

MacFarlan blasts Minister's actions

BCTF President Jim MacFarlan charged Education Minister Eileen Dailly with a 'dramatic shift' in desire to implement directions of the White Paper as evidenced in her firing of the director of Research and Development.

A long and protracted struggle occurred among senior officials in the Department between March and December, he said. 'And remember, these are the same people who formed educational policies under the previous administration — who said 'yes' Mr. Minister and 'no' Mr. Minister at the appropriate time.'

Acting as good civil servants, MacFarlan went on, the Department officials performed all those 'loathsome tasks' assigned by the former Minister including the loss of automatic membership, collective bargaining and the like.

'They did not feel obliged to resign or speak out in conscience against actions of that government.'

MacFarlan defended his recent call for the resignation of the Minister saying 'It was my decision.'

There was a motion instructing MacFarlan to withdraw his comments, it was defeated; a motion asking the Representative Assembly to endorse MacFarlan's comments that was defeated. A third motion, that would have had MacFarlan cease and desist from writing 'hostile' articles in the Newsletter — related to the article he wrote on the admini-

strator's PSA and the Teaching Profession Act — was also defeated.

'While the General Secretary and Vice-President were aware of the firing we had not had a lengthy discussion about the posture the organization should adopt. I made it because I believed we were at a critical point requiring a decisive action of the organization in response to a decisive action of the Minister.'

MacFarlan said he believes the Minister to be a humanistic, sincere individual. 'She believes that she is going to lead us out of the educational wilderness and dilemma that confronts this province.'

'But she is incapable, I believe, of doing that. She is not able to control the senior bureaucracy who serve her.'

The Minister, MacFarlan charged, is not able to cope with her own Cabinet in terms of making a priority for education in the annual pie-splitting contest at budget-setting time.

Other ministers, MacFarlan said, made significant changes in the structure to ensure that decisions would be carried out but the Education Minister had made what he called 'a fatal decision of making minimal changes and lateral demotions with enormous increases in salary to provide heart balm for those displaced.'

The White Paper, MacFarlan reminded delegates, had said a major responsibility of the school is to provide a measure of success for every

student, and had called for an examination of the whole structure within which the student is expected to learn.

'No such examination has been undertaken. No plans for renovation exist and no legislation has been tabled.'

'Have the needs of Indian children been better addressed than a year ago? Has special aid for children in less advantaged areas been provided?'

'Only in the battle against sexism has any progress been made because of the inspiration and initiative taken by the BCTF.' And he charged a senior official in the Department assigned to that work with hindering the program.

There has been no task force formed to examine authority and responsibility in the school system, he said, but noted that the Research and Development Division had been placed in the hands of the 'same tired old crew' in December.

He told delegates that the selection of a new superintendent for Sechelt had received a 'shoddy counter' from the Department. Also, the Deputy Minister, under duress from the rest of the superintendents, had assured him that no commitment to consultation with local associations had been made.

'There has not been a single cent in the form of grants made available for development of local curriculum beyond that which was made available

prior to the issue of the White Paper.'

While the White Paper suggests the professional staff of schools should have the opportunity for pre-service and in-service to offer alternative programs, MacFarlan said, 'I haven't noticed the coffers of government opening forth to provide us with the kind of funding and assistance in developing in-service programs.'

'There is no new structure of authority and responsibility but the same old tired hands appointed in the same old tired way by the same people.'

MacFarlan also charged that the government had reneged on its promise in education finance to ensure that funds were raised in an equitable fashion. 'The result of that investigation in the White Paper is to realize that the public at a local level are not paying a sufficient amount and the Minister was called upon in Prince George to announce that the public would anticipate a mill rate increase.'

Nor, he said, had the BCTF been asked to name anyone to the government task force, nor to make representation to the government on the White Paper in the investigation of education finance. 'There are no study groups, no recommendations, and no reports.'

On the political level MacFarlan said the Minister's decision to fire the director represents a retreat from the



Jim MacFarlan

major policy statement of the NDP in 1973.

MacFarlan defended his action in calling for the Minister's resignation both with reference to collegiality and to authority and responsibility within the BCTF.

'I have reported to the Executive on my actions and that body is rather evenly divided.'

'I appreciate the concern and opposition of those who sincerely disagree with the statement, both in the way it was made and in its content.'

'I think also there are those who really like Mrs. Dailly's action, because it means peace

(Continued on page 2)

Gov't reneging on promises to drop PTR

Is the government standing by its three year commitment to reduce pupil-teacher ratios?

If a board budgets to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio by 1½ will the government share costs?

We have asked these questions of the Minister by telegram, BCTF president Jim MacFarlan told the Representative Assembly, but he predicted that the government would not stand by its commitment for next year.

'When you read the Minister's speech quite carefully, you find that the Minister on behalf of the government promises to support school boards in the maintenance of existing programs and existing staffing ratios,' MacFarlan told the delegates.

The Minister, in a recent speech in Prince George, has said that with escalating costs the government and boards collectively are going to be very hard pressed to continue to meet the kind of educational programs that have been developing over the last two years.

And where, because of accelerated growth, a district is in financial difficulty, the government will attempt to

provide aid such that the mill rate increase will not be dramatically out of line for the rest of the province.

'It seems likely,' MacFarlan said, 'that there will not be additional funding for the 1½ reduction and there will not be a reduction in property taxes, but an increase.'

Member concerns on TPA sought

A motion to withdraw the Teaching Profession Act working paper from the Minister of Education until it could be discussed by the AGM was defeated by the Assembly.

Bill Broadley, co-chairper-



son of the Task Force on a Teaching Profession Act, assured the Assembly. 'I hope that those of you who come from teachers' associations that have concerns would advise teachers that the task force wants to hear from them. Nothing is being laid on in a heavy fashion. No documents will be collected back at this RA. Let's get back on the track in a reasonable discussion.'

On trustees, Broadley said he would prefer the 'open hand' extended by teachers be ac-

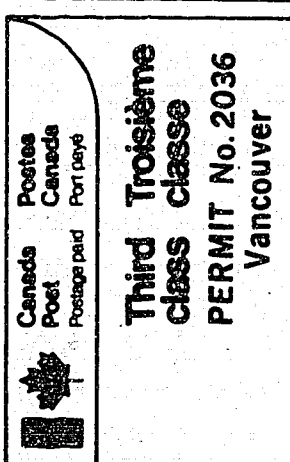
Allan Black, the Federation's solicitor, gave a long explanation about the responsibility of a staff for its members. A fuller treatment of this area will be carried in a subsequent Newsletter.

cepted for discussions on the proposed Act. And he stressed that there remains an opportunity for open dialogue within the Federation.

The Prince George delegation of Harry Hufty and Penny Stewart expressed a general concern on the supervisory duties and teacher responsibility in the proposed Act as well as the power of the Federation to dissolve a local association.

While they recognized that the power to dissolve a local association is not specific in the act, they felt that it could happen, however remote, and wanted to discuss these points.

GRs tackled the details in the working paper in an evening session.



IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

Learning conditions proposes school staffing formula

The Provincial Learning Conditions Committee has proposed a school staffing formula



Ralph Sundby

to meet BCTF minimum standards for class size, libraries and unassigned time.

Under this proposal, the school staff would have a certain amount of flexibility in choosing 'other services.'

Ralph Sundby, chairperson of the Provincial Learning Conditions Committee and Mike Zlotnik, BCTF staff, reviewed the learning conditions program with the Representative Assembly prior to reporting to the Annual General Meeting.

There are, according to the committee, a number of inadequacies in present minimum criteria.

