



Dave Kandall, BCSTA President

In criminal cases

Trustees seek to strengthen hand

School trustees want the power either to dismiss or to reinstate a teacher who is discharged by the courts after admitting or being found guilty of a criminal offence.

Their concern, arising from some recent and highly publicized marijuana cases, was aired at the annual general meeting of the B.C. School Trustees Association in Prince George, May 5-8.

The Public Schools Act allows school boards to suspend a teacher charged with a criminal offence, such as possession of marijuana, if 'the circumstances thereby creat-

ed render it inadvisable for him to continue his duties.'

If the suspended teacher is subsequently acquitted by the courts, he or she must be reinstated; if he or she is convicted the board has the discretionary power to fire him or her.

But the act gives no direction on what the board should do if the teacher is given a conditional or an absolute discharge by the court. Although the teacher may have been found guilty, or even have pleaded guilty, a discharge does

not constitute either an acquittal or a conviction.

A motion passed at the BCSTA convention asked that the act be changed to allow a school board 'to exercise its discretion regarding teacher dismissal or reinstatement' in such a case.

Education Minister Pat McGeer told the trustees the act already gives them the power they want to dismiss such a teacher, for misconduct rather than for conviction on a criminal charge.

He said if this interpretation of the law does not stand up in court, he will move to change the act.

Another motion passed by the trustees seeks an amendment to the act to put all teachers on a one-year probation when they move to a new district. Another would have all beginning teachers serve a year's internship before being granted a teaching certificate.

The right of teachers to serve on school boards was seriously challenged by a motion submitted by the Langley trustees. The rationale given for the motion was that teacher-trustees face a conflict of interest, particularly in salary negotiations.

The motion was defeated by one vote (173-172). Another Langley motion, which would have made teachers' spouses ineligible to serve as trustees, also was lost.

Other motions passed called for:

- The provincial government to reduce the basic mill rate over the next five years to the point

where local taxpayers would be paying only 25 per cent of the costs of the school system (instead of 62 per cent as at present).

- All school counsellors to have a university diploma in counsellor education (only 15 per cent now do);
- Grants to compensate school boards fully for the extra costs of mainstreaming severely handicapped children into the school system.

The trustees resoundingly defeated a drive by Langley's 'Basics Bunch,' by Board chairman Brian Westwood, to take control of the BCSTA.

Westwood lost his bid for the presidency by a first-ballot vote of 500-22. The winner, succeeding Cliff Adkins, was former vice-president David Kandal of Abbotsford. Kandal, a political moderate and an airline pilot, says he would rather fly over or around a thunderstorm than through it.

Westwood's running-mate, Marnie Robertson, got 48 votes in her try for the vice-presidency. She lost to Rubymay Parrott of Saanich.

A third Langley trustee, Peter Fassbender, dropped out of the running for a director's position, apparently in disagreement with his colleagues over their response to a chronology of recent events published in the Langley Teachers' Association newsletter.

newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

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'All is confusion'

Who is going to pay extra costs of integrating the handicapped?

'As a steady flow of moderately and severely retarded and handicapped children moved into the public schools,' says the Ministry of Education Report for 1976-77, 'resources were provided to accommodate them.'

Problem is no one knows what number is the 'moderate flow,' or what resources were provided.

All is confusion in this area, says Allan Garneau, the federation's second vice-president.

He asked questions at the Deputy Ministers' Advisory Committee about the integration of handicapped children and Jim Carter of the Ministry has agreed to bring back answers at the next meeting June 12.

At the Annual General Meeting during the Education Minister McGeer's post-speech question period a number of teachers asked about these resources. While integration in regular classes was desirable, they said, what support was the minister prepared to provide to help maintain these children in the mainstream.

'I'd like to know what your specific suggestions are,' replied McGeer. 'You're the professionals in the system and we look to you for leadership in that regard.'

But the ministry has all the data, not the profession.

In the meantime school boards, in the words of one official, are 'waiting, and waiting, and waiting.'

Frances Fleming, the ministry of education's assistant superintendent of special programs, says the main problem is the non-educational support services because this involves two other ministries — Human Resources and Health. She is concerned that the education dollar will be diminished unless they pay their share.

'We will provide an educational program to every kid in this province,' she insists. 'But we reserve the right to say who will be admitted to a school class and what resources must accompany him.'

She says it's the only way she can see that teachers can be supported and protected. The health and social costs have to be borne by the other agencies.

But there is some doubt at the school board level that teachers can say no to having a child in class. And it might not be wise.

As one school board spokesperson said, the teacher might refuse but there is no place in the Act that says he or she can.

In addition, parents and school boards can be charged with the

cost of maintaining a child at a provincial institution. There is a rumor, for instance, that school boards have been told to integrate or be prepared to pay the \$10,000 in cost to maintain a child at Jericho school. (Actual cost is closer to \$16,000.)

