University faced certain ominous expenditures. The addition of new programs (in addition to the Slavonic languages and the preparatory professional programs) would require expenditures for increased staff and classroom space. The most urgent necessity was a new library to replace the one located in Dillon Hall. Such a new

¹⁰⁰Letter of Hon. W.J. Dunlop, Minister of Education to Dana Porter, Attorney General, February 9, 1953, in "Frost Administration - General Correspondence", "Assumption College - 1952-61", Record Group 3, Box 6, Province of Ontario Archives, Toronto, Ontario.

building would cost \$300,000.00 in 1952, with an annual expenditure of \$10-\$15,000.00 on new books and periodicals to supplement the 40,000 now filling the old library.¹¹⁰ By far though, the most expensive inclusion in this plan for independence would be the construction of a new high school building to facilitate a separation of the college and high school. This separation would be modelled on the one between St. Michael's College and High School years earlier,¹¹¹ but for the moment was only being contemplated.

New staff for the proposed university were also foreseen by Fr. O'Loane, and assessed in terms of quality required rather than sheer quantity of new professors. After consultation with Fr. LeBel over staff requirements for the upcoming 1952 academic year, and anticipating at least the partial implementation of its expanded curriculum, he saw the new university as requiring: six Ph.D.s, three M.A.s and/or M.Sc.s. one B.Eng., and an additional librarian.¹¹² These were expected to cost an additional \$25,000.00. With this groundwork in place then, Fr. O'Loane's work was done at Assumption College. The pitfalls of his faulty financial forecasting would await

¹¹⁰"Minutes, Educational Policy Committee, 1951", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 40, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹¹¹"Minutes, Educational Policy Committee, 1951", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 40, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹¹²"Minutes, Assumption College Staff Meetings", December 9, 1952, Record Group 1, Box 1, File 90, Oversize Box 1, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

his successor, as he stepped down as both president and superior of Assumption in 1952, at the end of his six year term.

Chapter Two

UNIVERSITY FORMULATION AND ESSEX COLLEGE

As Fr. O'Loane's tenure as president of Assumption College closed in 1952, there would be no surprises at the announcement of his successor. Given a free hand in the administration of the College, Fr. LeBel had been well groomed for his presidency, which would possibly be the most illustrious in the history of the college. Eugene Carlisle LeBel had persevered through his period of post-war apprenticeship to meet head on at the age of fifty three, the greatest undertaking of his life.

LeBel's first road block to de-affiliation would be the Province of Ontario and Premier Leslie Frost. With post war university student growth over and no substantial future growth expected, Frost was not eager to see a new university in Windsor. The matter of Assumption applying for an amendment to its present status came as no surprise to Frost,¹ but he saw no reason why

¹Letter of Leslie Frost to C.P. McTague, February 17, 1952, "Frost Administration, General Correspondence", Record Group 3, Box 6, File 11G, Province of Ontario Archives, Toronto, Ontario. Here premier Frost informed Mr. McTague that he was anticipating similar applications for Private Bills status from St. Jerome's College, Kitchener, St. Patrick's College, Ottawa and Sacred Heart College, Sudbury.

the new powers gained through the act could not be held in abeyance:

I would hope, of course, that it would not be necessary to use the powers in the Bill owing to the fact that an arrangement satisfactory to everyone could be made to perpetuate the affiliation with the U.W.O.²

This initial reluctance to see the affiliation agreement dissolve had more to do with the very biased information that Frost and W.J. Dunlop, Minister of Education, were getting with regard to the state of relations between the two institutions than anything else. Dunlop especially felt that a fledgling Assumption University would not survive:

It cannot be forgotten that part of the difficulty in the present affiliation arises from persistent belief in the university (Western) that Assumption College is reluctant to adhere to university standards of academic achievement. The officials at Assumption indignantly deny the allegation, but the differences of opinion on this point will be no less acute if the affiliation with the U.W.O. is broken.³

Fr. LeBel and the Basilians, however, remained undaunted in their attempts to push through the Act that they saw as crucial to their future.

Although the Basilian agenda for de-affiliation was complete, Premier Frost's opposition to the plan would delay its proceeding. In February of 1952, the Premier informed Dr. Hall

²Letter of Leslie Frost to C.P. McTague, "Frost Administration, General Correspondence", Record Group 3, Box 6, File 11G, Province of Ontario Archives, Toronto, Ontario.

³Letter of W.J. Dunlop to Dana Porter, February 9, 1952, "Frost Administration, General Correspondence", Record Group 3, Box 6, File 11G, Province of Ontario Archives, Toronto, Ontario.

through Dunlop, that he wished Hall to set up a meeting with Fr. LeBel in order to prevent this action.⁴

Dr. Hall had his own reasons for not wanting to see Assumption leave the Western collegial "family". Aside from Premier Frost's reluctance to create a new university, Dr. Hall saw Assumption as serving a vital role for London Catholics wishing to attend a denominational college,⁵ but he went into the fall negotiations over the de-affiliation proposal, with his own list of grievances.⁶

⁴Letter of Dr. Hall to W.J. Dunlop, February 19, 1952, and in Frost to D.B. Weldon, July 17, 1952, where the Premier indicates his desire for Assumption College and the University of Western Ontario to work out their problems such that no de-affiliation is necessary, "President's Papers", Dr. G.E. Hall, File P-3, "Assumption College", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections", London, Ontario.

⁵The void left by Assumption's de-affiliation would be filled by a new Catholic college in London in 1956. Concerned by the lack of a local college to serve the needs of lay Catholics, Dr. Hall approached Bishop Cody in 1952 to see if he would be willing to have St. Peter's Seminary, also affiliated with Western, fill this role. Concerned over such close proximity of seminary and lay students, Cody then authorized and spearheaded the move to create Christ the King College.

⁶Financial arrangements with Assumption had been a problem, even an embarrassment of late to Dr. Hall and Western. Hall in particular was piqued by Assumption's unwillingness to accept the affiliation fee that had been passed by the Board of Governors only after gaining approval from the heads of the affiliated colleges. Further, Western's comptroller, R.B. Willis informed Dr. Hall that Assumption was applying for federal grants through the university for sixty students who were in actual attendance at St. Michael's College in Toronto. This practice was in keeping with an arrangement made in 1932 between then President Fr. MacDonald and Dr. Neville of Western, whereby Basilian Scholastics registered at Assumption could periodically study elsewhere, as long as federal grants were not being applied for at both institutions. See "President's Papers", Dr. G.E. Hall, "Assumption College", File P-3, "January-February, 1952", University of Western Ontario Archives, "Special Collections",

The fall talks with Dr. Hall were short and unfruitful. Fr. LeBel resurrected the same problems he had cited before, and Hall was no more sympathetic than he had been. The Basilians of Assumption then reached a consensus that independence should be sought for the college, and a public announcement to that effect was issued on December 29, 1952.⁷

From the point of view of the local Basilian Fathers of Sandwich, breaking away from Western and seeking an independent university charter was no longer at issue. The matter now was to make a case for university incorporation on behalf of Assumption College on both economic and theoretical grounds to the two bodies most directly concerned: the General Council of the Basilian Fathers of Toronto, and the Province of Ontario.

The problems posed by de-affiliation would be potentially disastrous for Assumption should the college be unable to mobilize all of its resources and generate enough civic interest in the proposed break to make the "Assumption University" plan viable. Strong leadership and an understanding of what its new identity would be as a Catholic university would be necessary to convince Basilian sceptics, already concerned with staffing and financing more established universities, that through Assumption, Windsor could become a "university town" along the lines of London or Toronto.

London, Ontario.

⁷Lawrence K. Shook c.s.b., Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English Speaking Canada (Toronto, 1971), p. 289.

When he assumed the president's chair in the summer of 1952, Fr. LeBel began to consider the steps necessary to transform this relatively small, liberal arts college into an independent Catholic university. The undertaking was not without precedent. In North America there were numerous examples, mostly Jesuit achievements such as Georgetown University in Washington, and the nearby University of Detroit. The intellectual foundations of Catholic universities in the twentieth century rested on the writings of John Henry Cardinal Newman.⁸ This nineteenth century English convert to Catholicism subsequently entered the priesthood and rose directly to the cardinalate. Although more popularly known as the father of what has become a twentieth century phenomenon in the creation of various "Newman Clubs", social groupings for Catholics on the grounds of denominational and non-denominational university campuses alike, Cardinal Newman has been praised and invoked as one of the great theorizers on the matter of Catholic university education and formulation.

In 1851 Fr. Newman was appointed rector of the fledgling Catholic University of Ireland.⁹ He had left the more familiar setting of his native Oxford at the behest of his friend Dr. Paul Cullen, later himself cardinal archbishop of Drogheda and primate of all Ireland. Newman's preparation for the

⁸John Henry Cardinal Newman, The Idea of a University (New York: Image Books, 1959), p. ii.

⁹Ibid., p. ii.

position of rector and his experiences in Ireland took the shape of a series of formal lectures published in whole in 1858,¹⁰ after resigning his post as a self professed failure. The resulting book however, The Idea of a University, became the anthem of worldwide Catholic university education.

First and foremost on Fr. Newman's agenda was a notion not necessarily catered to by the current bodies of university academia: that universities in general were to be responsible for the dissemination of knowledge, rather than the pursuit of higher academic goals. A total concern for a student's entire educational needs was Newman's key to a successful Catholic university, a view that Fr. LeBel would build on in formulating the new Assumption University:

The view taken of a university in these discourses is the following: that it is a place of teaching universal knowledge. This implies that its object is, on the one hand intellectual not moral; and on the other that it is the diffusion and extension of knowledge rather than the advancement. If its object were philosophical discovery, I do not see why a university should have students; if religious training, I do not see how it can be the seat of literature and science.¹¹

Fr. LeBel's memoirs indicate that he was well versed in the teachings of Cardinal Newman.¹² The path that he would follow

¹⁰Ibid., p. ii.

¹¹John Henry Cardinal Newman, The Idea of a University (New York: Image Books, 1959), p. 7.

¹²"Report, Curriculum of a Catholic Liberal College, University of Notre Dame", Record Group 1, Box 10, file 34, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

in building the college as the seat of university education for southwestern Ontario where previously none had existed, would strive to attain this objective of teaching universal knowledge. Catholics and non-Catholics alike should be engaged in this business of university instruction, with the Basilian motto of Teach me Goodness, Discipline, and Knowledge as the key to its new identity.

A "student promotions committee" was assembled to ensure that the "new look" Assumption would continue to thrive. This committee proposed a number of suggestions aimed at enhancing the Catholic composition of Assumption's student base. Firstly, a promotional campaign would be organized whereby the benefits of a university education could be promoted, through pamphlets and slides, by Assumption faculty.¹³ Similar promotional activity would be aimed at American alumnae too in Detroit, and through discussions with priests at nearby Wayne State University and the University of Michigan in the hopes of diverting students to Assumption.¹⁴ Similarly, promotional literature would be sent to alumnae teaching at the high school level exhorting them to encourage their students into pursuing advanced studies, where previously this might not have been a

¹³This would be arranged through speaking engagements in the various Windsor and Essex County parishes, clubs and schools. See "Information Sheets, Assumption College, Information for Applicants", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 6, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁴Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 10, File 6, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

consideration. Fr. LeBel saw the mandate of this new institution as not only to attract new students, which had not been a problem of late, but to attract approximately 800 of the "right" kind of students, Catholic and otherwise, who were willing to participate in this denominational approach to education.¹⁵

The difficulty of attracting both Catholic and non-Catholic students to an essentially Catholic school posed a threat to the "Catholic relevancy" that had been a key motive in the break with Western. For an analysis of how important this "relevance" was to the concept of a Catholic university, once again Cardinal Newman was the best source.

Newman, in stressing the independent nature of all disciplines and subject matter, maintained that a general interconnection did exist, especially for the successful running of a Catholic university:

In a word, religious truth is not only a portion but a condition of general knowledge. To blot it out is nothing short, if I may so speak, of unravelling the web of university teaching. It is, according to the Greek proverb, to take the spring from out of the year; it is to imitate the preposterous proceeding of those tragedians who represented a drama with the omission of its principal part.¹⁶

¹⁵Predictions and sentiments for the future can be found in the minutes of the June 1952 staff meeting in "Minutes, Staff Meetings, 1947-1952", Record Group 1, Box 12, File 159, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁶John Henry Cardinal Newman, The Idea of a University (New York: Image Books, 1959), p. 103.

Assumption's large non-Catholic population posed a potential threat to Newman's philosophy, and the success or failure of its implementation would determine to a great degree the identity that the school would take in the future. For the time being however, Fr. LeBel was able to assure his order of a strong student base in terms of numbers for a new university.¹⁷

The physical changes presented by Assumption to the Basilian General Council were far less theoretical, far more practical, and in most cases came to fruition more quickly. As Assumption was now definitely moving in the direction of incorporation as a Catholic university, its original role as a minor seminary, would be further de-emphasized. Beginning in 1952, the high school, occupying what is now Dillon Hall, was to give up its library to the new University.¹⁸ The grade school, which at this time only included the junior high levels of grades 7 and 8, would be phased out, one after the other, by September of 1953. In eliminating the grade school, the more serious problem of separating the high school and the college could be undertaken to free more space for the latter.

Separation of the high school and college departments would only alleviate Assumption's spatial requirements temporarily. It would still be incapable of accommodating the

¹⁷"Information Sheets, Geographical Distribution etc., 1950", Record Group 1, Box 12, File 163, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁸Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 10, File 12, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

larger numbers of students that would be attracted to the university. Its temporary classrooms, such as those in the airforce huts, were both unsafe and unsatisfactory. Fr. LaBel predicted Assumption's immediate needs as:

1. A science and classroom building.
2. A social science building, which would be multifaceted, including an auditorium, gymnasium and a cafeteria.
3. Several dormitory units to supplement the space in the College, accommodating roughly 40 students each.
4. An infirmary which would be the only building allocated for use by both the High School and College departments.¹⁹

Staffing this expanded university plan would also require some changes in the current administrative structure. Basilians would still continue to teach at both the university and high school levels wherever possible. They would live as before, under one superior, and teach where assigned. Basilian Scholastics would continue in the long entrenched Assumption tradition of teaching high school while working towards degrees. The greater change would come in the area of administration. Rather than maintain the more generalized central administration that adequately served a smaller school, Assumption College and High School would have their own separate administrations, under the direction of separate superiors and bursars. These plans were supported by

¹⁹"Information Sheets, Building, Development Plans for Assumption College, 1952", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 12, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

the Basilian staff at Assumption, and approved by the Basilian Superior General in Toronto, Fr. E.J. McCorkell. By 1952 along with eight additional priests for the teaching staff, the number of Basilians on staff reached forty.²⁰

With these plans firmly entrenched, Fr. LeBel with the support of Fr. McCorkell and the rest of the Basilian Order, formally approached the Province of Ontario. A team from Assumption was dispatched, including LeBel and his Registrar Fr. P.J.M. Swan, to amend the original Assumption College Act of 1858. The model used for this change of status was the Ottawa Association for the Advancement of Learning, which had undergone a similar incorporation in 1952.²¹ This Act, later titled the Carleton College Act, empowered Carleton with university powers after it had itself been incorporated as an affiliate of the University of Ottawa in 1943. In keeping with the tenets of the Carleton plan, Assumption sought specifically:

1. Its own University Senate.
2. All of those considered to be "University powers", namely:
 - (a) The power to establish and maintain such faculties, schools, institutes, departments, chairs, and courses of instruction as may be deemed by its Board of Governors.
 - (b) The power to confer University degrees and honorary degrees and awards in any and all

²⁰Lawrence K. Shook c.s.b., Catholic Post Secondary Education in English Speaking Canada (Toronto, 1969), p. 288.

²¹This Act is found in "Correspondence etc., Hamilton College, Charters etc., 1947-53", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 83, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

branches of learning.²²

Little consideration was given at this time to the fact that the model was the "Carleton College" and not "Carleton University" Act, and the wheels of independence were thus put in motion.

The new Act was introduced to the Ontario Legislature by William Murdoch, M.P.P. for Essex South, and received first reading on February 17, 1953.²³ It was then sent to a Private Bills Committee where it was discussed at length on March 2. Invited to speak on behalf of the College were: the Hon. Charles P. McTague, legal counsel for Assumption College, Col. the Hon. William Griesenger, M.P.P. for Windsor-Sandwich, as well as Frs. LeBel and Swan. The Act received second reading on March 13, and then final royal assent on April 2, 1953. Only one change was made to Assumption's version of the Carleton College Act. Where the Basilians had asked for immunity from expropriation of their university property, this was amended to read that such expropriation could only occur with municipal consent. Affiliation with the University of Western Ontario officially ended on July 1, 1953.²⁴ August examinations for summer courses taught at Assumption under Western's auspices were

²²"Act re: Ottawa Association for the Advancement of Learning, 1952", p. 10, Record Group 1, Box 11, File 83, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²³Purple and White, University Charter Edition, April 10, 1953, Record Group 1, Box 13, File 173, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁴"An Act Respecting Assumption College", April 23, 1953, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

administered by Western's officials, as was the last convocation in the fall of 1953.

Thus far, the whole process of de-affiliation from Western and incorporation as a university had proved to be relatively uncomplicated. The new university received sound counsel from McTague, a Windsor lawyer and former Conservative M.P.P.²⁵ The further involvement of McTague would lend additional support to the Basilians' resolve that a university was needed for this sector of the province.

The first negative feeling to be cast over this optimistic situation appeared prior to the passage of the Act, with regard to the very name of the institution. Fr. LeBel and his Basilian cohorts at Assumption knew well the potentially disastrous effects of retaining the name of "College" when striking out on their own. Further, they were aware of the provincial policy that a university in title existed in Ontario only when at least two affiliate colleges were in place.²⁶ This knowledge however did not convince the Basilians that this

²⁵During George Henry's Premiership, Hon. C.P. McTague was a general committee member of the Catholic Taxpayers Association, as well as a Conservative M.P.P. He resigned his membership in this committee in 1934 due to "religious-politico strife". See Franklin A. Walker, Catholic education and Politics in Ontario, Volume II (Toronto, 1985), p. 399.

²⁶Letter of Frost to C.P. McTague of February 7, 1953. This letter shows the great lengths that Premier Frost went to in order to clarify the province's position that a university in title existed only when affiliated colleges were taken on to the central institution, as in the case of the University of Toronto. See "Frost Administration, General Correspondence", Record Group 3, Box 6, File 11G, Province of Ontario Archives, Toronto, Ontario.

policy would directly effect them. Only after the Act had passed through the Legislature, and it was evident that there would be no exceptions made to this policy, did the Basilians begin to be concerned:

As you know this institution has borne the title Assumption College for a good many years. Since 1919 we have been able to add to this title the phrase "Affiliated with the University of Western Ontario". If we now revert to the plain title "Assumption College", friend and foe alike will assume that we have lost affiliation. Outsiders would inevitably presume that Western had quietly manoeuvred us out of their university on account of our low standards, of course. Incorporation as a college would be dismissed, we fear, as a sop thrown to us to limp along somehow.²⁷

Basilian tempers were raised by the prospect of being saddled with the name "College". After the school had undergone this long period of formulation, the name would connote a debilitation or weakening of the original college, rather than its advancement.²⁸ Mr. McTague though, had long come to the understanding with Griesenger, minister of planning and development, and Dr. Dunlop, that Premier Frost was more than willing to see Assumption empowered as a university, but that the

²⁷Letter of Fr. Swan to Fr. McCorkell, July 15, 1953, "Correspondence, University Incorporation, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 174, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁸Letter of Fr. LeBel to C.P. McTague, February 20, 1953, "Correspondence, University Incorporation, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 174, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

provincial policy with regard to the title would not be by-passed.²⁹

As the Basilians' tempers were settled in the matter of the "College" title, a more serious problem came to the fore. Premier Frost, foreseeing the need for an independent university for the Windsor area, had informally suggested to Fr. LeBel in 1953 the possibility of changing Assumption's title to the "University of Windsor".³⁰ At the time this matter was passed off by LeBel as nothing more than a mere suggestion. When it became clear however, that the name "College" was to be in place until such time as Assumption began to take on affiliate colleges,³¹ the Basilians of Assumption sensed the beginning of a denominational - non-denominational struggle that would hamper the school's new identity and its very reasons for de-affiliation in the first place. A position paper then, issued by Frs. Mulvihill, Crowley, Swan and Ruth, entitled "On Preserving the Name Assumption in Any Proposed Change of Title as a University",

²⁹"Correspondence, Agreements, etc., C.p. McTague, Q.C., 1952-56, Record Group 1, Box 18, File 453, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁰"Brief, Data, etc., Mr. Frost, Essex College", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 295, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³¹Although an affiliate of Assumption College since 1934 by a less formal agreement, Holy Names College could not change the titular status of Assumption College until it received provincial incorporation on 1856. Again, see Mona L. Gleason, "A 'Separate and Different' Education: A History of Women at the University of Windsor, 1920 to the Present", M.A. Major Paper, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, 1991, chapter 1.

made the denominational stance of their order clear.²² The proposed new title of "Assumption of Windsor University" was really a compromise between the original name they had hoped for - "Assumption University", and that suggested by the province as "the latter is apt to suggest to many a reality, which please God, will never eventuate; a non-sectarian thing."²³

Assumption saw itself as following in the footsteps of other Catholic universities that had gone before it in demanding the maintenance of the title of "Assumption". Loyola University of New Orleans, Loyola University of Los Angeles, Loyola University of Chicago as well as their own St. Thomas University were all examples. Whether justified or not in the matter of the name, the Basilians showed a great deal of concern that a non-denominational element was finding its way into their control over the institution.

