

Trustees vote 2 - 1 against Bill 33

newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

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Throw out ministers proposal say trustees

By Annette Croucher

B.C.'s school trustees voted two to one against the provincial government's plan to provide public funding for independent schools.

Trustees in a 198 for and 112 against vote called for withdrawal of Bill 33, the government's Independent Schools Support Act introduced in the legislature March 30.

James Swanney, Nechako, said the motion is a matter of principle and that a government should not promote a separatist, elitist system.

'Look to Ireland which has had separate schools for centuries if you want to see what could happen,' he suggested.

'I feel we should throw out the minister's proposal. Public money must be spent by the public.'

During debate, a number of trustees mentioned the education minister's statements that 'new' money and not 'public' money would be used to fund the independent schools.

Eunice Parker, Coquitlam, said trustees must support the concept of public money to be given to schools under public control.

'The monies will still come out of the public purse, probably general revenue, despite the minister's statement.'

'We must do something before it is too late and everything is finalized,' she stressed.

Bill Holdom, Nanaimo, who supported the motion said the public school system could

sure use some of this 'new' money the minister is either finding or printing.

He said separate schools support things that are not available in public schools.

However, he said, the public should be trying to put these things into public schools.

Earle Buckley, Central Okanagan, was against the motion saying that discussion of where the money comes from is a 'red herring.'

'What is important is first that it is public money and second how it is controlled and used.'

'We in the BCSTA already support the concept of independent forms of education. We support three independent universities and several community colleges.'

'Bill 33 would just provide some alternative choices at the elementary level that we have long demanded at the secondary level,' he said.

Buckley felt the people putting forward the motion (Coquitlam/Burnaby) were 'heavily teacher dominated' and that the preamble to the motion resembled BCTF policy.

Hugh Robins, Prince Rupert, said there are problems enough without adding independent schools. 'If they close their doors we will have to pick up the cost,' he pointed out.

Elsie Dean, Burnaby, said Bill 33 would allow for discrimination and that it would encourage all the denominations to establish schools.



Trustees listen intently to outgoing president Rendina Hamilton at the BCSTA annual meeting.

400 trustees hold AGM

Over 400 trustees from throughout B.C. gathered at the Hotel Vancouver April 29 through May 2 for the BCSTA's annual meeting.

Public funding for independent schools was the only subject to spark controversial debate in an otherwise quiet meeting.

Also causing some upset was the withdrawal of the Victoria board and the rejoining of the Langley board.

Highlights of the meeting included the opening by B.C.'s Lieutenant-Governor Walter Owen, keynote speaker Graham Down who spoke on the 'back-to-the-basics' movement, Education Minister Pat

McGeer and the elections which saw installed as new president North Vancouver's Cliff Adkins.

Some 40 motions were presented at the meeting including that of the question of public funds for independent schools. The motion to have Bill 33 — Independent Schools Support Act — withdrawn was overwhelmingly supported by trustees.

Trustees voted in favor of a motion to request the provincial and federation governments to set out guidelines governing the portrayal of violence on TV.

Also carried was a motion for the BCSTA to express its

support of the ministry's Work Experience Program and the Career Education Program.

Defeated was a motion to make available to students all scientific evidence and research relating to the origins of life and that equal time be given to scientific creation and evolution and that both be taught as theory only.

BCTF reps attend moratorium

The BCTF will participate in the B.C. Moratorium Coalition and send two members Jim MacFarlan and Peter Minshull as representatives.

A sum of \$500 will be contributed toward a conference May 27-29 in Vancouver on Northern Development and local associations are encouraged to send delegates.

The object of the coalition is to challenge present trends in northern development.

Organizations involved include the B.C. Federation of Labour, Oxfam, United Church, United Native Indians, SPEC, Lutheran Church, Committee for Justice and Liberty, UN Association, Catholic Church, Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, and Anglican Church.

Adkins elected new BCSTA president

North Vancouver's Cliff Adkins is the new president of the B.C. School Trustees Association.

Elected by acclamation, Adkins, who was vice-president of the organization

last year, said he wants to see stronger public control of education.

Adkins told trustees at the BCSTA's four day annual meeting that strong school board control of the public education is vital to a democratic school system.

The new president, who takes over from Rendina Hamilton, a lawyer in Penitction, has been on the North Vancouver board four years and the BCSTA executive for three.

The association's new vice-president, also elected by acclamation, is former BCSTA director Dave Kandal of Abbotsford.

