



No language problem seemed to exist for the teacher in Alexandra Yevdokimova who would eagerly mix with children whenever she could.

Impressed by children's behavior

Russians visit B.C. schools

'You had the Russians visiting' said the woman at the photographic studio, looking at the pictures. 'They have a better education system than we do.'

It makes you wonder how people were reading the visit by the three Russians this May to Vancouver schools.

This particular woman, a Czechoslovakian, in Canada less than two years, has not visited a school but still can state flatly that the Russian system is better. Why? 'Discipline is better.'

Yet the Russians themselves were quite impressed by the purposeful behavior of children working in groups and individually in the open areas of Champlain Heights Elementary and later Britannia Secondary.

In fact, Victor Berezin said at the end of the tour that the group was impressed with the independence of children.

It would take a while for the group to sort out what they had seen in the schools, he explained, but as a general conclusion he felt a system such as ours encouraged children to be independent. But it would require, he felt, a control for every student's work.

Since most people who criticized the school's lack of discipline have visions of children dancing on desks, or throwing objects about the room; more of these same people should tour the schools as did the Russians. For the Russians saw the immense variety of learning activities common in open area schools ranging from classes being taught in traditional ways in one part of the

room, to children working alone or in groups in another area.

And later at Britannia Secondary they were again caught up in the vastness of activities because Britannia is really a community within a city. They saw the ice rink, swimming pool, pre-school and retired citizens center, community library, elementary and secondary school, a bewildering scope of services for any visitor to grasp entirely.

Their visit to Vancouver was a reciprocal of the exchange made by the Canadian Teachers' Federation officials to Russia last year under the attempt to have constructive international relations in the new policy of Detente.

The three are members of the eight million member Educational and Scientific Workers' Union (ESWU). Victor Berezin is central committee secretary of the ESWU; Vladimir Nossov is the union central committee officer who spoke English fluently; and Alexandra Yevdokimova is a chairperson of a regional committee. Alexandra was also most obviously the teacher in the group for her face shone when she entered the kindergarten class at Champlain Heights. No language problem existed as she busied herself with the children. Anyone who works in the schools in the Soviet Union, teachers, principals, administrators, custodians, engineers, is a member of the ESWU.

Each school has a committee, elected by members, that meets on all problems involved in the school, for example,

working conditions, labor laws, safety and social security. Berezin explained the union looks into the quality of teaching and will reprimand poor teachers and will encourage good teachers. He said the government has allowed the union to look after the worker including the child of a worker who is ill. A mother or father can get 10 days off to look after an ailing child.

Maternity leave for 100 per cent of salary is available for 48 days before and after birth, even if the woman has worked one day at the school.

Salary negotiations as we know them seem to be nonexistent. There is no need for salary negotiations, Berezin explained, because no piece of legislation concerning the salaries of union members can be adopted without agreement of the union. 'In the 60 years of the Soviet Union a disagreement that would lead to negotiations has never happened because the government reflects the wishes of the people.'

All projects for the schools are discussed at the school level then district level then regional level then republic level then the state level before they are implemented. And the curriculum is established at a central research institute, although it insists that regional differences are accounted for.

Teachers are paid according to the number of hours worked during a school week, six days long, with a minimum of teaching hours set at 18. Teaching time above the minimum 18 hours adds to the teacher's

(Continued on page 4)

Broadley tells trustees control is a 'non-issue'

School boards should not be frightened of those who would have them believe that local teachers' associations want to take over the schools.

Trustees and teachers must work together, through their own organizations, to bring about improvements in the education system, urged BCTF president Bill Broadley.

The direct, hard-hitting speech, given by Broadley at the BCSTA Annual General Meeting, Tuesday morning, May 4, was well received by the over 700 trustees, secretary-treasurers, superintendents and guests.

Broadley spoke on a number of areas of concern to the BCSTA, including teacher militancy and control of public schools.

Broadley said the issue of who controls the public schools is a 'non-issue,' that teachers believe ultimate control of public schools must be in the hands of publicly elected bodies — school boards and the provincial legislature, and not in the hands of professional educators.