Fr. Swan, in a letter to Fr. LeBel, relaxing at his brother's cottage prior to taking office in the summer of 1952, remarked on what he considered to be the evil machinations ongoing in the secular ranks in the deliberations over the new charter. Here he made a very pointed reference to Mr. McTague's dealings on behalf of the college:

It is evident that a number of things have been going on at a high level of which we are

²²Crowley, Mulvihill, Ruth, Swan, "On Preserving the Name 'Assumption' in any Proposed Change of Title as a University", 1953, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²³Ibid., 1953, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

not informed, or at least not fully informed. McTague seems surprised over the name, for he points out that it was pointed out a long time ago that there was no possibility of getting the name "University".²⁴

For the time being there would be no further discussion of a "University of Windsor". The secular interests in such a plan had yet to define themselves, and all parties concerned, including Premier Frost, who would receive Assumption's first Honourary Doctor of Laws degree in 1954, seemed more interested in getting the new Assumption College off the ground.²⁵ The Basilians of Assumption had prevailed in gaining the university power they sought, as well as firmly entrenching its original title:

It will be "Assumption of Windsor", but at the same time not merely "of" it; it has a much more dignified and more glorious history than that of Windsor. It is one of the few things of genuine quality of which Windsor can boast.²⁶

Indeed though for the time being, Windsor was home to a university granting degrees under strong denominational auspices. The new Assumption College Act permitted the continuation of its Board of Governors, who were empowered to make all decisions,

²⁴Letter of Fr. Swan to Fr. LeBel, July 17, 1953, "Correspondence, University Incorporation, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 174, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁵"Correspondence, Biographies etc., Honourary Degrees 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 92, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁶"Correspondence, University Incorporation, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 174, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

financial and otherwise, on behalf of the college. Appointees to this first board in 1953 were Fr. LeBel, superior and president, Fr. E.J. Lajeunesse, first councillor, Fr. F.A. Brown, second councillor, and Fr. R.S. Wood, treasurer.²⁷ At the first meeting of the board, on May 6, 1953, a resolution was passed to extend its membership to six, and Fr. Dan Mulvihill and Fr. Peter Swan were added. The University Senate, which had control over all academic matters, was also provided for in the Act. To this group would be added lay people, to give voice to the lay element in the College that Prof. Barath had been concerned about, and who would become an integral part of its new character.²⁸

Another by-law was passed at the first board meeting to enlarge the University Senate allotted for in the Act, in order to include wider representation from the teaching staff and the community.²⁹ Further to this, both the Board of Governors and the Senate were empowered to create other bodies on behalf of the college when they deemed such measures appropriate. Hence, the Board of Regents came into existence as "a representative group of citizens, brought together to advise in the general direction of University effort, with particular reference to finance,

²⁷Introduction of new Board members, Board of Governors Minutes, May 6, 1953, Record Group 1, Box 18, File 432, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁸"Correspondence, General, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 52, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁹Board of Governors Minutes, May 6, 1953, Record Group 1, Box 11, File 432, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

public relations and integration of the University program."⁴⁰
 This board was to be composed of a broad cross-section of Windsor notables from the business, professional and academic worlds, brought together in the common interest of the success of Assumption College. It was hoped that such a broad pool of backgrounds and personalities would be sufficient to take Assumption through what were sure to be its first few trying years of independence.

In the spring of 1953, the new charter was a matter for celebration. A public spectacle had to be made of this momentous occasion for two reasons: to draw national attention to Canada's latest university, and more importantly, to stir up civic interest in the City of Windsor's elevation to a university town from what had previously been regarded as an industrial centre. A Charter Banquet was to be held on April 21, 1953 at the Prince Edward Hotel in downtown Windsor. It was a gala evening addressed by principal speaker Dr. Sydney Smith, president of the University of Toronto, and followed by congratulatory addresses from Dr. Hall of Western, Arthur J. Reaume, mayor of Windsor, and Clifford C. Morris, Warden of Essex.⁴¹ The evening also witnessed the gathering of other notable personalities, including Rev. G.B. Flahiff, rector of the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies and future Basilian

⁴⁰James A. Fraser, A School Becomes of Age, Assumption College -- University of Windsor (Windsor, 1971) Chapter V.

⁴¹The Windsor Star, April 22, 1953.

cardinal archbishop of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Premier Frost, and Paul Martin, minister of national health and welfare in Louis St. Laurent's government and M.P. for the federal riding of Windsor-Essex.

This was an evening of camaraderie and good wishes. Dr. Hall addressed the audience and wished Assumption every success in its future undertakings. The Basilian Fathers similarly acknowledged their debt to Western. Fittingly, a tribute was read from Fr. Joseph Muckle, who along with Fr. Forster had been a key to the success of the original affiliation agreement with Western:

As President of Assumption when affiliation was effected and during its early years, may I be permitted to state that Assumption owes a deep debt of gratitude to the University of Western Ontario for its spirit and understanding, patience, fairness and goodwill.⁴²

The keynote address for the evening belonged to the founder and expediter of the whole movement, Fr. LeBel. The new president of Windsor's first and only university stood at the gateway to the city's future as he reminisced on times past, and predicted greater eventualities for both Assumption and Windsor. Reflecting on what the charter would mean for Windsor's future, LeBel, ever the English professor, cited Keats' poem, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer":

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies,

⁴²Letter of Fr. Joseph Muckle to Fr. LeBel, April 14, 1953, "Correspondence, Programme etc., Charter Banquet, April 21, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

When a new planet swims into his ken.
 Or like a stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
 He stared at the Pacific - and all his men
 Looked at each other with wild surmise,
 Silent upon a peak in Darien.⁴³

Addressing the audience in less poetic terms, LeBel made it clear that he had no small aspirations for Assumption:

I predict that Assumption University in Windsor will one day rival in scholarship and research, the great universities of the world. I have no more to go by than the vision which the charter, granted us a month ago, gives us.⁴⁴

LeBel pointed out the freedom that Assumption now had to shape its own identity as a university. Its success would be dependent on two factors: Windsor's perception of the new school, and the accessibility the new university would have to the provincial funding so necessary to its functioning but so far from its reach. Certainly a strong reputation would lend credibility to any expansion plan, and Assumption's nearly one hundred years of college instruction to the border cities area was all the historical credibility it would need. Achieving provincial funding for a denominational institution in a province that forbade such practices, in order to expand both curriculum and staff would require more media and legislative clout than could be mustered by a group of religious academics. The brand of support or influence required here could only be provided by a

⁴³"Correspondence, Programmes, etc., Charter Banquet, April 21, 1953" Record Group 1, Box 10 File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁴Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 10, File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

corporate personality willing to lend his name to the college. Rhys Manly Sale, president and director of the Ford Motor Company of Canada Ltd. was just such a man. Born in Windsor in 1897 and having served a long apprenticeship in the Ford organization, this prominent Anglican was perceived by the Basilians as the man to present their case at Queen's Park when negotiating for provincial funds.⁴⁵

A man of Rhys Sale's calibre was attractive to Assumption for a number of reasons. His prominence as a Windsor business man would lend credibility to the fund drive planned for Assumption's future expansion. His clout as a leader of Ontario and Canadian industry would certainly help in future provincial and federal negotiations over funding for Assumption. Finally however, his Anglican faith would be essential for the college's plans to portray itself as a religiously tolerant Catholic university.

The campaign to attract Rhys Sale to the Assumption team was a long and arduous task. Various means and considerations were employed. Fr. LeBel, who felt it inappropriate that he should personally approach Sale, negotiated instead through Paul Martin. As a classmate of LeBel's and close personal friend, Martin had himself become a man of local and national prominence. Fr. LeBel's feeling was that, owing to his

⁴⁵The Canadian Who's Who, Vol VI, 1952-54 (Toronto, 1954), p. 935.

own personal interest in the educational and cultural betterment of the Essex County riding, Mr. Martin would feel:

..... obliged to approach one of the most influential men in the locality to urge him to lend his power and wisdom to this project.⁴⁶

Martin then approached Rhys Sale in the spring of 1953 armed with a proposition paper outlining reasons why Sale, an auto executive with little experience in university administration, should give of his time and influence on behalf of a Catholic university:

1. Due to provincial policy, Windsor remained in 1953 the largest city in Canada without a university at least in title. With Sale's help this could possibly be rectified.
2. Assumption College however did possess the power to grant degrees, and Mr. Sale's association with such an empowered establishment would not detract from his own credibility.
3. Development at Assumption should be considered by Sale to be a community obligation in terms of its existence as a: (a) cultural centre, (b) intellectual centre, (c) community unifying institution, (d) power against communism [a sign of the times!] and finally, (e) a power enhancing a decent Christian standard of living.

And most importantly to the Basilians,

4. Assumption College was non-denominational in effect, as students of all faiths attended the College.⁴⁷

⁴⁶"Notes, etc., Speeches, Ideas for 1952-?", Record Group 1, Box 12, File 149, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁷Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 12, File 149, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

With these points in mind, it was hoped that Sale would agree to chair the new Assumption College Board of Regents, a position that would require his name and status being associated with the college, more than his actual time and participation.⁴⁰

Due either to the right amount of moral suasion, or to his own personal convictions regarding the project, Sale agreed to join the Assumption team. His first action on behalf of the college was to chair the Charter Banquet, a highly visible but relatively uncomplicated posting to lend further credibility to the occasion. More important to Fr. LeBel was Sale's participation in the pending negotiations with Mr. Frost and the province that would be key to any expansion plans for Assumption. Once affiliated with the move to promote Windsor's university, Sale was consulted regularly about its financial future. In a private meeting during the summer of 1953,⁴¹ LeBel and Sale forecasted the monetary needs for Assumption through 1965. In anticipation of the addition of new faculties and a moderate increase in enrolment, they agreed that \$26,510,000.00 would be required for capital expansion.⁴² Of this, \$19,700,000.00 was expected in provincial grants and other income, while

⁴⁰"Notes, etc., Speeches, Ideas for 1952-?", Record Group 1, Box 12, File 149, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴¹"Correspondence, Superior General, 1952-54", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 168, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴²"Study, Recommendations, Public Relations and Development for Assumption University of Windsor, 1957", Record Group 1, Box 22, File 594, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

\$1,500,000.00 would come with the channelling of Basilian salaries back into the College.⁵¹ Without accounting for any serious changes in enrolment then, Assumption was confronted with having to raise approximately \$5,610,000.00 in voluntary contributions in order to meet this goal. Sale agreed, through the Board of Regents, to investigate a fund drive, as well as to negotiate with the province in the matter of funding.⁵² With its financial future somewhat more secure by Sale's participation, and verbal assurance from Bishop Cody of a gift of \$1,000,000.00 to the project, Assumption's position was almost enviable.

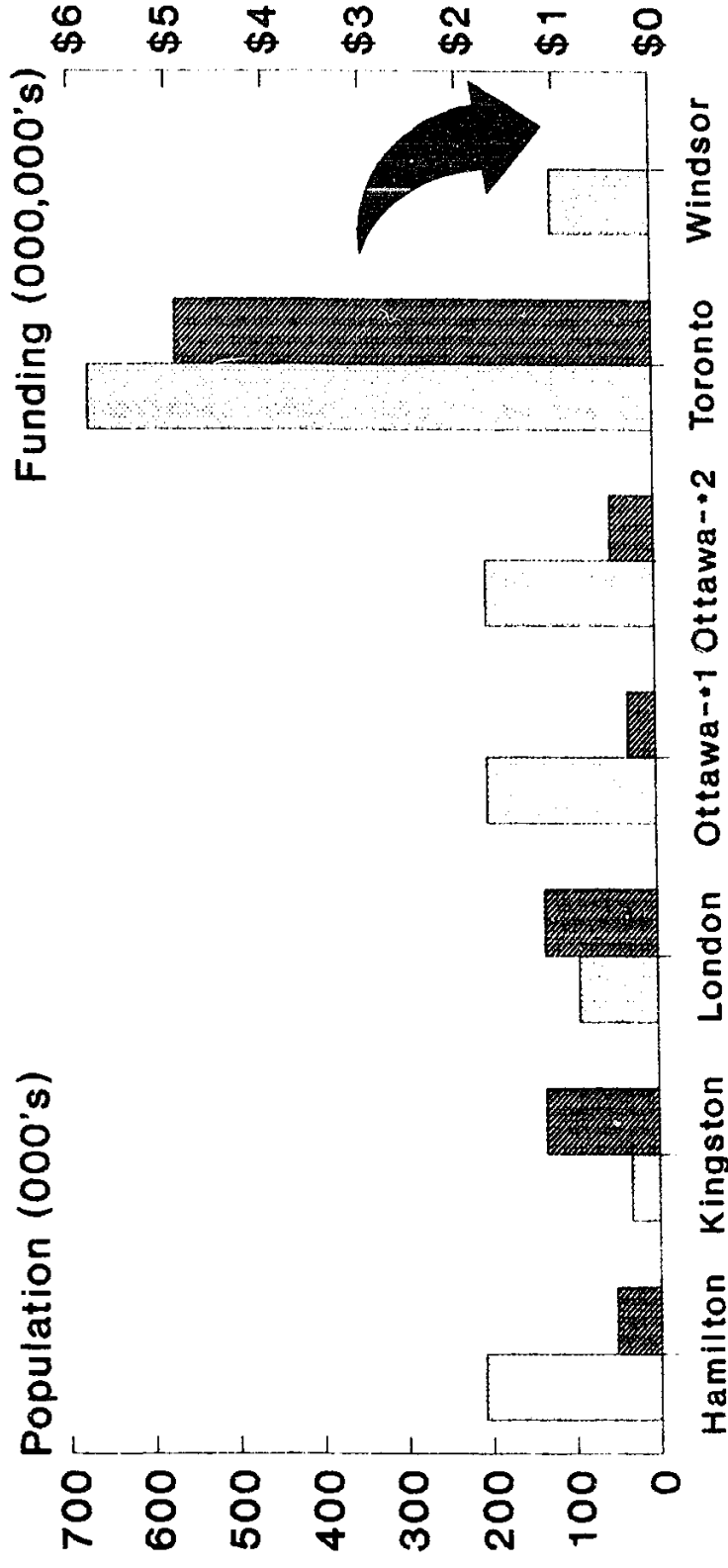
It was something of a coup to get Rhys Sale to lend his name to the drive on behalf of Assumption College. The question of denominationalism, and the fact that he was the most prominent Protestant on Assumption's Board of Regents, was not regarded as detrimental. Former Assumption President Fr. Vincent Kennedy pointed out how highly regarded in Canada Sale was, and how little effect denominational factors had in the considerations which went into his selection:

... incidentally, this week's "Saturday Night" has a sketch on Rhys Sale as one of the leaders of Canadian industry. I really like that man, and I am sure that he has a great role to play in the future of Assumption. It is most fortunate that he is not tied up with any other Canadian

⁵¹"Study, Recommendations, Public Relations and Development for Assumption University of Windsor, 1957", Record Group 1, Box 22, File 594, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵²Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 22, File 594, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Population vs. Prov. University Grants 1952



Cities/Schools

□ Population

▨ Funding

*1 - Carleton
*2 - University of Ottawa

university. You will have him on your team from now on.⁵³

Other key players on this first Board of Regents were the father and son lawyer tandem of T. Walker and John Whiteside. The younger Whiteside especially, an Assumption alumnus and also a prominent Anglican, would prove to be the stronger devotee of a successful university for Windsor, as Sale's position became more ambiguous.

Assumption College went into its first full year of independence undaunted. Fr. LeBel's "President's Report" for the 1953-54 academic year reflects the steady academic change that took place in the transformation of Assumption from an affiliate college to a college with university powers:

The policy adopted regarding changes in academic matters was one of rigid maintenance of standards while at the same time demands of an industrial area were considered. New courses were introduced and old courses changed over after the mature deliberations of various academic committees. Consolidating of existing courses and improvement of staff qualification took precedence over the desire for rapid expansion.⁵⁴

Course changes here though were substantial. During this first year the department of Business Administration was established separately from the department of Economics, and

⁵³Letter of Fr. Kennedy to Fr. LeBel, undated, "Correspondence, Superior General, 1952-54", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 168, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁴Report of the President, Assumption College, 1953-54, Windsor, Ontario.

courses leading to the B.Comm. degree were offered.⁶⁶ Further, the previous requirement of four years of English in a General B.A. program was reduced to two, allowing for more concentration in a particular field in the latter years of the degree. During this period too, the size of the university faculty had been raised from 31 to 36, with the addition of seven Ph.D.'s to the Assumption roster.⁶⁶

Once established, the Board of Regents faced a number of key issues requiring immediate attention. The first formal meeting between LeBel and Sale in May of 1953 had revealed a severe problem: Assumption would require provincial grants if it were to exist on its own. Premier Frost's initial enthusiasm for the "Assumption University" idea had been misinterpreted by LeBel and O'Loane as a willingness to bend the provincial policy of not funding denominational institutions.⁶⁷ Rhys Sale's leverage as an outstanding Canadian business personality would be put to the test. In November of 1953, a meeting between Dr. Dunlop, and the Board of Regents of Assumption College was called to discuss provincial funding. No specifics from this meeting were divulged, although it was hoped that Assumption's few months of independence would prove to Premier Frost that the college was

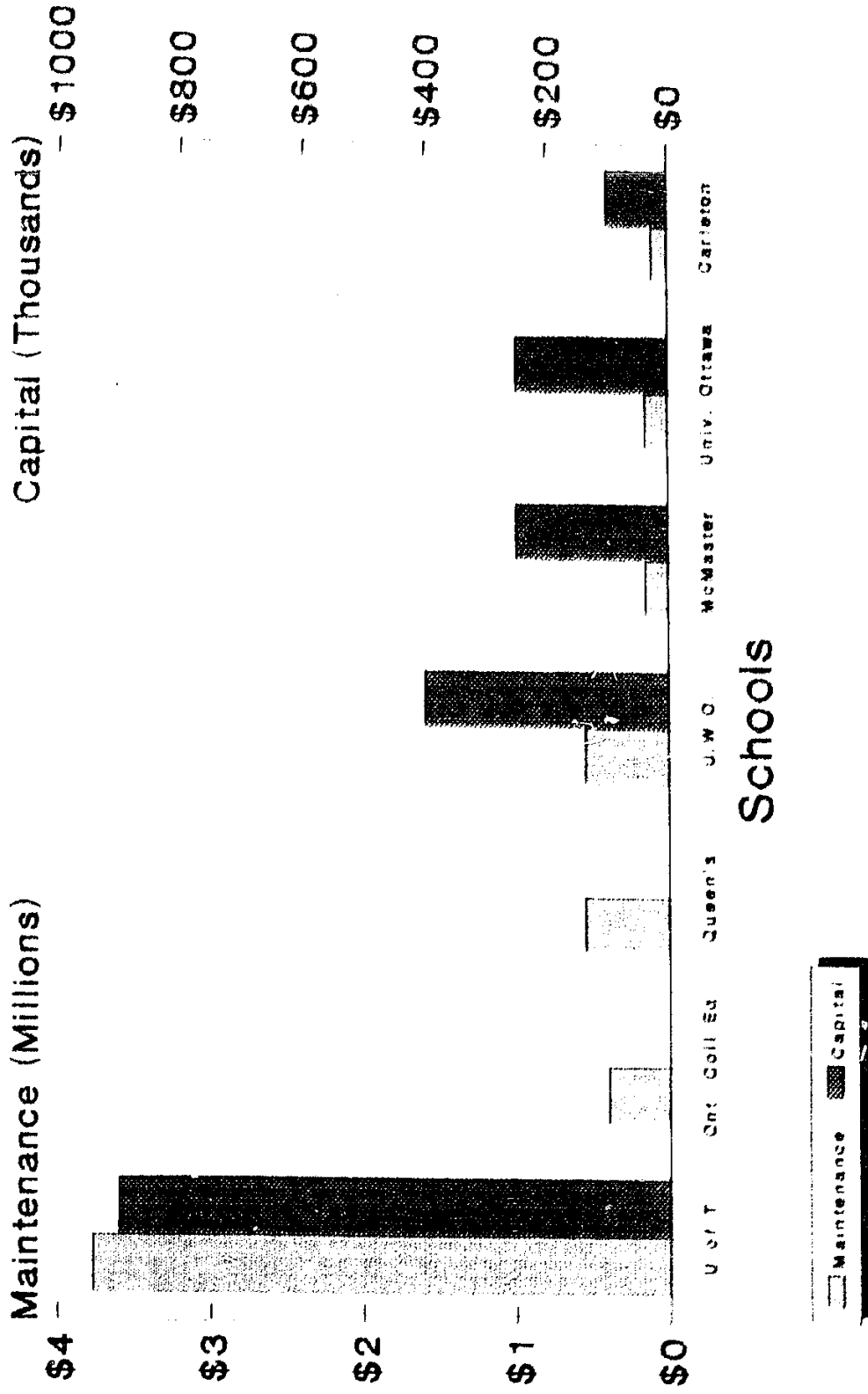
⁶⁶Report of the President, Assumption College, Windsor, Ontario, p. 3.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 3.

⁶⁷Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. McCorkell, March 11, 1953, "Correspondence, General, March-May, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 57, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Provincial Grants

1952



thriving under its own incorporation in the academic freedoms it had received, as well as in the student body it was assembling.

Fr. LeBel was filled with optimism:

While there is nothing absolutely certain about our receiving provincial grants, everyone felt that the question was sympathetically received. The college idea seemed to impress him, as did the enrolment, variety of courses, and variety of religions.**

Clearly, Fr. LeBel had come to the conclusion that Assumption could not survive by appealing only to the Catholics that he felt personally bound to serve. He could still remain true to Newman's ideas on religious relevance in shaping this new university while at the same time appeal to a broader religious cross section, as long as this process was not met with public indifference. Here the staunch religious intonations of Assumption's bygone character were put aside as Assumption went public as the religious melting pot that it was. Of the Windsorites pursuing degrees at Assumption in 1953-54, the religious breakdown was anything but homogeneous: there were 243 Roman Catholics, 75 members of the United Church, 30 Presbyterians, 21 Hebrews, 8 "Protestants", 9 Greek Catholics, 61 Anglicans, 28 Orthodox, 15 Baptists, 15 Lutherans and 2 Mormons.** Further, 54% of the day, and 61% of the night

**Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. McCorkell, November 20, 1953, "Correspondence, Superior General, 1952-54", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 168, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**"Correspondence, etc., City of Windsor, 1953-63", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

school population were non-Catholic, proving to all concerned that "Assumption was open to all creeds and cultures."⁶⁰ In terms of their petitioning the Province of Ontario then, and even in the planned public appeal, Fr. LeBel had anticipated the dangers incurred through overt expression of Assumption's denominationalism, that threatened the success of the college:

Today it is impossible to operate an educational unit without substantial public assistance. Private schools have found to their distress that tuition fees raised to the maximum possible are inadequate to meet current expenses, and profits for expansion purposes are completely non-existent.⁶¹

The concern over provincial funding occupied much of Fr. LeBel's time during the first year of independence in 1953-54. In 1953, provincial funds had been given to many other Ontario universities, increasing Assumption's further frustration at not being so considered. For example, Queen's University, and the University of Western Ontario had both received \$1.5 million in provincial support, with respective net populations of their home cities of 33,459 and 93,343 each.⁶² Carleton College, the offshoot of the University of Ottawa, had received \$285,000.00.