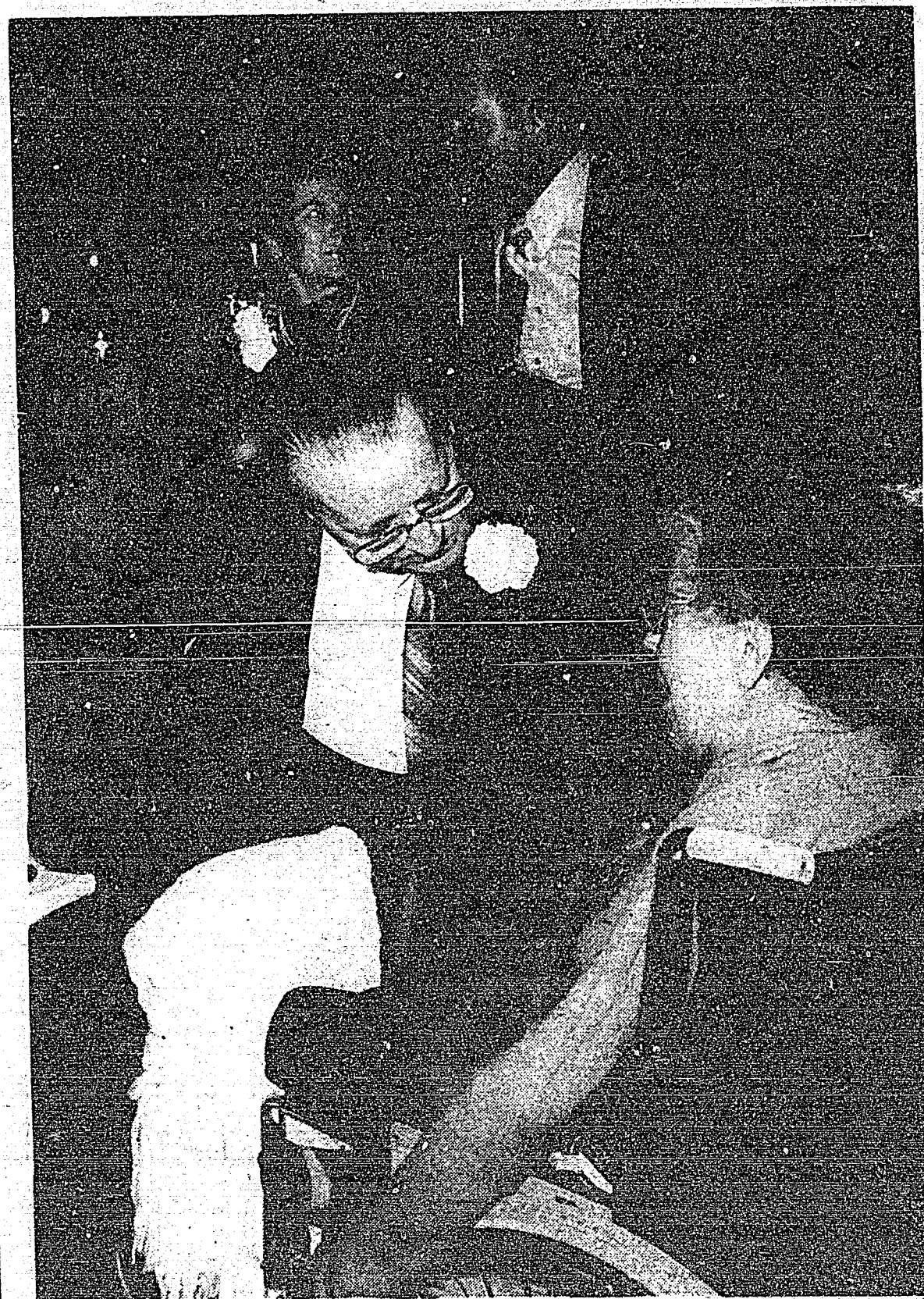
The two new directors are Rubymay Parrott of Saanich and Aileen Fletcher of Powell River.

Referendum balloting report

Ballots mailed — 29,539
Ballots returned — 13,919
Percent return — 47.12
Yes — 5,446
No — 8,421
Spoiled — 52



Cliff Adkins



Adam Robertson retires this June. Here he talks with Nancy Miles, one of the many old friends who came to pay respects at the East Kootenay District Council gathering April 30.

Readers opinion

Congratulations

Re your April 21st issue, congratulating on the independent schools question: first of all I understand and appreciate the BCTF position. While I agree with you on many and perhaps most things, the long standing position of my party on this issue is on the other side. That, however, is not what I am writing about.

I am writing to compliment you on your openness in giving the FISA people a chance to put their case in your newspaper. If we saw a bit more of this kind of thing in the government — for example departmental publications giving opposition people a chance to put their view even briefly — our democratic system would work much better.

Congratulations!
Gordon F. Gibson,
B.C. Liberal Party Leader

Successful

I would like to congratulate you in your successful attempt to air both sides of the independent school issue, despite your editorial policy which of course is firmly opposed to government aid or recognition.

There are indeed good arguments on both sides of the issue. It is refreshing to see them expressed in a calm and thoughtful manner. I think you skim over one point with regard to the non-sectarian (ISA) independent schools. We believe that we provide a worthy and coherent philosophy of education suitable to all young people who are willing to strive for a good education. Our purpose in seeking assistance is to bury forever the charge of class elitism that is levelled against us. We support a classless society for the young; what we are asking for is the opportunity to open our school to those who merit such an opportunity, without regard to their parents' financial status.