He said trustees should set up regular communication channels and work through the teachers' associations for a number of good reasons. One is to avoid ad hoc and conflicting advice. Secondly, by encouraging more teachers to become involved in their associations, the less extreme will be the position of the association. And, the advice received will be representative of the best teacher knowledge in your district, he added.

Broadley queried those trustees who show an 'absolute fear' of accepting advice from local teachers' associations. 'What is so frightful about listening to and considering other ideas?' he asked.

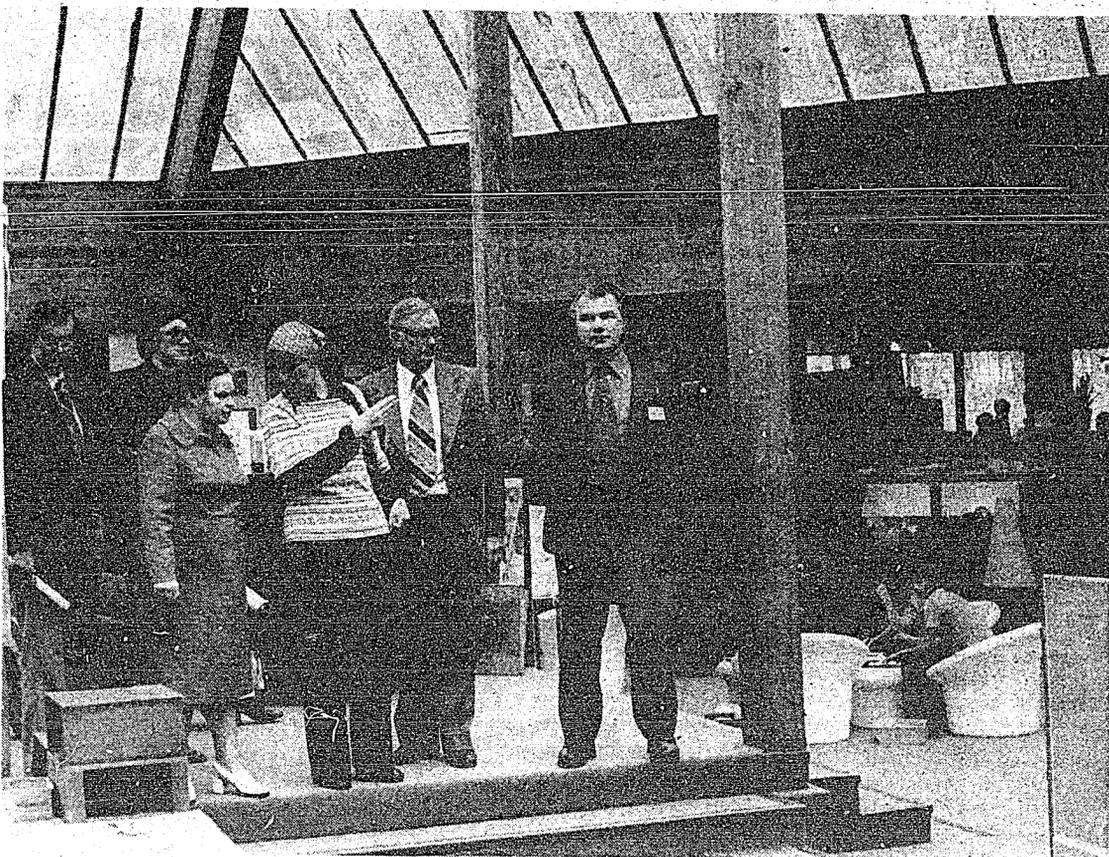
Regarding the trustees' concerns over teacher militancy, Broadley asked them to consider why teachers are militant. Teachers cannot be expected to behave reasonably when they are not guaranteed access to decision makers, when the publicly elected bodies make unilateral decisions, Broadley explained. 'Teachers are not prepared to remain silent if attempts are made to reduce the quality of the public school system.'

