

Wages up and up

Some mind boggling settlements

—Jim Cairnie

Wage and salary increases negotiated by workers in major industries so far this year may be described in one word — substantial. The most compelling factor behind a series of record wage hikes has been the dramatic rise in consumer prices. The pinch of inflation has sharpened the determination of workers and their representatives, in both the public and private sectors, to adopt demanding and aggressive stands at the bargaining table in an effort to protect the purchasing power of their wages and salaries.

In British Columbia, that climate has produced some mind-boggling settlements. In the second quarter of 1974 — the last for which complete data is available — the average annual increase in hourly earnings provided for in all contracts is 15.7%. In the trade and service areas, the average increase is 17.6%.

The two largest and richest settlements negotiated this year — in the forestry and con-

struction industries — were not concluded until August, and do not show up in the second quarter figures.

In the forest industry the IWA, representing 32,000 coastal workers, signed a one-year agreement with FIR that provided a 14.6% increase in the base rate — from \$4.45 per hour to \$5.10. Few workers in the industry, however, are actually employed at the base rate. For certified journeymen the increases were more substantial. The minimum journeyman rate was set at \$7.29 an hour — an increase of \$1.42 or 24% over the previous year.

Also included in that IWA-FIR package are improved holidays, increased life insurance, a dental plan and a cost-of-living adjustment. The latter COLA clause is a major first in a one-year agreement. The allowance — 1c per hour for every 0.35 point rise in the Consumer Price Index — will be paid quarterly, commencing January 1, 1975.

In the construction industry the 10 unions, representing 40,000 workers, negotiated a two-year agreement with the Construction Labour Relations Association. For laborers the contract provides an average annual increase of 18.8% in 1974 and 20.0% in 1975.

The actual gross increases in wage rates for laborers are even larger. By staged increases hourly rates will rise from \$5.64 in December 1973 to \$8.20 in December 1975 — 45.4% over two years.

The average annual increase for carpenters in 1974 and 1975 will be 13.2% and 16.0%. Again, over two years hourly rates will rise from \$7.00 to \$9.44 — a 34.9% increase.

For 1975 a regularly employed carpenter may reasonably expect to earn \$18,000. Plumbers, at an average rate of \$9.26 an hour, should do somewhat better.

The effect of inflation and news of healthy settlements has had an influence in those industries with multi-year contracts. In a recent *Financial Post* article Clive Baxter noted: 'With prices mounting and workers increasingly worried, more and more contracts are being opened and negotiated before they expire. Scores more that have built-in cost-of-living allowances are being changed to improve employee earnings.'

During the summer the pulp and paper workers in B.C. forced an unscheduled review of their contract, managing to bring forward to April 1 a raise originally set for July 1 and to introduce a cost-of-living review clause.

Recently Alcan voluntarily opened its contract to advance a scheduled increase by four months and boost the COLA benefits.

Inflation, productivity components in negotiations

Inflation and productivity must be adequately recognized when determining appropriate minimum wage settlement levels.

Recognizing inflation means that the first part of an increase should be enough to take care of the most recent

information on cost of living. At present, inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index is running at a level in excess of 11%, with nothing to suggest that this rise is likely to stop.

Because of this continuing escalation, a sound agreement must either attempt to predict the inflationary level which is likely to prevail during the term of the agreement or incorporate a cost-of-living clause that will periodically adjust wages in line with prices.

There may be a case, too, for an additional catchup increase to compensate for short-falls experienced in an expiring agreement that did not make adequate provision for inflation.

The second component of wage theory is based on the

level of productivity of the economy — the increase in the gross national product.

Aside from the fact that all employment contributes to the growth of national wealth and is entitled to a fair share, it is essential that the purchasing

power of wages be adequate to consume the growth in productivity, hence the need to distribute this growth.

Canada's productivity growth has averaged around 3.7% annually in the last 10 years. In 1973, the actual increase in real dollars was 5.4%

per capita. An examination of a current agreement will show whether there is also need for a catchup on this factor.

Simple addition of these two components, inflation and productivity, adequately measured, will produce a basic wage objective.

68 arbitrations if necessary

BCTF President Jim MacFarlan stressed that teachers' associations across the province are prepared to follow the legal process to its end in local bargaining, 'even if that means 68 arbitration hearings.'

MacFarlan called a news conference to re-inforce the teachers' position to bargain

locally and to release information that was coming to the BCTF from local associations on the salary packages.