'One of the most serious flaws is the failure of our minimum standards to

recognize that the school is a basic unit for learning conditions. The only specific minimum standards for schools are the library criteria. The rest of the criteria are based on either the classroom or the individual teacher as the unit.' Criteria, they say, are valuable and necessary. But teachers are showing more interest in collegiality and staff committees which indicates a readiness to deal with school staffing policies.

'The problem is that while the school is a suitable unit educationally, is the appropriate unit for collegial decision processes on staffing and is the sensible and logical unit from a logistical point of view, our minimum criteria, the real

clout to our program, ignore the school as a unit (except for libraries).'

Some members have expressed concern about the rigidity of the class size criteria, they note. And some members are caught in a bind because with the number of staff provided they can only maintain BCTF class size criteria by making sub-optimal use of their staff.

The committee will continue the minimum criteria program to reduce class sizes as well as propose a growth staffing formula to go with the present criteria for the AGM. A full copy of the committee report is contained in the Reports and Resolutions booklet coming to all staffrooms.

With the school staffing formula, teachers will have the responsibility through the provincial and local organizations and their staff committees, to establish priorities for the allocation of resources to the school.

Proposed minimum criteria for schools require that the provincial government and local school boards increase professional teaching staff in relation to pupils by some 6,300 teachers (26%) above the 1973 level.

In addition, the proposed staffing formula established priorities in regard to elementary schools, small schools and schools serving children from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Charlesworth Awards presented at RA

The B.C. Teachers' Federation has awarded \$500 scholarships to two students in the province.

Winners of this year's Charlesworth Memorial Scholarships are David Hampton, Kimberley and Kelvin Ketchum of Killarney Secondary School, Vancouver.

An award of \$1,000 is given annually by the Federation to the son or daughter of any active, retired or deceased member of the BCTF, in honor of the late Harry Charlesworth, first General Secretary of the BCTF.

Basis for the award is academic ability with some consideration of need. It is available to secondary school graduates proceeding to a post

secondary institution.

The Awards were officially presented at the RA by Jim MacFarlan.

David Hampton, is the son of Muriel Hampton, a counsellor at Selkirk Secondary, where he was rated the top academic male student in the school as well as having been active in the school's extra curricular activities.

The parents of Kelvin Ketchum both teach: Clifford Ketchum at Gladstone Secondary in Vancouver and Maretha Ketchum at Twelfth Avenue Elementary in Burnaby. He was rated by his teachers as having first-rate academic ability as well as being an active member in school extra curricular activities.



Jim MacFarlan presented the Charlesworth Awards to the winners whose parents attended the ceremony. From l. to r., Clifford Ketchum, Kelvin Ketchum, Jim MacFarlan, David Hampton, Maretha Ketchum and Muriel Hampton.

Fee hike to \$145 proposed

Members could face a fee increase for 1975, subject to AGM decision, from the present \$117.50 to \$145.00.

The RA rejected an Executive Committee recommendation that fees be established by .94% of estimated mean salary of all BCTF members as of January of the current year. In this case, .94% of \$16,151.00 for January 1975 or \$152.00 and instead, opted for .90% of estimated mean salary for January of the current year or \$145.00.

Past practice has been 0.94% of the mean salary of all BCTF members as determined by Statistics Canada as of the prior September. The shift to January should enable the Federation to draw on current dollars.

At the fall Representative Assembly, \$254,000 was slashed from proposed expenditures to make a balanced budget.

The cuts had been recommended by the Executive

Committee which found that the cost of the programs it believed were desirable for this year exceeded the Federation's revenue.

Using the new scale the Federation will have a projected operating surplus of \$181,692.00; a projected cash surplus June 30, 1976 of \$300,638.00 and a reserve fund allocation of \$135,000.00.

These projected cash balances, both surpluses or deficits, include \$192,000 received from the \$432,000 proposed building program sale of investment property, less building program expenditures of \$240,000. This amount of \$192,000 would be required to cover building program expenses in the next fiscal year (1976-77).

Included in the \$145.00 is a continuing \$5.00 per member to the reserve fund, \$5.00 per member to the Salary Indemnity Fund, and \$2.00 to International Assistance.

The Income Security Com-

mittee proposals have not been incorporated in the proposed fee and if the AGM approves a changed Salary Indemnity Fund fee, the BCTF fee would have to be adjusted accordingly.

From page 1

MacFarlan lashes out

and status quo and the tranquillity and lack of threats which has characterized education in this province.'

'They are the people of the 'let's not get upset with the new government because we may bobble it' philosophy.

'They have their right to disagree, but I believe they have learned little from our actions in the summer of 1972.

'And then I suppose there will be some critics who will suggest it was not collegial. I think I heard those soft voices before somewhere at about the same season.

'I believe that the decision to suggest that the Minister had to be removed was in the best interest of the organization's policies and I accept responsibility for making that decision.'

Teachers' pensions act amendments

The 1974 amendments to the Teachers' Pensions Act brought into effect new regulations governing reinstatement in the pension plan. Page 20 of the Members' Guide (1974-75) outlines the general requirements.

To clarify the question of 'applying' for reinstatement the following is the practice:

(a) Where no refund was taken and the requirements for reinstatement are fulfilled, formal application to the Commissioner of Teachers' Pensions is not required.

(b) Where a refund has been taken, formal application to the Commissioner of Teachers' Pensions for reinstatement is required.

As the rules governing reinstatement are complex, teachers are advised to seek advice from the Commissioner of Teachers' Pensions prior to absence from teaching service and immediately upon return.

Teachers presently in service who wish clarification on reinstatement of previous service should contact either the BCTF office or the Commissioner of Teachers' Pensions.

16 nominated to office

The Nominating Committee presents the following names (in alphabetical order) of BCTF members who have been nominated pursuant to By-Law 5.4, for positions on the Executive Committee for the year 1975-76. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual General Meeting.

For President
Bill Broadley (Victoria)
Dorothy Glass (Campbell River)
Don Walmsley (Boston Bar)

For First Vice-President
Jack Tearne (Chilliwack)

For Second Vice-President
Mavis de Girolamo (Victoria)
Jerry Joyce (Lake Cowichan)
John Zelac (Vancouver)

The Nominating Committee consists of the Geographical Representatives, with Al Paterson of Vancouver as chairperson.

For Member-at-Large
Sue Granger (100 Mile House)
Nina Green (Kelowna)
Les Phillips (Coquitlam)
Glen Pleuckhahn (Nanaimo)
Sylvia Rayer (West Vancouver)
Ross Regan (Victoria)
Ken Smith (Kamloops)
Ben Thomas (New Westminster)

RA authorizes building addition

The Representative Assembly authorized a budget item of \$60,000 for the first of four phases to renovate and add to the present BCTF building.

Rhone and Iredale, architects, will report back to the Executive after the first phase, about 21 weeks, before further decision is made to proceed with phase two. The objective is to provide an additional 43,500 square feet of net usable space at a cost of approximately \$3,600,000 exclusive of land (the Federation already owns sufficient land).

(Summary and conclusions presented by Rhone and Iredale in their report are contained elsewhere in this newsletter.)

There was intensive debate on approval of the building program that took the entire Friday morning session. Valorie Watson, Finance Committee chairperson, said the committee recommended going ahead with the project calling it a 'sound financial venture.'

She said the need for more space was well documented. On the question of building or leasing, the Finance Committee, she said, recommended additional building because of the difficulty of finding space and because 'we do not want the Federation at the mercy of landlords.'