Broadley, commenting on the BCSTA's motion seeking the repeal of Section 144 of the Public Schools Act (which states all teachers must belong to the BCTF), said he found it 'rather mischievous. Imagine how your association would feel if a BCTF annual meeting voted to delete Section 98 (d), (requiring trustees to be members of BCSTA).'

Broadley said he hopes that 'despite some differences in our policies and objectives, we may continue to co-operate in areas of mutual concern.'



BCTF President Bill Broadley



The touring Russian visitors pause for moment to take in the expanse of open area at Champlain Heights. From L. to R., UBC interpreter Nick Tyrras, Vladimir Nossov, Alexandra Yevdokimova, interpreter Tania Thorpe, principal Ray Rintoul, and Victor Berezin.

Testing program

I ran into my friend, Pat, in the Parliament buildings the other day. 'How are things in the education department?' I asked.

'We're in for some exciting times,' said Pat. 'Have you heard about our terrific new testing program to describe and evaluate changes in student learning over a period of years?'

'Great!' I replied. 'The kids and teachers will really appreciate the help. I suppose the tests will point out districts with poor learning conditions, high teacher turnover, social and economic difficulties, minority cultural and language problems, poor facilities and a lack of learning resources.'

'You don't understand,' said my friend. 'We are not identifying individual students or teachers. We don't want any invidious comparisons; just strengths and weaknesses. Besides, those other things you mentioned are sensitive issues.'

'I can understand that,' I said. 'How much will it cost? I know John Young used to outline strengths and weaknesses and he didn't charge anything!'

'Yes, money is tight. But, we can keep it under a million. These tests will also provide information that can be used in determining the allocation of resources.'

'That's very encouraging. Frankly, I am amazed that a Grade 4 reading test can give so much information. With larger class sizes, because of the budget situation, teachers are going to need all the help they can get.'

'Oh, I wouldn't worry,' said Pat. 'These tests will provide directions for change in teacher education and professional development.'

'Thank goodness! You had me worried for a minute. How long will this testing take?'

'Five years!' he answered over his shoulder as he headed for his office.

'Just a minute, Pat,' I called. 'Wouldn't it be easier and cheaper to ask the teachers for factual information about achievement levels, class size, facilities, staffing and so on?'

'I want to know what the real facts are and these can only be determined by a properly administered program of evaluation. —, I missed the rest as he disappeared around the corner.'

'The real facts?' I repeated to myself. 'Hmm!'

Yours truly,
Joe Harrison

Teacher education

I cannot let pass without comment Mr. Regan's recent letter in which he indicated that changes are needed in

Members' voice

teacher education but that nothing is happening. Your readers should know that although there has not been a great deal of publicity the faculty of education at UBC has changed more in the past two years than many experts would think possible for such a large organization.

Here are some of the changes:

— a large number of improvements in the regular programs,

— nine new alternative programs for training teachers in a school-based setting including a major new program for preparing Native Indian teachers,

— tremendous expansion of credit courses and professional development activities offered at centers throughout the province,

— a re-structuring and expansion of graduate programs to make them more functional for teachers,

— a whole fresh look at ways of improving the regular student teaching program.

We in the faculty of education feel proud of what has been accomplished in a short time and are deeply appreciative of the participation of so many teachers both directly and through BCTF channels. There is much left to be done. But with a partnership between the universities and the profession we are confident we can make a real difference in the quality of teachers being prepared.

John H. M. Andrews
Dean
Faculty of Education, UBC

Administration

Re: 'Administrators — are they overpaid, underworked, too powerful?' March 25th issue. Mr. Frizell is guilty of both distortion and destruction.

From the corner of Granville and Georgia he attempts to assess administrators in all parts of the province and at all levels of the school system.

I do not take strong exception to his one word answers to the first two questions he poses. Yes, many administrators are overpaid in relation to what the good classroom teacher gets. Yes, the Public Schools Act does put a reasonable degree of power in the hands of administrators.

I do take strong exception to his negative response to his last question. The fact is that most of 'us' are overworked because of a system which demands 'us' to be responsible for education and to be 'plant managers.'