He stressed that demands are formulated at the local level, and that teachers have no intention of negotiating on a centralized basis as proposed by the BCSTA. 'It is simply nonsense for the trustees' asso-

ciation to call on meetings in Vancouver,' MacFarlan said.

Central negotiations would not cut costs as claimed, he said, but simply impose another stage, since local negotiations would be needed to settle local conditions.

MacFarlan congratulated the six school boards who resisted pressure of the BCSTA negotiating campaign and did not sign over their bargaining rights last year. These are Kamloops, Merritt, Nechako, North Vancouver, Burnaby and Richmond.

MacFarlan warned that teachers' associations would not passively accept the cavalier attitude of school boards toward the legitimate processes of bargaining by teachers. 'Boards could very well find teachers making an issue at the November elections of this lack of responsibility toward the intent of the Public Schools Act and for local autonomy.'

MacFarlan called for local boards to think seriously about their responsibility under the Act and to meet with teachers' associations to look at their requests.



How's that for a large class! Actually principal Sam Reid at Sechelt Elementary was organizing the house system for the sports program — a common event as the province's schools got underway

Postes
Canada
Canada
Port payé

Canada
Post
Postage paid

Third
Troisième
class
classe

PERMIT No. 2036
Vancouver

IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver 9.

BCTF AGREEMENTS 1974-75



—Mike Zlotnik

Inflation erodes salary gains

For the past two years, teachers' salary increases have not kept up with inflation. Primarily this is because the rate of inflation has been increasing. Salary increases that were higher than price increases in the immediate past turn out to be lower than current increases in prices.

Although there is no perfect way to measure inflation, the Consumer Price Index is generally considered the best indicator of overall inflation.

The current rate of increase in consumer prices in Canada is the highest since 1920. It took more than five years for the consumer price index to

rise by 10% in the period 1961-1966. In the period following, until this past year, it took approximately 2½ years for the index to rise by 10%. However the index has risen by more than 10% in the past 11 months.

What is even more distressing is to look ahead into 1975. There is no indication that inflation will slow down in 1975. The latest figure for the wholesale price index (July) shows an annual rate of increase of 23.2%. One has to anticipate much of that increase being passed on to the consumer over the next few months.

The rate of inflation in Canada's main trading partners is now higher than in Canada: U.S.A. — 12%, Britain — 16% and Japan — 19%. We will inevitably 'import inflation' from these countries.

If present rates continue with no further acceleration, the Consumer Price Index will be in the area of 177.5 to 181 by January 1975; a rate 13% to

15% higher than January 1974. If these rates continue right through 1975, the Consumer Price Index will be from 195 to 206 by December 1975 which would be 24% to 31% higher than January 1974.

As prices rise, the purchasing power of the dollar falls. As Chart I demonstrates, since January 1973 the purchasing power of the dollar has declined to 85.2. That means that as of August 1974, a dollar was only worth 85.2 cents in relation to January 1973.

Even with the 11.1% increase in salaries which teachers typically received in January 1974, the purchasing power of teachers' salary scales has not been maintained. For every \$100 which a typical salary scale provided in January 1973, it provided only \$94.70 in purchasing power in August 1974. (See Chart I)

Teachers' 1975 salary increases will have to recognize these record rates of inflation.

Purchasing power of dollars

CHART I

		PPs 1 PP Salaries 2	
1973	Jan.	100.0	100.0
	Feb.	99.4	99.4
	Mar.	99.2	99.2
	Apr.	98.1	98.1
	May	97.4	97.4
	June	96.5	96.5
	July	95.7	95.7
	Aug.	94.4	94.4
	Sept.	93.9	93.9
	Oct.	93.6	93.6
	Nov.	92.9	92.9
	Dec.	92.4	92.4
1974	Jan.	91.7	101.9*
	Feb.	90.7	100.8
	Mar.	89.8	99.8
	Apr.	89.3	98.2
	May	87.8	97.5
	June	86.7	96.3
	July	86.0	95.5
Aug.	85.2	94.7	

* After 11.1% salary increase in January 1974. (see Chart II)

1) Purchasing power of dollar in January 1973 cents.

2) Purchasing power of teacher salary scales in relation to January 1973.

Source: Calculated from Consumer Price Index—Canada. Statistics Canada.