The frustration felt by the college at being left out of this provincial support system did not bode well for its

⁶⁰"Correspondence, etc., City of Windsor, 1953-63", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶¹Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶²"Reports, etc., Fund Drive, 1953-58", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 385, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

future. Assumption still owed \$180,000.00 on the Memorial Science Building, opened by Fr. Guinan in 1948.⁶³ Other problems were mounting. Maintenance expenditures for the college had risen to \$450,000.00 annually.⁶⁴ Further, it was apparent by the end of Assumption's first year that Sale and LeBel's financial forecasting was already obsolete. Certain construction had to be undertaken for this school that was bursting at its seams. For example, the new library, costing approximately \$600,000.00, a new student centre at \$500,000.00 and a new heating plant projected to cost \$150,000.00 were now considered to be immediate necessities.⁶⁵

On March 9, 1954, Rhys Sale began negotiations with Premier Frost to initiate provincial grants for Assumption College.⁶⁶ Although the tone of these talks was always cordial, Frost maintained that no exception to the provincial policy would be made for Assumption as long as it remained denominational in character. Rhys Sale had failed on the level of talks at which it had been perceived he would be most helpful.

For his part, Fr. LeBel remained undaunted. He had

⁶³"Briefs, Financial, Mr. Sale and Mr. Whiteside, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 378, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁴Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 17, File 378, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁵"Correspondence, Fund Drive, 1953-54", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 43, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁶Letter of Fr. LeBel to Rhys Sale, March 11, 1954, "Briefs, Financial, Mr. Sale and Mr. Whiteside, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 378, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

worked quietly on his own to circumvent the provincial policy which threatened the college's survival. Through Paul Martin M.P., Fr. LeBel sought federal support. Prime Minister St. Laurent was invited to the Charter Banquet, and was subsequently offered one of the college's first honorary degrees at its initial convocation in the spring of 1954.⁶⁷ Although unable to attend either function owing to previous commitments, correspondence between the two sparked by LeBel was ongoing and allowed Fr. LeBel to suggest:

Perhaps another great service you could do casually and conversationally with the Premier could bring about equal distribution for all Ontario students and all universities, regardless of creed. We hope and pray that Colleges such as ours can share in provincial Educational grants.⁶⁸

As 1953 passed and the province made no move to include Assumption in its funding scheme, Fr. LeBel made one final appeal to St. Laurent before arming his own assault on Queen's Park:

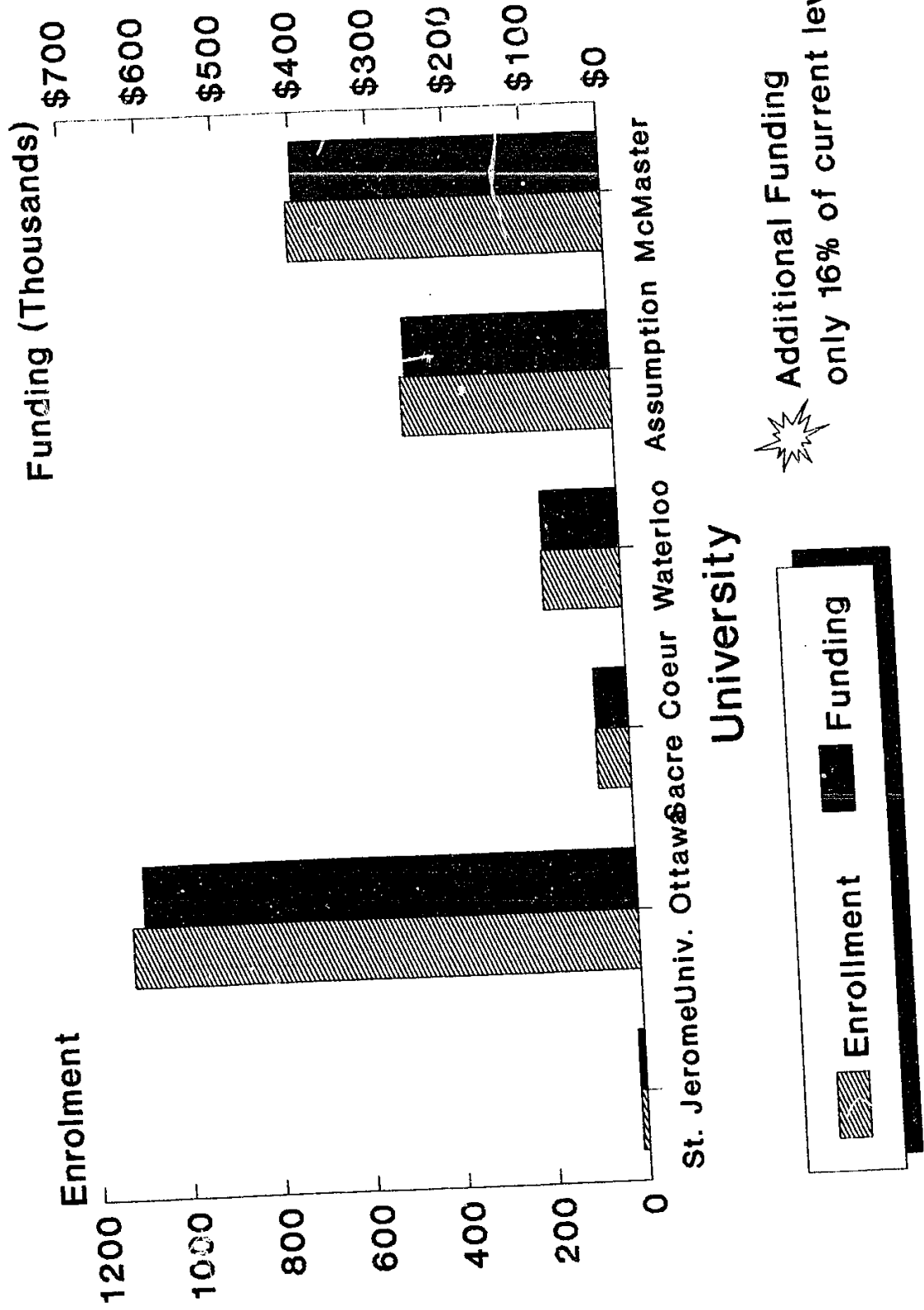
Would it be too much to ask you to say a prayer for us and use any influence that you can at provincial levels to convince provincial authorities that educational grants should be on a per capita basis, rather than on a basis of non-denominationalism.⁶⁹

⁶⁷"Correspondence, Biographies, etc., Honourary Degrees, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 92, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁸Letter of Fr. LeBel to Prime Minister St. Laurent, May 11, 1953, "Correspondence, General, March-May, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 57, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁹"Correspondence, General, March-May, 1953, Record Group 1, Box 11, File 57, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Enrolment vs. Funding



Understandably, no assistance was forthcoming from St. Laurent. Although Paul Martin had proved to be especially helpful to LeBel and the college in expediting a number of local situations (arranging for student visas etc.) and ensuring LeBel direct access to the prime minister, St. Laurent was reluctant to involve himself in matters of provincial autonomy.

LeBel next turned for assistance to the Board of Regents, who were to have their first meeting on December 4, 1953. A non-denominational committee, consisting of Walker Whiteside and Rhys Sale, was commissioned to lobby the province for funding. In the spring of 1954 this delegation was again refused funding, sparking a move that had not been anticipated by Fr. LeBel or the Basilians of Assumption College. At the June meeting of the Assumption Regents, Whiteside and Sale acknowledged their failure to attain funding through Assumption College, but reported that they had made application for the incorporation of a new body, Essex College, as a corporation without share capital under Part III of the Corporations Act.⁷⁰

⁷⁰The creation of Essex College in 1954 was a seemingly spontaneous move on the part of individuals that would later form its Board of Directors. Although The Assumption College Board discussed the possibility of using the "McMaster Plan" at its December 1953 meeting, there is no documentary evidence to indicate that the delegation from Assumption's Board of Regents was sent to Toronto to do anything other than lobby Mr. Frost for provincial grants. Mr. Whiteside, in an interview with the author on February 20, 1991, and again on April 30, 1991, acknowledged the fact that Mr. Frost had indeed contacted him first in 1961 as to the governments plans for the creation of the University of Windsor, but that no such communication took place with regard to the creation of Essex College in 1954. In the case of the University of Windsor, Fr. LeBel was not informed until a private meeting with the ex-Premier, now Vice-Chairman of

Such a body would be under public control, and thereby eligible for provincial funds. LeBel was somewhat taken aback as Sale went on to invite the struggling Assumption College, which he was still representing on its Board of Regents, to enter into affiliation with this proposed corporation.⁷¹

Fr. LeBel now definitely had his back against the wall. Not only was Assumption in dire financial straits without the provincial funds, but it was showing signs of disunity at a point in its history when an outward appearance of solidarity was necessary to its public image. Assumption had yet to gain admission to the National Conference of Canadian Universities, membership in which would give it the prominence and distinction of Canada's other great universities.

LeBel then had little choice in this matter. As in the case of Queen's University before it, Assumption College could, in the very least, gain some financial recompense through the affiliation of a new public institution. As a non-denominational college, Essex would receive provincial funding regardless, and so no argument was put forth with regard to this affiliation, in thinking that Essex College would readily serve as a conduit for funding. Essex College was then legally incorporated on July 14, 1954, and Walker Whiteside was named its

the sub-committee on university affairs, in February of 1962.

⁷¹Interview with Fr. N.J. Ruth c.s.b., January 14, 1991.

first board chairman, with Rhys Sale serving as vice president and John Whiteside as treasurer.⁷²

Fr. LeBel, reconciled to the necessity of this affiliation, did not react favourably to Frost's suggestion through Sale for the terms of this affiliation, which above all would see the enactment of a new corporate title:

We have the green light and are now working with the Whitesides to draw up the preliminary constitution of Essex College... Sale mentioned that by April we should have about \$450,000. He also mentioned that Frost would like the name University of Windsor, but we shall fight hard to maintain the name we approve.⁷³

Not wishing to give up any authority over the college, but understanding provincial funds were key to its present and future existence, Fr. LeBel was in the most precarious position of his career. In the early summer of 1954 he was forced to give in to those non-denominational forces that would see the creation of a public university with a denominational affiliate in Assumption College. On July 13, 1954 the Board of Regents of Assumption College prepared a press release for its Chair, Rhys Sale, to declare the creation of the non-denominational Essex

⁷²Minutes of the Board of Directors of Essex College, July 1954, "Minutes, Reports, Correspondence, 1954", William Arison Papers, Record Group II, Box 12, File 3, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷³Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Kennedy, June 17, 1954, "Correspondence, General, June 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 66, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

College, as well as the change of title of the entire institution to the University of Windsor.⁷⁴

Stage one of this plan would see the affiliation of Essex College with Assumption according to the power granted the latter by the 1953 charter. The new Essex College then, according to this first press release, would be set up with its own administration, and accept students beginning in the fall of 1954:

Essex College will have its own Board of Directors, Bursar, Registrar and teaching staff, and will be wholly self contained as a non-denominational educational institution.⁷⁵

Ironically enough, Essex College would occupy the Memorial Science Building, the money still owing on which being a large factor in Assumption's financial turmoil. This mounting burden revealed itself in Fr. LeBel's rash presentation to the Ontario Legislature of a "University of Windsor" plan. According to this idea, both Assumption and Essex College would join in affiliation. This move was described by Sale as "the next logical step" in the chain of development at the college after the granting of the original charter, creation of Essex College,

⁷⁴"Press Release, Essex College, Established July 14, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 42, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁵"Press Release, Essex College, Established July 14, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 42, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

and admission into the National Conference of Canadian Universities.⁷⁶

Admission into the N.C.C.U. would not prove to be as much a part of the progression from denominationalism to non-denominationalism as originally estimated by Rhys Sale. On February 22, 1954,⁷⁷ the investigation committee, consisting of Dr. Fieldhouse, dean of McGill University, Dr. Earle, dean of Queen's University, and Dr. J.F. Leddy, dean of the University of Saskatchewan, would visit the grounds of Assumption College in order to determine whether or not it was worthy of admission to this prestigious council. The inclusion of Dr. Leddy would be of particular importance to Assumption. A Rhodes Scholar and renowned Professor of Classics, Dr. Leddy was the son of John Joseph Leddy, long known to the Basilians for his part in the creation of their college of St. Thomas More as an affiliate of the University of Saskatchewan.⁷⁸ It was hoped then that Dr. Leddy's influence would prove propitious to Assumption's cause:

I have been thinking that Dr. Leddy of Saskatchewan would be a very valuable ally to have on your side for that problem of membership in the Universities Conference. No

⁷⁶Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 11, File 42, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁷"Programme, Notes.etc., National Conference of Canadian Universities, and Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 123, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁸Lawrence K. Shook c.s.b., Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English Speaking Canada - A History (Toronto, 1969), p. 342.

doubt you know him personally; he is really quite an important person in academic circles now, and and he is a great Basilian booster.⁷⁰

The February meetings with the N.C.C.U. went smoothly, and Dr. Leddy and the other representatives were sufficiently impressed with Assumption as to recommend its membership in the Council on June 24, 1954.⁸⁰ Although the July announcement of the creation of a University of Windsor was only a month away, the confidence gained through this new national exposure would go a long way to stave off the forces that would render the new institution strictly non-denominational.

From the moment of the Council's announcement in July of 1954, the Basilians of Assumption were dissatisfied with the creation of the University of Windsor. Fr. LeBel in particular felt that this was a hasty move made by the Essex College group without the proper deliberation:

.....although the odds seem stacked against us I do not feel that the option to announce the University of Windsor was made in the best interests of all concerned. Mr. Sale in particular seemed to be most disposed to this plan of the change, which needless to say was not met with our unanimous approval.⁸¹

⁷⁰Letter of Fr. Kennedy to Fr. LeBel, May 16, 1954, "Correspondence, Superior General, 1952-54", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 168, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸⁰"Programme, Notes. etc., National Conference of Canadian Universities and Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, 1954, Record Group 1, Box 12, File 123, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸¹Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Kennedy, July 23, 1954, "General Correspondence, July, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 67, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Bishop Cody too had indicated his disapproval of the proposed situation.²² Cody was an ardent supporter of a Catholic university for the Windsor area, not a non-denominational college as proposed by the prospect of an Essex College, or a public entity as in the case of the University of Windsor. His episcopal privilege and promise of one million dollars rendered his voice one to be reckoned with. Clearly then, as Fr. Swan noted in the summer of 1954, Fr. LeBel was in an unenviable position as he strove to define Assumption's university status in this early period:

I have read with deep interest the copy of the resolution re: Essex College, and of your explanatory letter to Bishop Cody. In the circumstances it would seem that there is no course to follow other than that which you have chosen. I do hope that some smoke will be settled by this time.²³

The "smoke" however had never "settled" as far as Fr. LeBel had been concerned. He had been unimpressed by the original offer of Assumption to affiliate with Essex College, and had given in to the University of Windsor plan in a moment of weakness while facing some staggering financial odds. The press release then was not immediately acted on, and there would be no students admitted to Essex College for the fall term in 1954.

²²See "Correspondence, London Diocese, Bishop Cody, 1954-57" Record Group 1, Box 18, File 446, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario, for several letters from Bishop Cody, outlining his scepticism on the planned affiliation.

²³Letter of Fr. Swan to Fr. LeBel, July 12, 1954, "Correspondence, General, July, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 67, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

At a meeting with the Essex College Board on September 14, 1954,⁸⁰ the representatives of Essex College made a formal invitation to Fr. LeBel and what was left of his Board of Regents to join in affiliation with them under the auspices of a larger University of Windsor. Fr. LeBel, newly invigorated, showed none of his previous tentativeness:

We replied with a firm "no" since we did not wish to give away control of an institution which we had worked nearly a hundred years to establish.⁸¹

Fr. LeBel now went on the offensive in making a counter proposal on behalf of Assumption College. Since the 1893 example at Queen's, further precedents had been achieved in the matter of circumventing the provincial policy of not funding denominational schools. For example, the University of Ottawa, founded by the Oblate Fathers in 1848, had managed to gain limited grants in the late 1940s through its School of Medicine and Faculty of Pure and Applied Science.⁸² More relevant to Windsor's case was the further precedent that existed in the matter of funds received in 1953 by McMaster University in Hamilton. Here in 1952, McMaster, under Baptist control, established a non-denominational affiliate

⁸⁰"LeBel, General Correspondence, October 1954", Record Group 1, Box 1, File 70, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸¹Lebel, General Correspondence, October, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 70, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸²"Minutes, Reports, etc., 1955", William Arison Papers, Record Group II, Box 12, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

in Hamilton College in order to gain the provincial funds necessary for maintenance and expansion costs. According to this original "McMaster Plan", Hamilton College took over all science programs at the university. As a result, the Province of Ontario awarded maintenance grants to Hamilton College that, spent at the discretion of the university's Board of Governors, would indirectly help maintain McMaster University.⁷

The use of the "McMaster Plan" by Assumption College had been considered and dismissed a year earlier in the hopes of obtaining the funds through a more conventional approach.⁸ After recovering from the original shock of Essex College's first offer for Assumption to affiliate, LeBel decided that this newly incorporated college could be used to Assumption's ultimate advantage. Another press release was prepared, regarding Assumption's use of this "McMaster Plan" with Essex College serving as the conduit for funds:

Assumption College needs both capital and maintenance assistance and it plans, with the approval of the Bishop of London and the Superior General of the Basilians of Toronto, to institute and incorporate a non-denominational college for the sciences called "Essex College". This non-denominational College will approach

⁷Charles M. Johnston, McMaster University Volume II, The Early Years in Hamilton, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), p. 174.

⁸"Briefs, Correspondence, etc., Leading to Affiliation With Essex College, 1953-56", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 403, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

the government for capital and maintenance grants.**

Thus began an administrative stalemate between both Assumption and Essex College that would last for nearly a year and a half. As far as Fr. LeBel was concerned, he saw that Assumption had clearly been mistreated by the members of its own Board of Regents who had undertaken to create the "public" college behind his back:

When Essex College was incorporated, and again when Essex College (Mr. Sale or Mr. Whiteside) picked its Board, we were not consulted; the Board turned out to be made up of nine Anglicans, four Presbyterians and one Catholic employed by Mr. Sale.**

None the less, the key to Assumption's future success lay in the funding that would hopefully be forthcoming through Essex College, and so negotiations began. A committee consisting of Frs. LeBel, Ruth, Wood and Mulvihill for the Assumption side and John Whiteside, Arthur Granger and Frank DeMarco representing Essex College began the affiliation discussions.* At this time the Assumption representatives outlined their terms for affiliation following the unadulterated "McMaster Plan". The negotiations between the two colleges began as the Essex College

**This press release can be found in "Correspondence, General, October, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 70, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**Press Release, "Correspondence, General, October, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 70, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

*James A. Fraser, A School Becomes of Age, Assumption College -- University of Windsor (Windsor, 1971), chapter V.

Board and Assumption's representatives agreed to deliberate over each other's concerns. Such strong differences of opinion existed as to cause Fr. LeBel to remark that:

Unless hydrogen bombs explode, Assumption looks ahead to a better future, so we must be patient and optimistic even in the face of current disappointment.*²

The Essex College representatives had proposed their alternative to the "McMaster Plan" at the September 14 meeting. This was to be known as the "University of Windsor Plan", as suggested by Premier Frost months before. According to this plan, both Assumption and Essex would exist in affiliation with a central, non-denominational University of Windsor. This concept then followed the centrist-affiliation lead already established by the University of Toronto. This university would then have a top Board of Governors consisting of equal representation from both of the affiliates. Such a loss of control of all that had been gained thus far was unacceptable to Fr. LeBel and the Basilians, and hence the September meetings ended in stalemate.

The matter then of the creation of a "University of Windsor" was now quietly put to rest. On February 10, 1955, Charles McTague delivered a cheque from the Provincial Treasury, refunding the application fee for the status name change of

*²Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. O'Loane, December 9, 1954, "Correspondence, General, December, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 72, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Assumption College to the "University of Windsor".³³ Although negotiations with the Essex College Board were to be ongoing, Assumption would remain, for the time being at least, a denominational university.

It would be well into 1955 before negotiations with Essex College resumed. The Ford strike had ended on January 19, freeing Sale for some negotiations on behalf of Essex College. In late March, Fr. LeBel was planning to re-open negotiations on his own with McTague, Sale, and the new Basilian Superior General, Fr. G.B. Flahiff. Disagreement as to the terms of the affiliation, coupled with Sale's preoccupation with the movement of Ford's front office to Oakville, would delay these talks until November of 1955.³⁴ LeBel had managed to make some headway during this period, securing a verbal agreement from Dr. Dunlop that provincial funds in the amount of \$200,000.00 would be immediately forthcoming through Essex College upon affiliation.³⁵ The problem then remained as to how best the problems separating the two colleges could be settled.

³³"Correspondence, General, February, 1955", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 73, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁴Sale, from 1954, was in the process of moving Ford's entire front office to Oakville. This move and the resulting problems of distance would make him less available for negotiations in the matter of the Essex College affiliation.