The following statements are not profound, but when considered as a package they will

weaken the smear attempted by Mr. Frizell:

1. Most administrators in the province also teach.

2. Most administrators in the province were good teachers, are good teachers and, if called upon to return to the classroom fulltime, would continue to be good teachers.

3. Most administrators in the province must have two distinct sets of skills. Their own teaching skills and their knowledge of other teaching skills must be continually refined. As well, their administration skills must get similar attention.

Mr. Frizell demeans a very large number of good administrators in his attempt to get at those who are incompetent. He is advised to start pointing a finger instead of hiding behind half-truths and exaggeration. He must put his specific 'bitches' on the line to specific people. I am well aware of the risks involved in doing this. I also know that the kids will benefit mostly quickly if this is done.

Yours truly,
Dr. Shirley Wong,
Chairperson, Business
Education Department.

Yours truly,
Dave Harrison, Principal,
David Thompson School,
Invermere, B.C.

Regan reply

Ross Regan's statement that numerous attempts have been made to influence teacher education programs without achieving change is startling. As a faculty member of the business education department, UBC, for the past four years, and as the present chairperson, I have never received any communication

that Mr. Regan had any interest whatsoever in our program. Another shocker is to find our methods course labeled out of date, in view of revisions made to our program during the past three years.

These changes include:

1. Addition of a fourth concentration in distributive education to the existing three in secretarial, commerce and data processing.

2. Greater freedom of choice by students in the major program whereby a student can now select the commerce concentration and any one of the other three concentrations in completing his program.

3. Seven new courses in the undergraduate program. If Mr. Regan wishes to influence the teacher education program, a good place to start would be establishment of a dialogue, and support for our efforts. This we would invite wholeheartedly.

Yours truly,
Dr. Shirley Wong,
Chairperson, Business
Education Department.

Wage controls

We believe that you lack the mandate to give the membership of our organization totally biased information. We urge you to redress the imbalance in your presentation of the case against wage controls by publishing the case for wage controls.

Your assumption that the BCTF membership is too stupid and/or too busy to reach reasoned conclusions based on impartial information is to invite alienation from the

cause you are attempting to promote.

The BCTF members are not sheep — give us unbiased information and trust us to make wise decisions based upon it.

As a group, we teachers resent being manipulated, and your Wage Control Monitors 1, 2 and 3 appear manipulative, not genuinely informative.

Your condescending pre-digestion of the facts surrounding this issue invite a backlash. Too often when arguments are weak, the voice is raised.

Sincerely,
G.N. Greer
Nanaimo

Education fund

Re: Vietnam — Cambodia Education Fund

Is it really true? Are we being invited to contribute to a fund to aid the 'educational' facilities in these countries? Surely anyone who stops to examine the situation would have to suspect that:

1. This 'education' would be more in the form of political indoctrination — not seriously providing these needy children with objective knowledge.

2. This fund is not tax deductible as it has not been registered by the Canadian Federal Government. After six months BCTF's attempts to get any agent to handle the fund have failed, not even the Red Cross is interested. (Is there a message here?)

Perhaps what this brochure reveals is that the executive is neglecting the real needs of the members of the BCTF. Are we members of the BCTF because of political reasons or are we members because we want to strengthen our professional and salary positions?

Yours truly,
(Mrs.) Donna M. Mackey

Scene in Quebec



Montreal teachers were appalled at the disgraceful show of force to an orderly teacher demonstration outside the Protestant school board office. They have asked for an inquiry into the senior officials responsible for calling in the riot police. A platoon of thirty men marched into the crowd of teachers and according to one demonstrator 'started swinging at random before many even had an opportunity to retreat.'

B.C. Home and School Federation says:

Consult with teachers on testing

The B.C. Home and School Federation passed a number of resolutions at its 1976 Annual General Meeting, some of which are outlined as follows:

• Achievement testing — that, the department of education and all school boards follow these guidelines, 1. that, preference shall be given to material constructed

within the local classroom school or school district; 2. that, province-wide or district-wide tests shall not be considered valid unless based upon the instructional aims of the classrooms being tested, as ascertained by consultation with the teachers involved; 3. that, if, for any reasons, province-wide or district-wide tests are admin-

istered without teacher consultation, the results of such tests shall not be considered valid in assessing the performance of individual students or of individual teachers.