An Irish lullaby

Great genie soothes troubled trustees

—G. R. Kirby

Last year, 68 of the 74 school boards turned over their bargaining rights for 1975 agreements to the BCSTA.

The tactic of turning over their responsibility to a BCSTA agent was not new. For several years most school boards have used BCSTA assigned agents. But these former agents, some from as far away as California, met with local teacher negotiating committees on home ground. This year the BCSTA agent is a committee and it has decided that it will meet with all teacher committees at a time and place of its own choosing. The first time and plan chosen was July 12 in the Hotel Vancouver but no teacher representatives showed up.

Once upon a time there lived in a land of tall mountains and rushing streams a people known as school trustees. It

was known by all who lived in the land that trustees were to travel down the school board trail tending to schooling problems as they went. But the trail was difficult and the hardships many for they came upon teachers suffering from maladies of salary and bonus.

Others too suffered from inappropriate work or too much work. Children were also encountered who suffered a poor learning malady and some parents of these children were overwrought about their child's malaise. Yet when the trustee people moved to give aid and succor, they were set upon by wild and ferocious taxpayers or blocked by huge ponderous bureaucrats.

Alas! It is little wonder that many of the people wearied and stopped by the wayside to rest and slip into a gentle sleep disturbed only by a warm fuzzy dream. In the dream a genie came to them who said, 'Labor no longer! For I shall relieve you of your troubles.' And so it was that there unfolded before them a strategy.

Let the genie and his helpers travel the school board trail for all their troubles into a small ball and with a deft movement make it disappear behind my left ear. 'Should those teachers grumble at this treatment of their troubles I shall appeal to the wisest of wise ones who will surely take out a great pen and

known throughout the land as the clever ones.

But when it came to pass that the genie could not convert dreams to reality, they would sleep and dream again in order to find a new genie. With many stops and rests, with recurring dreams and with new genii, the trustee people moved very slowly down the trail.

Finally in the year 1974 the greatest genie of them all appeared in their dreams and said: 'I am the Genie of the "Grand Strategy."

'Don't Meet Teachers. Don't Bargain With Teachers.

'I shall assemble them all within the Great Hall called the Columbia Room in the huge hotel whose spire disappears in the clouds.

'I shall, with my helpers, roll all their troubles into a small ball and with a deft movement make it disappear behind my left ear.

'Should those teachers grumble at this treatment of their troubles I shall appeal to the wisest of wise ones who will surely take out a great pen and

write in strong flowing strokes upon the tablets of authority which surround the wise ones in the city of the parliaments.

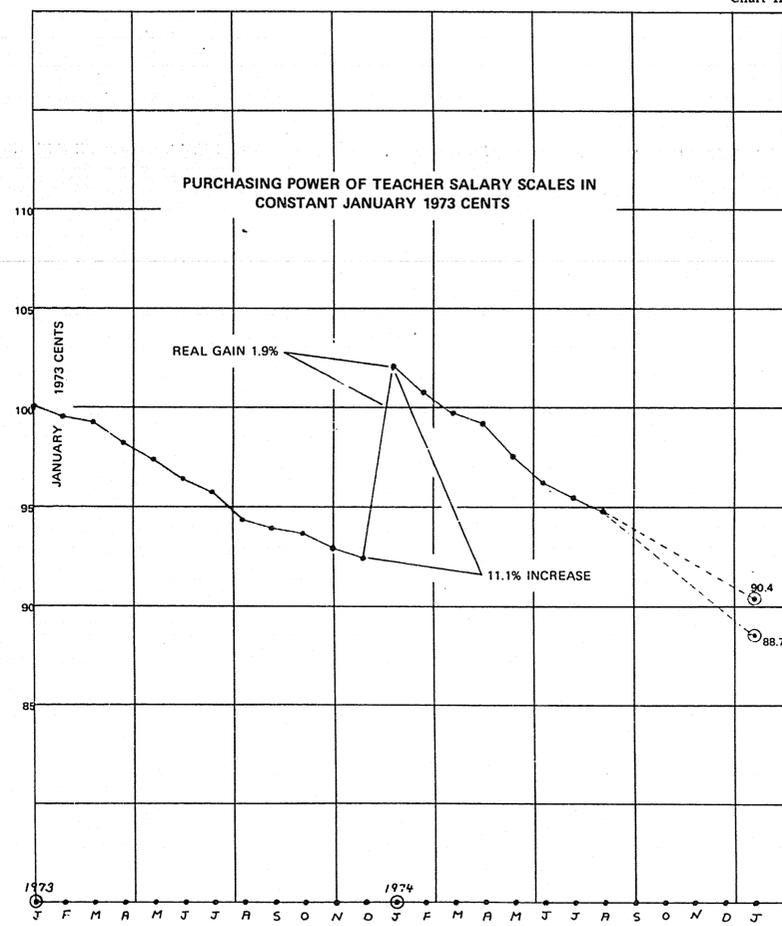
'The words inscribed there shall chastise teachers for seeking to redress their grievances in public and change them so that they can only genuflect and applaud. They shall nevermore experience want even though their need be great. They shall have a blind eye facing in the direction of children who suffer poor learning maladies and cries of distraught parents shall fall on their ears as a light morning dew falls on the leaves of our great forests.'