Allan Garneau has what is called an 'off-campus' class at Lloyd George School for children with a hearing impairment. The teacher, Eileen Astin, is employed by Jericho and she says the program is 'excellent' for while the children are not integrated academically, they are integrated socially in the school.

An off-campus class, Garneau points out, is no problem because the school can draw on the resources that are close at hand. 'If we need the support staff of Jericho we can get help. But not one of these children could survive in a regular classroom.'

Eileen Astin agrees. 'They wouldn't learn in a regular classroom. Deaf kids need a teacher of the deaf and you can't provide a teacher per child so you have to group them.'

There seems to be agreement among educators that blind children are easier to integrate in-

to the mainstream than the deaf, which may explain why Jericho, contrary to news reports, is not closing but will have 170 deaf students next year.

There are now 46 children classed as visually impaired in Vancouver schools.

Placing blind and deaf children together, as at Jericho, never has been workable. As Frances Fleming says, the deaf kids have long victimized the blind: 'They love to trip them.' And the learning mode for each is totally different; the blind learning through their ears, the deaf through their eyes.

It would be easy to view the government favoring decentralization and floating children in the mainstream to have the cost of maintenance also float away and save money. Except that Frances Fleming has never been a person to operate on that basis.

Her main goal, she says, is to keep the handicapped child at home or at least in a regional center from which the child can go home on weekends. She talks of the need for the child to have pets, a mom and dad close by, and home cooked meals. Also, one of the good things about taking the program to

(Continued on page 4)

Bill seen as threat to collective bargaining

BCTF President Pat Brady has taken up the fight on behalf of B.C. teachers against the federal government's proposed amendments to its Public Service Staff Relations Act.

The amendments are contained in Bill C-28, introduced in the Commons earlier this year on the advice of a special joint committee of Parliament which studied a consultant's report on compensation in the federal civil service (the Finkelman report).

At the heart of Bill C-28 is the concept of 'average comparability of total compensation' (ACTC). Under this concept, the total dollar value of compensation for public employees — including wages and other benefits such as pensions, sick leave, vacations, statutory holidays, overtime, etc. — would be measured against the average of comparable compensation packages for workers in the private sector. The total federal package

would never be allowed to exceed its private-sector counterpart.

Although the bill now before Parliament would apply only to the federal civil service, there is a possibility that its principles might be adopted by provincial governments and extended to their employees and eventually, perhaps, even to teachers.

The BCTF, like the Canadian Teachers' Federation, has opposed the bill as being repressive in nature and autocratically devised without adequate consultation with the employees it would affect.

On April 7 Brady wrote to all 23 Members of Parliament from B.C., explaining the BCTF's objections to the bill and urging them to press for revision or withdrawal of C-28. Excerpts from his letter, and from some of the MPs' responses to it, are reprinted below:

Pat Brady, president, BCTF: The bill is a regressive piece of legislation. If adopted in its present form, it would deprive some Canadians of their basic democratic rights and undermine the fundamental process of collective bargaining in the public sector.

Specifically, we are very apprehensive about the immediate and long-term effects of:

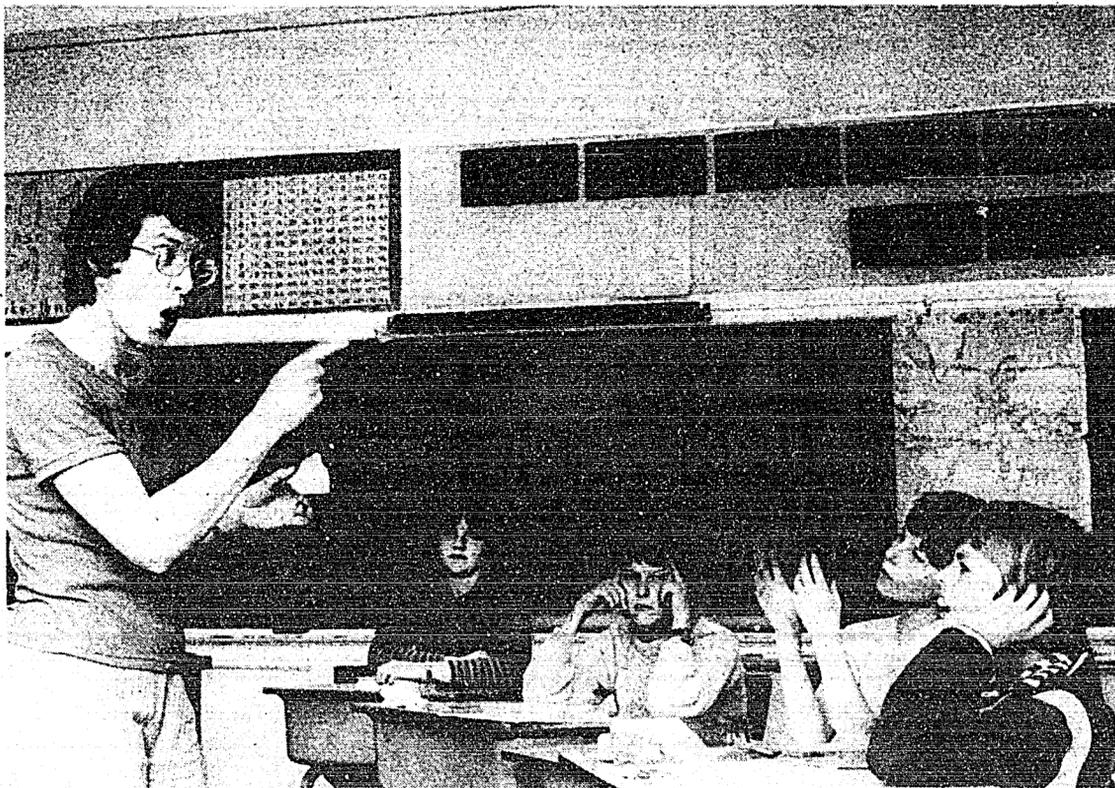
1. The introduction of a definition of an employee that would provide for the exclusion from the bargaining unit of any individual earning more than \$33,500 per annum.