³⁵Letter of Dr. Dunlop to Fr. LeBel, January 24, 1955, "Correspondence, General, February, 1955", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 73, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Fr. LeBel saw the "McMaster Plan" as being the maximum concession to public interests. Surrendering any control of the college administration, as in the "University of Windsor Plan", was out of the question as far as he was concerned. He was determined that the ensuing shape the university was to take would not just include, but would be dominated by Catholic interests:

As a result (of the "University of Windsor Plan") a thoroughly Catholic view would be impossible of presentation, and true principles are compromised. Under the proposed College plan, this unhappy situation would continue in the Arts subjects and worsen in the sciences. There, almost complete practical control of the courses would necessarily be handed over to the authorities of Essex College.⁶⁶

The "University of Windsor Plan" was not however wholly disregarded by Assumption. Fr. LeBel foresaw the difficulties involved should the Basilians be unable to continue to staff a major university for a city with a projected population of 270,000 by 1970.⁶⁷ Such considerations rendered even a Basilian consensus on the identity of the University difficult:

While complete unanimity regarding the merit of this plan has not yet been reached, most of those concerned Basilians feel that the plan merits serious consideration, especially in

⁶⁶"Reports, etc., Reasons for Essex College, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁷"Reports, etc., Reasons for Essex College. 1954", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

the long range view of Assumption's development."⁹⁹

Certainly benefits or partial benefits would avail themselves to the Basilians should they choose to support the "University of Windsor Plan". The plan itself followed the Basilian policy of collegial affiliation with a public or state university that had already been practised in Toronto, Saskatchewan and Windsor for years.¹⁰⁰ Further, such an affiliation would lay the major financial burden on the province and free such concerns from the Basilians. Assumption too would be in the advantageous position of having 50% representation on the senate and the Board of Governors of the new university, along with Essex College's 50%, where the un-modified "McMaster Plan" would empower Essex College with the autonomy to manage all of its own affairs:

Within the University of Windsor organization, however, she (Assumption College) could exert a very positive Catholic influence without being burdened by impossible obligations of staff and finances.¹⁰¹

The most negative implications of such a plan were easily summarized for the Basilians; the mere name of the "University of Windsor" subjugated the denominational element that for this

⁹⁹Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 17, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰⁰The examples of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto, St. Thomas More College in the University of Saskatchewan and Assumption College until 1953 in the University of Western Ontario, serve as the most obvious examples of this practice.

¹⁰¹"Reports, etc., Reasons for Essex College, 1954" Record Group 1, Box 17, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

order was its ultimate purpose in education. At this stage in its history, the Basilians of Assumption could not foresee its involvement in such a plan.

Such was the case then through 1954-56 as the representatives of both sides, soon to become one, deliberated over their respective proposals. Alternatives however were periodically discussed. The first of these, brought forward by Fr. Swan, was appropriately referred to as the "Registrar's Plan".¹⁰¹ Working on a solution to the problems posed by the "University of Windsor Plan" in 1955, Swan saw that this solution could not be enacted soon enough to alleviate Assumption's most immediate financial obligations, and hence the \$200,000.00 short term provincial grant would be lost. Under the "Registrar's Plan", Assumption through Essex College, could appeal for provincial grants to cover maintenance costs that had recently run up over \$450,000.00.¹⁰² The essential features of this plan then included:

1. The right of both Assumption and Essex College to admit students to separate four year programs.
2. Each would have the right to appoint 3 representatives to the Board of Governors

¹⁰¹Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 17, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰²"Reports, etc., Reasons for Essex College, 1954", Record Group 1, Box 18, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

of the other College providing a joint committee of 6 to discuss problems for both sides.¹⁰³

Then, in the meantime it was hoped that Assumption and Essex College representatives would work out the permanent terms of affiliation. Once this affiliation was carried out, Assumption would appeal for status as "Assumption University of Windsor" in order to:

...indicate the new status of Assumption College as an institution possessing the power to confer degrees and to affiliate with other institutions of higher learning and to grant degrees to graduates of such other institutions and... to indicate the relationship that exists between the institution and the municipality it served.¹⁰⁴

Another integral component of the "Registrar's Plan" was that in keeping with the original plan, Essex College would take over all instruction in the sciences and business administration while, "henceforth the name University College will be used to designate that part of the faculty of Arts and Science under the immediate control of the Assumption University Board of Governors."¹⁰⁵

It was becoming apparent through these early negotiations that a division existed within the Basilian ranks at this early stage in the new school's history, as to the direction

¹⁰³Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 17, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 17, File 398, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰⁵"Briefs, Correspondence, etc., Leading to Affiliation With Essex College, 1953-56", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 403, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

and shape it was to take. Several Basilians, according to Fr. Dan Mulvihill, professor of history and future president of Assumption University, felt that such negotiations betrayed the ninety-eight years of Basilian struggle that had resulted in this autonomy. Further, 50% control of the university would be surrendered to an uninitiated body:

...because the Essex College authorities had no experience in education and had nothing but paper incorporation to recommend it.¹⁰⁶

Charles McTague was still acting in the capacity of Assumption's legal counsel during the course of these deliberations with Essex College. By March of 1955, the various problems mentioned earlier had mounted to the point where formal negotiations between the two groups still had not taken place since September 14, 1954.¹⁰⁷ On March 1, 1955 then, Fr. Lebel wrote McTague in Toronto to urge him in his upcoming discussions with Sale to push the "Registrar's Plan" and its various modifications of the "McMaster Plan" as the basis of the affiliation. The main cause of his frustration and disappointment at this time was with Rhys Sale and the rest of the Essex Board, who in his mind were deliberately stalling the negotiations:

I certainly hope that something will soon take place to get us out of the present morass. It is exasperating to

¹⁰⁶Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 17, File 403, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 17, File 403, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

think that we must just sit and do nothing while the direction of the development of this institution lies in the hands of people who are not too sympathetic with what we stand for and who only take action whenever it suits their convenience.¹⁰⁰

Although it was true that Sale had now counted himself out of the negotiations, this "stalemate" period was not strictly due to any delaying tactics on the part of the Essex College Board. The "Registrar's Plan" was Assumption's only acknowledgement of the status Essex College had been looking for from the beginning: instalment and autonomy as a viable academic entity. Further safeguards would be required before formal affiliation could take place, and before "Assumption University" could finally come into being.

Negotiations in November of 1955 proved one thing to still be true: Fr. LeBel was only willing to see affiliation take place on Assumption's terms. Fortunately for the sake of both schools, Essex College now possessed in men like John Whiteside and William Arison men willing to give of their immediate time to the resolution of this conflict. Where it was considered at the previous negotiations that "matters which required consideration, being somewhat of a sensitive nature, could not be discussed in a frank and open manner,"¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰Letter of Fr. LeBel to C.P. McTague, March 1, 1955, "Correspondence, General, February, 1955", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 73, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰⁰Notes from informal meeting of the Essex College Board of Directors, November 26, 1955, "Minutes, Reports, etc., 1955", William Arison Papers, Record Group II, Box 12, File 5, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Whiteside and Arison tried to further open discussions. They presented to LeBel a scenario wherein both Assumption and Essex College would be willing to work together in the same tradition of the Assumption College of old, "in the interests of University education for the young people of Windsor and Essex County."¹¹⁰ For this happy end to eventuate, Whiteside and Arison added their caveat that for negotiations to proceed, Essex College would require complete freedom of operation and would tolerate no interference in internal matters and in its areas of academic responsibility.

The next meeting between the two boards was arranged by Arison for the head offices of Hiram Walker and Sons on Riverside Drive on December 6, 1955. To John Whiteside, reflecting years later on the tone of this meeting, it was clear that Assumption had come to the bargaining table this time with a better understanding of the role it was to play in its immediate future:

It was clear that Fr. LeBel and his advisors recognized that within the general principles set out in the articles of affiliation, the work of the two corporations in the development of a university centre in Windsor involved a joint effort by autonomous groups.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰"Reports, etc., Essex College Affiliation, January, 1956", Record Group 1, Box 17 File 397, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹¹¹Minutes of the last Board of Directors meeting for Essex College, June 26, 1962, "Minutes, 1962", William Arison Papers, Record Group II, Box 18, File 72, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

LeBel was now willing to empower Essex College as an autonomous college with freedom to offer degree instruction in business administration, nursing and the natural sciences. Assumption would play a dual role, running the proposed University College that Fr. Swan had suggested, and administrating the entire university with concern for the interests of both of its affiliate colleges. Essex College's fears of a Basilian dominated senate that would have control over all academic matters were put to rest by LeBel's promise to enact a by-law at its next meeting to ensure its non-sectarian status. This was typical of LeBel's new understanding of Assumption University, where the non-denominational element was not feared, but seen as a public partner in the running of a broader denominational school:

Appointments throughout Essex College to the Board and to the staff are to be made so as to offer the widest possible representation to religious, ethnic and sectarian groups in our community.¹¹²

Formal signing of the Articles of Affiliation then took place on January 24, 1956, based for the most part on the general agreements coming out of the December 6 meeting. Signing the agreement for Assumption were Frs. LeBel and Swan, with Walker Whiteside and William Arison signing for Essex College. By virtue of this affiliation, Assumption was assured of its

¹¹²"Reports, etc., Essex College Affiliation, January, 1956", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 397, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

university status. As Assumption University it would serve as an exception to all other examples of university incorporation. Assumption was a Catholic university with a public affiliate college as opposed to other examples of university-college affiliations in the country.

Finally, in an era marked by press releases, Fr. LeBel would make his own on January 24, 1956 that would prove to be truly prophetic with regard to the subsequent history of his school:

With the signing of these articles of affiliation, Essex College became the first to take its place beside Assumption College... This affiliation is the happy culmination of nearly two years of negotiations. As a pattern and guide for the future therefore, these articles may well be of historic importance.¹¹³

¹¹³Assumption College Press Release, January 24, 1956, "Reports, etc., Essex College Affiliation, January, 1956", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 397, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Chapter ThreeASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR: FURTHER EXPANSION AND
AFFILIATION

The affiliation of Essex College in January of 1956 established Assumption as a civic-minded university under denominational auspices. The agreement, which would allow for a share of provincial grants received by Essex to be used in the maintenance of Assumption, would force the Basilians to depart from their traditional cloistered administration. The new school that would come out of this affiliation would be based on a new spirit of cooperation between public and denominational interests. Although a bitter pill to swallow at first, the strain of this new organizational structure would soon be overshadowed by the strong economic viability offered by Essex College.

Two weeks after the signing of the affiliation agreement with Essex College on February 6, 1956, the new Act received first reading in the Ontario Legislature.¹ This new "Assumption University Act" maintained all of the powers and privileges obtained through the 1953 Act, with certain amendments. For example, section 15, subsection 1, which read "There shall be a Chancellor of the College who shall be the

¹Assumption University of Windsor Act, 1956", February 6, 1956, Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Bishop of the Roman Catholic diocese in which the principal establishment of the College is situated,"² was changed to better suit Assumption's new non-denominational element. The amendment allowed for a chancellor to be chosen by the senate for a renewable four year term. This Act then served two purposes: it formally acknowledged the legality of the Essex College affiliation and in so doing, granted the title of "Assumption University of Windsor" to the school in keeping with the province's stipulation.

Although ceding a share of its own autonomy to public interests, Assumption University of Windsor's new identity was by no means non-denominational. Fr. E.J. Lajeunesse was the first principal of the new University College to be located in Dillon Hall. He served under direct control of the Board of Governors of the university which in 1956 was made up of eight Basilian priests.³ University College would be responsible for instruction in English, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Religious Knowledge, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Music, Fine Arts, History and Home Economics making up a good deal of the expanded curriculum of the new university.

The final realization of Assumption University of Windsor came just in time to meet the 100th anniversary of the

²"Assumption University of Windsor Act, 1956", February 6, 1956, Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³"Act to Incorporate Assumption University of Windsor", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 248, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

founding of the institution. Although Assumption's manifold economic difficulties were far from settled, this event coupled with the new titular status for the university would be met with a year of festivity and celebration in honour of the school's latest facelift.

Anniversary day, February 10, 1956 witnessed a Centennial Tea in St. Denis Hall. A memorial plaque was unveiled by Miss Celia Girardot, granddaughter of Theodule, Assumption's first lay instructor.* The next day a Centennial Pontifical Mass, sung by Bishop Cody himself, gave Catholic witness to the celebrations. The Centennial Convocation was held on June 1, with eight honorary degrees awarded in light of the auspiciousness of the occasion. These celebrations reached an appropriate climax at a Centennial Banquet at the Prince Edward Hotel in downtown Windsor on June 21st. University of Toronto President Dr. Sydney Smith addressed a gathering of national, provincial and community dignitaries. Proudly bearing its new title of "University", Assumption was free to pursue the matter of fund raising for expansion purposes which, like the affiliation of Essex College, had been delayed far too long.

These festivities would do little to disguise the fact that dark clouds would still face the future of the new University. Indeed McMaster University, the prototype upon which the long awaited affiliation with Essex College had been based,

*"Typescripts, Histories of Assumption, Interview with Fr. LeBel by CKLW Television, 1964, etc.," Record Group 1, Box 18, File 432, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

was forced to succumb to various financial pressures and give up its denominational status during Assumption University of Windsor's first full year. The Baptist Church in Hamilton could no longer meet the expenses of its own University College.⁶

Fr. LeBel, hardly a novice in matters of fund raising, had begun preparing for a public campaign as early as the Charter Banquet in 1953. He began to sell the "Assumption University" plan on Windsor not as a denominational presence, but rather as a post-secondary institution meeting the academic needs of the greater community:

For 25 years Windsor has been trying to overcome the withering effects of the depression. She is becoming more and more able to undertake civic enterprise. A new civic centre, new station, beautification of the river front, of parks and the widening of the highways are proof of this. She is definitely interested in truth, goodness and beauty. She must have a university. She must have a municipal government beyond reproach... that to me is the spirit of Windsor today, and that is why I have confidence that the spirit of Windsor will help Assumption College to play a great role in the enrichment of human life in this southern peninsula of Ontario.⁶

Receiving good wishes but little in the way of financial contributions for such gestures, Fr. LeBel became convinced that a professional fund raising campaign would be

⁶"Act to Incorporate Assumption University of Windsor", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 248, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶"Correspondence, Programme, etc. Charter Banquet, 21 April, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 10, File 23, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

necessary to get the college on its feet. The days of church basement cookie sales and "Dad's Club" contributions were gone, and on the advice of his confreres at St. Michael's College in Toronto, he contacted the John Price Jones Company, renowned Canadian institutional fund raisers. A similar drive to the one planned for Assumption by LeBel had raised \$800,000.00 for St. Michael's, \$750,000.00 more than the goal.⁷

In the summer of 1953 Arthur Maybee of the John Price Jones Company came to Windsor to speak with Fr. LeBel. Maybee stayed for a week, compiling an assortment of statistical data necessary to prepare a long-range plan for Assumption. Bolstered by summaries of Assumption's long-term financial needs and anticipated revenue for capital purposes, Maybee proposed a fund raising appeal for Assumption College of five weeks duration, and a goal of \$250,000.00. Delays caused by the two year stalemate with Essex College rendered the initial plans for this first drive ineffective. The over \$12,000.00 paid to the John Price Jones Company for this planned campaign then had been wasted.⁸ A similar drive with the same company in 1954 was aborted when negotiations between Assumption and Essex College ended in stalemate. LeBel however was forced to arrange for short term financing at least, to meet temporarily Assumption's maintenance

⁷"Correspondence, etc., Fund Raising, John Price Jones Company, Survey and Questionnaire, 1953-54", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 46, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸"Reports, Correspondence, etc., Brakely and Co., 1956", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 294, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

costs during the period of stalemate in negotiations. Thus began in earnest Fr. LeBel's attempts at keeping Assumption solvent through this period during which the pressure to create a secular institution was clearly mounting.

Unwilling to await completion of the negotiations with Essex College, LeBel sought out municipal grants. In comparison with the bureaucratic backlog he had encountered at Queen's Park, LeBel was optimistic about approaching the Windsor City Council on the matter of obtaining grants. During the first year of his presidency in 1952, the city turned over to the college the final of three promised grants of \$5,000.00 each despite dealing with its own serious deficit.⁹ In February of 1954, LeBel submitted a brief to the Windsor City Council, "Concerning Financial Assistance For Assumption College",¹⁰ to remind the city of the various benefits Assumption offered to the community should funds be given in support of its cause. Rising maintenance costs would require even more funds, and here LeBel cited the London precedent where the city had in the last few years committed itself to annual grants of \$75,000.00 for the University of Western Ontario.¹¹ London had also pledged further building grants of \$68,000.00. Hamilton, an industrial town which

⁹Windsor Municipal Archives, J.B. Adamac interview, pending.

¹⁰"Brief for Windsor City Council Concerning Financial Assistance for Assumption College", February 1954, Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹¹Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

resembled Windsor, had donated \$391,276.00 to McMaster. The local communities of Port Arthur and Fort William in northern Ontario had each given \$30,000.00 towards the development of Lakehead Technical College, which in 1953 was offering only one year of university training beyond grade 13.¹²

Assumption in 1954 faced a certain financial crisis unless provincial funds through Essex College were forthcoming. Arthur Maybee's brief reconnaissance into the financial affairs of the college had unearthed some alarming statistics. Maybee estimated population growth in Windsor as reaching 270,000 by 1970.¹³ The 1,008 university and 862 high school students severely cramped in their close quarters required immediate attention. Clearly the college and high school would have to undertake expansion if Assumption were to continue in her traditional role of educating Windsor's secondary and post-secondary students. Fr. LeBel's municipal appeal was rewarded the following spring. On April 4, 1955, J.B. Adamac, secretary for the Board of Control for the City of Windsor, informed the college that its needs had been provided for in the new budget. It would receive \$50,000.00 in grants from the city to "assist

¹²"Brief for Windsor City Council Concerning Financial Assistance for Assumption College", February, 1954, Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹³Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

financing the activities of Assumption College during the current year."¹⁴

Given the numbers of American alumni that Assumption had always boasted, Fr. LeBel deemed it as appropriate that some move be undertaken at this time of economic crisis, to harness American support behind the appeal. On December 31, 1954 the "Friends of Assumption Foundation Incorporated" was established as a Michigan company in order to aid American students of Assumption, and her Canadian students doing work in the United States to contribute to their alma mater.¹⁵ This non-profit organization was originally established in order to solicit and collect funds, receive gifts and make contributions towards the administration of Assumption College and its students. Consultations with groups like Foley Associates Inc. of Rochester, New York, who boasted "Fund Raising Exclusively For Catholic Projects," and representatives of Dartmouth's "Alumni Fund," convinced Fr. LeBel to suggest that the "Friends of Assumption Foundation" amend their own constitution in order to provide for direct student aid.¹⁶

When Frs. LeBel and Swan represented Assumption College at the June 1955 meetings of the N.C.C.U., a year to the month

¹⁴Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁵"Correspondence, etc., Friends of Assumption Foundation", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 206, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁶Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 13, File 206, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

had passed since Assumption's admission into the organization. In that year Assumption had weathered its economic crisis admirably, maintaining both its denominational and university authority even though unable to affiliate Essex College. Assumption's administrators however hardly had time to wipe their collective brow before being faced with a new crisis. Dr. E.F. Sheffield, director of the educational division of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics revealed some startling predictions when he addressed the N.C.C.U. He declared that the numbers of young people seeking admission to Canadian universities would double by 1965.¹⁷ Assumption's expansion program could not be postponed; immediate action was necessary.

First priority of expansion would be to resolve the problem of both the college and high school divisions sharing the same property. In years past, when Assumption had been regarded as a minor seminary, it had been advantageous for administrative and streamlining purposes to have the two bodies located together. The post-war growth, as previously mentioned, had exhausted the college's physical limits. The high school building, now Dillon Hall, was desired for use by the college division. Well before the N.C.C.U. meeting, the proposition of moving the high school off the college grounds had been made to Bishop Cody. It was made clear to him that "in the interests of the University, the Assumption College authorities have finally

¹⁷"Reports, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1958-62", Record Group 1, Box 17, File 384, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

decided to discontinue Assumption High School within two years", and to this plan he was willing to add his name, along with a vague commitment:

I can see the wisdom in having the High School completely separate from the University, and after mature consideration am prepared to undertake as soon as possible the construction of a new high school completely independent of the university.¹⁰

In addition to the present college and high school, the Basilian Fathers were in possession of land to the south of the campus, bordering Huron Line and Tecumseh Blvd. For years they had been approached by developers who hoped to establish a shopping mall on at least part of this property.¹⁰ In February of 1955 the Basilians reached a tentative agreement to lease part of this land to Principal Investments. On the strength of this security, ground was broken for the first stage of the new high school on February 18, 1955.²⁰ The services of a local architect, G.A. McElroy, had been secured the month before. The formal agreement signed with Principal Investments on April 12, allowed the developers to have eighteen feet of the property, while the high school was to be built on five acres of the land with 400 feet of frontage on Huron Line. Fr. LeBel successfully

¹⁰Copy of Letter of Bishop Cody to Fr. LeBel, May 20, 1954, "Correspondence, Superior General, 1952-1954", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 168, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰Interview with Fr. N.J. Ruth c.s.b., January 19, 1991.