On the question of building now or later, Watson urged the decision be made now because the Co-op, which is willing to rent 20,000 square feet at market value, would have to seek other premises unless the plans for expansion were authorized.

'All experts the Finance Committee consulted say build now,' she reported.

Derek Holden, BCTF Treasurer, noted that Rhone and Iredale had included a clause guaranteeing that the final costs would be within the established budget — an important consideration, he said.

While the BCTF would have to pay a subsidy of \$50,000 in the first year, he noted, the off-setting revenue could put the Federation in a break-even position within the first five years. 'The \$50,000 is future investment.'

The additional building would be on property the Federation purchased in 1968 when five lots were purchased costing \$25,000 to \$30,000 each, with their present valuation of over \$500,000.

All indications are, Holden said, that the mortgage market is approaching its best stage and therefore stage one would allow plans to be ready to get a mortgage. In addition, he said, the Federation owns the Pancake House property on Broadway which could be sold to yield \$500,000 to be invested in the building.

BCTF President Jim MacFarlan spoke strongly against endorsing the program. MacFarlan urged GRs to delay decision for a year because of uncertainty in the economic scene.

A teachers' organization, he said, can't assume a debt structure that's unreasonable and he suggested that the Co-op could leave the building then come back as a tenant in future years when the project was completed.

Bill Broadley, First Vice-President, argued the BCTF Co-op and Credit Union should both be in the building for service to members.

The projections and dollar costs, he argued, were based on reasonable assumptions and he said there is always some uncertainty in the future. 'There is no way anyone can hold your hand.'

Colin Forbes, Mount Arrow-smith, expressed pleasure at the completeness of the Rhone and Iredale report as well as chiding the Executive Committee for not bringing a recommendation to the RA on the issue.

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move back into the building using 1500 square feet.

'This will leave 18,000 square feet available for future expansion to be rented until needed on a schedule of short- and long-term leases based upon the projected requirements of the BCTF and associated organizations,' says the report.

They acknowledge risks of committing to a mortgage loan to be repaid from tenant revenues without firm leases on all space and in maintaining budgets established in this report during construction.

Don Walmsley, Executive, expressed concern over the 18,000 square feet of empty space. And he asked why the Co-op with assets of \$150 million felt there was too much risk in assuming more space whereas the Federation with \$3 million assets was expected to assume the risk.

However, Co-op officials, Dale Klemke and Jack Bentley, who attended the debate, said they felt the Co-op was going 'pretty far now' in assuming 20,000 square feet and that to take more would be difficult to explain to Co-op members.

The Co-op have committed to rent 20,000 square feet, the Credit Union for 2,000 square feet. The Vancouver teachers' secondary and elementary associations would be able to

One of the major decisions RA had to make was on the proposed building plan. Picture above those for, and below, those against.

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What's an AGM

It's well known that teachers work hard at conventions, a fact that surprises most outsiders who attend a teachers' conference for the first time.

Nowhere is this more evident than at the BCTF's Annual General Meeting, held each year during the spring break.

While most teachers are on their spring vacation, more than 1,000 of their colleagues will meet for three days to review the work of the Federation during the past year and to chart the course of the organization for the next 12 months.

The AGM is a real work session. Seven hundred voting delegates and several hundred visitors and observers will meet for eight business sessions totalling 26 hours — a

gruelling schedule. They'll meet morning, afternoon and evening, except for one evening when there will be a delegates' dance.

The meeting will examine the reports from the Executive Committee and Representative Assembly, detailing the work of the various committees and task forces throughout the year. The delegates will debate recommendations from the Executive Committee and resolutions submitted by local associations and provincial specialist associations.

In addition, delegates will interview candidates for office and subsequently elect members to the Executive Committee for the next school year. The meeting will also pay

tribute to Ernest H. Lock, the Federation's senior past president. Delegates will mark the 50th anniversary of Mr. Lock's election as president in 1925.

Another highlight will be the presentation of the Fergusson Memorial Award, the highest honor the BCTF bestows.

The AGM is the largest teachers' annual meeting in the country, and exemplifies the BCTF's tradition of democratic control of the organization by its members. Decisions are made by teachers elected by their colleagues to represent them at the AGM.

Because the meeting is the sovereign body of the Federation, its decisions take priority over those of any other BCTF body.

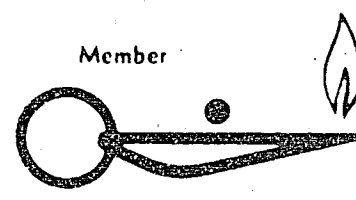
BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

newsletter

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EDPRESS



Sam Reid



Barbara Joe

Teachers and Indian parents work together

Sechelt Indian children have a 'positive self image'

Frank Fuller, 'to see the immense changes that have taken place.' There's an obvious sense of well-being among the Indian children.

Principal Sam Reid agrees. 'Look around you. The Indian children are always well dressed now, but it wasn't always so. That's one change. Another is what I call the "Sechelt time syndrome" — these kids always used to be late for school — now they come on time and there's very little truancy.

'But the big change,' he says, 'is in style. They know they're Indians and they're darn well proud of it.'

In the past, it was common for an Indian child to say, 'I'm not going in there; the room is full of white kids.' Now the same child will say: 'This is my school and I'm going to get things out of it.'

Over the last five years, teachers in the school agree, the well-being of the entire community has improved. Credit, they say, goes to Indian parents, who have taken real interest in their children's progress in school, and also to a

housing development undertaken by the band, which has changed the social environment for the Indian people. Teachers have met Indian parents on the reserve twice, explaining their programs and expectations.

One of the teachers, Jim Gray, puts it this way. 'Schools have to bend a little and go to the native people.'

He has some interesting insights into differences within the two cultures, for example, the different approach to pocket knives on the part of Indian parents. All children go through a stage of wanting pocket knives, but where a white parent might forbid it, the Indian parent will permit it on the assumption that if the child cuts himself, he learns some respect for the knife.

Jim Gray plays goal for the Chiefs, the only white on the local soccer team, and he has, accordingly, a large status in the eyes of young people in the school.

Another reason for the successful change in the school is Barbara Joe, one of a number of Indian teacher aides now

working in district schools. 'I pretty well know where everything is,' she comments, and it's clear that the teachers rely on her.

She works mainly with teacher Pat Craig in the school's learning assistance center. Pat Craig sees Barbara as a facilitator, communicating with parents on the reserve, helping with introductions, ensuring that homework is done and that the child goes to bed at a reasonable hour rather than watches the late show.

The economic aspect of the band's improvement began under the leadership of Sechelt band chief Henry Paul and Clarence Joe, Band Manager, when houses were moved from a former army installation at Ladner to Sechelt. The Indians built new foundations, put in telephone, hydro and cablevision as well as the septic tanks — the latter approved three times 'to prove to everyone we're doing it right.' From that initial start, the band, with a newly acquired skill and sense of confidence, started their own housing development at

Tsawcome properties on Indian land three miles south of Sechelt.

The Sechelts in November became the first band in Canada with the authority to manage their own land. Over the two years the Indians spent negotiating the land management scheme, they dealt with 47 of the estimated 10,000 civil servants in Judd Buchanan's Department of Indian Affairs, most of whom could be dispensed with if other Indian bands were given similar control of their own affairs.

Premier Barrett commented recently that the band had another first to its credit, a meeting with the provincial Cabinet in Victoria, which is something of a tribute to the band's political skills.