The bill proposes control over the membership of individuals in a union on the basis of an arbitrarily determined dollar figure. It ignores (or rejects) the fundamental basis on which a union is founded; namely, as an association of employees with common job concerns.

2. The introduction of very restrictive provisions governing the matters that arbitration boards must take into account in determining the amount and nature of their award.

Interest in arbitration has developed in areas of the public service as a substitute for strike action. It has proven effective as a substitute where arbitration boards have had the freedom to exercise their judgment with res-

(Continued on page 4)



Eileen Astin at work: deaf kids need their own teacher

Letters

Co-operation 'is essential'

In the past, teacher bargaining has taken place within the limitations of the Public Schools Act; limitations which have, in fact, tended to place teachers in a status category secondary to that of unions in either the public or the private sector.

from the BCTF, and also announced its intention of holding to a 6.5 per cent ceiling on teachers' salaries. In the spring of 1972, Victoria passed Bill 3 formally imposing a 'fixed percentage' limit.

In spite of the traditional differences, teacher bargaining was made subject to AIB regulations. This fact would seem to suggest that, in the minds of governments, teachers are members of a union as surely as plumbers and bus drivers.

The B.C. Council of Public Sector Employers has been established. Can we afford to ignore that fact? Do we need to face reality, and take steps to protect ourselves against the possible undesirable results of the activities of the council, which are seen to be severely threatening by other public employees' groups?

In 1971 the B.C. government removed automatic membership

co-operating with other affected working groups?

The B.C. Council of Public Sector Employers is now firmly in place with a board of directors and an advisory committee and a staff of nine people, about six of whom are performing a variety of research functions. Can we afford to isolate ourselves from any involvement with others concerned about the true implications of the development of a new and growing bureaucracy? The council is either a useless and inexcusable waste of taxpayers' dollars or it is going to become an authority superseding the already efficient and adequate services of the Ministry of Labour research division and the Labour Relations Board.

There is a well-founded fear among the public-sector unions that the inevitable result will be direct intrusion of a provincial agency into the collective bargaining process. All the assurances in the world that the members and not the provincial government will be the council's agencies cannot eliminate the fact that those agencies are supported or guaranteed by treasury board provisions. The influence of the treasury board on its activities can well be enormous.

It seems to me that it requires more than these simple facts to indicate that this federation's co-operation with all other public-sector bargaining groups is essential. Let us face the fact that for all the purposes of the B.C. Council of Public Sector Employers, teachers are public employees. The only recourse in a situation like this is for the B.C. teachers to become members of the B.C. Public Sector Employees' Co-ordinating Council.

That our executive should have seen fit to discharge our labor liaison committee at this critical time borders on irresponsibility. Edith Crowe, Coquitlam

S/W conference supported

I am writing in response to the letter from Lila O. Stanford, which appeared in your April 6 issue.

The student teacher conference at Charles Tupper School was indeed a co-operative venture: students requested it, helped organize it and chose the workshop topics, working with teachers all the way. At the conclusion, they evaluated the conference and indicated they want another one next year.

Students themselves gave the workshop on the women's studies program. The workshop on the 'powerless majority' examined how students can understand the system and work effectively within it. 'Racism and the law in B.C.' applied to both men and women; considering the numbers of immigrant families in our society, this is certainly a timely topic.