²⁰"Correspondence, General, February, 1955", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 73, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

negotiated with the city clerk the rezoning of twenty-three acres for these purposes on June 20, 1955.²¹

The original plans for the proposed "Assumption High School" called for development in two stages to enable financing the project. The first stage would house nine classrooms, a library, administrative offices, a cafeteria, kitchen, locker area, and a heating plant for 950 students. The cost of this project to the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich was to be \$515,000.00. The Odette brothers, Bud and Lou, founders of Eastern Construction Company of Walkerville and long-standing supporters of the Basilians, agreed on to do the work on the project at no cost, charging only for supplies and agreeing to donate their overhead charges.²² Work began when the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich borrowed \$400,000.00 for these purposes from the Bank of Commerce, to be repaid within two years.²³

Within a year, "stage II" was begun. This would see the eventual completion of fourteen more classrooms, a study hall, gymnasium and other athletic facilities at a cost of

²¹"Correspondence, etc., City of Windsor, 1953-62", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 362, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²²Letter of Bud Odette to Fr. LeBel, December 12, 1955, "Correspondence, Photos, etc., Assumption High School Building, 1955, 1956", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 237, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²³The financial arrangements made for the Assumption High School move are detailed in a letter from Fr. Burns to Fr. LeBel, July 10, 1958, "Correspondence, etc., Basilian Fathers, 1958-1964", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 285, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

\$550,000.00.²⁴ By this time, the Basilians' liquid assets were limited. In late 1956 they floated a Public Bond Issue for \$1,000,000.00 in order to repay the short-term loan and pay for "stage II". At 5% interest, principle and interest payments yearly would reach \$80,000.00. As the entire \$1,000,000.00 was not immediately required, \$300,000.00 was put into short-term bonds.²⁵ The Basilian contribution to the high school project totalled \$1,215,000.00 in the fall of 1957 with the completion of "stage II", but the project was still incomplete. A staff residence and chapel as well as boarder facilities would have to be finished according to the original plan. The lack of available liquid capital however at this stage forced the Basilians of Sandwich to conclude that funds could no longer be given gratuitously to the high school. The original plan made provision here for the \$300,000.00 in bonds to be given to the high school, a debt that could be paid back over 20 years.²⁶ Further, it was proposed that half of any money given by Bishop Cody, who had not yet followed through on his agreement to be involved in the project, would be split between the high school

²⁴Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 15, File 285, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁵Letter of Fr. Burns to Fr. LeBel, July 10, 1958, "Correspondence, etc., Basilian Fathers, 1958-64", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 285, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁶A separate administration was allocated for the new high school. Although both administered by the Basilian Fathers, Assumption High School and University would now compose two distinct corporate bodies, and so funds borrowed from one would have to be paid back by the other.

and the university. A two month structural steel shortage caused a delay in the negotiations in 1957 that proved most propitious for the high school. The affiliation between Assumption and Essex College in early 1956 bore fruit in 1957 with the receipt of an initial provincial grant of \$100,000.00.²⁷ The high school received its \$300,000.00, with an additional \$35,000.00 to cover incidental expenses incurred due to last minute plans to enlarge the chapel.²⁸

The project was completed by March 1958, with the Boarders' Hall to be ready a year later. The administrative separation of the high school had been in effect since 1954 to give Fr. LeBel more time to devote to the administration of the college.²⁹ The responsibility for running the high school, that had previously been under Fr. LeBel's care, was now given to the high school staff. New appointees included: George Thompson, superior, W. Oscar Regan, first councillor, Ronald J. Cullen, principal and John J. Gaughan, treasurer.³⁰

²⁷This is found in a circular from Fr. Lebel entitled "Update: High School Development", January 6, 1958, "Correspondence, etc., Basilian Fathers, 1958-64", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 285, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

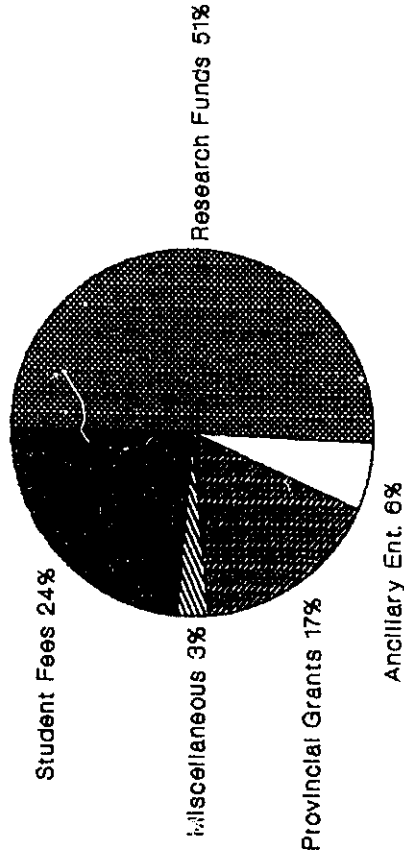
²⁸Ibid., "Correspondence, etc., Basilian Fathers, 1958-64", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 285, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁹Ibid., "Correspondence, etc., Basilian Fathers, 1958-64", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 285, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

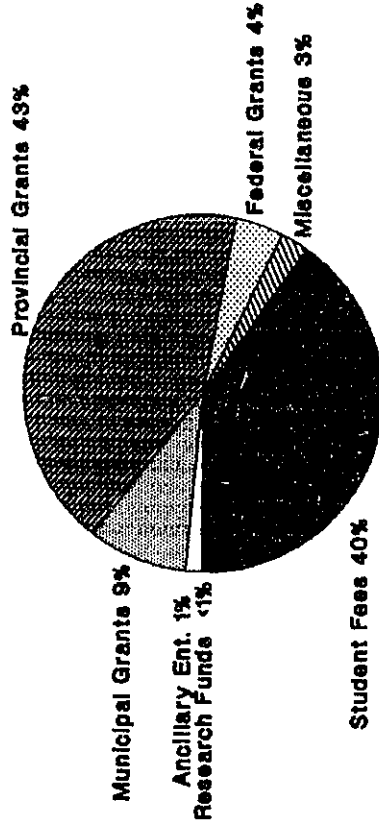
³⁰Ibid., "Correspondence, etc., Basilian Fathers, 1958-64", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 285, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Operating Income Comparison

Assumption University of Windsor
June 30, 1957



Essex College
June 30, 1957



The completion of the high school project did little to alleviate Assumption's financial woes, which in fact had been exacerbated by the addition of its debt. A fifty-five year lease to Principal Investments, the owners of the Fairview Shopping Mall chain, guaranteed Assumption \$25,000.00 a year for the first twenty years, \$30,000.00/year for the next twenty and then \$35,000.00 for the final fifteen.²¹ This would prove to be a pittance when compared to Assumption's mounting plans and debt. The university was now becoming accustomed to its steady growth and change, and clearly by the end of the negotiations with Essex College, Fr. LeBel was even encouraging it. The money coming in from Essex College though in these first years, with \$200,000.00 in 1955 and \$600,000.00 in 1956,²² was not sufficient to match Assumption's present development. Any immediate expansion then would have to come through an outside source.

The disappointment felt by Fr. LeBel and the Basilian community in 1953 at not being able to achieve the title of a university along with its commensurate status, was strong. In the early days before there was any mention of Essex College, it was hoped that another Catholic affiliate could be added to Holy Names College, to attain the title of "Assumption University."

²¹Letter of C.P. McTague to Fr. LeBel, March 16, 1957, "Correspondence, McTague, Charles P. (White, Bristol, Beck and Phipps, Barristers and Solicitors), 1956-62", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 215, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²²"Shared Funds and Facilities Agreement with Assumption University of Windsor", William H. Arison Papers, Record Group II, Box 12, File 10, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

The very summer that Assumption received its charter, representatives of an order desiring to create another such affiliate college approached the Basilians. The Redemptorist Fathers, more appropriately known as the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, were an order well known for their preaching and missionary activity. Founded in 1732 by St. Alphonsus Ligouri in Scala, Italy,³³ their Canadian mission included the "Toronto Province", which administered all Redemptorist activity for Eastern Canada. Since 1930 the college-seminary for the "Toronto Province" was located in Woodstock, approximately 130 miles from Windsor. On August 25, 1953 Bishop Cody approved the plan of the Redemptorist Provincial, Fr. Arthur Ryan, to move the Woodstock studentdate to Windsor.³⁴ Here, through affiliation with the newly empowered University of Assumption College, a Redemptorist college would allow seminarians to pursue both undergraduate degrees and theology studies. Later that September, Ryan presented LeBel with his plan.³⁵ Fr. LeBel communicated Assumption's definite interest in the proposal, but would wait until a point when more substantial plans could be discussed, and when Assumption College was on firmer ground. When the

³³Karl J. Schindler C SSR, To Serve God's People: A Hundred Years of the Redemptorists at St. Patrick's, the Cradle of the Toronto Province, 1881-1981, (Toronto, 1981), p. 2.

³⁴"1953 - Affiliation Plans", File 5, Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁵Letter of Fr. Ryan to Fr. LeBel, September 7, 1953, "1953 - Affiliation Plans", File 5, Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

Redemptorists were in a position to show the economic viability of their plans, LeBel would most certainly be receptive to an affiliation that would present no economic entanglements.

1954 and the incorporation of Essex College saw Fr. LeBel more concerned than ever with the economic viability of his own college. Fr. Ryan however was well on his way to seeing that the plans for the proposed "Holy Redeemer College" were to go through, as this letter to LeBel of November 20 indicates:

...you will be pleased I trust to know, off the record, that our prospects of obtaining suitable property within the next few months are shaping up nicely. If they are realized I should think that work on our seminary could begin in very early 1956.²⁶

The prospect of an affiliate college that would be economically independent of Assumption and that would offer instruction to its seminarians by Redemptorists was encouraging. Although no formal agreement had yet been signed, the negotiations over the creation of Holy Redeemer were well under way. On June 7, 1955 Fr. Ryan informed Bishop Cody that Rome had permitted the purchase of land in the township of Sandwich West. The land, which would serve as the home of Holy Redeemer College, was located on what is now Cousineau Road, just east of Huron Church Road. It would cost \$45,000.00.²⁷ Fr. Ryan and LeBel

²⁶Letter of Fr. Ryan to Fr. LeBel, November 20, 1954, "Correspondence, General, November 1954", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 71, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁷"Seminary Project Approved", File 1, Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

met again on June 27, 1955 to work out the final arrangements. With the realization of this plan, both men were more than satisfied. Fr. Ryan had long been perturbed with the Woodstock student body, which had not allowed Redemptorist seminarians to engage in degree study,³⁰ and Fr. LeBel, after the Essex College affiliation, was pleased to have another Catholic affiliate.³¹

The Articles of Affiliation between Holy Redeemer College and Assumption College were officially signed on February 8, 1956.⁴⁰ Holy Redeemer was now an affiliate college with the Faculty of Arts and Science of Assumption and authorized to give instruction in courses leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. These degrees naturally would be conferred on members of Holy Redeemer College by Assumption College, and the principal of Holy Redeemer would be an ex-officio member of the Assumption College Senate. The Redemptorists were empowered to move their seminary from Woodstock to its new location on Cousineau Road, five miles

³⁰Interview with Fr. Matthew G. Meehan CSSR, March 28, 1991.

³¹Fr. LeBel's reaction to this meeting was clear, concise and written in his own hand at the bottom of another letter written to him by another Redemptorist, Fr. George O'Reilly: "Mission Accomplished!". See "Correspondence, General, July, 1955", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 75, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁰"1953 - Affiliation Plans", File 5, Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

from the Assumption campus, upon the completion of their building.⁴¹

This agreement proved beneficial to both religious orders. Young Redemptorists would take B.A. degrees from Assumption prior to their theological studies. As for the Basilians, they would benefit from the interchange of teaching staff, especially in the areas of religious studies, to which Holy Redeemer Principal Fr. Gerard Owens would contribute Redemptorist teachers. Assumption too would be financially compensated for those Redemptorists pursuing degrees at the main campus. The benefit of affiliating Holy Redeemer College in early February of 1956 was to strengthen Assumption's resolve as a Catholic university, but the financial implications of this affiliation were negligible.⁴²

With the affiliations of Essex and Holy Redeemer College out of the way, and so much of their resources being spent on the high school move, the time was finally propitious for the Basilians to launch their long-anticipated fund drive. In keeping with its original purpose, the Board of Regents in 1956 was given the responsibility of organizing an appeal for funds to enable Assumption to keep pace with the future. A committee, including Windsor businessmen Ron Todgham (Chrysler

⁴¹Construction was expected to be complete by September, 1957, see "1953 - Affiliation Plans", File 5, Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴²Holy Redeemer College would never graduate more than twenty B.A.'s per year, and its total enrolment would never dramatically effect Assumption University's total student body.

Canada), Clifford Hatch (Hiram Walker and Sons) and Eli Goldin (a local merchant) was struck. "Outstanding men from all walks of life", Fr. LeBel boasted,

...have come forward as volunteers to ensure the success of this drive. They are men who are widely versed in the need of higher education on the community, provincial and national levels. They know fully the steps that must be taken to avoid a crisis in the supply of trained manpower.⁴³

The first solid action made by this subcommittee of the Board of Regents was to submit its proposal, "A Vision Of A Second Century", to Fr. LeBel on the eve of Assumption's centennial year ⁴⁴. They cited the growth statistics in general predicted for all Canadian universities by Dr. Sheffield at the N.C.C.U. conference as only one of a number of reasons for the university to carry on with its agenda for expansion. Growth in Windsor itself was predicted as rising from 190,000 to 250,000 as a result of the city's increased importance as a shipping centre with the completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway. A carefully planned development program was an absolute necessity:

Thus, the University marks the beginning of a new century with a carefully planned development programme. Without this

⁴³Press Release, Fr. E.C. LeBel announces a fund drive for Assumption University of Windsor, May 22, 1956, "Reports, Assumption University of Windsor, Capital Expansion", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 242, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁴"A Vision of a Second Century, 1956", "Minutes, Reports, etc., Building Fund, Vision of a Second Century", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 293, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

programme, many capable young people would be denied an education because they couldn't afford to go away for it.⁴⁶

Assumption's expansion program initially was expected to cost \$1,250,000.00. The Board of Regents felt that membership in such groups as the N.C.C.U. and the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth had raised popular perceptions of the university to the point where a municipal campaign could succeed. Immediate needs were projected as a new library, to replace the one presently in Dillon Hall, for \$600,000.00, a student centre for \$500,000.00 and a heating plant costing roughly \$100,000.00.⁴⁶

If Assumption is to be assured it can perform its most important functions in all of these areas, its current minimum development program must be successful. The sum of \$1,250,000 must be raised privately for the first major capital appeal by the new university.⁴⁷

The new library would have space for 300,000 volumes, reference facilities and reading and seminar rooms. The existing library in Dillon Hall housed less than 40,000 volumes. Essex College

⁴⁶Ibid., "Minutes, Reports etc., Vision of a Second Century", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 293, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁶"A Vision of a Second Century", 1956, "Minutes, Reports, etc., Building Fund, Vision of a Second Century", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 293, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁷Ibid., "Minutes, Reports, etc., Building Fund, Vision of a Second Century", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 293, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

agreed to pick up \$300,000.00 of the total cost of \$900,000.00 as its share for use of the new facility.⁴⁰

A new Student Centre was just as urgently required as student activities were still taking place in the four temporary airforce huts loaned by Fr. Guinan in 1945. After ten years of continuous use, these huts were in urgent need of replacement. The new structure, to be funded entirely by the university, would include a large cafeteria, reading room, lounge, Students Administrative Council offices, and rooms for various other student needs.

A statement announcing "Canada's Newest University Plans Expansion Program Appeal For \$1.25 million" was prepared for release on Tuesday May 22, 1956.⁴¹ These developments were explained as the "first steps" in a planned long-range expansion program.⁴² Honourary Chairmen Rhys Sale and Ron Todgham would head the drive under the general chairmanship of Clifford Hatch. Conspicuous by his absence was Bishop Cody. As Chancellor of Assumption College, Cody had always enjoyed friendly relations with the Basilians of Assumption. His instalment as chancellor of Assumption University of Windsor, once the post was no longer

⁴⁰"Building Committee Agreements, 1956", Record Group II, Box 13, File 17, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴¹Press Release, May 22, 1956, "Reports, Correspondence, etc., Brakely & Co., 1956", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 294, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴²Ibid., "Reports, Correspondence, etc., Brakely & Co., 1956", Record Group 1, Box 15, File 294, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

the sole domain of the Bishop of London, was an acknowledgement by the non-denominational senate of all he had done in the original negotiations over the receipt of the charter. By this time though, Cody had diversified his interests.

The granting of a university charter for Assumption in 1953 opened room for another Catholic college to affiliate with the University of Western Ontario. Dr. Hall approached Cody in September of 1953 over the matter of accommodating the overflow of Catholic lay students in the London diocese that would not be going to Assumption.⁸¹ Not wishing to meld studies for laymen with the seminary activities of the only other Catholic male affiliate of Western, St. Peter's Seminary, Cody began work on the creation of what would become Christ the King College. Unfortunately for Assumption though, this development had taken place in the middle of the "stalemate" period with Essex College, when funds were particularly scarce. Fr. LeBel then undertook to write Cody with regard to the matter of the \$1,000,000.00 he had verbally committed to in 1954:

Your Excellency,

We are a bit discouraged these days. First, the Provincial government gave us no consideration in its 1954 budget in spite of our best efforts... We had anticipated \$50,000 from Your Excellency during this academic year. We did not understand that it was conditioned by commencing to build. How can we commence to build without money?... the plan for a new Catholic College in London is a good one,

⁸¹Patrick Phelan, Studium et Hospitium - a History of King's College, (London: King's College, 1979), p. 3.

but we did not think it would take precedence in financial support over the previously planned university development in Windsor... So you see Your Excellency, enthusiasm here is at a low ebb. Perhaps it is God's will that we should remain a small college, and forget our ambitions to be a wider service to Catholics and Protestants seeking higher education in the locality.⁵²

For the first time in their administrative relationship, the president of Assumption had incurred the wrath of its chancellor. On January 19, 1955 Cody issued a rather tersely written memorandum to LeBel outlining definitively the financial relationship of the diocese of London to Assumption College, in an attempt to clear up all "misunderstandings:"

In view of the misunderstanding which has arisen already, it is my duty to place on written record this clear and conscientious statement so that my successors particularly will know precisely what policy I pursued from the outset in regard to the University so dear to our heart.⁵³

In this lengthy statement, Cody answered all questions pertaining to his financial commitments and contributions to the college. No formal commitment on behalf of the diocese was made by him regarding funding for the university, although clearly, the Bishop felt he had been fair:

⁵²Letter of Fr. LeBel to Bishop Cody, undated, December 1954, "Correspondence, London Diocese, Bishop Cody, 1954-57", Record Group 1, Box 18, File 446, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵³Letter of Bishop Cody to Fr. Lebel, January 19, 1955, "Correspondence, etc., Financial Agreement, Bishop Cody, 1957-63", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 262, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

I persisted in the attitude that I desired to be most generous to the new university, but faced with heavy diocesan obligations, could not and would not sign any formal commitment of a financial nature binding either myself or my successors in office.⁵⁴

Dealing with his own diocesan problems, Cody found it necessary to dilute his promise of \$1,000,000.00 to the college, which LeBel had counted on so strongly in developing its future, and then backtracked to show that he was still on a pace to meet that commitment:

I did say on several occasions that I hoped to be able to contribute gradually from the annual Diocesan Campaign Fund the sum of one million dollars as a subsidy expressing some confidence that I might thus be in a position to pay at the rate of \$50,000.00/ann. under normal circumstances.⁵⁵

Such "normal circumstances" obviously did not avail themselves to the Bishop, and so his donations, although welcomed, took a less structured and more scattered form. In early 1954 he gave \$160,185.00 worth of land (based on 1954 estimates of property value) held by the diocese near the Ambassador Bridge. In December, 1954, he donated \$25,000.00 towards the high school move, followed by a second contribution of \$25,000.00 in June of 1955. This list of donations caused Cody to conclude that his

⁵⁴Ibid., "Correspondence, etc., Financial Agreement, Bishop Cody", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 262, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁵Letter of Bishop Cody to Fr. LeBel, January 19, 1955, "Correspondence, etc., Financial Agreement, Bishop Cody", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 262, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

bequest to Assumption in 1955 sat at \$211,022.00, well ahead of his \$50,000.00/year "commitment,"⁵⁶ although most of this was based on land recently ceded to the college, a commodity not exactly at a premium for Assumption at this point.⁵⁷ Bishop Cody was however, dismayed at the Basilian's reaction to his treatment of this problem:

Though more than 2 years ahead of schedule, some letters I have received would seem to indicate that the diocese has been much less generous than anticipated. Though, as already explained, not formally obligated to do so, I am most anxious to pay over as quickly as possible the sum of \$1 million to the new University, because the first years are always the most trying, and Assumption University has undoubtedly hit more than the usual amount of difficulties, but criticism of the diocese or of its bishop for lack of generosity would definitely only make matters worse, especially in light of the facts explained in this memorandum.⁵⁸

Thus in one letter, the man who had been so key to the establishment of Assumption College as an independent Catholic university, was forced to distance himself financially from both the university expansion program and high school relocation. Properly chastised, Fr. LeBel would now have to draw even further

⁵⁶Ibid., "Correspondence, etc., Financial Agreement, Bishop Cody", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 262, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁷Basilian land holdings on Patricia, Sunset, and University Ave., along with the University property made them already "land rich", although it was mostly being saved for purposes of future development.

⁵⁸Letter of Bishop Cody to Fr. LeBel, January 19, 1955, "Correspondence, etc., Financial Agreement, Bishop Cody", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 262, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

on his administrative abilities to pull the college through a period of turmoil.

Bishop Cody would make periodic contributions to Assumption University of Windsor's fund drive, along with issuing a circular on October 30, 1956 to all of the parishes in the London diocese, asking support for Assumption's \$1,250,000.00 campaign.⁵⁹ Although amicable relations would continue between the chancellor and Assumption for the next seven years, Cody's apparent balk in the matter of funding for the university at a period when it most needed it, was a dismal disappointment. Ironically enough though it would spark another unprecedented shift in both the direction and the identity of the Catholic Assumption University of Windsor.

Among the first consulted in Assumption's civic campaign in 1956 through the Windsor Council of Churches was George Luxton, Anglican Bishop for the Diocese of Huron. Given the more ecumenical approach to education that Assumption was clearly adopting, it was only reasonable that representatives of various denominations should be contacted to support this "equal opportunity" Catholic university. Luxton held a symposium, including Essex College chairman William Arison, to discuss the possibility of more extensive Anglican participation in Assumption University of Windsor. Arison approached the Board of

⁵⁹Circular from Bishop Cody to the Diocese of London, October 30, 1956, "Correspondence, London Diocese, Bishop Cody", Record Group 1, Box 18, File 446, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Governors of Assumption University on behalf of Luxton in order to determine how it would feel about: a) the creation of an Anglican hostel on its campus or b) the creation, in 15-20 years of an Anglican liberal arts college to be affiliated with Assumption.⁶⁰ Initial reaction to this proposition was not as negative as might have been expected. In a letter to Bishop Luxton, LeBel stated that he saw no reason why such a college could not get the approval of the Board of Governors as long as there was no course duplication.⁶¹

The success of the Essex College affiliation had gone a long way to convince LeBel that taking on another non-Catholic affiliate would pose no threat to the Basilian guidance of Assumption. Essex had proved to be an academic as well as a financial boon to Assumption. In the 1956-57 academic year, committees were set up, chaired by Dr. Frank DeMarco, faculty chairman of Essex College, in order to investigate the feasibility of extending Assumption's pre-engineering course to a complete degree program.⁶² Extended courses leading to the degree of Bachelor of Engineering were offered in each of the

⁶⁰Canterbury College Facts Sheet, undated, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶¹Letter of Fr. LeBel to Bishop Luxton, September 19, 1956, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶²Annual Report of the Essex College Board, 1956-57, Record Group II, Box 12, File 12, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

academic years 1959-60 and 1960-61, and tentative plans were drawn up for the future creation of a \$5,000,000.00 Pure and Applied Science Building to house programs in chemical, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering.⁶³ LeBel saw that the Basilians could still control the direction of the university while taking on an affiliate to cover different areas of academic or even religious specialization. The religious knowledge, philosophy and medieval history courses proposed to be taught by the Anglican college would be considered as university instruction in a particular specialty, like the nursing, business and science instruction ongoing at Essex College.