• Family life education — that, the department of health be requested to assume immediate responsibility through the medical health officers of the province for direction and leadership in the field of family life education in the schools.

• Basic literacy, reading and study skills — that, in the pre-service training of all teachers high priority be given to the knowledge and skills required to improve standards of pupil performance in these areas.

• School size — that, 1. the provincial department of education encourage, finance and direct local school boards into a policy of maintaining smaller schools with populations not exceeding 500 students when planning new schools or 200 students per grade at the secondary level; 2. large existing schools be divided into units not to exceed 500 population, (a) consideration be given to the physical structure of each building, (b) library facilities, shops, etc. be shared on a scheduled basis.

• Corporal punishment — that, the B.C. Home and School Federation re-affirm its total opposition to corporal punishment in the schools.

• Education finance — that, the B.C. Home and School Federation urge the provincial government to assume their rightful responsibility and ultimately finance education from the general revenue of the province.

• Kindergarten — that, thorough pre-kindergarten evaluation and physical testing be carried out on children.

Parent/citizen workshop held

Parents need information survey of province shows

Parent power is on the march. And in many cases teachers and administrators are right in step.

Or so it appeared at a Parent/Citizen Workshop for School Involvement, sponsored by Education Advisory (BC) in co-operation with Vancouver Community College held April 24 at the Langara Campus.

Organized by Tunya Audain, co-ordinator of Education Advisory (BC) the workshop attracted some 160 delegates from across the province, 90 percent of whom were parents.

The thrust of the conference was aimed at raising the awareness of parents as to their rights and privileges vis-a-vis the school system and to show them how to get more input into the system — from curriculum to budgeting.

Chairperson June Logie reported that the Citizen Advisory Committee on Education (CARE) had recently done a survey of educational needs throughout B.C. Results indicated there was a high level of need for information on schools and for parents and teachers to communicate.

Parental involvement was necessary for achievement of educational goals, social goals and community goals, she reported.

'A dynamic home-school partnership is needed,' she said.

Delegates revolved through six workshops of their choice during the day: Basics of Parent Involvement; How to Get the Best Education for Your Child; School Consultative Committees; Making the System Work for You; What Should the Schools Teach; and Getting Value for the Educational Dollar.

One of the most popular workshops was on parent involvement.

Lorena Baran, a Vancouver parent, told the group of four ways of involvement:

1. Parents who keep track of their child's progress in school.
2. Parents who serve as volunteers in their local school.
3. Parents who keep up with current trends in education.
4. Parents who influence the type of education being offered in the school.

Working through the four stages the first group would make an effort to meet their child's teacher early in the year and follow this up with a later request for a parent-teacher interview and a discussion of the child's report card.

The second stage of involvement for parents would be that of volunteer involvement such as organizing for, or transporting children on, a field trip.

'The child is helped because you are working in his or her school. The child sees teacher, mom and dad as a team.'

Parents at the third stage would investigate the program of the school, join a school consultative committee, obtain educational materials from the BCTF, school board and other sources.

At the fourth stage parents would join organized parent groups such as CARE, the PTA or VACL; would help prepare briefs to government; work to get candidates elected to public office; and serve on education committees as laypersons.

And that is really what the workshop was all about — how to move from step one to step four.

Berg warns of take-over

Improved communications and ensuring that the education faddists, party politicians, bureaucrats and militant teachers do not 'take over' the education system, are the major challenges facing the BCSTA according to president Mike Berg.

Speaking to the three-day Annual General Meeting held at the Bayshore Inn, Berg said the association must ensure

that the public schools be controlled by the public. This is best guaranteed by having a system of school boards whose members are elected by that public, he said.

Berg referred to the 'faddists' as 'generally well-schooled, well-intentioned individuals who suffer from tunnel vision, believing the solution to problems lies in their deep, but narrow, field of knowledge.'