The approach of the conference was not 'inflammatory' but addressed very real problems. Perhaps we, as teenagers, did not have to worry about such serious matters, but our young people must learn to deal with them if they are to preserve humanitarian values and live with any measure

of self-esteem in an increasingly alienating society.

Many children already face problems such as were examined at the student / teacher conference at Charles Tupper School. They can profit from the opportunity to exercise judgment and consider options within the microcosm of the school, before testing them in the world outside. If Status of Women can find the energy and the inspiration to help provide such an opportunity, I say, more power to them.

The Status of Women budget is one of the smaller of BCTF budgets. It contains no frills or 'contingencies.' The wonder is that S/W is able to carry out such an effective program within this bread-and-butter budget.

Let's quit nit-picking at one of the most efficiently run, hard-working committees in the BCTF, and once and for all give unequalled support to their programs. All teachers, men and women, and the children we see daily, stand to gain by such support.

J. Heiberg, Black Creek

Evaluation committees report on independents

A Ministry of Education circular on private schools in B.C. contains the following report from three external evaluation committees that visited 51 of these schools during 1977-78.

The committees found a wide variation in the schools visited. Some schools select students on the basis of academic standards and the ability to pay while others use religion as the main criteria for selection. There are in the religious

schools students who do not belong to the faith but these students represent a minority.

A noteworthy advantage of the independent schools is the singleness of purpose which encourages the formation of clear-cut goals and provides a motivation for teachers and students. Hence, department and school spirit is commendable.

Much school equipment and many library books are purchased from funds raised by lay people. This shows the strong support the religious schools receive from parents and parishioners. With the exception of a small number of schools, the number of students in a class is small.

Independent school authorities interested in the improvement of schools should direct attention to specific areas. The committees feel that increased supervision by the principal or other educator merits consideration, particularly to beginning teachers who want and require assistance. Also, the careful selection of principals who are trained in elementary or secondary work, and who understand classroom problems which require assistance is another means of improving instruction.

Cameron medal re-established

The federation has re-established the Maxwell A. Cameron medal and prize for outstanding student teachers.

The award, withdrawn two years ago, was reinstated by the executive committee at its meeting Jan. 7.

The silver medal and a \$50 prize will be awarded to the outstanding Bachelor of Education graduate in both the elementary and secondary programs at the Universities of B.C. and Victoria, and their equivalents at Simon Fraser.

The medal commemorates the life and work of Dr. Maxwell A. Cameron (1907-1951), first director of the School of Education at UBC and author of the 1945 Cameron Report on education in B.C.

S/W report available

The report of the third national Canadian Teachers' Federation Status of Women workshop is now available.

The report, entitled Socialization and Life Skills, contains addresses by Kay Sigurjónsson, Dr. Dorothy Smith, Phyllis Yaffe and Dr. Nola Symor as well as highlights of group discussions.

Copies are available for \$2 from the Canadian Teachers' Federation, 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, K2P 1B4.

From the Legislature

McGeer estimates due for House scrutiny

This month's debate in the legislature has concentrated on the government estimates. Each ministry's budget is discussed and questioned in committee of supply.

The estimates are broken down into 'votes' — a total of 250 for the entire government. Each functional unit within a ministry makes up a vote. For example, in the Ministry of Education, the minister's office comprises one vote, independent schools another, the Teachers' Pension Fund another, etc.; a total of 13.

It is expected that the education estimates will be debated around the time of the Representative Assembly. (May 31-June 3). All ministerial estimates should be passed by mid-June.

Dennis Cocke (New Westminster — NDP): I spent the entire weekend visiting with the B.C. School Trustees Association in Prince George. That visit was very revealing in this way: the government has somehow or another lost contact with people who could give them some very useful information. The premier is probably more responsible than anyone for this.

There were 400 or 500 people who were directly involved in the education of our children. And what was the word around there?

They said they weren't being listened to by this government. Naturally, most of their ire was directed at the minister of education. But they also had a great deal to say about overall government policy. The government is responsible for having dumped the burden on the local taxpayers, and that was the chief concern at that conference.

Where do we stand in education? Is it that we are spending so darned much money on education in our province? Are we No. 1 in Canada? We are No. 10 out of 10. It's a shame. B.C. ranks at the very bottom in total education expenditure per capita of the labor force, as a percentage of personal income and as a percentage of gross provincial product.

Premier Bill Bennett: The illusion that somehow the provincial government has money from some source other than the taxpayers — it has proven to be just that.

In public school education we are now at a stable population level. The high growth years have ended, but education at that level continues to accelerate in cost, and this is of concern to the taxpayer. Information just passed to me by the minister of education indicates a 76 per cent overall increase in the last four years while school populations have stabilized and in many areas are going down.

Control of the school budgets is not with the provincial government. The provincial government provides additional funding but a part of the funding is collected on the local tax bills, and always has been. The local people have control over the expenditures of the public school system through their board of trustees. They're the people who negotiate labor contracts, make the decisions at the local level and, to a large measure create the final cost of education.