Alan Brown,
Headmaster,
St. George's School

Bill 33

Dear Mr. McGeer:

On behalf of the Coquitlam Teachers' Association Executive, I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the introduction of Bill 33, the Independent Schools Support Act, into the legislature.

Our executive council has reaffirmed BCTF Policy Statement 11.A.07 which reads:

"That public education funds should be used only for public education. Public funds should not be provided directly or indirectly to private schools, denominational or otherwise."

It is our belief that the public school system provides a free and

non-sectarian co-educational school accessible to all without regard to sex, creed, race, wealth or social status. The public school system represents a microcosm of the total population of our communities and it has served as a powerful force in integrating and animating the entire community.

I would strongly urge the withdrawal of this bill from the floor of the legislature.

M. Lombardi,
President, CTA

Appalled

As a member of the BCTF I am appalled at Mr. Broadley's public display of ignorance regarding independent schools, and his obvious intolerance of religious teaching in particular. He insults the intelligence of the fair minded members of the federation when he uses the political ploy of whipping them up and trying to carry them along like sheep with his loaded phrases, over-worked clichés, and words such as: divisiveness, intolerance, wealthy, haves, etc. This canting stems from utter blindness on the subject.

The greatest divisive factor occurs where an injustice is perpetrated. The divisiveness and intolerance of which Mr. Broadley speaks is directed at, not taught by, these schools. They are not all wealthy and elitist as he suggests. Let him open his eyes and look at the many needy elementary schools which manage to keep going with difficulty.

Parents of children attending these schools ask only that their own share of their own taxes be applied to their own schools. A simple, civil, democratic right acknowledged for many, many years by eight of the ten provinces in Canada, and by the more enlightened countries of the world.

B.C. is just emerging from the dark ages. Progress is often painful, but the regressive efforts of people like Mr. Broadley only add to the agony by helping fester an open wound. One expects a more enlightened attitude from educators, be they from the private or public schools. How can we expect tolerance and understanding when such intolerance is preached and lack of understanding is shown? Children in all schools need better examples than this.

Margaret M. Taylor,
Coquitlam

Angered

I wish to take issue with Mr. Broadley's statements made in your most recent publication in an article entitled 'Separate Schools Lead to Separation.'

First, I am angered that Mr. Broadley would attempt to distort the national question of unity for the political purpose of maintaining the strength of the BCTF. Mr. Broadley is fearfully foreseeing a day in the future when more than the present 5% of B.C.'s students will be attending independent schools, and therefore a day when a greater number of teachers will not be in the BCTF — maybe in an independent federation of teachers. Then the BCTF will not be the only teacher's group speaking out in education — it will not be the increasingly dominant force in education that it is today.

Maybe salaries would increase in the independent schools and then teachers searching for alternatives would try the new source of employment, weakening the hold of the BCTF on its membership.

Glenn Andrews,
Barriere

AGM fails

Over three hundred votes were cast at approximately 9:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 30, in favor of abrogating the responsibilities of the AGM and referred all unfinished business to the RA. We were derelict in our duties as delegates.

We had elected people to office who stated that they were sincerely concerned about being able to represent the views of the membership and we, as duly elected delegates, presumably should have done likewise. In the humble opinion of this one delegate, the referral of all unfinished business was a denial of not only the responsibilities of this 1977 AGM but a usurpation of our rights to vote on substantive issues which concerned not only the welfare of ourselves but that of children. We had a responsibility which we did not fulfill. I was not proud to be a GR at this particular AGM.

I believe that this past meeting should go on record in an apology to the members by whom we were elected for failing to serve them.

Mavis De Girolamo
Victoria

S/W

The Newsletter of April 11, 1977, states that status of women is now a standing committee and as such will be able to make regular committee appointments. This takes many of us unawares. How did it come about — may it be reversed? I propose that S/W as a task force costs us too much (\$70,000 plus for one year) and in this new entrench-

ment it will be a luxury we can do without.

May I emphasize, at the outset, that I recognize there are some things that need to be done to elevate the station of women in society, and some of them desperately need to be done. Where there are inequalities, they are to be deplored. There have been injustices to women, before the law and in society generally and there are additional rights to which woman are entitled. However, I firmly believe that the course of action of women's liberation groups in general and the federation's S/W in particular, is NOT the answer.

I vigorously urge the dissolution of the Status of Women Committee of the BCTF.

Lila O. Stanford,
Delta

QCDA

The voices of the teachers on the Queen Charlotte Islands have often spoken out on matters of which we have concern. We are a small group, yet have need to be heard and understood by our big brothers and sisters. This we feel is necessary and will, no doubt, continue to happen.

We are intensely proud and offer praise to the BCTF and its staff when their concern for a small northern local such as ours is expressed in the form of interest and aid.

This has been my experience this past year regarding the inherent difficulties in negotiating a new contract made practically impossible by the anti-inflation guidelines and the employees who administer them. The care and attention which the Economic Welfare Division staff gave to detail through technical bulletins, well researched informational handouts, area conferences for update sessions and a willingness to travel to the local to lend support when called upon was truly inspiring.