A second consideration in favour of the Anglican proposal was financial. Given that Windsor's population base was by no means largely Catholic in origin, appeals to other denominations was necessary to the success of the larger university. An exact estimation of Catholic support of the building fund was attempted after its first year by LeBel for his Superior General, Fr. Flahiff. While acknowledging an exact figure to be almost impossible to determine, LeBel used the available statistics showing the Roman Catholic population as being 43% in the federal riding, and 41% in both the county and city areas when calculating his figures.⁶⁴ Further, he

⁶³Annual Report of the Essex College Board, 1959-60, Record Group II, Box 14, File 14, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁴"Correspondence, etc., Catholic Support to a University, 1955-58", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 349, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

discovered that the total for Catholic support of the fund in its first year was 24.56%, while non-Catholic contributions amounted to 75.44% of the total. A non-Catholic denominational affiliate then would bring funds into the drive from sectors of society not responding to a "Catholic" drive, but who would be more likely to support a Protestant college within a Catholic university.

Bishop Cody, still a long way from his \$1 million promise, came through with two contributions of \$30,000.00 each to the fund on December 21, 1956 and January 26, 1957,⁶⁵ further indicating his involvement in the project to be at the "pastoral" level.

Finally, the Basilian openness to taking on an affiliate of another denomination was indicative of the ecumenical spirit sweeping through the world at this time.⁶⁶ This spirit caused Fr. LeBel and the other members of his order to put aside the differences which had separated Catholics and

⁶⁵Letter of Bishop Cody to Fr. LeBel, January 19, 1955, "Correspondence, etc., Financial Agreement, Bishop Cody", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 262, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁶Pope John XXIII convoked the Second Vatican Council in 1959 in order to discuss a number of issues dealing with the Catholic Church in a time of change. Among the topics of discussion were the increased role of the laity in the church, and ecumenism, both having ramifications for this period in the history of Assumption University of Windsor. The results of the Council meetings would move the church closer to the brand of ecumenism, or inter-faith dialogue, about to take place between Assumption University and the Anglican Church. Never before in history had a college of another denomination affiliated to a Catholic university. For more information on this particular movement in the church see Douglas J. Roche, The Catholic Revolution (Toronto, 1968).

Protestants from the time of the Reformation, and work towards a broader university program for Assumption:

...the university authorities in a democracy therefore should, in things spiritual, permit freedom to the various denominational groups, to teach and study their respective theologies. In things pertaining to the temporal order however, the curriculum should be common to all.⁶⁷

The long-range possibilities of such an undertaking too would be ground breaking. Never before had a Catholic university taken on an affiliate of another denomination.⁶⁸

Later that October Bishop Luxton wrote back to Fr. LeBel to indicate that interest and resources in his diocese would enhance the Anglican college proposal, teaching theology, philosophy and history, much sooner than was previously expected.⁶⁹ At the June Board of Governors meeting Bishop Cody, on behalf of the board, agreed to this proposal in principle, with an understanding to work out the terms of affiliation at a later date.⁷⁰

⁶⁷Fr. LeBel statement in a program outlining the reasons for the proposed Anglican College, undated, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁸Betty Lee, "Change is Almost the Only Constant at Assumption", The Globe Magazine, March 12, 1960.

⁶⁹Letter of Bishop Luxton to Fr. LeBel, October 26, 1956, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁰Canterbury College Facts Sheet, undated, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Bishop Luxton was ecstatic at seeing his plans reach their fruition so soon. After receiving this initial approval of his plan, he indicated to the Board of Governors his intention of formulating a press release to the effect of outlining the tentative affiliation of this yet to be named college. Knowing full well that Catholic response to this ground-breaking affiliation would result in widespread concern and confusion, Fr. LeBel asked to see a copy of the press release before it went to publication. His fears of an overblown situation were well-founded. The wording of this release was deceptive, indicating that the university authorities:

...requested the immediate establishment of an accredited course in Religious Knowledge at the University under Anglican instruction, and indicated that they would welcome the establishment of an Anglican hostel in conjunction with the University.⁷¹

Indeed such a request had never been made by the university, but rather had been fielded by it from Luxton through William Arison.⁷² This release would have to be changed lest the impression be given that Assumption was making concessions to the Anglican Church in return for its endorsement of the Assumption fund drive.

⁷¹Canterbury College Press Release, undated, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 16, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷²Fr. LeBel's notes on the Canterbury College affiliation, undated, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

This press release was altered to reflect more adequately the true tone of the negotiations that actually took place. The London Free Press though received a copy of the original press release, inciting a letter from Fr. Swan to clarify the true nature of the negotiations:

...we still consider ourselves basically Catholic and freely acknowledge the importance of spiritual values in education, and hence the term "non" denominational would be inaccurate if it implied a rejection of our traditional background. In any case, the term has already disturbed some of our old friends.⁷³

Regardless, Fr. Swan's worst fears were already materializing. A letter from Toronto lawyer J.A. Fullerton to the Canadian Register, was forwarded to Fr. LeBel for his information, revealing the tone of dissatisfaction and confusion felt by Canadian Catholics:

We have been taught from infancy that Catholic education is unique, that it also has the truth, and that we have a serious obligation to provide such training for our children. Now one of our great teaching orders proposes to establish an heretical course of instruction, and strongly implies that such action is taken in pursuance of its responsibilities. It is submitted that no Catholic body has any mandate to establish an Anglican instruction course.⁷⁴

⁷³Letter of Fr. Swan to the editor, The London Free Press, November 8, 1957, "Correspondence, London Diocese, Bishop Cody, 1954-57", Record Group 1, Box 18, File 446, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁴Letter of J.A. Fullerton to Fr. J. Hanley, October 3, 1957, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives,

Often times too, such criticism took a rather harsh stance in firmly chastising the ecumenical spirit of the merger:

The motivation of this undertaking is not clear; perhaps the Assumption authorities intend a cynical barter of their birthright for \$1,250,000.00, or perhaps they really believe that they have an obligation to provide instruction in heresy. In either case the situation is monstrously scandalous to the Catholic laity.⁷⁵

The Board of Governors of Assumption University, consisting of seven Basilian Fathers and the Superior General in Toronto, had no choice but to respond to such concerns. It then issued for public consumption the definitive "Statement Concerning Anglican College."⁷⁶ This "Statement" outlined the Basilian university at its academic and administrative peak. The fact that such a strongly worded document could be issued while holding in affiliation a non-denominational college possessed of equal senate representation was testimony to the strong Basilian control maintained at Assumption. The university's identity had come full circle, as it freely admitted its dedication to serving all aspects of Windsor's varied socio-cultural and religious

Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁵Ibid., "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁶"Statement Concerning Anglican College", January 21, 1958, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

makeup. This "Statement" was a bold defence of all the "questionable" moves made at Assumption during the previous four years and of the one it was about to make:

The Board of Governors retained full control of the University in spite of a strong effort on the part of several Windsor citizens (during the "stalemate") to establish a secular university. Had Assumption not acted when and as it did, there could very well be a university under secular control in Windsor at this time. In actual fact however, Assumption is a Catholic university, but in view of the provincial charter, it must meet the needs of non-Catholics as well as Catholics.⁷⁷

Assumption University had found its niche in Windsor serving as a Catholic university open to public and extra-denominational affiliation. This early ecumenical spirit represented more than just toleration, but rather was indicative of the spirit of cooperation that had been thriving at Assumption from the time of the Essex College affiliation. Assumption too was well ahead of the church in general in opening the doors to inter-faith dialogue, as Bishop Cody would remark of the move:

What is needed [in a pluralistic society] is something far more Christian than [tolerance]. What is needed is not mere diplomacy, not a mere veneer of outward respect for one another, not just good public relations but, with God's help, a deep and abiding mutual love, a brotherly love to be translated not by mere words, but by active participation in whatever is known to be helpful.⁷⁸

⁷⁷Ibid., "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁸Jubilee, January, 1958, p. 72.

As the year progressed, the Anglican college idea began to take a definite shape. A name was chosen, Canterbury College, and on June 27 it made official petition to the Board of Governors of Assumption University for affiliation with the university.⁷⁹ This petition took the form of six proposals that would be considered for the future affiliation agreement. As in the cases of Essex and Holy Redeemer College, the Canterbury College proposals were of the standard variety seen thus far. As a body to be vested with the authority to offer instruction in theology, philosophy and medieval history, Canterbury College sought admission to the Faculty of Arts and Science of Assumption University. They also sought representation on the senate of the university, with the principal of the College to be an ex-officio member. With regards to the Board of Regents who undertook such things as public campaigns on behalf of the university, Canterbury wanted to be able to appoint two representatives to this "citizens group". In keeping with its desire to be more than just an Anglican hostel, Canterbury sought the ability to appoint its own instructional staff in accordance with the university's hiring policies. Finally, Canterbury College desired to have full control over its financial situation.

This affiliation agreement was accepted in principle and held to be binding for five years. It was signed on Monday,

⁷⁹Canterbury College Facts Sheet, undated, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

November 4, 1957. Signatories here were Frs. LeBel and Swan on behalf of Assumption, and R.E. Burnell, president of the Board of Directors for the new Canterbury College, and J.A. Holden, its secretary.™ Bishop Luxton would serve as the chair of the Board of Directors, and both he and Bishop Cody were invited to give remarks following the proceedings. This was fitting, as Cody worked with Luxton in this ecumenical spirit, to bring about goals that were at the root of both denominations' interests:

In Canterbury College, as in Assumption, we hope and pray that we may bring to pass something apart from the assembly-line product in the realm of character, men and women who can take their place in the world and think for themselves without receiving their ideas from television or radio or the newspapers; men and women who are deeply rooted in the eternities...™¹

Bishop Cody espoused the same hope that this union might bring about a different level of understanding, not only among Catholics and Protestants in Windsor, but on a broader plane:

Assumption University of Windsor and Canterbury College join hands and hearts today in order to fulfil the great hope that we have in us that we will contribute something very definite to the betterment of our times, to the betterment of our

™Program, Canterbury College Affiliation, November 4, 1957, "Assumption University and Canterbury College Affiliation, 1957", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

™¹Program, Canterbury College Affiliation, November 4, 1957, "Assumption University and Canterbury College Affiliation, 1957", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

nation, to the betterment of the world.²²

Canterbury College would be ready to undertake academic work in the fall of 1958 with the establishment of one course in religious knowledge. First principal, Rev. R.S. Rayson would head the college in its temporary location at 172 Patricia Road.²³

Now perhaps Assumption had gone too far. Certainly the move to affiliate Canterbury College was well within its legal prerogative, and such an association with an Anglican institution met with the spirit of the ecumenical movement. One senses Fr. LeBel struggling though from the time of the Canterbury College affiliation to define Assumption University of Windsor as a uniquely Catholic entity, while all around him popular opinion could not help but determine otherwise. Assumption's policy even as an affiliate had never been to discriminate against other faiths; it had always striven to accommodate all creeds and cultures under strictly Catholic auspices. Fr. LeBel was now finding it increasingly difficult to expound on the Catholic virtues of the university, as it took on less of a Catholic appearance. Rather, he was forced to resort to a less specific, more "Christian" approach:

²²Ibid., "Assumption University and Canterbury College Affiliation, 1957", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²³Letter of Bishop Luxton to Fr. LeBel, February 25, 1957, re: purchase of the property on Patricia Street, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College, 1956-61", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

...the university under Catholic Governors is theist not in the sense that it would require every member of the staff and students to believe in God, but in the sense that it recognizes, that in the reality of things, God is the principle and end of the human person... As for those who do not believe in God, if they do however believe in the dignity of the human person, in justice, in liberty, in love of one's neighbour, they can be part of the University and can contribute to its life in the temporal order.⁸⁴

The re-affirmation of the place of Holy Names College on the campus of Assumption University was all that stood between Fr. LeBel and the complete shape that the university would take. Since moving on campus, the college had experienced a state of affiliation not as legally explicit as that enjoyed by the newer affiliates.⁸⁵ When Assumption received its university charter in 1953, the Holy Names Sisters and Fr. LeBel had signed a one page agreement with regards to the standing that the college was to enjoy within the new university. Here the student bodies of both institutions would be merged.⁸⁶ Holy Names would supervise women's activities on the campus, and contribute personnel to the combined administration and instructional staff of the university. It was further agreed that Holy Names College

⁸⁴Report of the President, Assumption University of Windsor, 1957-58, Record Group II, Box 13, File 19, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸⁵Affiliation with Holy Names College took the form of a brief written agreement made with Assumption College in 1934, and amended with its move on campus in 1950. See "Correspondence, etc., Holy Names College, 1953", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 90, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

would operate a women's residence in a house they took over from the Basillian Fathers at 290 Kennedy Place, until a later date when they could build a more permanent structure.

The addition of new, legally incorporated affiliates to Assumption, foreseen in 1955, spurred the Holy Names Sisters into action. On September 14, 1955, after twenty-one years of existence, Holy Names College was legally incorporated under the Corporations Act for the Province of Ontario.⁹⁷ On May 28, 1956 the Board of Directors of the College petitioned the senate and Board of Governors of the new university for formal affiliation with the newly formed Faculty of Arts and Sciences, as a liberal arts college for women. It sought "a more formal and permanent relationship with Assumption."⁹⁸

The Holy Names Sisters had finally received legal acknowledgement of their long standing affiliation with Assumption. They sought the same terms of affiliation with the university as the other colleges, with one notable exception. As a teaching institution under the direction of the dean of arts and science of the university, they sought special acknowledgement of their domain over the female students of Assumption University:

⁹⁷Letter of the Mother Superior of the Holy Names Sisters to Fr. LeBel, September 17, 1955, "Correspondence, General, 1955", Record Group 1, Box 11, File 77, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁹⁸"Typescripts, Histories of Assumption, Interview with Fr. LeBel by CKLW Television, 1964, etc.", Record Group 1, Box 18, File 432, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

If feasible, the authorities of University College will assign only women students to the classes and laboratories presided over by Sisters, yet not in the case of expensive duplication.**

These terms were approved by the Board of Governors in the spring of 1956, and the affiliation agreement was signed on June 30, 1956.

The home that Holy Names College would occupy had itself been a matter of concern for some time. The property on Kennedy Place was really a family dwelling, and far too small to suit the needs of the growing student population that had been predicted by Dr. Sheffield. Construction of a new Holy Names College then finally began in the fall of 1957 after the Sisters had surmounted a number of financial difficulties.** On June 1, 1958 Monsignor Langlois, dean of Essex officiated at the opening of the college, which would accommodate 100 women on the corner of Patricia Road and University Avenue.

Assumption University had now fulfilled its collegial destiny. From what had been a relatively small Catholic liberal arts college in affiliation with the University of Western Ontario, Assumption had swelled as an independent university to include four affiliates that, for the time being were able to appeal to Windsor's varied university interests. The glue that

**Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 18, File 432, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

**"Typescripts, Histories of Assumption, Interview with Fr. LeBel by CKLW Television, 1964", Record Group 1, Box 18, File 432, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

had always bound Assumption together though was the Basilian Fathers. Assumption's increasing diversification, coupled with its expanding student base would soon prove too much for the order, and it would be forced to capitulate or risk diluting the educational philosophy and reputation that were paramount to its existence.

Chapter Four

FROM ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR TO ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY

"Reasonable change has never frightened those who have guided the destinies of Assumption."¹ With these words, Fr. LeBel ushered Assumption University into the final stage of its history as a degree granting body. In 1914 the decision was made to widen its curriculum through entrance of the college to the Ontario Matriculation Board. In 1919 the curriculum and prestige of the college was further heightened through affiliation with Western University. In 1934 women were entered into degree study at Assumption with the introduction of Holy Names College. In 1953, independence and degree granting authority had been achieved to meet the needs of an expanding college, and in 1962, further expansion would necessitate a final change.

The final stage in the evolution of Assumption University was marked by close interaction between the University and its provincially sponsored affiliate, Essex College. From the time of its affiliation in 1956, Essex had flourished in its instruction in business administration, nursing and the applied

¹Report of the President, Assumption University of Windsor, 1962-63, Record Group II, Box 19, File 75, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

sciences. Through 1959, it had managed to operate at a moderate financial surplus.² By 1961 however, it was evident that this financial situation was unlikely to continue in the future.

Essex College's first year of degree instruction in the field of engineering began with the 1957-58 academic year; Assumption University of Windsor would graduate its first class in applied science by June of 1961.³ Although the Engineering Planning Committee headed by Dr. DeMarco anticipated the need for additional staff and facilities with this expanded course instruction, no one had foreseen what actually existed at Essex College in 1961. In 1955 the Essex College corporation employed a rather meagre 17 people. That number had expanded to 149 by 1961, with a payroll in excess of \$865,000.00 yearly.⁴ By the 1959-60 academic year inadequate student fees coupled with these additional costs had created an operating deficit of \$125,000.00. In his report to the Finance Committee of the Board of Regents of the university, John Whiteside, chairman of the Essex College Board, anticipated further deficits of \$104,000.00 for 1961, and

²Report of the President, Assumption University of Windsor, 1962-1963, Record Group II, Box 19, File 75, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³John Whiteside memorandum, January 14, 1961, "Correspondence, Memos, etc., 1961", Record Group II, Box 18, File 62, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴"Financial Reports, 1961", Record Group II, Box 18, File 67, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

\$250,000.00 for 1962.⁶ As a result of its expanded services into the field of engineering, Essex College ran a total deficit of \$479,000.00 from 1959-62. The deficits incurred thus far had been handled through the borrowing of capital funds granted by the provincial government. As this practice was unsanctioned however,⁶ banks had refused further financial assistance to Essex College to complete construction of the new Applied Science Building in the spring of 1960. Phase "1" of this structure, costing \$3,000,000.00, was financed without government support through short-term borrowing.⁷

The Essex College administration made a convincing case to Fr. LeBel: the once equitable arrangement between the university and Essex College, whereby a substantial part of its provincial grant went to the university, was no longer equitable. The principal source of revenue for Essex College had always been the provincial grant, and if it were to continue to contribute to

⁶Report of Essex College Chairman John Whiteside to the Assumption University Board of Regents, January 14, 1961, "Financial Reports, 1961", Record Group II, Box 18, File 67, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶Report of Essex College Chairman John Whiteside to the Assumption University Board of Regents, January 14, 1961, "Financial Reports, 1961", William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario. Here Mr. Whiteside described the practice begun in 1957 with the use of provincial funds for the creation of the new library, resulting in title to the building going to Essex College. Assumption University supplied all furnishings for the building.

⁷Ibid., "Financial Reports, 1961", Record Group II, Box 18, File 67, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

the expansion of the university, it would require an increase in this grant.

Fr. LeBel had his own financial turmoil in running the larger university. He was not going to jeopardize further Assumption's financial situation by releasing its share of the Essex College grant. Assumption's student population had doubled between 1950 and 1960,⁹ and University College announced an operating deficit of its own totalling \$109,784.00 for the year 1960-61.¹⁰ Declining religious manpower at this time particularly affected University College, as the hiring of more lay staff meant that fewer Basilian salaries would be able to be channelled back into the running of the school. Fr. LeBel opted to hand this problem over to the Joint Steering Committee of Assumption University of Windsor, and appointed a sub-committee made up of Frs. Mallon, Ruth, Dr. DeMarco and John Whiteside of Essex College, to consider different ways of establishing a more satisfactory working relationship between the university and its affiliated colleges.¹¹ This sub-committee however would be

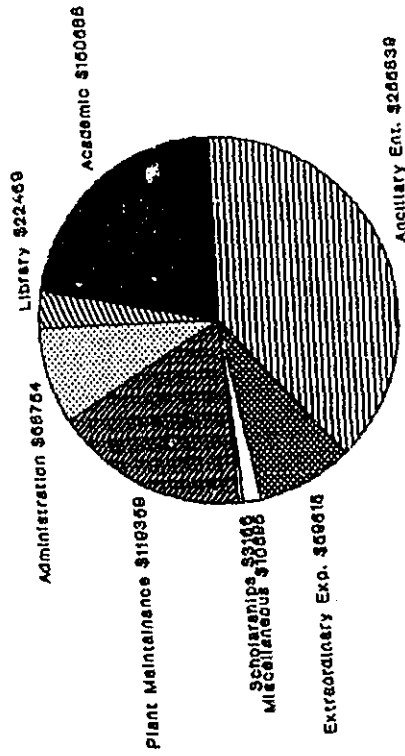
⁹"Reports on reorganization, 1961-62, Fr. LeBel", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰"Reports on Re-organization, 1961-61, Fr. LeBel", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

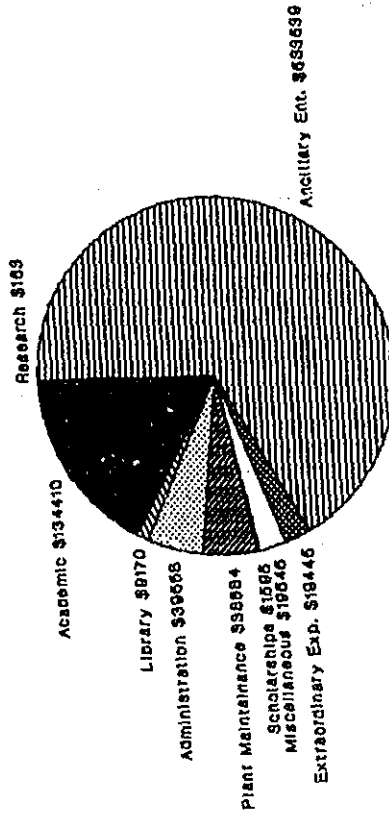
¹¹On a recommendation from the Board of Governors, Fr. LeBel also commissioned an analysis of Assumption's entire organization, completed as the "Hulcher Report" on June 17, 1961. This report commented on the poor state of affairs that was beginning to exist between the university and its affiliate colleges, especially Essex College. Rather than a united front, Hulcher commented on the university as a fragmented institution

Expenditure Comparison

Assumption University of Windsor
June 30, 1959



Essex College
June 30, 1959

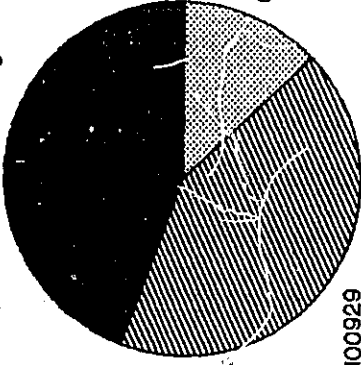


Capital Funds Surplus

June 30, 1959

Assumption
Beginning Balance \$1,844,002

Building Transfer \$104377



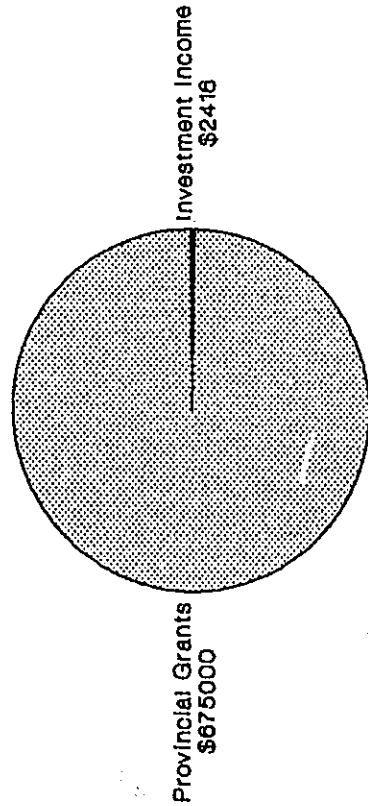
Asset Donation \$400

Current Funds Trans. \$

Basillian Donation \$100929

Total \$2,079,708

Essex
Beginning Balance \$1,995,357

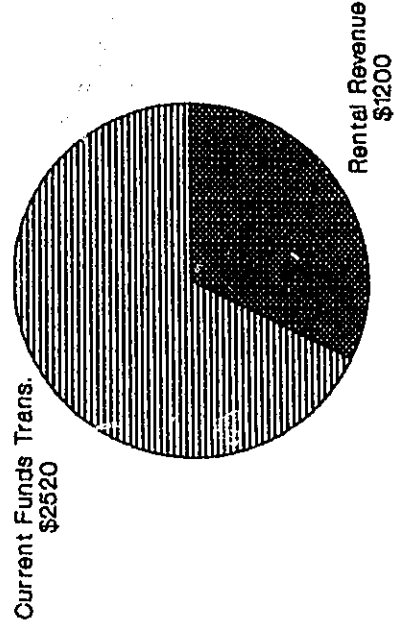


Provincial Grants
\$675000

Investment Income
\$2416

Total \$2,672,773

Canterbury
Beginning Balance \$8,196



Current Funds Trans.
\$2520

Rental Revenue
\$1200

Total \$11,916

cast aside in the events of early 1962, that would prove to be the end of Assumption's financial insolvencies, and the beginning of a new chapter in its history.