(Teachers') salaries are a large and growing part of the cost of providing an educational service. (School boards) have this under their control. The provincial government doesn't do the bargaining.

You would lose that local measure of direction and control if all the budgets came from the province. We all know how important local input is and the involvement of local citizens in directing those early years of education.

Education will be a continuing priority. (Pat McGeer) has earned a measure of respect that has led many trustees and educators to term him the best minister of education this province has ever had. It's an opinion I share.

Dennis Cocke (New Westminster — NDP): (Bennett) by inference, has said in this House: 'I want teachers' salaries to go down.' By inference he says that the only way you can control (education costs) is to bring those salaries down. Shame for him for making that kind of inference. The teachers are important people in our communities, giving leadership in terms of education.

Own PSA for one-roomers?

Teachers in one-room or two-room schools face special problems. Such schools are often isolated in rural areas. Their social atmosphere is different from that of larger schools. They require different approaches to curriculum and instruction.

Steve LeBel, who teaches in a one-room school in the Kamloops district, is looking for other teachers who would be interested in exploring the idea of establishing a PSA for teachers in one- or two-room schools. You can write to Steve care of the BCTF Professional Development Division.

Premier Bennett: Just to correct, because (Cocke), through inadvertence, has fallen into the same trap as his colleagues. He said I said I wanted teachers' salaries to go down. When we check (Hansard) you'll find out that that is an incorrect statement. I have not said that.

Charles Barber (Victoria — NDP): If (Premier Bennett) had bothered to be there (at the BCSTA convention) he would have observed that on an annual and traditional vote to determine whether or not the minister of education should be named honorary president of the BCSTA, the usual procedure was not followed.

The recommendation of the executive was challenged on the floor and for the first time in memory the BCSTA, on a standing vote, determined whether or not this minister of education, in whom the premier says he has such confidence, was worthy of that office. Well, surprise, surprise! On a standing vote, a third or more of the trustees voted to deny this honorary position to that minister. They do not share the opinion of the premier. They hold the opinion that this is the most centralizing, bureaucracy-bound, elitist minister of education this or any other province has ever seen.

Rosemary Brown (Vancouver-Burrard-NDP): The policies of this government resulted in a large number of cutbacks, cut-offs and wipe-outs of services. The withdrawing of the program on the study of sexism in the educational system was something that was to happen as a direct result of the policies of that government which continues to downgrade women — and with the express support of (Bennett).

(Cutback) No. 20 is the decision not to give any funding to the B.C. Home and School Federation this year.

No. 21 is the cutback in special-aid grants in education. Only 6 grants were given out this year while in the previous year there were 18 grants. We anticipate that next year there probably won't be any — this despite the excessive mill rate increase in those districts hardest pressed for funds. Since 2/3 of last year's grants are not being allocated this means that some districts will have to either cut services or raise their taxes even higher.

No. 22: direct grants to school districts are only up 4.6 per cent — despite inflation of somewhere between 7 and 9 per cent.

No. 23: no increase in the homeowner grant for those people under the age of 65.

No. 25: The K-12 sector of the education budget has only been increased by 4.6 per cent.

No. 26: The Ministry of Education is beginning to cut back on all of its support and administrative staff. The services department is being cut by 4 positions, the public schools department is being cut by 21 positions and the post-secondary department is being cut by 10 positions.

Human Resources Minister Bill Vander Zalm: I have two independent schools within my constituency, Our Lady of Good Counsel, and Fraser Valley Christian High. Both will benefit enormously from the legislation which provides assistance to independent schools.

Gordon Gibson (North Vancouver / Capilano — LIB): I make a plea for handicapped children and their families in this province. I am talking about the potential plight of handicapped children and their families in this province if the premier allows policy direction indicated within the Ministry of Human Resources to become the law of this province. All across the country it is the evolving policy that those mental and physical disabilities which fall upon people through no fault of their own, should, at least insofar as the share of the financial burden is concerned, be shared by the whole of society and not simply by the family concerned.

Karen Sanford (Comox — NDP): The Public Schools Act provides that the minister of labor shall appoint a chairman of an arbitration board when that is necessary, but it puts constraints on the fee schedule for this chairman to the extent whereby at least the teachers'

association is concerned about the whole arbitration procedure. The current fee schedule allows for \$40 a day to be paid to a chairman, and if the school board or the teacher will not waive that schedule of fees, then that whole arbitration procedure could be in jeopardy.

I'm wondering if the minister is considering a change in that fee schedule.

Labor Minister Allan Williams: There was a problem in (Sanford's) constituency and one in Trail which arose from that. Yes, that fee schedule is under examination by the attorney-general. We've changed so that we can make adjustments very quickly in that fee schedule, but that's one matter we're discussing with the minister of education. It's being done.