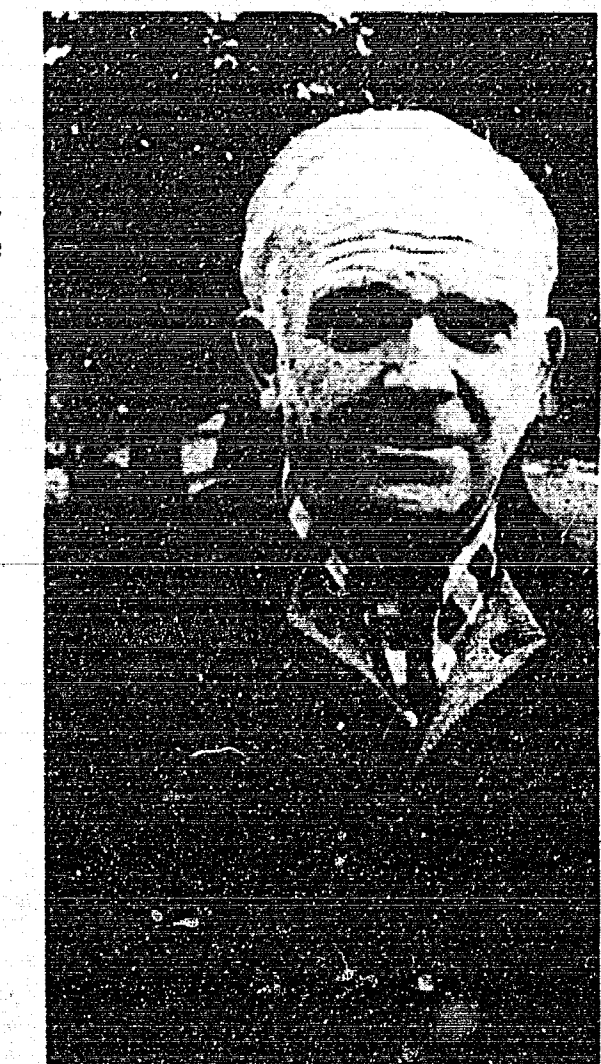
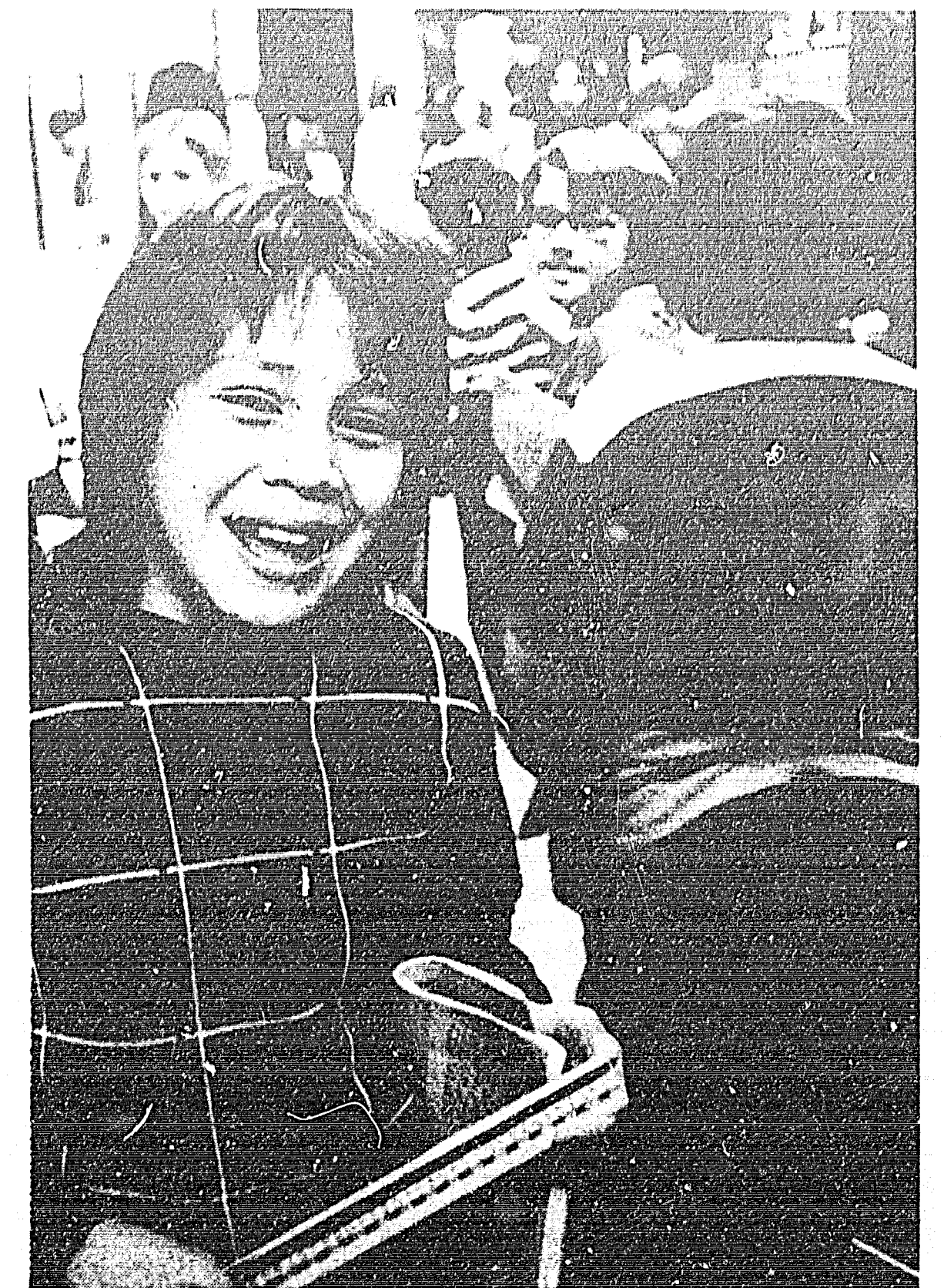
When the Tsawcome development began, the band was leasing heavy construction equipment for as much as \$1,000 a week. They made a decision to buy their own equipment. The band also hires its own people for the construction work rather than hire outside people and give the work away. Ted Dixon, education officer

for the band, says the social implications of the housing development for the Sechelts have been tremendous. In addition to the changes in Sechelt Elementary, Ted notes the drop-out rate in secondary is lower, and there were seven graduates last June. More Indian children are realizing post-secondary education is important. More are taking post-secondary education. 'There are no more breaking and entering charges against our young people; the crime rate went down to zero,' he says.