When Fr. LeBel, joined by Dr. DeMarco, John Whiteside and the Comptroller for Essex College, Robert Nairn, left on January 29, 1962 for the annual meetings of the Provincial Committee on University Affairs in Toronto,¹¹ it had been a full ten years since he had debated the nature of Assumption's affiliation with Dr. Hall and the contingent from the University of Western Ontario. Those ten years had witnessed many changes to Assumption's academic structure, as well as varied attempts at maintaining the economic solvency of this growing university. Yearly appeals had been made to the City of Windsor,¹² in order to increase civic contributions to the school. Now in the midst of further economic turmoil with the recent losses declared by Essex College, LeBel, with the representatives of the publicly funded college were going to Toronto to defend a rather large budget submission for the 1962-63 academic year.

where the "we and they" complex thrived. See "Assumption University of Windsor - Documents - 1960-61", C.31341870 Coll.19, General Archives of the Basilian Fathers, Kelly Library, St. Michael's College, Toronto, Ontario.

¹¹Minutes, meeting of the Board of Directors of Essex College, July 10, 1962, Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹²Among other examples, see "Brief, Fund Raising, Why and How Windsor Can Help Assumption, 1953", Record Group I, Box 11, File 47, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Much had changed in the structure of the provincial government since the original university charter had been enacted through the Conservative government of Leslie Frost in 1953. In 1961, John Robarts had assumed leadership of the party, with Frost relegating himself to his duties as an M.P.P., and occasional committee work. In 1962-63, Frost, a proven university arbiter, was the vice-chair of the University Affairs Committee. It was Frost who, in the absence of chairman Dana Porter, accepted the Essex College submission on behalf of Assumption University of Windsor for \$3,846,433.00 in capital and \$830,000.00 in operational grants.¹³ Ever the conciliator, and still interested in the expansion of a public university in Windsor, Frost made overtures to LeBel with regard to expanding the sphere of influence of Essex College to allow for less of an economic burden on Assumption. He suggested Essex College take over responsibility for instruction in the social sciences and that three or four laymen like John Whiteside be invited to join the Basilian dominated Board of Governors for Assumption University of Windsor.¹⁴ Fr. LeBel's reaction to this offer on the part of the government of Ontario to play a larger role in the administration of the university showed little of the

¹³Essex College Operating Budget, 1962-63", Record Group II, Box 19, File 73, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁴Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, February 5, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

resentment that he earlier had displayed to any suggestion of a heightened non-denominational presence in the administration of the university. In his letter to the new Superior General, Fr. Joseph Wey, LeBel remarked that the order would likely be divided over the issue of government support at the expense of Basilian influence in the administration of the school, but that this matter, given the failing resources of the order should be given serious consideration:

Frank DeMarco, Fr. Ruth, Mr. Whiteside, Fr. Mallon and I do not think that it would lessen our influence... I am almost certain that Fr. Garvey, Fr. Burns and Fr. Swan, and perhaps others here now, might think we are selling the Basilians and the Catholic University down the river, if we agree to the government's responsibility to the Social Sciences.¹⁵

Division amongst the Basilians on this matter would prove destructive to the move to keep it afloat. Clearly two interests were at odds here: The Basilian mandate to serve the university needs of the Catholics of this area had been stretched to the breaking point, and men like Fr. Swan refused to see this role

¹⁵Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, March 12, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario. Letters from then Assumption Superior Fr. Burns on April 26, 1961, and again on July 12, 1962 to the Superior General indicate his dissatisfaction first with the Hulcher Report, and then with the move to make the university more public, and as he puts it, "less Basilian". An interview with Fr. Edwin Garvey c.s.b. on April 18, 1991 confirmed that indeed frs. Garvey and Swan were suspected by Fr. LeBel as being opposed to any further government encroachments in the administration of the university. See "Assumption University of Windsor - Documents - 1962", General Archives of the Basilian Fathers, Kelly Library, St. Michael's College, Toronto, Ontario.

dissipate any further; Frs. Ruth and LeBel had seen this Catholic mandate expanded to include the interests of all cultures and faiths under Basilian influence. In the long run, the short-sightedness of the former would be surpassed by the long-range thinking of the latter who ensured that public interests were served while carving out a new niche for Assumption University.

While the Basilians contemplated this divisive matter of whether or not to give up control of the social sciences, the Ontario government was preparing plans of its own. On March 21, 1962 this same University Affairs Committee met with the Presidents of the Ontario Universities at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto.¹⁶ The primary purpose of this meeting was to study reports and offer suggestions pertaining to the latest projections of Dr. R.U.B. Johnson of the Ontario College of Education pertaining to increased enrolment in Ontario universities. His previous estimation of another 58,000 students by 1970, was expanded to 95,000 - 112,000.¹⁷ For Assumption, this translated into a university population upwards of 5,5000 from 1,425 in 1962, and required tripling its staff within eight years in order to meet the needs of the increased numbers (from

¹⁶Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, March 3, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁷Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of Essex College, July 24, 1962, Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

134 to 375-400).¹⁰ Staff salaries, which had themselves doubled in the past five years, showed the potential for doing so again by 1970.¹⁰ Regardless of the disagreement within the order over the future of Assumption University of Windsor, these figures spelled the end of the denominational control that the Basilians held over the school as a degree granting body. With already over-taxed resources, Assumption, with facilities suited to a student population of 2,000, was asked to expand to three times its present capacity within eight years.

Leslie Frost's interests in the expansion of Assumption to public sector control had been clear, although a reasonably amicable relationship had existed between the Premier and the university since de-affiliation in 1953. It was most fitting then that Frost would be the one to engage the university in the final negotiations leading to entry into the public sector.

During the course of these March meetings in Toronto, Frost had scheduled private meetings with the presidents of the two Catholic universities that had fallen upon hard times. To Fr. Henri Legare O.B. of the University of Ottawa and Fr. LeBel, Frost suggested an extension of the offer originally made to LeBel on January 29. He wished to see at both universities a

¹⁰Ibid., Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

¹⁰Ibid., Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

non-denominational top Board in order that provincial monies might be made available for both schools.²⁰

The writing was on the wall, but as in 1953, Assumption would have to go through the proper channels to implement Frost's plans, which would virtually make it a provincial school.

Where LeBel before had been able to count on a cohesive Basilian unit in the operation of the college and later the university, the manifold changes of the past ten years were taking Assumption's philosophy further afield than some of his confreres would have liked. Out of this frustration emerged Assumption's most able negotiator, Fr. Norbert Ruth, the Dean of Arts and Science at the university since 1952.

A native of Hepworth, Ontario, Fr. Ruth was an alumnus of Assumption High School where he first came into contact with the Basilian Fathers whom he subsequently joined in 1926.²¹ After graduation from St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto in 1932 as the recipient of the Daniel Meader Gold Medal in Mathematics and Physics, Fr. Ruth had gone on to graduate studies and work in a host of Basilian institutions before arriving at Assumption in 1952.²² Fr. Ruth was present during

²⁰Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of Essex College, July 24, 1962, Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²¹Biographical Sketch, Fr. N.J. Ruth c.s.b., Record Group 1, Box 30, File 59, Fr. N.J. Ruth Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²²Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 30, File 59, Fr. N.J. Ruth Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

all of the negotiations leading to the affiliation of Essex, Holy Redeemer, Holy Names and Canterbury Colleges. During this time he established a solid reputation as a Basilian administrator who had a strong concern for the denominational interests at the university. Fr. Ruth, as Dean, was responsible for the June, 1959 creation of three new faculties for Assumption including: Graduate Studies, Applied Science (through the work of Dr. DeMarco), and Theology.²³ By 1962 then he would be well experienced for the challenges that lay in his future.

As Basilian acknowledgement of the large role played by Bishop Cody and the London diocese, LeBel contacted the bishop in early May and presented both Frost's proposal and the University's economic position. Cody was reluctant about giving up any further control over the only Catholic university in his diocese, and would do his best to persuade the Basilians to hold on to Assumption University of Windsor:

Besides being very unjust to the Basilian Fathers who have been granted a charter for a University under Catholic management, the pressure being now exerted by the government to try and force us to accept the composite pattern they later invented is unjust to the diocese of London which did not make its generous contributions to a composite but to a Catholic University; It is unjust to the Redemptorists who came to Windsor because there was a Catholic University there; it is unjust to the Christian Brothers and other Catholic groups who counted on Assumption as a Catholic University.....

²³The faculty of Theology was to be administered out of Holy Redeemer College. See "Affiliation of faculty of Theology", File 12, Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

It is conceivably our last chance (for the diocese of London) to have a Catholic-controlled university, and it must not be sacrificed. Ours is a teaching Order of ever-growing importance. It needs a Catholic University to co-ordinate, exemplify and facilitate its educational endeavours. You have it now, so don't give it up!²⁴

Fr. LeBel took the bishop's concerns to his Superior General before opening negotiations with Essex College and then the province. Fr. Wey would prove to be key to the speed with which the negotiations would proceed in the months to come. In May of 1962, at Wey's suggestion,²⁵ LeBel was joined by Fr. Ruth in the discussions with the province. Fr. Ruth was possessed of a strong facility for seeing beyond strictly denominational interests, and Fr. Wey saw it appropriate that he be appointed to compose an Act uniting the proposal of the province with the demands of the denominational interests. The Act was presented to the Essex College Board on June 25 before going to the Committee on University Affairs on June 28, 1962.²⁶

²⁴Letter of Bishop Cody to Fr. LeBel, May 10, 1962, "Correspondence, etc., Financial Agreement, Bishop Cody, 1957-63", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 262, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁵Letter of Fr. Wey to Fr. LeBel, May 7, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁶Minutes of the meeting of the Essex College Board of Directors, July 24, 1962, Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

The first stage of this Act put together by Fr. Ruth was titled "Proposal re: An Act for the Uniting of Assumption University of Windsor and Essex College." This proposal included the juxtaposition of several concerns into one unifying Act under the name of Assumption University of Windsor. It provided for the non-denominational top Board necessary to receive provincial funding. University College and Essex College would be united together under the auspices of this top Board, with all of the subjects that the Basilians had been responsible for being transferred to this new university under one arts and science program. Fr. Ruth included in this proposal the suggestion that courses in religious knowledge receive degree credit as a department operating under the new Faculty of Arts and Science.²⁷ If the Basilians were to lose administrative authority in the university, they sought at the very least to enhance the prestige of the department of theology.

As the chairman of the provincially funded affiliate of Assumption, John Whiteside had been in with Leslie Frost for some time before the June 25 proposal to Essex College.²⁸ His response to Fr. Ruth's first proposal was an honest "no," as he knew that what the government wanted was not just a non-

²⁷"Reports on Re-Organization, 1961-62", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²⁸Interview with Prof. Whiteside, February 22, 1991.

denominational board, but a non-denominational university.²⁰

As Fr. LeBel told his Superior General:

...substantially he insists the government will not be satisfied with the non-denominational board, but will insist upon a non-denominational University. He thinks all of our rights will be protected if we were to move our activities to a University of Assumption College. He intimated that many Windsor people would be displeased if we insisted on the safeguards we have written into the proposed Act.²⁰

Unknown to the university officials, the executive committee of Essex College had been putting together its own plan for amalgamation with the university. On June 15, the Essex College Board commissioned Mr. Whiteside and Dr. DeMarco to review this plan, which called for the amalgamation of Assumption and Essex Colleges' resources into one non-denominational university. On June 28 Frs. Ruth and LeBel were joined by Dr. DeMarco and Mr. Whiteside for the trip to Toronto.²¹ This meeting was brief. The provincial officials refused Assumption University's proposal, despite Fr. Ruth's clarification that the

²⁰Interview with Professor John Whiteside, April 30, 1991. Professor Whiteside indicated that not only had Mr. Frost contacted him before consulting the Basilians in the matter of the status change for the university, but that he suggested the name "Essex University of Windsor". Then Mr. Whiteside told Mr. Frost that he thought this name highly inappropriate in light of the often tense nature of the negotiations that had gone into the affiliation of Essex College.

²⁰"Reports on Re-Organization, 1961-62", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

²¹Minutes of the meeting of the Essex College Board of Directors, July 24, 1962, Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Act was an attempt to satisfy the demands of the government, the Bishop of London, the Basilian Fathers, the Essex College Board and the alumni and friends of Assumption University of Windsor.³² Frost was now adamant in demanding the creation of a public university. He pointed out that the maintenance of the title "Assumption" for a non-denominational school would be an insult to what Assumption had stood for in Catholic university education. Frost suggested that the interests of the Basilian Fathers, and the Catholic church for that matter, would be best channelled through a "University of Assumption College" (as was achieved at S.M.C. in '58) in federation with a public university. He would be willing to make concessions in the appointment of Bishop Cody as the first chancellor of the new public university, and a larger Basilian component (of 1/3) on its Board of Governors than even Fr. Ruth had suggested. It was now quite clear that an entirely public university would be the only plan acceptable to the government.

Fr. Ruth now knew well that the task ahead of him would be virtually to dissolve the academic substance of Assumption University so that a non-denominational school might rise out of its ashes. On July 18 then,³³ Ruth and LeBel travelled to Ottawa in order to discuss the situation again with Bishop Cody. Although convinced of there being little other alternative for

³²Interview with Fr. N.J. Ruth c.s.b., January 19, 1991.

³³'Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Assumption, Bishop Cody gave his blessing to a plan that would incorporate a "University of Windsor" with the condition that he be present during the final negotiations with Roberts and Frost. As Fr. LeBel remarked to Fr. Wey:

His Excellency believes we are making concessions on the University level, and I surmise he wants to get some concessions on the elementary and secondary school level in return.³⁴

On July 24, 1962, both Assumption University and Essex College collaborated in presenting the revised Act "Proposal re: An Act to Incorporate the University of Windsor."³⁵ This Act had received tentative agreement in principle from the affiliated colleges, the Basilian Fathers, representatives of the university's alumni association and the Bishop of London.³⁶ Pending the final vote on this Act at Queen's Park, John Whiteside detailed the negotiations to his fellow Essex College Board members:

The new University of Windsor would be incorporated by an Act of the Province of Ontario. It would absorb Essex College together with all assets and liabilities. It would be headed by a

³⁴Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, July 23, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁵'Proposal - An Act to Incorporate the University of Windsor", Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁶Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, November 29, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Chancellor and governed by an inter-denominational Board of Governors. It would have jurisdiction over the faculties of Arts and Science, Applied Science and Graduate Studies. Assumption University of Windsor would change its name to Assumption University, remain a corporate body, become a federated college, enter federation agreements with the University of Windsor. It would have jurisdiction over the Faculty of Theology, and hold other degree granting power in abeyance. Holy Redeemer College and Canterbury College may stay with Assumption University, or negotiate with the University of Windsor as they wish.³⁷

The freedom to enter into affiliation agreements with the University of Windsor was not extended to Holy Names College. On Friday March 9, 1962,³⁸ Fr. LeBel had received word from the Mother General of the Holy Names Sisters, Sister Mary Xaverita, indicating the inability of her order to sustain further a college for women at Assumption. The problem was similar to that which the Basilians were undergoing in a much larger way at Assumption University: the overflow of students expected by 1970, coupled with the lack of religious staff trained to offer university level instruction, had forced the Sisters' withdrawal from Assumption. Further, they requested that the Basilians purchase their assets in the hopes of maintaining the Catholic presence for women on the university campus.

³⁷Minutes of the meeting of the Essex College Board of Directors, July 24, 1962, Record Group II, Box 19, File 72, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

³⁸Minutes of the April, 1962 meeting of the Assumption University Board of Governors, Record Group I, Box 26, File 18, Fr. N.J. Ruth Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

This interest posed a very serious problem for Frs. LeBel and Ruth who, while being integral components of the new university, were also concerned for the role that their order would play in offering the spiritual guidance that had always been key to Assumption's educational philosophy. As the final federation agreement between Assumption University and the University of Windsor was still a long way off,³⁰ the spiritual role that the order would play was still only theoretical. It was proposed that Assumption maintain a strong influence over undergraduate students by continuing to control the residences that they had always administrated with the assistance of their Basilian Scholastics.⁴⁰ Cody Hall, recently completed in 1961, and St. Michael's Hall in the old building would adequately serve the needs of incoming male resident students, most of whom were Catholic anyway.⁴¹ This left the Basilians with little other alternative than to purchase Holy Names College if the Catholic legacy were to be maintained and equally apportioned to both men and women.

³⁰Minutes of the April, 1962 meeting of the Assumption University Board of Governors, Record Group 1, Box 26, File 18, Fr. N.J. Ruth Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁰Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 26, File 18, Fr. N.J. Ruth Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴¹Interview with Fr. N.J. Ruth, January 19, 1991. Although denominational statistics are not available from the reports of the Dominion Bureau Statistics for this period, Fr. Roberts, who orchestrated the purchase of Holy Names College, maintains that the majority of residence students were still Roman Catholic in 1962.

The present debt of the Holy Names Sisters after the creation of their college site in 1959 was \$735,000.00.⁴² The Basilians found this price to be quite excessive, especially in light of the fact that the Sisters had by-passed their advice on how to make some financial short-cuts in the construction of the building on the corner of University Ave. and Patricia Street.⁴³ Further, the superior general would have to be consulted on any venture of such proportions.

If the Basilians were going to venture, for the first time in their history, into the administration of a university residence for women, they could not afford to do this in any small way. Holy Names College could accommodate roughly 100 students which, as the Sisters had indicated, would be too little for the horde expected by 1970. The Basilians then would have to embark on an expansion project for this building, which they planned to call Electa Hall in memory of the late founder of Holy Names College, Mother Mary Electa. Surrounding properties on Patricia St. would have to be purchased in order that a \$500,000.00, 200 bed addition might be put in place.⁴⁴ Using a

⁴²Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, March 3, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴³Both Frs. LeBel and Ruth make this eminently clear in "Statements, Financial, Holy Names College, 1962-63", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 210, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁴Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, March 3, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives,

formula taken from the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation in granting loans for university residences, Fr. Roberts, the Basilian bursar, put together an offer for \$624,000.00 to the Holy Names Sisters, based on three payments of \$208,000.00 on September 1 in each of 1962, 1963 and 1964.⁴⁶ On July 23 then, Fr. Wey communicated his permission for the Assumption authorities to purchase Holy Names College, as well as the adjacent Rochon, Porter, Wilshire, DeMarco and Wilkinson homes.⁴⁶ Fr. Robert's offer was accepted by the Holy Names authorities on August 18, at which time the Basilian investment in this project was already understood to be \$1,682,000.00.⁴⁷ The Holy Names Sisters would leave a skeleton staff for the following fall, and after twenty-six years of dedicated service to the needs of women in the college and university community, they left Assumption University for good.

The rest of the summer of 1962 was spent working out the specifics for the new University of Windsor Act. Unlike the summer of 1954, there would be no more last minute reprieves from

Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁶"Statements, Financial, Holy Names College, 1962-63", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 210, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁶Letter of Fr. Wey to Fr. LeBel, July 23, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁷Letter of Mother Xaverita to Fr. LeBel, August 18, 1962, "Correspondence, agreements, etc., Holy Names College, 1955-62", Record Group 1, Box 18, File 433, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Fr. LeBel. The desperate financial woes of the University had been compounded by new strains, sealing its fate. The Bill would incorporate a new University of Windsor under the direction of a public Board of Governors, and an academic senate:

It will be a new plan to solve new problems in a new age. The spirit upon which this new venture will be undertaken is the spirit of cooperation for the common good, and this is basically a Christian concept of loving one another and sharing our mutual burdens.⁴⁸

The next stage in this development would be to present this plan before the Ontario Bishops. A meeting of this austere group had been set for September 26 at Morrow Park in north Toronto, the Mother House for the Sisters of St. Joseph. Here Frs. LeBel and Ruth represented Assumption, and the official appeal for the status change was made by Bishop Gerald Emmett Carter, recently appointed auxiliary to the ailing Bishop Cody. Carter spoke most convincingly on behalf of Assumption. Only a year before he had served as the rector of St. Lawrence College in Quebec, and was possessed of a long history of strong personal involvement in the field of Catholic education.⁴⁹ The Ontario Bishops then, although regretting the loss of a most substantial Catholic teaching university, accepted the move.