I would like to express my personal appreciation to Bruce Watson of Economic Welfare Division for all the expertise and human effort he has made available to me and the association I represent. His earnest endeavors have contributed greatly to the economic well being of the teachers on the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Mike Dowling,
QCDA

Political action

It has been most frustrating to see the past follies of our central office perpetuated. The recent

action booklet prepared by the Committee on Political Action has reared the spectre of the partisan nature of the 1989 Apple Campaign and the 1972 election campaign activities. The emphasis of the booklet on political action rather than the less emotive term 'public relations' denotes a certain philosophy at work.

We ordinary members of the federation believe that the BCTF is a professional structure designed to promote the interests of teaching and education. We do not believe that the BCTF has a mandate to promote political philosophies or objectives. We believe that the federation must maintain good relations with whichever party is in government. We do not believe that there should be a constant effort to score political points.

Please, for the sake of the BCTF, desist from the option of political action and return to the concept of public relations.

Delbert Doll,
Courtenay

Human rights

'Human Rights Project as advertised in and sponsored by the BCTF Newsletter and Public Schools Legal Education Services.'

Here is a misnomer in semantics. Human Rights is not about 'rights' at all. It is a smoke screen to poorly disguise militant feminism. How do sexism and racism become equated — spoken of as one and the same problem? Let us hear it for the other side dear editor. Here is how one member's considered opinion runs:

I forbid any doctrine of so-called 'human rights' to be given to my children in any way, shape or form. I am willing to defend a person's right to choose any legal course as an adult. I have no argument with women who would play other roles or exert themselves to do so. I know the teaching profession to be one of the fairest of all systems in terms of equal rights, status, privilege and consideration for women.

But, the desires of a few militant feminists, their personal ambition to fly in the face of tradition, values, morals and the basic fabric of civilized society, does not have to be thrust upon youth.

Lorin D. Higley

Public showing of BCTF slide / tape presentation 'Racism in B.C.', Killarney Secondary School, Vancouver, Tuesday, May 24, 8.00 p.m.

Panel: BCTF, Vancouver School Board, Minister of Education, East Indian Community, Native Speaker, Student Representative, UBC.

Two women given superintendencies

B.C. Teachers' Federation President Bill Broadley has congratulated Education Minister Pat McGeer for appointing two women of the four new district superintendents.

Sue Granger of Williams Lake and Dorothy Glass of Campbell River, as well as Robert Moss of Duncan and Wayne Taylor of Osoyoos are the four new superintendents.

'Congratulations to Dr. McGeer,' Broadley said. 'He has given recognition to the quality of women in teaching which is long overdue in the history of the province. We hope that it will encourage other women to apply for positions of responsibility in education.'

Sue Granger has been a member of the BCTF Executive Committee but she will resign her position as of May 1 because superintendents cannot be BCTF members.

Granger is a supervisor of

instruction for the Cariboo-Chilcotin school district.

Dorothy Glass, is on a one-year leave of absence from the Campbell River school district where she is a vice-principal of Campbell River Secondary School. She served on the BCTF Executive Committee 1973-1975.

The first woman to hold the position of district superintendent was Frances Fleming, appointed in May 1973, and now an assistant superintendent with the ministry's Schools Department.

A major thrust of the BCTF status of women program has been to encourage more women to apply for positions of responsibility in education.

'We're pleased that one major educational group in the province has given recognition to the need to appoint outstanding women like these to positions of responsibility,' Broadley said.



Dorothy Glass



Sue Granger

English teachers president calls complaints 'dangerous'

The B.C. English Teachers' Association held a successful conference in Richmond April 29 with estimates of more than 300 teachers attending.

Joyanne Landers, President of the PSA, took the opportunity of media coverage to reply to some of the unproductive criticisms that have been coming from the University of B.C.

Complaints from UBC, she said, demonstrate a complete ignorance about what is going on in B.C. schools.

She said criticism given by Robert Jordon, UBC English Department Head, is dangerous because it is demoralizing to both teachers and students. Even excellent students doubt themselves when they read in the newspapers that high schools are turning out illiterates, said Landers, who teaches at Hastings Junior Secondary School in Coquitlam.

She expressed concern about the new English placement tests for Grade 12 students that could be transformed into university entrance examinations, with schools changing their programs to conform to the requirements of the examination.

CBC writer Ben Metcalfe gave the keynote address: 'The pen is heavier than the shovel.'

He was introduced by George Hawksworth, a New Westminster teacher, who said later that the conference 'energized people.' He said that English teachers have never relaxed in their quest for standards.

Other sessions at the conference included 'Film the eye opener to composition', 'Strategies for the teaching of composition', and sessions on poetry writing, grammar, and a student newspaper.

Adam given his sendoff in East Kootenays

An educator, a humanitarian, and a card shark who will 'clean you of every coin?'

That's how the evening went for Adam Robertson who retires this June. It was an evening marked with deep affection liberally laced with good humor, a characteristic of the man the East Kootenay teachers had gathered to honor.