The second group presenting a challenge to the judicious use of trustee power, said Berg, are those party politicians whose main interest in education is the manipulation of the system as a 'vote-getting device.'

And, thirdly, he said, we must beware of the bureaucrats — 'the appointed administrators at all levels from the officers in Victoria to the officers in school. These present a threat simply because we, by default, have allowed them to exercise the power which our communities gave us when we were elected,' Berg said.

Berg stressed improved communications between boards and the public. Communications, a two-way process, presents two kinds of challenges, he said — keeping the public informed and getting accurate feedback on what the public wants.

Watch out for the lion

By JOHN WINSTANLEY
In view of the concern so rightly expressed in the 29th April Newsletter about the 'Value School' movement, I think colleagues might be interested in my own recent experience.

Phillip Butler was introduced to the assembly by a former teacher in our district and, after a short prayer, wasted no time in launching into his attack upon the Family Life and Sex Education Program.

Brandishing the education department's curriculum guide in a manner reminiscent of a lawyer who has procured at great difficulty an incriminating document, Butler heaped scorn and derision upon the phrase 'the teachable moment.'

Who are these people who are subverting the minds of our children? Who are the immoral, godless members of this conspiracy to sap the moral fibre of our free and democratic society?

Perhaps you can guess. International Communists, Fabian Socialists, Leftist Intellectuals, Radical Agitators and so on. The speaker clearly regarded all such epithets as synonymous with the evil pronouns of progressive education who 'infest' our schools.

The audience seemed somewhat alarmed to hear that the Communist conspiracy has so far infiltrated our schools, but no one challenged the speaker. Some of the teachers present gripped their chairs tightly, but managed to remain silent.

Then the speaker named some of the enemies in our midst and, unfriendly though I was, I was moved to admiration by the catholicity of his choice and the fecundity of his imagination. The members of the conspiracy included Hitler, Jim MacFarlan, Premier Bill Bennett and Pat McGeer, Dave Barrett, Pierre Trudeau, The London School of Economics and Professor Harold Laski, the Rockefeller Foundation and that group of radicals who have subverted the BCTF Executive Committee.

The audience showed some consternation. Nobody laughed.

Around the room was

displayed a variety of books and pamphlets, including promotional material of the Canadian League of Rights. At the close of the meeting there was a line-up to join the organization and subscribe to its publication list.

It seemed blatantly apparent that the topic of sex education was being used to provide a platform for political polemics, and I was dismayed that so few people present seemed aware of the manipulation which was taking place.

I have described this sordid matter at length, comrades, to familiarize you with this organization's modus operandi and to enable you to recognize the symptoms early.

Let our text be taken from Peter I, Ch. 5 v. 8.

'Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.'

Labor History PSA

A provincial Labour History Specialist organization was formed by 125 delegates to the AGM.

Frank Fuller (Sechelt) has been designated pro tem President, Cliff Boldt (North Vancouver) pro tem treasurer and Lewis Jones (North Vancouver) pro tem secretary. Application for recognition has been made to the BCTF Executive.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION
105 - 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

newsLetter

Editor
JOHN HARDY

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Letters to the editor must be signed by and bear the address of the writer. The Newsletter may edit letters for brevity, clarity, legality or taste.



Why grade-wide tests at all?

Education Today, the department's propaganda sheet, contained two interesting items, one on provincial learning assessment programs and the other on a survey the department made of teacher opinion last year.

According to *Education Today*, the minister wants 'dependable data' and 'real facts' to provide information to the public on strengths and weaknesses in the school system.

If reassuring the public is the need, surely a process in which parents and children are actively engaged in the documentation provides more first-hand reassurance than any generalized study of the province could ever yield.

A survey of school districts conducted last year by the department on these matters, reported in *Education Today*, says, 'Many teachers and administrators advocated a return to provincial norms and to evaluation by standardized or provincial survey type tests.'