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OR CHAIRPERSON OF AGREEMENTS OR OF LEARNING CONDITIONS

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★ handling personnel relations
★ services available to members
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The agreements short course

Plaza International Hotel, North Vancouver, August 22-25 will feature:

- ★ bargaining in a post AIB period
★ provincial economy in 1979
★ case for bargaining objectives
★ strategy and operational plan

The learning conditions short course

Village Green Inn, Vernon, August 25-27 will feature:

- ★ provincial learning conditions objectives
★ sessions on skill building
★ budget presentations
★ local problems and solutions

Information and registration forms have gone out to local presidents and chairpersons. Make sure you register and get the help you need for the coming school year.

From Toronto Globe and Mail

Row simmers over private schools

By JOHN CLARKE

The old public versus private school controversy is bubbling up all over again in B.C. following the annual conventions of both the B.C. Teachers Federation and the B.C. School Trustees Association.

What has both organizations in a stir is the fact that the Social Credit Government of Premier Bill Bennett has earmarked \$9-million in its budget for support to independent schools. For the first time in history private schools have received funding from the Government. After years of lobbying, the independents last year convinced the Government to rush through funding legislation.

The size of the Government grant has raised a lot of eyebrows. There are 18,000 students in independent schools and the \$9-million grant works out to \$500 per pupil.

The Government's contribution to public school costs has been going down since the Secords took over in 1975. It's gone from 46 per cent then to 40 per cent now. For instance, in Vancouver, where there are 60,000 children in public schools, the provincial Government is paying only \$8-million, \$2-million less than a year ago. That amounts to only \$135 per pupil.

What riles the teachers and the trustees is that the Government responsible for this unbalanced arithmetic last year pledged that public school funding would not be affected.

Alan Sprague, in a study commissioned by the teachers federation, said it was naive to accept the Government pledge.

"One implication is clear," he said. "Money devoted to support independent schools is money not available for support of the public schools."

"When a provincial budget is established, the Government of the day must determine what total sum it is prepared to allot to the support of education and of that total sum the amount required under the Independent Schools Support Act is an integral part."

He said that in January, four months before the provincial budget was due to be drawn up. Now the teachers and trustees are saying he has been proved abundantly correct.

What disturbs the teachers the most is that, with declining Government funding for public schools, their dream of reducing the pupil-teacher ratio will evaporate. They've made smaller classes their top priority as a means of improving the teachers' working conditions and the quality of education at the same time.

For the trustees the biggest objection is that the private schools are getting favored treatment while the Government is shaving so much support from the public schools that boards are in virtual straitjackets. Teachers' salaries — 80 per cent of all operating costs — are set primarily by arbitration over which they have no control.

Municipal taxes are actually dropping in B.C. this year. But increases in school taxes are more than making up for the savings and the school boards are being blamed.

The private schools, of course, are smiling. They have said they are "certainly not disappointed" at the size of the Government grant. But more than that, they know that now the funding has started it will be very difficult politically for any government to rescind it.

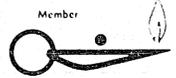
BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION 105 - 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

newsletter

Editor JOHN HARDY

Associate Editor ARNIE MYERS

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 here-in reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily express official policy of the BCTF.



ADDRESS

Questions remain about decentralization, mainstreaming

the child and keeping the child at home, she says, is that the parents very often learn along with the child.

All of that is well and good in the minds of people we talked to about both decentralizing and mainstreaming. But the questions remain.

And the questions involve more

than children from Jericho who have hearing and sight impairments, but all the handicapped children from other provincial institutions — Woodlands for example.

As one teacher said "Taking education to the child is a beautiful philosophy when everything is right. But just to throw a child into

the mainstream without providing the resources is to be party to a drowning."

"Consider the child in a wheelchair — who is going to do the toileting?"

Other people were concerned about what they saw as the ministry's decision to decentralize without having worked through the generalized rules and policy ahead of time.