Creston teacher, Dale Speaker, set the tone when he said 'I like this man, but there are some things I'd like to draw to your attention. He's a destroyer. In your classroom when he waves his arms every kid runs to him.'

He may be a noted poker player, Speaker said, but he's also been a fantastic player in this game of education, a man who has fought for the best learning environment possible for children.

Harry Peebles explained the 'unselfish gesture' of the East Kootenay council when they gave their secretary treasurer of 26 years to the BCTF to serve time as president. 'He's an educator, a humanitarian,

and a servant of children in B.C.,' Peebles said.

Johnny Lucas recalled the years when teachers were not allowed to use school buildings for meetings. But at any meeting, he stressed, Adam was 'always dependable, always there, no matter what the weather or how he felt.'

Another retired teacher, Vic Montaldi, paid respects from the North Central District Council when he read a letter from NCDC saying that teachers are indebted to Adam Robertson for the service he gave to education during the difficult period of his presidency.

Adam Robertson will, of course, best be remembered for his leadership in the confrontation with the former Social Credit Government. As BCTF president, Robertson took a firm stand in February 1972 against legislation (Bill 3) that would regulate the percentage increase for teachers salaries saying 'We won't live with it.'

'I believe in trust and co-

operation,' Adam said at the time. 'I have tried. Through Bill 3, my offer of good will and co-operation has been spurned.'

At the March 1972 Annual General Meeting Jim MacFarlan, then first vice-president, withdrew his name as a candidate for the presidency saying he would nominate the man who 'can reunify this house.' MacFarlan said Robertson had the audacity, courage and wisdom to lead the BCTF during the difficult times ahead.

Adam kept the federation united during the troubles of 1972.

Service to others has been the key note of Adam Robertson's career. It was fitting, therefore, that he replied to the speakers at the East Kootenay retirement party with a quote that he had recently drawn from a book: 'The service we render onto others is merely the rent we pay for our space on this terrestrial sphere.'

Adam gave special thanks to guests Nancy Miles, Muriel Baxter, and May Truscott.

Grievances

By Dennis Rankin

Introduction of the Declaration was heralded as a significant advance for the teachers and students of B.C.

Delegates to this year's AGM voted to retain statement 23.C.18 in policies and procedures. Resolution 11 called for the deletion of the procedure which calls upon members to report learning conditions violations.

The grievance procedure as outlined in the Declaration was cited in both the cases for and against deletion.

It was argued that since the grievance procedure was set out in the Declaration, 23.C.18 was not needed. A deluge of grievances could result. Charges under the code of ethics could arise. In short, the procedure was deemed unnecessary.

Advocates for retention described 23.C.18 as complementary to the formal grievance procedure. Reporting violations and members' co-operation were considered necessary in gathering data and in evaluating learning and working conditions.

The guarantee that each member may seek to improve the educational environment

was deemed of major importance for teachers and students. Access to a formal grievance procedure was commended.

23.C.18 — that to foster quality education it be considered conduct harmful or prejudicial to the interests of the federation when any member:

1. does not report a learning conditions violation;
2. deliberately causes misleading or false information to be reported;

3. fails to co-operate with his/her professional organization in attempts to correct violations.

(1974 AGM)
The convention chose to retain 23.C.18 endorsing the procedural aspect of the statement. While the action inherent in that policy logically precedes the grievance procedure, the filing of a grievance is not automatic and is subject to the discretion of the grievor.

23.B.05 — 13.1. The local association shall establish procedures for identifying, investigating and resolving learning and working conditions problems and concerns prior to formal grievance proceedings.

Victoria board withdraws from BCSTA

The Victoria school board is out and the Langley school board is back in.

Victoria board chairman Susan Brice told the BCSTA annual meeting Monday, May 2 that the group is withdrawing to protest 'overspending and

an alarming growth of bureaucracy' in the BCSTA.

She made the announcement following defeat of an amendment by the Vancouver Island delegation to reduce the BCSTA budget increase from

11.6% to 9.5%, 'the average for the province.'

'We came here hoping to convince other trustees that we should address ourselves to a decline in expenditures,' Brice told reporters.

'Until the BCSTA membership is more in keeping with the Victoria board, we cannot legitimately be part of that organization.'

Referring to Langley school board, which earlier withdrew from the BCSTA after expressing dissatisfaction with its 'lack of direction on general education issues,' Brice said Victoria is not trying to create a 'snowballing of decisions to walk out.'

She said Victoria and Langley seem to have the same

concerns and told reporters the two delegations would be meeting to discuss ideas.

The Langley board rejoined after the convention approved its request for a task force to study BCSTA goals and directions and report to the next annual meeting.

NWTTA want rights

Teachers employed by the government of the Northwest Territories are forbidden to participate actively in the political process.

The NWT Teachers' Association is concerned with this problem because 'the majority of its membership is denied a right accorded without ques-

tion to teachers throughout provincial Canada,' said a press release.