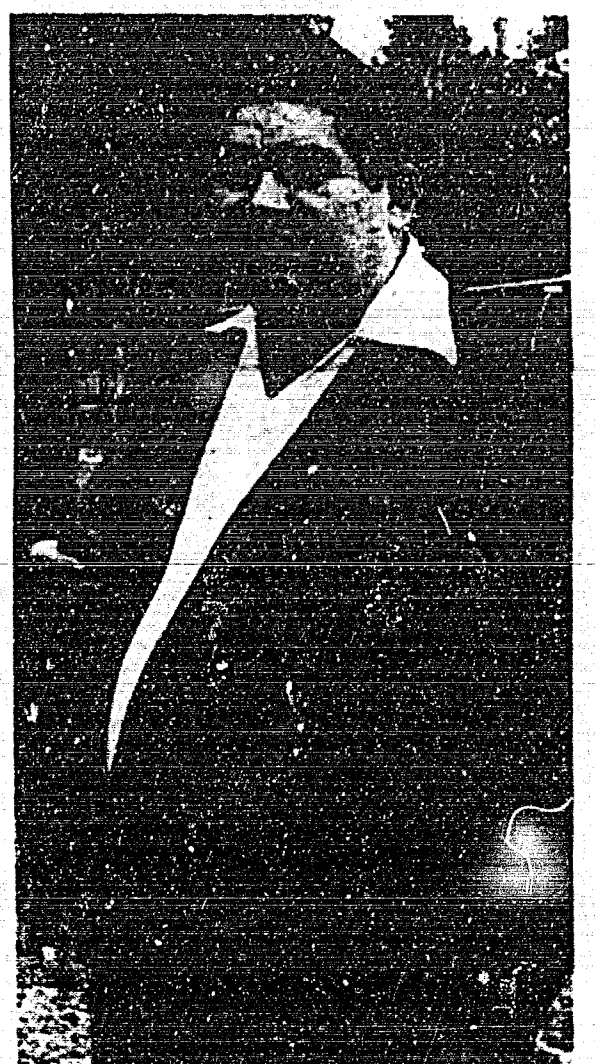
He says tests given to Sechelt kindergarten children, which formerly indicated low achievement, now indicate this year's youngsters scored 50% more than the overall average, white or Indian, of the students who did not take pre-school.

Ted has three children in Sechelt Elementary, each recognized as a leader by teachers in the school. His eldest boy, Darren, for instance, captains the soccer team and was chosen athlete of the year. Darren has, in contrast to earlier generations of

'You can do great wonders when you have financial means.'



Frank Fuller



Gilbert Joe

Feeling for the school shows in letter from ex-pupil

When you say in an article that Indian children coming through Sechelt Elementary will have been given a positive self image that will carry them through the remainder of their school days, it's good to know that you are right, in this case from a letter written by an Indian girl we'll call Gail, to her former teacher in Sechelt Elementary, Mr. Lizée.

'I've been dying to write to you since I was in Grade 7,' she starts, 'but I was afraid you might have been transferred. There is no nicer, more humorous teacher than you. It's too bad I left Sechelt after Grade 5.'

Now in Grade 10, Gail reports a 'B' in art, English, social studies, crafts and textiles and PE; science and math, a 'C'.

Mr. Lizée wrote back and he received a second letter in reply. Where Gail was tentative in the first letter, she is more confident in the second saying, 'I know from what I remember of you, that you care about animals, meaning you respect nature and you treat everyone equally. You treat others as they treat you or you treat others in a way you want to be treated by them.'

She's concerned about teachers' attitudes toward Indians. 'Most of them are prejudiced against us. They include us in for what other Indians have done. When I first got into Grade 8 there were about 40 Indians; by the time I finished Grade 9, there were only 14 of us.'

'Now that I'm in Grade 10, all the ones who quit are working, married, shacked-up or just free-loading which means they're all mostly bums. I'm one of seven in the senior high school. It's the first time in years that there have been that many Indians in the school. There is more coming in next year. Next year there'll be about 25 Indian students going to the school. Years before there used to be only one or two attending.'

She goes on to talk about some of her school activities, then offers this interesting comment: 'In later years, my dad wants to invest in the restaurant business. Right now he's starting his own logging camp. It's been his dream for years. He's just starting and he's doing great. My mom was a part-time primary teacher but she is now thinking about being an alcoholics' counsellor.'

'Nobody in our family drinks. I'm very thankful that our parents don't drink. I've seen other children with alcoholic parents and there's a great number of disadvantages.'

'In our reservation, the education has greatly intensified in the past few years.'

She concludes with a thoughtful comment for Mr. Lizée: 'I'm sorry if I offended you in asking your height. That's the last thing in the world I'd do is offend you.'

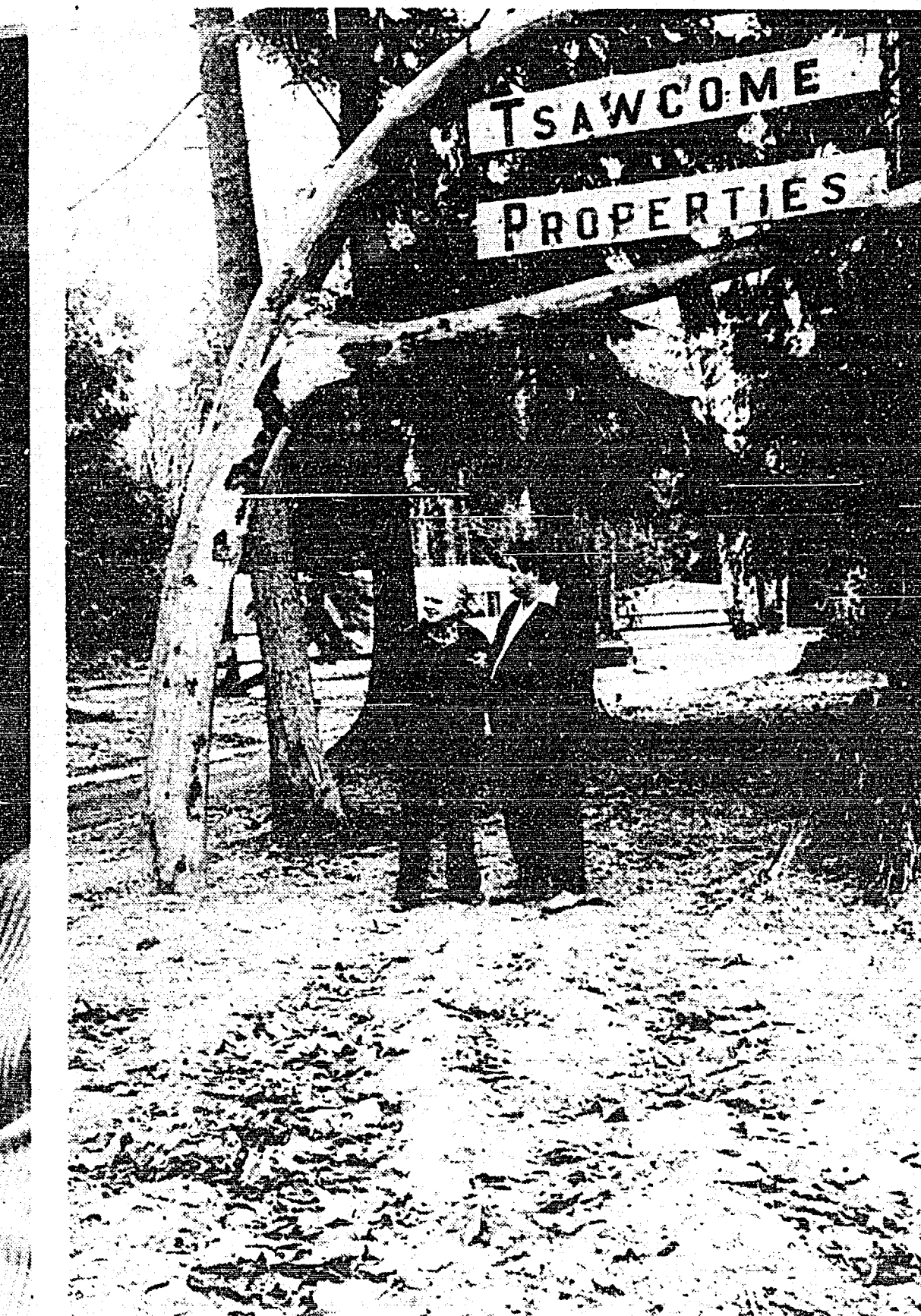
'I don't think you should feel let down for being small. I can't think of a tall Mr. Lizée. I've always thought of you as small and you suit it. You're a very beautiful person and gifted in many ways.'