But then the article also reports that while these same teachers and administrators indicated almost unanimous agreement on the use of some kind of testing, 'a substantial number of teachers expressed opposition to external testing,' because these external tests are perceived as inimical to their philosophy of assessing achievement in terms of these students' abilities.

In fact, one school replied, 'a good teacher is evaluating his charges continuously, by many different means, the least of which is formal examination. If evaluation is treated as an integral part of the education process, it ceases to become a sorting out device with all kinds of negative connotations.'

Where is the emphasis: on the 'many' who advocate provincial norms and standardized tests or on the 'substantial

number' expressing opposition to external testing?

There are serious doubts about the need for such generalization, but if the minister feels he must produce statistics each year to monitor the system's effectiveness, we recommend that he read Vito Perrone, Dean of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the University of North Dakota, on alternatives to standardized testing.

Perrone makes a number of suggestions, among them a sample of a small number of children rather than testing every child. Then there are commercial diagnostic tests that, unlike the group test, typically permit open-ended responses and involve verbal interaction. And there are criterion-referenced tests that include items or tasks that relate directly to the instructional purposes of the teacher or of the particular math, reading or social studies program that the teacher is using — easily prepared by teachers and more useful than norm-referenced standardized tests.

But the weakness of these tests, however, is that they relate to a narrow range of learning activities and tend to lose a great deal of their usefulness when teachers place more reliance on tests than on direct observation of children in class, as they learn, and as they interact.

Therefore, what Perrone suggests are interviews with teachers, children, and parents to serve as a base for program evaluation and staff development.

Perrone says teacher interviews provide a way for individual teachers to think about their goals, use of materials, relationships with children, organization of time and space, difficulties, successes, and so on.

'The child interview provides another important perspective, focusing on how the child uses materials, pursues learning, understands what is occurring in the classroom, uses the teacher, and relates to other children.

'The parent interview, a third perspective, describes parents' perceptions and attitudes about what is happening in the classroom, the degree of parent involvement in the classroom, what parents think is important, how they view their children's progress, and their overall level of support (or lack of support).'

No standardized test, says Perrone, can provide as much data, or make as much difference in what teachers do and how children learn. Particularly true, when information from interviews is seriously discussed by all involved.

This information from interviews can relate the child's originality, responsibility, initiative, and independence of effort; evidence the children find meaning in their learning, that is not merely rote; and most important, a consideration of the basic human relationships that exist in schools — child, child-to-child, child-to-teacher, and teacher-to-teacher.

From page 1

Russian visitors

earnings. Class sizes are in the 35-40 range.

Mastery of a core curriculum is demanded of every student who wants to graduate from the school system.

Women in Russia have a right to retire at 55 (the men retire at 60) because women are expected to carry a double load in looking after the home in addition to working. There are 70 percent women teachers and 30 percent male teachers in Russia, a fact that caused the group to say they were encouraging young men to enter teaching.

'We are concerned about equality of women and men,' said Berezin.

A woman returning to work after the 48 day period following the birth of her child, would be entitled, by law, to leave work every three and one-half hours to go to the daycare center to nurse her child if necessary. Women, they said, are becoming quite militant for the right to stay home and look after their children.

Daycare is provided by the government for children from two months to seven years, and the government has

recognized a need for an increase in daycare facilities. Each facility will usually have one to three extra aides as well as a teacher nurse.

Parents are involved in school committees to a certain extent but it was difficult to relate these committees to our consultative committees. However, parents do meet teachers to discuss problems, such as misbehavior problems, although the Russians said the schools are not troubled with vandalism, drugs or alcohol.

Corporal punishment does not exist in the U.S.S.R. and there is no sex education in the schools; it is considered a parental responsibility — instead the students are taught anatomy.

How did the visitors react to the Vancouver schools?

All they would say is that the school visits were interesting, and that they needed more time to really think out what they had seen.

One hopes that they recognized the schools in the Vancouver area are evolving to meet their own unique cultural, social, and political environment. But one also suspects that visitors or landed immigrants to this country have an emotional commitment to schools of their childhood as being 'the best.'