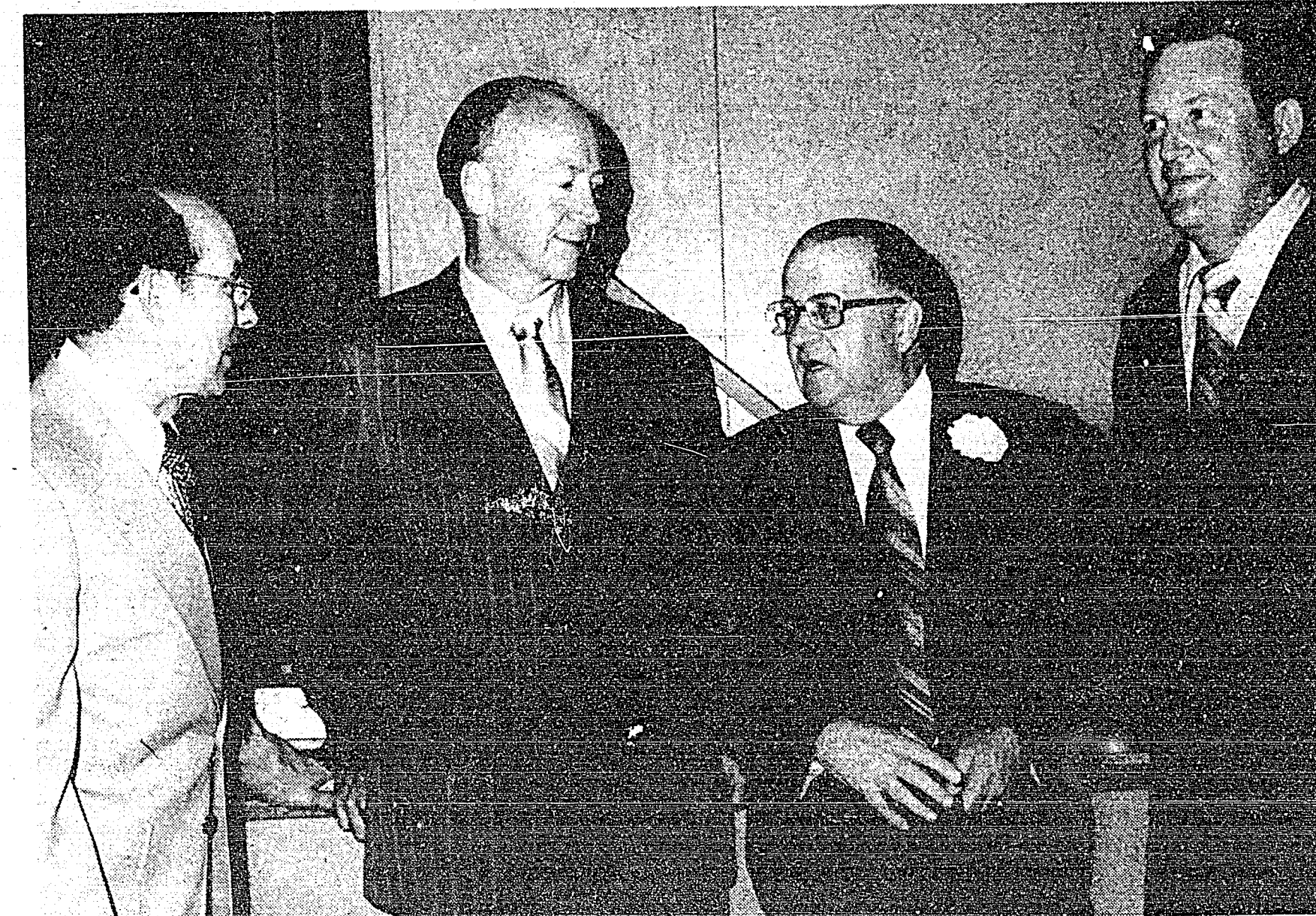
NWTTA president Al Wolitski states 'the time has come for all northern teachers to share the rights and the responsibility of participating in the government of this territory and this nation.'

RTA office open

The Retired Teachers' Association office is now open more frequently in the BCTF building.

If offers a Retirement Information Service to retired teachers and those considering retiring.

Telephone 731-8121, local 214, or come into the office Monday, Wednesday or Friday, 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.



We're not sure what Bill Constable, left, said but if may have been something about a portly gentleman. It got results. Next to Constable is a fit looking Charlie Ovens, and at the right, Dale Speaker.

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letter

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EXPRESS

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. Articles contained herein reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily express official policy of the BCTF.



Pat McGeer

Funding won't affect public schools - McGeer

Minister of Education Dr. Pat McGeer told delegates to the BCSTA annual meeting that funding of independent schools will not effect the public school system or its funding.

'It will be completely new money,' he said. 'What goes into support of independent schools will in no way be taken from the public school system.'

Speaking at the BCSTA luncheon, April 30, McGeer called for improvements in education financing.

'We all serve students and taxpayers. Our mandates are therefore clear — to improve

the quality and depth of education while at the same time seeking every management efficiency that can be found to enhance the cost-benefit of what we do. So I must talk about the quality of education on the one hand, and the quality of financial management on the other,' McGeer told trustees.