⁴⁸"Notes on the Incorporation of the University of Windsor, 1962-63", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁴⁹Then Fr. Carter had published The Modern Challenge to Religious Education in 1961, adequately qualifying him to speak on behalf of Assumption University.

For LeBel and Ruth, this was the final hurdle to be passed. On September 27, 1962 a formal announcement was made of the new University of Windsor, with which Assumption University would federate.⁵⁰ The official Act for incorporation would be submitted to the Ontario Legislature during the fall session.

Even though this Act would not be passed for quite some time, Premier Robarts was confident that a non-denominational board could be invited to submit a five year budget so that the provincial grants from 1963 to 1968 could be established.⁵¹ On October 9 then this new interdenominational board of the yet-to-be incorporated University of Windsor was called into session. With Fr. LeBel acting as temporary chairman, it was agreed that a committee consisting of himself, Whiteside and Tony Fuerth, the chairman of the Assumption Board of Regents, should appoint a standing committee in order to act on such specific business of the board. Appointees to this new board included Richard Grabiell of the Windsor Star, Alphonse Gignac of Purity Dairies, Jerry Hartford of the U.A.W-C.I.O and Clare McCloud, assistant superintendent of schools in Windsor.⁵² These men set about

⁵⁰"Reports on Re-Organization, 1961-62", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵¹Robarts gave this Board until November 15, 1962 to submit this budget. See "Minutes of the October 9, 1962 meeting of the provisional Board of Governors", Record Group 1, Box 26, File 18, Fr. N.J. Ruth Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵²Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 26, File 18, Fr. N.J. Ruth Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

the business of preparing operational costs for a school of 5,000 by 1970.

For the time being the activity of the new board would have to take a back seat to the affiliation negotiations between Assumption, its affiliated colleges and the new University of Windsor. While acknowledging that the decision to go public was not reached easily, Fr. LeBel was confident that it had been the only solution to Assumption's many ills:

It was no easy decision to make. It had to be looked at from all angles. The long, difficult and countless sacrifices made by many priests, teachers, lay staff, alumni and benefactors for over a century had to be balanced against the province's pressing need now for expanding facilities in higher education for thousands of students.⁵³

The Basilians were left no choice in the matter of the creation of the University of Windsor, but would have all of the latitude they would need to establish Assumption University within it.⁵⁴ As for those Basilians still not satisfied with the creation of the University of Windsor, Fr. LeBel would not tolerate dissent within the ranks at this stage of the negotiations:

Perhaps the General Council would

⁵³"Reports on Re-Organization, 1961-62", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 247, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁴The "Proposed Financial Agreement Between the Basilian Fathers and the University of Windsor" indicates the free hand Frs. Ruth and LeBel had in establishing financial arrangements with the new university after they had been squeezed into its creation. See "Basilian Contracts with the University of Windsor", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 201, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

consider possible replacements for some Basilians presently on the academic staff. Perhaps 2 or 3 of them have lost interest in the re-organization, and may do better work elsewhere.⁵⁵

Beginning in October of 1962 then, the Basilians entered into discussions with the province over what their financial arrangements would be with the University of Windsor. The Basilians entered into the negotiations with a set agenda for discussion:

1. That the Basilians should be adequately recompensed for the sale or lease of both land and buildings of Assumption University.
2. They should not be saddled with the long-range problem of "debt retirement." If they were to continue to exist in some form on the University campus, they would require funds for the renovation of their residence, the student chapel and other projects.
3. But as a religious congregation that was tax exempt, the Basilians should like to give something back to the new University such as in the running of student residences. Basically, it would not be their intention to make a profit from the University.
4. The Basilians would agree to sell, transfer in title or lease such buildings to the new University as was deemed necessary for its proper function.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, February 6, 1963, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁶"Correspondence, etc., Basilian Contracts with the University of Windsor", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 201, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Fr. Ruth had clearly taken over at this stage of negotiations. He would arrange the sale of Basilian properties on Patricia and Sunset for the purposes of university expansion, as well as for Assumption's share of the library furnishings; only the library building was held in title by Essex College. Dillon Hall would be sold for approximately \$900,000.00 and then all other properties, including Memorial Hall, which had been bought by Essex College, would automatically become part of the university with the dissolution of the public college. In his negotiation with the province over the new university, Fr. Ruth would request roughly \$3 million for all of the required assets of the old university.⁵⁷ These financial arrangements, including the federation agreement that was summarized by Mr Whiteside, were finalized with the passing of "An Act Respecting Assumption University" in 1964.⁵⁸

The greatest concern of the remaining affiliated colleges namely, Holy Redeemer and Canterbury, was the freedom they would have to continue in their instruction of Catholic and Anglican doctrine respectively. The University of Windsor Act,

⁵⁷"Correspondence, etc., Basilian Contracts with the University of Windsor", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 201, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁵⁸By this Act it was agreed that the thirty Basilians that would continue to teach at the university would be treated and paid as other faculty members. See "An Act Respecting Assumption University, 1964", See "Correspondence, Staff Applications, 1960-63", Record Group 1, Box 19, File 504, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

passed in December of 1962,²² would allow both colleges to continue in their affiliation to what would become Assumption University, or engage in affiliation discussions directly with the new university. Canterbury however would initially prove unwilling to go along with the University of Windsor. In early December Fr. LeBel and Bishop Luxton engaged in a two and a half hour discussion at which time the Anglican Bishop relayed his intention of possibly delaying the proceedings at the Private Bills Committee level.²³ This sudden move by Luxton was particularly confusing to Fr. LeBel as it was made clear that the wording of the Act would allow Canterbury to work out its own affiliation agreement with the university, and the Act stood not to affect Canterbury's role as a teaching college. Luxton was re-opening negotiations that were seemingly closed in order to ensure that Canterbury received fairer representation, as this letter from Luxton to LeBel indicates:

In my judgement and indeed in the judgement of the vast majority of the Anglicans concerned, the present Act as submitted is a radical departure from the previous

²²Although enacted in December 1962, the Act would be called the "University of Windsor Act, 1962-63" due to the fact that it would not come into effect until July 1, 1963. This gave the new Board six months to set up the new corporate structure from the remains of Assumption University of Windsor. See the letter of Fr. LeBel to Fr. Wey, November 29, 1962, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

pattern acceptable to the government.⁶¹

The problem in the creation of the University of Windsor as Luxton saw it involved the matter of "inter church equity."⁶² The Board of Directors of Canterbury College put together a list of concerns and considerations for the provisional Board of Governors of the new university, and submitted among others, the following suggestions:

1. That Canterbury receive equal representation as that of Assumption University on the new Board of Governors.
2. That it also receive the "appropriate" representation on the University Senate.
3. That no new affiliated Arts Colleges be taken on until 1980.
4. That, by a new Act, Canterbury College should be made the "University of Canterbury College."
5. And, that a lateral agreement to that would be sought with the new University should be struck between Assumption and Canterbury.⁶³

These points, although soundly proposed by the college in order to safeguard its own existence, would be well outside of the

⁶¹Letter of Bishop Luxton to Fr. LeBel, December 6, 1962, "Correspondence, reports, etc., Canterbury College, 1957-63", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 265, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶²Letter of Bishop Luxton to Premier Robarts, November 6, 1962, "Correspondence, reports, etc., Canterbury College, 1957-63", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 265, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶³Memorandum from A.E. Ganich, Canterbury Board to the provisional Board of Governors, October 31, 1962, "Correspondence, reports, etc., Canterbury College, 1957-63", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 265, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

likelihood of possibility, given its limited size and resources. Since its affiliation in 1957, Canterbury had never been able to offer a substantial course load, but rather seemed destined to serving Anglicans as the university hostel that it was originally proposed to be.

Holy Redeemer College was guaranteed the same freedom to work out an affiliation agreement with one or both of Assumption University and the University of Windsor. Like Canterbury, the greatest concern to the Redemptorist Fathers in affiliating with the University of Windsor was the freedom they would enjoy to offer instruction in religious knowledge. Both colleges then contributed to a draft resolution on the creation of a Faculty of Theology, agreement in principle of which would play a great part in the affiliating of both colleges to the new university.⁶⁴ This draft provided for religious knowledge, or theology as a department in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of the new university, with the freedom guaranteed to individuals for instruction in their own beliefs. Further, in keeping with the inter-denominational spirit of this new university, it was agreed that:

The members of the department will bear in mind that their field of study has been defined as "faith seeking understanding." They will avoid the spirit of controversy on the one hand, and the spirit of indifferentism on the other. They will strive to present their courses in an objective, intellectual manner as befits the dignity of the subject and its

⁶⁴"Draft Resolution, Theology, 1962-63", Record Group 1, Box 13, File 220, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

place in the University curriculum.⁶⁶

The agreement would allow other faith groups to petition for instruction in their particular philosophy, and for the church-related courses to be offered by the representatives of Assumption, Canterbury and Holy Redeemer by their own instructors as long as they were qualified.⁶⁶

For the Redemptorist and Basilian Fathers, this meant the beginning of a most unique relationship. As Assumption had agreed to hold all other degree-granting power in abeyance while maintaining the power to grant degrees in theology, it would enter into a special affiliation agreement with Holy Redeemer College. Assumption would grant degrees in theology to Holy Redeemer College graduates, who would be equally free to pursue arts degrees at the University of Windsor.⁶⁷ On May 24, 1963 then, the college solidified its place on the campus of the University of Windsor by signing a separate affiliation agreement, whereby it became an affiliated college in its Faculty of Arts and Science. It would also be guaranteed one representative on the new Board of Governors, and jurisdiction

⁶⁶Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 13, File 220, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁶Ibid., Record Group 1, Box 13, File 220, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁶⁷"University of Windsor Construction", File 15, Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

over the conduct of all of its students subject to the regulations of the senate.⁸⁸

Although Bishop Luxton was proving to be somewhat difficult in negotiating Canterbury's affiliation with the university, the Anglican community in general was enthused by the religious freedoms that were being secured by the University of Windsor. On December 11, 1962, E.S. Reed, Anglican Bishop of Ottawa, wrote Fr. LeBel to remark on what he considered to be the strong spirit of ecumenism that had surrounded the negotiations with the affiliate colleges, and that would pervade the new department of theology at the university:

It is most encouraging to know that the new Board of Governors of the University of Windsor is sympathetic with the policy of the religious basis of education on the campus. The role of the Basilian Fathers and of our Anglican clergy will continue to be an important one. Assumption has made a significant contribution to the ecumenical spirit in the University setting. The atmosphere created and the encouragement you have given have made it possible for our Canterbury College to develop as it has.⁸⁹

With the University of Windsor completely operational as of July 1, 1963, Bishop Luxton's pretentious demands and stalling began to be rendered ineffective. Sentiments such as those expressed by Bishop Reed indicated that Anglicans would be satisfied with the new university, and if not, the University of Windsor was

⁸⁸Ibid., Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

⁸⁹Letter of Bishop Reed to Fr. LeBel, December 11, 1962, "Correspondence, etc., Canterbury College", Record Group 1, Box 16, File 355, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

willing to go on without Canterbury.⁷⁰ Faced with the possibility of non-inclusion in the new university, Bishop Luxton signed an affiliation agreement with the University of Windsor on Dec. 6, 1963.⁷¹ Canterbury would no longer offer independent courses, and its teaching staff would be absorbed into the larger academic community of the University of Windsor.

The University of Windsor Act, 1962-63, brought the public university into existence as of July 1, 1963.⁷² Its creation also marked the dissolution of Essex College, and the chairmanship of John Whiteside.⁷³ Whiteside tendered his resignation to Fr. LeBel in a tone reminiscent on the eight years of relations undergone between the two institutions. From its initial capital grant of \$200,000.00 to its combined assets in 1963 of over \$8,000,000.00,⁷⁴ Essex College had been a most vital component to the extension of Assumption University of Windsor to serve more of the Windsor - Essex county area:

During the period, the Corporation maintained its obligations to Assumption University of Windsor, imposed under the terms of the affiliation agreement, and made

⁷⁰Interview with Prof. John Whiteside, April 30, 1991.

⁷¹The Windsor Star, December 18, 1963.

⁷²II,19,#75 University of Windsor Act - File.

⁷³Mr. Whiteside would later go on to join the teaching staff at the Faculty of Law at the University of Windsor in 1975, serving as its Associate Dean from 1980-82 and 1988-90. He was made Professor Emeritus in 1990.

⁷⁴Minutes of the June 26, 1963 meeting of the Essex College Board of Directors, Record Group II, Box 19, File 75, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

a substantial contribution to the development of the University in the provision of services, assistance in administration, proposal of new undertakings in academic areas, and other matters.⁷⁶

And so with little fanfare, the last meeting of the Essex College Board that had done so much in such a short period of time, adjourned on June 25, 1963. A private dinner would be held that evening in order to reflect on the Essex College of old and the University of Windsor of new, but John Whiteside would best estimate what the project had been all about, in his closing address to the Board:

Our experiences will never be repeated. It has been unique, and out of it has grown a realization of the accomplishments that can be achieved in the practice of cooperation in the field of education, as in all other fields.⁷⁶

The Board of Governors of the University of Windsor, which, amongst new members, included the representatives of the old colleges, unanimously elected Fr. LeBel to stay on as the first president of the University, a fitting commemoration to the man who had been responsible for guiding the destiny of Assumption University for the past ten years.⁷⁷ Bishop Cody

⁷⁶Ibid., Record Group II, Box 19, File 75, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁶Minutes of the meeting of the Essex College Board of Directors, June 26, 1963, Record Group II, Box 19, File 75, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

⁷⁷Anticipating this honour to be bestowed upon Fr. LeBel, Fr. Wey, on November 1, 1962 wrote him in order to "suggest" that he refuse the position when it was offered him. Fr. Wey felt that a more fitting retirement awaited LeBel elsewhere, and

too was chosen as the first chancellor. For Fr. LeBel this would be a one year appointment. The Board of Governors would select John Francis Leddy, vice president academic of the University of Saskatchewan, who had been so key to Assumption's admission to the N.C.C.U., as the first Roman Catholic lay president of a non-denominational English speaking university to succeed him on May 24, 1964.^{7*} Dr. F.A. DeMarco, the previous principal of Essex College would serve as vice president under both administrations. These men along with Fr. Ruth, who was made dean of arts and science, would guide the University of Windsor through a period of growth and expansion unprecedented in its history, making it the world class university that many knew it to have been before being bankrolled by the government of Ontario.

indicates to him here that Fr. John Murphy would be a more fitting replacement as the first President of the University of Windsor. Although this may have played a factor in the decision to limit his term to only one year, Fr. LeBel persevered through this "suggestion" of his Superior General to take the posting he so richly deserved. See letter of Fr. Wey to Fr. LeBel, November 1, 1962, "Assumption University of Windsor - Documents" C.3135 1870 (01), General Archives of the Basilian Fathers, Kelly Library, St. Michael's College, Toronto, Ontario.

^{7*}Biographical Sketch, J. Francis Leddy, "Correspondence, etc., Assumption University Board of Governors, 1962-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 267, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

Conclusion

The final stage in these developments came with the signing of the Federation agreement between Assumption University and the University of Windsor on November 26, 1963. The event was marked by a spread in "The Tablet" and an article outlining, on the eve of Assumption's new role as a Catholic community on the campus of a non-denominational university, "what is a Catholic University:"

What is a Catholic University? Is it Catholic if a large number of students are non-Catholic? There is no difficulty in giving an affirmative answer to this question, for surely we do not want our universities to be ghettos. Is it Catholic if many of the Professors are non-Catholic? Is it Catholic if the very administration is divided in religion? In other words can a university be Catholic if it is part of a larger federation in which there are component parts that are non-Catholic?... The really vital point is that the Catholic spirit will be felt more strongly in one or several of the component parts of a federation, but if it is the genuine Catholic spirit it will radiate throughout the whole structure. Time also will tell.⁷⁹

And so Assumption was finally able to discover what it was to be a Catholic University. It could serve the academic and

⁷⁹Dennis O'Brien, The Tablet, June 29, 1964.

spiritual needs of a community in an independent capacity, as it had done for so many years, and it could serve the spiritual needs of a university community in conjunction or affiliation with a larger school.

As Fr. LeBel's only term in office as the first President of the University of Windsor drew to a close, great praise and tributes were heaped on the man who had played such a large role in this period of Assumption's self-discovery. For so many years, he had managed to balance the needs of his own religious community, the concerns of his diocese and those of the public that made up Assumption University, that he himself had come to a realization on the nature of this school, and the role it should play:

This school's policy, its curriculum, its structure, its methods should represent what society wants it to be. Our society wants and needs the good man who has knowledge and a deep sense of personal and social responsibility. This belief is still current in our University, and no one has doubted its validity.²²

On March 13, 1964 then, as was the custom of the Basilian Fathers, Fr. LeBel received a small card in the mail from his Superior General, indicating he had been transferred to St. Mark's College in Vancouver as Superior and Principal effective

²²Report of the President, Assumption University of Windsor, 1961-62, Record Group II, Box 18, File 65, William H. Arison Papers, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

July 2, 1964.^{¶1} With his characteristic humility and optimistic spirit, Fr. LeBel quietly left the institution he had toiled in for 22 years and brought to world acclaim.

With Fr. LeBel's departure this period in the history of Assumption College and University truly came to a close. Reflecting on LeBel's presidency during the centennial proceedings of the arrival of Fr. O'Connor to Assumption in December of 1970, Fr. Lajeunesse quoted a description of another past president, Fr. Forster:

In controversial matters he welcomed criticism and respected opposition.....But such was his grasp of the situation, his power in argument and the strength of his personality that he could always carry the majority with him.^{¶2}

This strength typified the Basilian Fathers of Sandwich during this revolutionary period in their history. When Fr. Forster penned the affiliation agreement with Western in 1919, religious animosities prevented closer ties with any less denominational counterparts. The affiliation of Holy Names College in 1934 was acceptable so long as their female students received instruction in south Windsor. Fr. LeBel's presidency however was as far away from these bygone days as could be possibly be imagined. His view of a truly Catholic university would see, under his deanship, the admission of female students onto Assumption's

^{¶1}Actual notice, "Reports, Quarterly, correspondence, Basilian Superior General, 1960-64", Record Group 1, Box 14, File 253, Assumption University Archives, Windsor, Ontario.

^{¶2}Quote of Fr. Henry Carr c.s.b. on Fr. Dan Forster, taken from Centennial Proceedings, Fr. E.J. Lajeunesse, December 8, 1970, Assumption University Archives.

campus for the first time in 1950. With the university charter gained in 1953, non-Catholics such as Rhys Sale and Walker Whiteside would be increasingly invited into participation in the expanded school.

The affiliations of Essex and Canterbury Colleges were extensions of this same sentiment. Assumption had discovered that to be a Catholic university did not mean isolating Catholics from those of other faiths, but that under Catholic auspices an inter-faith union was possible that would still fulfil all of Newman's criteria. The addition of a newly incorporated Holy Names College and Holy Redeemer College would ensure that Catholic doctrine and philosophy still held preeminence on the campus. The end of Assumption University of Windsor as a teaching institution then was the result of changes and pressures beyond the control of the Basilians. When they finally gave in to Frost's insistence of the creation of a public university, it was in a moment of two-fold realization: they knew that they could no longer hope to manage a university of the proportions expected by 1970, but they also realized that this situation need not spell the end of Assumption's age old service to Windsor's university community:

This is not an end, but a beginning; not the death of Assumption, but its flowering; not a time to look back with sadness, but forward with joy.²³

²³Bishop Emmett Carter, address at the first convocation of Assumption University, The Windsor Star.

AFTERWORD

With the formal establishment of the University of Windsor on July 1, 1963, work began on the Assumption University Act of 1964 which would mark Assumption's transformation to the status it presently holds as a federated university. Assumption would form a vital link with the public university by: (a) providing religious staff to its various faculties and governing bodies, (b) providing a base of operations for a university chaplaincy to serve the spiritual needs of the university community, and (c) continuing the Basilian tradition of offering student residence supervision.

Assumption retained its status as a degree granting institution and continued for one more convocation to grant degrees to the Redemptorist Scholastics of Holy Redeemer College. Thereafter this power would be held in abeyance. This would not deter the Basilians from continuing the Campus Catholic Community. The spirit of the old school, Bishop Carter explained, would always be present in the new:

It is alive in continuing the tradition which must effect the University of Windsor, and alive in the men and women who are the mainspring of the new university.⁸⁴

⁸⁴May 7, 1964 Convocation address, Bishop G. Emmett Carter, File #14, "Affiliation - Faculty of Theology", Redemptorist Archives, Holy Redeemer College, Windsor, Ontario.

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VITA AUCTORIS

Peter Meehan was born on April 30, 1966, in Toronto, Ontario, the first of six children born to Dr. Joseph E. Meehan and Yvonne (Mohan) Meehan.

From 1980-1985 Peter attended St. Michael's College School, and in the summer of 1982 he began the first year of what continues to be a sessional position in the Engineering Department of St. Michael's Hospital, as a micro computer analyst.

From 1985-87 Peter attended King's College in the University of Western Ontario. After his father's death in early 1987 Peter returned to Toronto and St. Michael's College. He received his Honours B.A. in History from the University of Toronto in the spring of 1989. During this time he also served as a Supply Teacher with the Metropolitan Separate School Board, specializing in History, English and Mathematics.

Peter entered the M.A. program at the University of Windsor during the 1989-1990 term. During his time in Windsor he was active in various aspects of university life. This included work as a Graduate Assistant, a Residence Assistant in the graduate residence Electa Hall, and as a representative on the university Residence Services Advisory Board.

Peter is an avid golfer, tennis player and fisherman. He plans to tour Europe for a month following completion of his M.A.