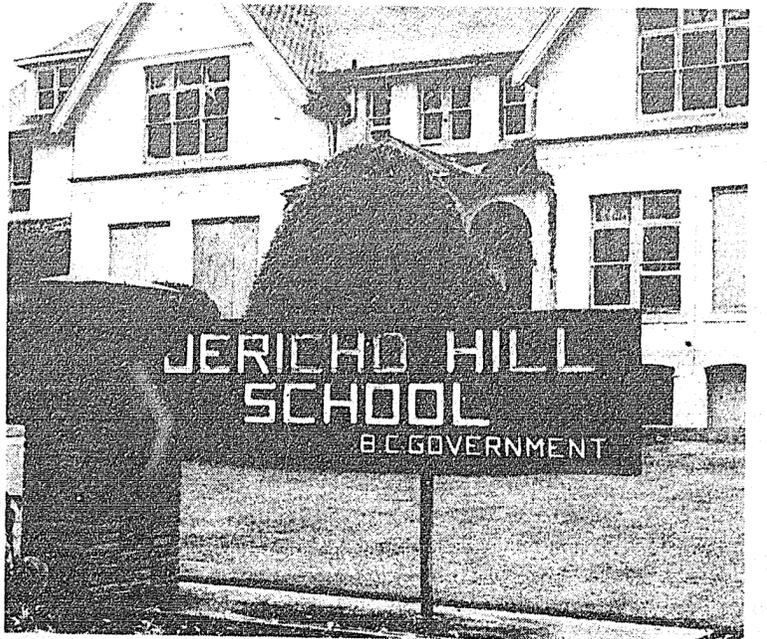
How many children are we talking about? What amount of money and when does it come? Will the ministry co-operate with boards by supplying personnel or by contracting out and give us the money? Will a decision be made about each child by the ministry responsible and then what is the responsibility of each ministry to each in relation to others?

What training is the ministry going to provide classroom teachers who have a handicapped child in a class?

If you have questions that you want asked you can send them to

Allan Garneau who could use information on what is happening around the province before the

meeting June 12. He's at Lloyd George Elementary School, 8370 Cartier Street, Vancouver.



What Hardwick said at AGM

I can tell you that it is not an easy job to get other ministries to put in their budgets dollars for services to education. But at least we have recognized the problem. It has been brought squarely to us by representatives of the trustees and I would like to assure you that on that particular problem area, we are doing what we can at the ministry level.

You can do something, though, in each of these areas at the local level by helping your member of the legislature and others to recognize the need and recognize that educational dollars should go to education and that health and human resources dollars might well be voted by the legislature to provide services in those areas.

From page one

MP's respond to BCTF concerns

pect to the fairness and appropriateness of their award.

Employees who have recognized the need to maintain essential or near-essential public services have, through the acceptance of arbitration, foregone a very fundamental right in the collective bargaining process. They have foregone that right in the belief that arbitration boards would provide fair and just awards.

Bill C-28 would limit the right of arbitrators to think for themselves and also limit the information that might be considered by arbitrators. The bill would effectively prevent arbitrators from acting independently and exercising fair judgment.

3. The introduction of the concept of average comparability of total compensation (ACTC).

The anti-inflation program clearly demonstrated that the imposition of arbitrarily determined limits on the size of compensation packages for any particular group of employees was unfair to individuals, inefficient in the distribution of incomes, and unsuccessful in combatting inflation. To repeat the same sort of folly in new legislation represents an unwillingness to learn anything from our recent economic history.

It is said that the ACTC was devised as a means of controlling the growth of public sector salaries. It has been contended by some that increases in the salaries of public sector employees have led to increases for employees in the private sector and, further, that public sector employee increases have contributed markedly to the recent inflationary cycle in our economy.

We reject that contention completely. We believe the facts prove our point, and are clearly discernible to anyone with the intelligence or wit to understand simple evidence.

It can be demonstrated from historic and general trends that increases in salaries in the public sector have lagged behind those in the private sector. The limited instances in which increases in the public sector have served as pacesetters are rare; the overriding position of the public sector has been that of follower.

For the government — acting as employer — to impose arbitrarily selected and predetermined limits on the results of the bargaining process represents a position one might expect to find in a totalitarian state rather than a democratic country.

On behalf of my members I urge you to press your colleagues in the House, and particularly the members of the cabinet, to either revise the bill to remove the regressive items I have referred to, or withdraw the bill completely.

T. C. Douglas (NDP — Nanaimo / Cowichan—The Islands): My colleagues in the New Democratic Party and I share your concern, and we are adamantly opposed to this proposed legislation.

This bill strikes a blow at the heart of the collective bargaining process that now exists in the public service. This bill is based on the most cynical kind of political manipulation by the Liberal government and plays to a section of the Canadian public that believes labor in general and public employees in particular are responsible for the deplorable state into which the government has allowed our economy to endure.

We find several aspects of the bill totally unacceptable, such as the section which would limit strikes in the public sector during periods of the dissolution of the House of Commons. This would be the beginning of the limitation of the right to strike within the public sector at any given time.

We are also opposed to the provisions that would give the employers the right to lock out employees and the right to lay-off employees temporarily for up to 60 days in the

event of lack of work due to a strike by another group in the public sector. We cannot accept the provision in the act that would allow for increased managerial discretion with respect to job classifications

The provision that would exclude all public servants earning a salary equal to or greater than \$33,500 a year from engaging in collective bargaining is most inequitable. If there are to be any exclusions of employees from the bargaining units, such exclusions should be based on the function performed as opposed to salary.