'They may often be in conflict but they are nevertheless our twin responsibilities.'

'Government programs are weighed according to their cost-benefit,' he said.

'The present government has decided that there is sufficient

cost-benefit in funding independent schools to go into that program.'

McGeer told delegates he is studying the rapid increases in school mill rates.

'School district expenditures are going faster than inflation and growth of student enrollment.'

'I will do all in my power to obtain as much support as possible from the provincial government for educational purposes, but school districts must realize that the provincial revenues are not growing at anywhere near the pace of school district budgets in recent years.'

'The provincial government must take into account the general economy and the number of students to be educated in establishing this overall budget in future years,' McGeer said.

McGeer said wage settlements by school districts last year were higher than experienced by the public service.

'They reflected a general position on the part of boards that a figure above the growth

of the provincial economy was a starting point for negotiation and with that it can be no surprise that the agreed to and arbitrated settlements were in excess of 9%.

'I communicated with districts last fall about probable increases in mill rates in hopes that trustees would go into the bargaining process with wage offers to teachers and support staff that reflected the provincial economy, but that was not the case.'

'The arbitration process that we are now involved in seems to serve the professional arbitrators who may be more concerned with bringing in a settlement which will permit them to be invited another year to chair arbitration panels than serve the public interest. Those procedures must be reviewed thoroughly,' McGeer told trustee delegates.

The minister also spoke on the trend in reduction of the pupil / teacher ratios saying he is 'very concerned.'

He added that he has seen no proof that smaller classes improve the quality of teaching and learning.

What 'new money'?

By John Hardy

Perhaps the fault is in us, but the speech given by Education Minister Pat McGeer at the recent trustees' convention seems confused. It may be that we did not understand his ideas, or it maybe that he simply was not communicating well.

To tell trustees, for example, that provincial revenues are not growing 'at anywhere near the pace of school district budgets' and then tell the same group that additional funding for independent schools can come from the same provincial revenues, surely lacks coherence of thought.

Why talk about the high cost to local taxpayers and about the shortage of government money and then talk about 'new money,' for non-public schools, that apparently the government has available?

Before the money goes through the government laundry, it all comes from taxes.

Another topic in the minister's speech that is unclear to us has to do with the appointment of superintendents.

The minister must know that those local boards that now appoint their own superintendents are quite pleased with the process and would probably fight to preserve it. Other boards that do not yet have the

right very clearly desire it. One can only wonder, then, at the minister's going against the grain by telling trustees that he does not favor expanding the trend toward locally controlled superintendents.

The reason that he gave is that the ministry must have some call on superintendents to assure that provincial policy is carried out across this province.

Very clearly, the main thrust is control, control of curriculum and finances.

Independent school people claim they exist primarily because of a resentment against state control. They argue that there is no compelling reason for state control of curriculum.

Government for them has adopted an official 'civil religion' and designated the public school as an established church.

Therefore, what the minister seems to be saying in his speech is that he will give funds to independent schools when state influences can be lessened, but at the same time he wants a tighter control of the public schools through curriculum and through supervision.

The minister also expressed concern about the trend in the reduction of pupil / teacher ratios, saying 'there is no appraisal of the value of the sharp drop in pupil / teacher ratio in recent years.'

One appraisal, surely, is that the private schools (not the religious group) base their claim for better education on the small classes in small schools with intensive pupil / teacher relationships. Classes of 5, 10 and 15 are common in elitist private schools where PTRs are usually small. Another appraisal is that the minister, we understand, has sent his children to private school.

NASA joins teachers

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of USA is joining hands with B.C. teachers in cosponsoring an important conference in Vancouver. Space Update: 1977, Pacific Methods Conference on Lunar and Planetary Exploration is the first international conference of its kind and will be held May 20-21 at H. R. Macmillan Planetarium. About 14 resource persons include well known NASA scientists associated with Apollo and Viking space missions, geologists, geophysicists and teachers.

The conference is an attempt to

inservice teachers at K-college level in space and earth science teaching and coincides with the introduction of a newly developed course sequence Earth Science 11/Geology 12 throughout the province.

The BCTF Executive Committee, April 15, unanimously approved a financial grant of \$500 to the workshop. The money will be used in developing a comprehensive teacher resource package for the participants and others.

For information contact ANAND ATAL at Royal Oak Jr. Secondary in Burnaby (433-9396).

Must start with ourselves



Rendina Hamilton

During my three years of service on the executive I have witnessed a growing credibility for our association, outgoing president Rendina Hamilton told trustees at their convention.

'We are now recognized participants in education policy and curriculum determination,' she said.

Hamilton said that public schools in the democracy must be controlled by the public and the key is effective trustees. Survival of our democratic lifestyle and improved quality of education depend on the degree to which we are prepared to make ourselves more effective, she said.

She called on trustees to be honest with themselves and honest with those they serve. 'We must demand the same standard of integrity of all who are employed in our public school system. But to do these things successfully, we must start with ourselves.'