As we said in the beginning, every teacher should get such a letter sometime in his career.

Jim Gray
working
with
Darren Dixon
at Sechelt
Elementary



Photos & Text by John Hardy



Editorial from 'The Peninsula Times' on choosing a new superintendent

Sechelt School District will soon be naming a new superintendent to replace R. R. Hanna who is retiring.

It has been suggested that since a superintendent, as a representative of the department of education, wields such importance in the educational trends, a new person should be selected with extreme care.

A committee composed of teachers, school board trustees, parents and members of the Sechelt Indian band should make up this committee to review names and prospective candidates.

The department of education will forward three names to the Sechelt school board to study as a replacement for Mr. Hanna. This committee will review the individuals and interview candidates.

A completely representative group should make up this committee which should include persons from throughout the entire school district. Not the least of these representatives should be members of the Sechelt Indian band who have more than 200 students attending local schools. It is not only numbers of children represented by the band, but dollars must be considered because each Indian student must be considered in the overall school budget.

As a group, Indians have been in the forefront in education in this district and as such have an extremely high interest in what goes on.

At any rate, as this is a growing community, with a bright future, so we must select the best possible person and that can only be done through the most careful and thorough screening methods.



Al Patterson, Nora Grove, and Maureen Pollard presented the brief to the Vancouver board at a public meeting that was overflowing with women.

Historic first for Nanaimo

Nanaimo teachers' president Glen Plueckhahn recently found the district teachers caught in the middle of a dispute between CUPE and the board, so he moved them out of the crossfire.

Rumblings from the board office during the three-week strike were on docking of pay, firings, and cancelling of certificates. And the hostile atmosphere generated by the strike lockout situation in the community was such that it precluded normal and healthy conditions for teaching.

Nanaimo teachers voted unanimously at a general meeting to report to schools 15 minutes early, to ask permission to cross picket lines, and if refused, to report to some central meeting place.

What was described in the press as an 'historic first' then began for the district teachers who met every day for in-service training and seminars. Arnold Olsen in the Nanaimo Free Press describes it this way: 'For the first time in this district, the teachers gathered for concentrated sessions in which they became students.'

He goes on to describe a massive amount of in-service that took place across the district, providing good public relations for the teachers.

Glen Plueckhahn told the people of Nanaimo 'We have

never had this opportunity before. It was a wonderful opportunity and there was a positive benefit which will begin to be passed on to students almost immediately, but more important, will benefit this district for years to come.'

'It has spurred many of us on and made us more aware of what we can do.

'We started by using expertise we have right here in this district—we have some highly qualified personnel here—and we began searching for experts from outside to take part next week if the situation had not been resolved.

'Many of us will be happy to get back to classrooms for several reasons other than our concern for students' education.

'In elementary levels, there are teacher-pupil relationships which have been developed which must be allowed to deteriorate, but on top of that, we are eager to try out some of the new concepts in all levels of education.

'Most of us actually worked harder than we would have done under normal conditions, he said.

Congratulations to the teachers in Nanaimo for coming through a very difficult situation so well.



Holding a telegram they were sending to MLAs and Ministers are members of Nanaimo teachers' executive, l to r, John Secur, Tom Krall, Bill Smiley, Gordon Sanborn, and Glen Plueckhahn.

VESTA presents women's brief

'Our major concern is for the well-being of our students,' the Vancouver Elementary Teachers' Status of Women Committee told the Vancouver School Board at a public meeting January 20. But the present system, they said, inhibits the potential growth of all our students through stereotyping, segregation and discrimination.

Members of the teacher delegation were Nora Grove, spokesperson, Maureen Pollard, and Al Patterson, president of VESTA.

Women school teachers filled school board offices to overflowing while the delegation read a brief containing 18 recommendations.

Teachers called on the board to make 'serious attempts' to ensure a more equitable male-female teacher assignment throughout elementary and secondary schools.

At the secondary level in Vancouver schools there are twice as many male teachers as females but in the elementary schools, where the teaching staff is 1694 only 434 are male. 'Traditional assumptions that female teachers are better able to teach primary children are unfounded.'

The delegation also sought a more equitable balance of women in administrative positions. 'The female teacher is not given an equal opportunity to develop skills of leadership and organization.'

Only 6 of 65 school principals are women, even though women make up 65% of the elementary level teaching staff. There are no female principals at the secondary level.

'At the co-ordinator level, only those positions that have been traditionally labelled "female" — primary, inter-

mediate home economics, library and business education — are held by women.'

Why are women not appointed to administrative positions? The brief argument that teaching is merely a 'stop-gap' before marriage showing that median years of experience for women is higher at all levels than that of men.

In other recommendations they asked the Vancouver School Board to:

- * end the necessity for married women to produce their marriage certificate as condition of employment.
- * include the title Ms. on all forms and publications.
- * make more extensive use of part-time teachers
- * greater staff participation in decision-making was also called for in the brief. Board policy favors involvement, but implementation 'is often contingent upon the benevolence of the administrative staff.'

Women's program goes to AGM

The Representative Assembly advised the Executive Committee to take the status of women program to the AGM for decision on continuing or not continuing the program.

The 1973 AGM had recommended that a BCTF member be appointed to the staff effective September 1973 for a two-year term to work full-time toward an improvement of the status of women in the govern-

ment of the Federation and in education in B.C. Suitable funding would be made available for this work, the AGM recommended.

The Status of Women Task Force, at the January 10-11 Executive Committee meeting, recommended that the position be continued.

The Executive Committee passed two motions: one that the status of women program be continued, and two, that the

staff position be posted for a two-year term from September 1975 to September 1977.

Jim MacFarlan explained to the RA that the Executive Committee did not see the Annual General Meeting decision as a statute limiting the Executive but rather to ensure that the Executive was instructed to appoint for the two-year period. 'We did not feel the AGM decision was a limitation but an intention to appoint for that time.'

Get actuarial support says RA

The Representative Assembly instructed the Income Security Committee to get actuarial support for increasing benefits from the Salary Indemnity Fund before the committee takes the proposal to the Annual General Meeting.

A comprehensive, province-wide proposal to insure income against sickness and disability was a major item in the December Newsletter. The Income Security Committee has proposed an extension from 75 to 175 days in the BCTF Salary Indemnity Fund with a scale based upon salary earned.

It will cost a member an estimated 0.2% of salary with

benefits to at least 60% of pay and the maximum length of pay increased from 75 to 175 days. Benefits would not be taxable.

If a member's salary is \$1,000, the monthly fee would be \$2.00 and the monthly benefit \$582.00; if the salary is \$2,000 the monthly fee is \$4.00 and the benefit \$862.00.

The recommendations now passed by the Representative Assembly read:

'1. (a) Subject to supporting actuarial advice, that each active member of the Federation pay, in addition to the fee for operation of the Federation, a fee equal to 0.2% of salary up to a maximum as set by the AGM plus the employee share of reduced employer contribution to Unemployment Insurance;

'(b) and that these sums be allocated, pursuant to By-Law 16, to the Salary Indemnity Fund from which such benefits shall be paid as shall from time to time be recommended to the Executive Committee by actuarial advisors;

'(c) and that the Federation re-negotiate, and/or assist local associations in renegotiating existing Salary Continuance contracts with insurance companies with a view to reducing premiums commensurate with the extended elimination period.

'2. That the Income Security Committee continue its study.

'3. That for 1975-76 the maximum salary for calculation of SIF benefits be \$30,000.'