The three Russian visitors enjoying a talk with Champlain teachers during recess.

So spake the minister

Department of Education, February 27, 1976

Education Minister Dr. Pat McGeer said today that an overall 19.3 percent increase in budgetary requirements by B.C.'s school districts for next year's operating costs is completely unrealistic in view of today's economic climate.

'Unless the school boards take steps to severely pare their proposed costs, local mill rates could skyrocket because taxes being paid to the provincial government are insufficient to support grants beyond the federal guidelines,' the minister said. 'School boards must realize that local taxpayers will be the ones who must pay the difference.'

Dr. McGeer said education department officials have calculated the total proposed operating budgets by B.C.'s school districts at \$785 million — 19.3 per cent more than last year.

News release, Department of Education, April 9, 1976

The average municipal mill rate increase for education costs in B.C. this year will be close to seven mills — approximately the same as last year — Education Minister Pat McGeer said today.

He said departmental officials had computed this increase (from 40.98 mills to 47.60 mills) on the assumption that school district budgets would not be trimmed from the previously announced 19 per cent jump.

The minister noted that local school boards have sole authority to establish the final budget.

The minister said that the 1976 basic school tax levy as required by the Public Schools Act has been set at 32.50 mills, an increase of six mills over 1975.

Province of British Columbia
1st Session, 31st Parliament (Hansard)

Hon. Mr. McGeer: . . . I want to make it clear this evening to all British Columbia teachers that contrary to some of the statements made by officers of their own association — I am speaking now to the teachers of British Columbia — their jobs are not now in jeopardy, nor will they be in the future.

Our Department of Education has done a fair study, Mr. Speaker, and it indicates that every teacher in British Columbia now teaching will have a place in the classroom next September. Moreover, because of the normal attrition in the teacher force, which amounts to about 10 percent a year — 2,700 teachers — all those graduating from university departments of education and wishing teaching assignments will also have an opportunity. The only qualification that we have to add, particularly to those who have graduated recently, is that they must be prepared to take appointments in those locations in the province where growth has occurred and not expect that there will be additional assignments in areas where the school population is declining.

News release, Department of Education, April 20, 1976

Education Minister Pat McGeer has announced that the average 1976 mill rate for school taxes will be 46.53 mills, down a full mill from an earlier estimate of 47.60 mills.

The figure is the provincial average. The actual mill rate varies from district to district.

Dr. McGeer also announced that the current departmental estimates contain \$7.5 million for special aid to school districts.

This money has been allocated to 41 school districts in order to effect relief to taxpayers who would otherwise have suffered a disproportionate increase, said the minister. The disbursement of special aid is based mainly on increases in student population.

Happenings

King Edward

Anyone having plans or photographs of the old King Edward High School, which was destroyed by fire and the wrecking ball in 1973, is requested to contact Paul Manning at 263-5277.

Manning and John Lambert are working on a scale model of the building but are unable to find William Whiteway's 1903 blue prints of the first part of the building and are having to rely on photographs.

Business ed

Retiring business education teachers are asked to contact Miss Bea Sutton, No. 610 — 548 Dallas Road, Victoria, B.C., V8V 1B3.

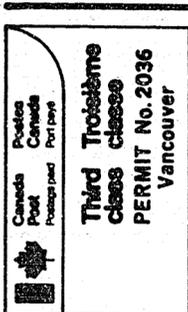
Primary

Booklets from the B.C. Primary Teachers' Association fall conference at Surrey 1975, have been reprinted and are available for the following prices: Art booklet, \$1 plus 50 cents handling; Ideas booklet, \$2 plus 50 cents handling; from the Primary Department, Surrey School District 36, 56th Ave., Surrey, B.C., V3W 1H9.

Habitat

Senior high school students from four West Coast communities plan to make a presentation of their ideas on Laws for Human Settlements at Vancouver's Habitat Forum in June.

The 55 students from Campbell River, Powell River, Gibson's Landing and Courtenay took part in the UNESCO '76 School Conference held at the Strathcona Outdoor Education Centre on Vancouver Island March 3 to 7.



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