It is recorded that six trustee people woke from the dream with a start and forthwith strode down the school board trail with a firm and determined mien. Others were heard to mumble, 'Trustees' trail? I seem to remember — alas the thought has slipped away!'

Alas, the last page of the tale is missing. Will the trustees follow the six healthy ones?

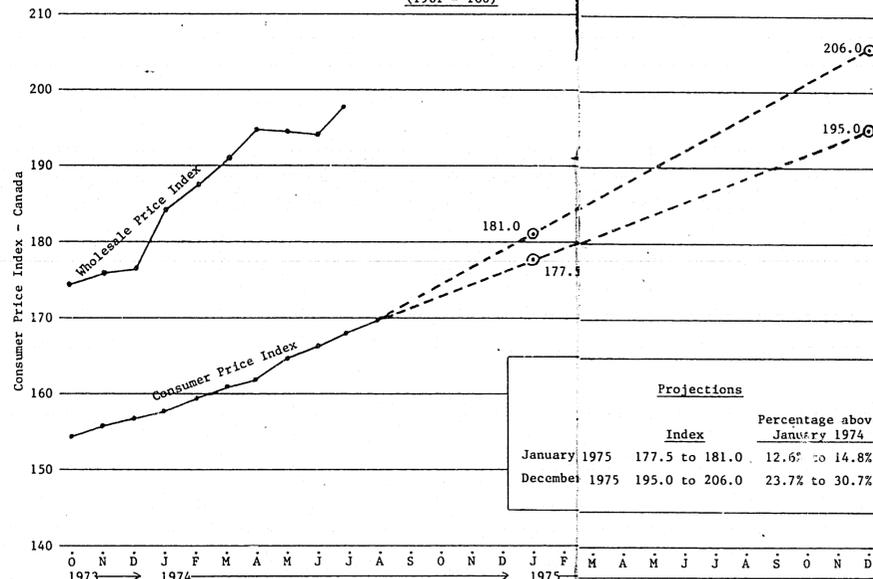
Here's where your raise went

Chart II



RECENT CHANGES IN WHOLESALE AND CONSUMER PRICE LEVELS — PROJECTIONS FOR FUTURE CONSUMER PRICES

Chart III



INFLATION AND SALARY LEVELS

IF YOU ARE NOW EARNING

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO MATCH INFLATION WHEN CPI REACHES:

169.6 (August 1974)	\$ 8609	\$ 10761	\$ 12914	\$ 16142	\$ 19371
177.0 (minimum projection for January 1975)	8985	11231	13477	16846	20216
181.0 (maximum projection for January 1975)	9188	11485	13782	17227	20673
195.0 (minimum projection for December 1975)	9898	12373	14848	18560	22272
206.0 (maximum projection for December 1975)	10457	13071	15685	19607	23528

Note — Minimum and maximum projections are not in any sense absolute but only indicate the range of projections derived from chart III.

Chart IV

Fringe benefits important

—Bruce Watson

Benefits other than salary, negotiated into collective agreements, have been traditionally labelled as fringe benefits.

Their importance to employees, however, is such that they should no longer be called a fringe or marginal benefit. These benefits might more appropriately be referred to as indirect or supplementary compensation, or as employment benefits.

For teachers the benefits fall into two broad categories — those available to all teachers in a district and those which only a few members of the local association may avail themselves of at any one time. The latter includes leave of absence, educational leave, detached duty, in-service funds.

climate in a school district. However, our experience has been that in many school districts; trustees do not present concrete economic arguments rebutting the teachers' case for salary adjustments. Rather, trustees just say no. Any arguments offered tend to be political arguments rather than economic ones.