A considerable amount of concern was expressed about the viability of the proposed plan.

Ben Thomas, of the BCTF Finance Committee, said if the plan goes into effect it's highly likely claims will increase and 'there will be diseases you've never heard about.'

Thomas argued that the number of claimants will increase in the same ratio as benefits.

In 1972, he said, the BCTF increased SIF benefits to \$25.00 a day and claims were up 29%. Subsequently, SIF benefits were reduced.

Similarly, he said, with the LTD when people could get 20% of salary for nothing the claims went up and again there had to be a reduction in benefits. When the Unemployment Insurance Commission increased benefits 'a funny thing happened,' the claims went up and they had to put on a team of inspectors to reduce claims, he said.

The BCTF, Thomas argued cannot guarantee benefits in the manner of an insurance company.

He differed with the Income Security Committee on the liability of the BCTF. The committee has a clause saying the liability of the BCTF for benefits shall not at any time exceed the total amount of monies to the credit of the fund. But Thomas argued the Federation is a social organization and therefore would be morally bound to continue liability.

John Uzelac, Vancouver, suggested it would be helpful for delegates to the AGM 'the committee would test the plan on the open market as well as consult with Great West Life to see if they would incorporate the plan.



No, delegates weren't standing up to debate. We caught the breakpoint!

Letters

Native Indian program

Dear Mr. MacFarlan:

Thank you very much for your letter of support for the Native Indian Teacher Education Program.

We have been more than pleased about the response from all quarters to the program. In fact, the program owes a large part of its very existence to a large number of individual members of the BCTF. These members have led the way within their own communities in trying to improve the educational opportunities for Indian children.

While there are many legitimate criticisms that we could make of both our educational system and some of the teachers in it as it applies to the opportunity for Indian people, I have met so many teachers who are devoting tremendous amounts of their professional and personal energies toward this problem that I think it is only a matter of time before we start seeing very positive results. Already in such communities as Sechelt, Williams Lake, Terrace, Queen Charlotte Islands, North Vancouver and Alert Bay, to mention only a few, there are programs usually spearheaded by classroom teachers, which are having very far-reaching effects.

We really appreciate the support from the BCTF at the organizational level as well as the individual level. On a number of occasions when I have presented this program to various approval agencies, a BCTF member has been there and has always been very supportive. In addition the Centre Council of the B.C. Native In-

dian Teachers Association have met with your Executive on a number of things including this program and again have come away feeling that the BCTF is behind them.

Again my thanks for your wishes for success. Please pass on my thanks to your membership for the tremendous amount of assistance which they have given us.

Arthur J. More
Chairman
NITEP Advisory Committee

Letters reviewed

Dear Sir:

Of four letters in the January issue attacking Jim MacFarlan's comments on the Teaching Profession Act, only one, from Jack Tearne, properly dealt with the matter at issue; namely, MacFarlan's (and perhaps the Executive's) somewhat intemperate and precipitate approach.

H. A. LaFontaine implied that 'honest disagreement among honest men,' presumably as practised between administrators and those who effectively wield less power, somehow invalidates MacFarlan's charge about 'some administrators who fear that if Federation policy was to become a reality they would find that the absolutism and divine right which they practice and believe in would have to give way to democratic and collegial practices.' While I repudiate MacFarlan's hectoring tone, I cannot believe that LaFontaine means that there are no absolutist principals (and potential principals) in this province. Not only are we

BCTF seeks full accident coverage

The Representative Assembly reacted to a recent court award of damages to a student by seeking to ensure that all teachers are fully covered by insurance while performing their duties.

The Federation will seek

legislation that would make it mandatory for all school boards 'to indemnify fully all BCTF members for accidents that may occur during the discharge of their duties.'

Allan Black, BCTF solicitor,

addressed the Assembly on the legal responsibilities of individual teachers and school staffs, and agreed to prepare a written opinion on the matter. His comments will be carried in a future issue of the Newsletter.

Internship programs endorsed

The Representative Assembly will recommend to the AGM that UBC's and UVIC's internship programs be continued next year with BCTF support.

Last fall both universities introduced internship programs for trainings some teachers, with BCTF support. Based on the year's experience, the RA gave its blessing

for a continuation of the programs.

The Assembly's recommendations will spell out the conditions under which the BCTF believes the internship programs should operate.

The recommendations originated with the Teacher Education Committee, which has been studying the programs, and thinks they should

be continued.

The committee's comments drew support from several RA members. Evert Krider, of Ashcroft, for example, said that his staff has four interns and both the staff and the interns are happy with the arrangement. He added that the internship program was a much superior approach than the traditional programs to training teachers.

Small classes boost reading skills

Attainments in reading may be improved if classes are made not just smaller in size but a lot smaller in size, according to a report prepared by Professor John Downing, University of Victoria.

The report, prepared for the British government, titled 'Inquiry into Reading and the Use of English,' notes that

increasing the pupil's share of the teacher's time from 1/32 to 1/28 had little if any effect, but increasing it to 1/14 did make a difference. 'Possibly the research on class size has been misleading because the reduction in size has never been large enough to be significant.'

'Our Comparative Reading survey found that teachers in all countries share the belief that smaller classes would improve efficiency in literacy acquisition,' writes John Downing. But the general consensus of research comparing classes of varying sizes has been that there is no systematic relationship between class size and reading attainment.

'However, the universal belief among teachers that the size of the class does make a difference, suggests that the research on this question may have been invalid.'

The problem seems to be that people have not made classes small enough. For example, in a Danish report, he finds that Danish language classes divided into halves, each taught separately, proved more satisfactory in results than previous efforts directed at reducing the size of the whole class — for example from 32 to 28.

Reports from two other countries, Sweden and America, mention similar efforts to increase the pupil's share of the teacher's time.

'Some infants' teachers in England, of course, do organize their day informally according to a similar principle, but, in comparison the sheer weight of numbers of pupils works against the principle of child-centered education which has been recognized in this evidence as an important virtue.'

In small classes

Kids act better

Smaller classes and a stable teaching staff can significantly improve the behavior of inner-city students, according to a new study conducted by researchers from the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois.

The new results counter the belief that children enter school with an established level of problem behavior determined by their family and community, and that schools are powerless to change this pattern, the researchers say.

They contend, instead, that a school tends to develop a social system in which there is a relatively constant level of problem behavior that becomes characteristic of that school. Their conclusions are based on a three-year study of a Chicago elementary school serving residents of a black public housing project.

Researchers found that the students' behavior improved when the school's enrollment dropped, making classes smaller; and the tight job market for teachers made it harder for them to transfer, resulting in a more stable and experienced faculty. 'Since inner-

city schools often have overworked administrators, a high turnover of teachers and large class sizes, the high level of problem behavior in these schools may be related to these factors more than to the "disadvantaged" situation of the child,' the researchers say. Their study was reported in the July American Journal of Orthopsychiatry.

Apartheid

A series of nine information sheets on apartheid and the repression of the black majority by the government of South Africa has been produced for use in schools by the Southern Africa Action Coalition. The topics dealt with include education, sports, health, women, and the Rhodesian problem. These sheets would be particularly useful for secondary social studies classes. They may be obtained at a cost of 5 cents per copy from the Southern Africa Action Coalition at 2524 Cypress Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 2M3.

Marjorie Stewart,
Nanaimo

Vancouver teachers given choice in arbitration award

Vancouver teachers chose 16.3% on scale and improved group insurance rather than 15.6% spread differentially through the scale and a shared dental plan. The arbitration board for Vancouver, one of six in the province, came up with a different award when it offered both parties a choice of scale and benefit packages.