BCTF appointments

Four incumbents were given permanent appointments on the BCTF staff at the April 15, 16, executive meeting.

The four are: George North, Ralph Sundby, Wes Knapp and Jim Bowman.

A motion to appoint three, rather than four, to the Professional Development Division was rejected.

In other business, the executive:

Appointed an interim editorial board composed of Gordon Eddy, Delta; Bill Harrison, Campbell River; Michael Kennedy, Lillooet;

David Manning, V.I. North; Sid Middal, Maple Ridge and Pearl Slater, Central Okanagan.

Approved Ed May, of the Racism Task Force, to attend as BCTF representative to a Toronto conference on Multiculturalism in Education.

Approved that executive members Broadley, Brady, Blakey, Goulden, Neuberger and Smith be the BCTF delegation to the Canadian Teachers' Federation AGM this summer. Jim MacFarlan going as an alternate delegate. The General Secretary will also attend.

In dispute reaffirmed

Trail teachers have reaffirmed they are in dispute with the Trail School Board.

The BCTF will assist the Trail District Teachers' Association in getting an arbitration for the 1977 agreement by ensuring that:

1. there be continuing contact with the ministries of labour and education;

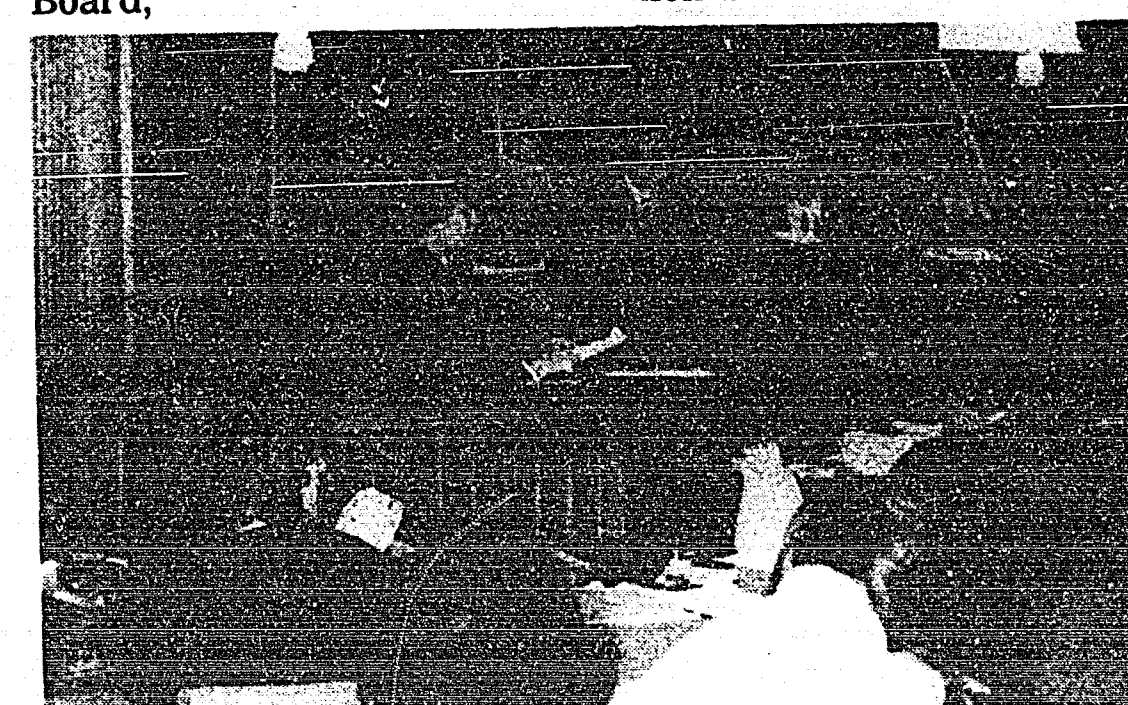
2. there be continuing publicity — local and provincial;

a. to counteract misrepresentations by the Trail School Board,

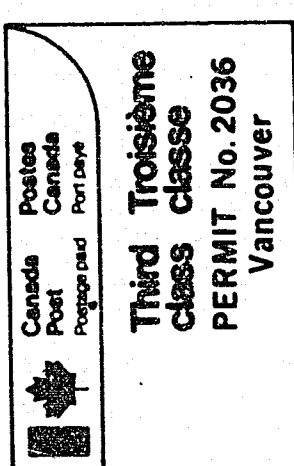
b. about the Ministry of Labour's responsibility to provide an arbitration board;

3. staff develop proposals for legislative changes that would prevent a repetition of the Trail events.

Trail went into dispute with the board back in February because local trustees refused to have meaningful negotiation or conciliation. The final straw came when the board obstructed the arbitration process with a dormant part of the Arbitration Act that sets a fee of \$40 a day for an arbitration board chairman.



McPherson Park Jr. Secondary School students held a retrial of leader of the Riel Rebellion, Louis Riel. Found guilty of treason in his first trial, Riel was found innocent on grounds of insanity at this trial held in the New Westminster Court House.



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