We contend that the single most important cause of the large number of arbitrations in recent years was the desire of the BCSTA to show, by encouraging large numbers of arbitrations, that the present local negotiating process does not work.

The BCSTA is attempting to use the negotiating process to achieve its political objective — provincial bargaining for teachers' salaries. It hopes to convince legislators and the public that the present system does not work. In past years the organization has put a great deal of pressure on local school boards. We have had near agreements in districts only to find that heavy pressure from the BCSTA office resulted in a withdrawal of offers and collapse of negotiations.

If bargaining has not taken place in good faith in the past, it is not because of any lack of effort on the part of teachers' organizations. It is a result of direct interference by the B.C. School Trustees Association in the bargaining process.

Each one of the 74 local teacher associations has complete autonomy in the area of agreements negotiations with its school board.

This point was re-emphasized in the BCTF's concluding presentation to the Select Standing Committee of the Legislature, which held its final hearing in Salmon Arm on September 17.

The text of the BCTF statement on local autonomy follows:

Two myths have been presented to this committee and should be dispelled. The first of these is the myth that local associations of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation do not in fact enjoy autonomy in the salary bargaining area. We state categorically, and for the public record, that every one of our local associations has complete freedom to determine its own objectives in terms of salaries and bonuses and to settle at any figure it considers appropriate.

Those who suggest otherwise are either ignorant of the facts or deliberately falsifying the facts before this committee.

It might be useful to describe the role of the central office of the Federation in the bargaining process. First, we assist local associations by supplying statistical material, tables, economic information, and, if necessary, assisting with case

Bargaining demystified at hearings

preparation. We provide a clearing house and liaison service among associations across the province. We make information on negotiations and settlements in other districts available to all of our associations. Second, we offer provincial and regional seminars to local association agreements chairpersons. In these seminars we discuss not only the economic situation and current trends, but also the timetable for negotiations, the legal requirements contained in the Public Schools Act and suggestions for improving techniques in negotiations.

Once again we want to state for the record that these provincial and zoning meetings do not set any figure that is binding on local associations in terms of either their initial requests or the figure on which they must settle.

The settling of precise objectives and the determination of whether or not a local association will accept a board offer is entirely the responsibility of the association. On several occasions local associations have requested from the BCTF office information or advice on a proposed set-

tlement and have chosen to ignore that advice. Of course, when we are requested, we advise a local association that a proposed settlement is within a range we consider desirable for the economic circumstances in its district. However — and we cannot stress this fact too much — the final decision on both opening requests and on acceptance or rejection of board offers is solely a local responsibility.

The second myth can be phrased in the form of a question: "Do the large number of arbitrations in the last two or three years not indicate that the process of setting teachers' salaries has broken down?" No, the process has not broken down. Arbitration is a legitimate part of the process. It is provided for in the Public Schools Act and it is one method of resolving disputes. Although we wish that more negotiations could be concluded without resorting to conciliation or arbitration, we reject the idea that there is something inherently wrong with the arbitration process.

We share the view that negotiation without resort to arbitration provides a somewhat more amicable

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

Newsletter

Member

Editor
JOHN HARDY
Assistant
JOAN WHITE



EXPRESS

105 - 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver 9, B.C.

BCTF Office Hours
Monday to Friday — 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Lesson Aids
Monday to Friday — 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday — 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Note: The BCTF Office will be closed on Saturdays of long week-ends.

Fringe benefits important

The former encompass plans to protect members from undue loss of income through sickness, disability, retirement and death as well as undue costs in the provision of health services and insurance.

Teachers may all belong, through their employers, to the B.C. Medical Plan and to the Extended Health Benefits plans underwritten by MSA and CU&C.

Each local association may obtain group life insurance

coverage for its members either through the BCTF/BCSTA plan or through another carrier. Similarly long term disability insurance is available through the BCTF sponsored plan with Great-West Life Assurance Company. Again local associations may wish to select their own carrier.

Dental plans are becoming quite popular among union members, the latest large union negotiating such a plan

being the International Woodworkers of America. In this plan, the employer pays 75% of the premium cost.

Teachers should check with their local association officers to determine what benefits have been negotiated for them, what is required on their part to participate in the plans and how to apply for a benefit when eligible.