Teachers wanted a dental plan, says Linda Wilson, president of Vancouver Secondary Teachers, but not the scale increase spread differentially through scale with the lowest points on the salary grade receiving larger increases and those with more experience and training getting smaller increases. 'Something we wanted was tied to something we rejected for years,' she says.

One satisfactory part of negotiations, she says, is a differentiated group life plan which, she says, is an excellent one. 'It makes it less necessary to carry outside insurance. And young family people can

have insurance at up to three times their salary.'

Al Patterson, elementary teachers' president, says 'We've always maintained that fringe benefits should not be brought from salary scale benefits but should be an addition to salary scale awards. The dental plan was put forward on its own merits.

'We've instructed our negotiating committee to pursue a dental plan in the next contract talks.'

Awards from the six arbitrations in the province average 16.69% compared to settlements reached by negotiation for other districts averaging 16.52% on scale.

Eight districts had EHB plans added to their agreements. Dental plans, to take effect at various times during 1975, were negotiated in seven districts, and salary continuance in four. Sixty districts now have a salary continuance plan. The last remaining district previously without a group insurance plan now has it.

Confused people are ineffective

Norm Goble, Secretary General of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, attended an Intergovernmental Conference on Teacher Policies in Paris, France, November 26-29. Here is his report:

Though much of value may be offered by resource persons from outside the school, or by technicians and teacher aides within the school, 'the persons involved in the actual teaching-learning relationship are only of two kinds — teachers and pupils,' summed up one of the major points of agreement reached by delegates of the 19 member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. There was no support from any country for the notion that auxiliary personnel of any kind were acceptable as a substitute for teachers.

Other points of agreement

were that the 'labor intensity' of teaching is justified — though precise calculation of demand is becoming immensely difficult as teacher assignment grows more flexible — and that new roles and new demands put tremendous emphasis on the need for coherent, well-designed programs of in-service education closely related to practice in the schools.

An American consultant emphasized the need for close support of the beginning teacher for the first three years, for a balanced recognition of the need for the school itself to develop a capability to act as an in-service learning center and for periodical release for re-education in another environment (the Belgian delegate stressed that this need not be closely job-related, but should include 'intellectual and personal refreshment'), and

for the total involvement of the school in on-going system change.

Finally, the conference asked, if education is indeed the key to power in society, 'how is it that educators, though holding the key, so often lack the economic and political power they need . . . when the allocation of scarce resources to the education system has to be fought for?' And it threw the ball to teachers with the words: 'Confused people are ineffective: a clear consciousness of one's role is essential for professional performance . . . teachers with a clear articulation of their role can be more effective in negotiating the establishment of their position and in claiming adequate resources to perform it effectively . . . in the contemporary economic and political climate.'

Drive kids at your own risk

Des Grady

What risks do teachers take when they drive pupils to school functions? Are they covered by insurance, or not?

Fortunately, the establishment of Autoplan and the Regulations passed pursuant to the Automobile Insurance Act have made the teacher's position much more certain than in past years.

Teacher's Duty

The duties and responsibilities of teachers are set out in the Public Schools Act and the Regulations. There is no duty imposed on teachers to transport pupils, either in their own cars or otherwise, to and from school functions and/or school business.

If a teacher chooses not to transport pupils, he/she breaches no express or implied condition of his/her teaching contract. This presumes, of course, that transporting pupils was not a condition of the contract between the teacher and the school board.

Duty of Others

Many school boards have professional bus drivers to transport pupils. Teachers have credentials for teaching and bus drivers have credentials for transporting people, and never the twain should meet.

Overall responsibility for the effective and efficient operation of schools in a district rests with the school board. Among its many responsibilities the board attends to the matter of conveyance of pupils and the purchase and operation of such motor vehicles as the board deems necessary for its transportation system. The board also seeks to satisfy the taxpayers, balance its budget and in general obtain a maximum return from its expenditures.

Many schools, particularly the isolated and active ones, find that the ambitious program of school activities involving basketball games, track meets, music festivals, field trips and excursions cannot be attempted within the limited finances available for school board transportation. Activities that might be viewed as highly beneficial for a limited number of pupils become less attractive when viewed in conjunction with the driver's wages and operating costs of the school bus.

Occasionally teachers have driven school buses on extra-curricular trips. This has predictably produced complaints from the regular drivers, and their unions, who correctly point out that they do not seek to take over the teacher's duties and therefore expect that teachers will not take over theirs.

More often, however, the teachers and parents most interested in the particular activity volunteer

their vehicles and their driving skills to chauffeur the pupils at minimum or no cost. Welcoming the offer, the school board gives its express or implied consent to the volunteers who feel sincerely that the show, whatever it is, must go on.

Throughout the school year, and particularly on Friday evenings and Saturdays, hundreds of teachers are likely to be volunteering not only their known and tested skills as instructors and supervisors, but also their less well-known and tested skills related to highway driving under varied conditions.

Although BCTF advice has consistently discouraged teachers from using their vehicles to transport pupils, the practice continues. What, then, is the teacher's position if an accident occurs and the teacher faces criminal charges or civil claims arising from his conduct as a driver?

Because the transportation of pupils is not a duty of the teacher, it is unlikely that legal aid will be provided by the BCTF for any criminal proceedings. As to civil claims, the teacher will have to look to his/her own auto insurance policy. As noted earlier, the Regulations passed pursuant to the Automobile Insurance Act, appear to make the teacher's position more predictable.

Insurance Coverage

Most teachers are likely to have declared on their application for insurance that their vehicles are used for pleasure, and perhaps for driving to and from work, in which case their class is either Class 01 or Class 02 for purposes of calculating the annual basic premium.

The Regulations define those circumstances when the vehicle may be used for other purposes without contravening the declaration. Regulation 6.29(i), provides an exemption of particular interest to teachers and reads as follows:

'The occasional and infrequent use by the insured of his motor vehicle for the transportation of children to or from school or school activities conducted within the educational program.'

The effect of this regulation is that the teacher who transports pupils is covered by his/her standard insurance policy if the conditions are met. The effective conditions are:

1. Occasional use — elsewhere in the Regulations this is defined as not more than four days in each month.
2. To or from school or school activities conducted within the educational program — to ensure that this condition is met the trip should have the approval of the school board.



Des Grady returned to BCTF staff this year after completing a law degree and articles.

These regulations do much to clarify a teacher's uncertainty but they must be strictly construed. For example, the teacher who rarely transports pupils and then one month uses the vehicle to transport pupils on five days contravenes his/her declaration and the allowable exemptions. If the teacher is likely to transport pupils outside the limits prescribed by the exemptions, the vehicle should be rated for business use rather than pleasure use.

Moreover, and this is not found in any specific Regulation, ICBC advises that any pleasure-rated vehicle that is used for business for more than 1,000 miles a year should be rated for business use. Any teacher whose vehicle's occasional use to transport pupils is likely to exceed more than 1,000 miles a year is advised to pay the higher premium and have the vehicle rated for business use.

Other regulations clarify another area of uncertainty. Payment by the employer to the driver for the occasional use of the vehicle or for the sharing of costs of occasional use by the passengers will not contravene the declaration that the vehicle is operated for pleasure purposes only.

Finally, while the basic Autoplan policy provides for third party legal liability of \$50,000, it is obvious that any accident involving a carload of pupils could create claims greatly in excess of that limitation. Third party liability limits may be increased by the payment of additional premiums, and any teacher who transports pupils should seriously consider this option.