Local association agreements committees have been made aware of the benefit plans available and of current trends. If teachers consider their benefit package to be incomplete, they should pursue the matter with their local association.

Mavis meets the Victoria Labor Council

Mavis De Girolamo, president of Victoria teachers, addressed the September 4 meeting of the Victoria Labour Council, in keeping with BCTF policy of encouraging local associations to send an observer to local district labor councils. This is what she has to report:

'The experience of speaking to the Victoria Labour Council first filled me with grave misgivings and much trepidation! However, bolstered by information of various kinds from Jim MacFarlan and Frank Fuller during the presidents' conference I practised smiling and mumbling a great deal and

memorized our policy statements on labor liaison!

'The directions in the brief speech I gave were two-fold: a look at the history of our policy, how we reached a compromise at the '73 AGM, Bill 3 and the subsequent political action; then the advantages which might be accrued by all of us in creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and co-operation through closer liaison.

'I was given only one "brickbat" when someone suggested that if teachers were sincerely

interested in establishing liaison we should join the Canadian Labour Congress and thus "put our money where our mouths are." However, generally, the whole 10-15 minutes went very smoothly and I believe the shared experience was mutually beneficial.

'While constitutionally I apparently cannot attend their meetings as an observer (my original request), I have been invited back again prior to trustee elections to discuss GVTA priorities and to share further ideas on educational issues.

'I hope that the GVTA will reciprocate the invitation at a future date and have a representative from the Labour Council share their goals with us.

'I would highly recommend this kind of sharing experience to all local presidents who have not yet tried it — it, hopefully, will provide a little furthering of good public relations.'

Salary indemnity rules changed for pregnancy

BCTF Salary Indemnity regulations have been amended to extend benefits to teachers who become ill while pregnant.

Benefits will not be paid to such teachers, however, during the period designated in the Unemployment Insurance Act as the time during which a woman can be eligible for unemployment insurance maternity benefits.

Normally that is a 15-week period — eight weeks before the week in which confinement is expected, the week during which confinement occurs, and a six-week period following confinement.

Unemployment insurance maternity benefits begin eight weeks before confinement is expected. If confinement occurs earlier than expected, however, the benefits stop six weeks after the week in which confinement actually occurs. In such cases the benefit period may be shorter than the normal 15 weeks.

The two alternative calculations are required to take into

consideration premature and delayed births.

The Salary Indemnity regulations appear as statement 17.C.02 on pages 45-6 of the Members' Guide to the BCTF.

The change affects Regulation 13(d). The new regulation, passed by the Executive Committee in August, reads: 'No benefits shall be paid to any member for the period designated in the Unemployment Insurance Act as that for which persons shall be eligible for unemployment insurance maternity benefits — i.e., the eight weeks before birth, the week of birth and the six weeks following birth.'

Teachers applying for SIF benefits must meet all eligibility rules of the Salary Indemnity Fund. They must be sick while employed as a teacher, have used all statutory sick leave for the year, and be on leave of absence for illness only.

SIF benefits are \$21 a day for a maximum of 75 teaching days. No benefits are paid during July and August.

B.C. Teacher highly praised

The teachers of B.C. don't realize just how good their professional magazine is, according to two communications professors.

Dr. Don Bagin and Dr. Dick Ambacher, of Glassboro State College in New Jersey, were asked to evaluate last year's issues of *The B.C. Teacher*. Here are a few of their comments.

'We've done a large number of these evaluations, and this is probably the most professional-looking magazine we've seen, in terms of appearance and more importantly, perhaps, in terms of content.'

'Content is far superior to that of most national educational publications. You take

challenging topics, you show both sides, and that's really healthy. The content is as good as we've ever seen for a magazine of this type, and is certainly provocative.'

'Some of your headlines and content selections are absolutely brilliant. We're going to use many of your headlines as examples for courses in communications, layout and design at our college. They're just tremendous.'

'Pictures throughout your publication are effective; you make good use of them.'

'The professional quality of this publication overall is very impressive.'

The evaluation was arranged by the Educational Press Association.

Overseas wants you

Fifteen B.C. teachers will spend next summer in a developing country as part of Project Overseas, the major international assistance project of the Canada's teaching profession.

The program sends Canadian teachers each summer to assist their colleagues in developing countries. In the 13 years it has been operating, the project has gained worldwide recognition, and has established Canada's teachers as leaders in international assistance work.

Project Overseas is administered by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and is financed by the provincial teachers' organizations and a

grant from the Canadian International Development Agency. No salaries are paid, but all expenses are met.

Since the inception of the project, 107 BCTF members have participated in countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia.

Application forms for the 1975 project are available now from the BCTF office, and must be returned by November 20.

Basic requirements are: membership in the BCTF, a university degree, a minimum of five years of teaching experience, excellent health, and evidence of mature judgment and flexibility.

Anxious? Try COLA

No, it's not a carbonated soft drink but a device to protect salary levels against sudden and large increases in inflation. The record rates of inflation this year have created a sense of uncertainty and insecurity. Hopefully we are not headed for the type of hyperinflation experienced in Germany in 1922-23 when prices rose an average of 322% per month nor even the present rate of acceleration which could produce price increases of 33% per year by the end of 1975.

The question is, 'can you afford to take the chance?' What are the implications to the family budget of a one-third cut in your salary or of a quarter or of a fifth? For that's what inflation increases of 33%, 25% and 20% mean.

Many employees fear that they may not be able to meet their obligations let alone maintain their living standards if inflation continues to spiral upward.

Their solution to this problem has been to negotiate COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment) clauses into their contracts. For example the railway unions are seeking a 'one for one' COLA clause. Under this scheme each employee would receive a 1% increase for each 1% rise in the Consumer Price Index.

While there are a number of ways in which the COLA could be applied, a common one would be to adjust salaries each quarter of the year by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index in the past quarter over the one previous to it.

Such a COLA clause would protect the purchasing power of teachers' salaries against large increases in the Consumer Price Index. If such increases do not occur school boards would find the COLA clause an inexpensive means of relieving teachers' anxiety over continued inflation.

Brief takes

Gastown tours

Educational tours of Vancouver's historic Gastown and Chinatown areas are continuing because of their phenomenal success last year — 25,000 elementary and secondary students from all parts of the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island and interior of B.C. took part in the tours. The Department of Education is now providing financial support for the programs. Raymond McAllister urges you to contact him

at 18 Water Street, Vancouver, for more information.

Retired teachers

Retired Teachers' Association meets October 19 for a coffee party at Langara College, Vancouver.

As of September 1, 1974, medical coverage will be with Medical Services Plan of B.C. Along with the August pension cheque came the medical cards. Make certain your doctor is notified of your new numbers.

Home and school

The Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation has prepared a brochure to encourage the involvement of students in international development education so that when students participate in fund raising it will be a meaningful study of the plight of the developing nations. Contact Cathy Schoen, president of the B.C. Home and School Federation, 45 Kingsway, Vancouver.

Connaught reunion

A reunion of graduates and teachers of Duke of Connaught High School, New Westminster, 1953, takes place at the Royal Towers Hotel, October 19, 7:00 p.m. Information from Murrie Redman, Seascope, Box 313, Sechelt, B.C.

New district

A new school district to serve a population which is 90 percent native Indian, has been established in the Nass River Valley.

Education Minister Eileen Dailly announced Cabinet approval for the creation of School District No. 92 (Nishga). The boundaries of the new district cover the general watershed area of the Nass River, including Stewart.

Mrs. Dailly said the Nishga District will operate under the same regulations as all other public school districts in the province, but will be able to provide greater opportunity for meeting the specific educational needs of native Indian children.

Department establishes students rights in police investigations

The Department has received informal reports which indicate that at least in some school districts special efforts have been made to establish excellent working relationships between law enforcement officers, school staff and students.

It is recognized however that there are times when serious problems arise, possibly of a criminal nature, where the police are required to conduct a formal investigation. Such an investigation has sometimes led to formal interrogation of students in the school by police officers. In order that the rights and responsibilities of all persons concerned may be recognized, the following statement of Department policy in connection with these situations is issued:

1. No student should be officially interviewed or interrogated at school by law enforcement personnel without prior consultation with at least one of the student's parents or guardians.
2. Such a parent or guardian should be present (as is required in the case of Juvenile Court) at such an interview.
3. In no case should a teacher or principal assume this parental responsibility.
4. Students are clearly subject to the normal responsibilities of any citizen to assist the police or other authorities where it is established that the student involved is not subsequently to be charged.
5. This policy should be made known to students, parents, principals, teachers and law enforcement officials.