Benno Friesen (Surrey/White Rock): I think the truth is that the government has no intention of passing this bill. As a matter of fact it has already indicated that it is reconsidering the bill's major provisions.

It appears to me that the government's purpose is to capitalize on what it perceives to be considerable public feeling about employee benefits in the (public service) so that during the election they can go to areas of Canada where private industry is the main part of the economy and say to them that they have introduced legislation to 'control' the 'civil service.' They can then go to places like Ottawa or Victoria and say the bill died and that it was only a trial balloon to get reaction from both inside and outside the service.

Donald W. Munro (Cons — Esquimalt / Saanich) and Bob Brisco (Cons — Kootenay West) identical responses: Before any action is taken . . . the public servants themselves, their organizations and their unions, as well as other segments of the community which must be concerned with such a legislative move, have a right to be consulted and the government would be wise to refer the subject matter of the bill to an appropriate committee of the House of Commons to give them that opportunity.

There is a very strong feeling within the membership of the labor movement outside as well as within the public service about the changes contemplated by Bill C-28.

These feelings cannot be ignored and I can assure you that my colleagues will use their best efforts to provide the opportunity for a complete and definitive examination of this approach introduced by the government.

I want you to know that our committee, under the guidance of Lincoln Alexander, MP, will be studying the legislation very carefully and in this regard I will make him aware of your concerns.

Finally, I would say the proposed legislation is a poor attempt to create an impression of restraint and is a sad contrast to the lofty statements of the minister of labor concerning management-employee relations.

Art Lee (Lib — Vancouver East) in a speech to the B. C. region of the Public Service Alliance of Canada: It is almost trite for me to say that the government and I, as a government member, remain committed to the collective bargaining system as the fairest and most publicly acceptable method of determining wages and working conditions, in both the private and public sectors. Having said that, I cannot help but emphasize that the government's primary responsibility is to ensure the public interest is being served. Recently there has been concern expressed about the rate of growth, the level, and the fairness of public sector compensation. Some apparently generous contract settlements, occasionally preceded by prolonged interruption of essential services, have reinforced the impression that public sector compensation has been one of the main causes of high inflation.

I personally know that this is not necessarily true and in many instances, these rather large increases were both necessary and desirable to establish equitable levels of compensation.

What are the facts? From a table documented by the federal Department of Labour, it is known that the growth in average base-rate settlements, excluding the construction industry, for bargaining units of more than 500 employees was marginally greater in the public sector than in the private sector from 1968 to 1976.

Given this factual background, I personally believe, and have expressed to the Hon. Robert Andras, that I find the tabling of Bill C-28 very untimely, in view of the general Canadian public's misconception that federal public servants are the main cause of high inflation. Tabling of C-28 at this time fuels the fire, that federal public servants or laborers in general are the main cause of high inflation. What is required, before any amendments to the Public Staff Relations Act are made, is that the government must educate the public that labor is not necessarily the main cause of high inflation in a pluralistic society.

Moreover, why didn't the government include in C-28 other recommendations of the special joint committee or Parliament which examined in detail the Finkleman report?

Among other things, the committee recommended:

- An expansion of the scope of collective bargaining to include classification standards, training programs, layoff and recall provisions, technological change provisions and lateral transfers;
- Referral of classification grievances to third party adjudication;

- Making the arbitration process more attractive than the strike route.

- Accordingly, it is my position that Bill C-28 not be rushed through Parliament and that the government should allow it to die on the order paper.

Frank Oberle (Cons-Prince George / Peace River):

I am considering the matter in the context of the parliamentary timetable and the impending election, which would indicate that the government has no intention to debate the proposed legislation in Parliament, but rather in the country during a political campaign.

Obviously, it is considered expedient to make the public service the target of the anger and frustration which is reflected in public opinion at the present time, as a result of an over-growth of public spending and the deterioration of some essential public services such as the Post Office. My colleagues and I are, therefore, resisting the temptation to be drawn into what has become an irrational and emotional debate which can only result in a loss to everyone.

As you know, I have often expressed very strong opinions on the issue of the industrial and labor relations process in our country, which did not always coincide with the views held by the unions. I have, however, no difficulty in identifying several provisions in the proposed legislation which can serve no other purpose than to draw the issue into a form of open confrontation.

Allan McKinnon (Cons-Victoria):

Frankly, I do not believe for one moment that the Liberal government has any intention of bringing forward this legislation with a view to its passage in the House. My opinion is that its introduction was a carefully staged ploy, intended to create hard feelings between the Progressive Conservative party and the public service on the eve of an election.

You are probably aware of the Conservative suggestion to establish a public interest disputes commission that would arbitrate in cases where otherwise the public would be the victims of inconvenience and possible expense as has happened in the case of postal and airline employees' strikes. The public should be innocent bystanders (as indeed they are when for example the employees of Mr. X's factory strike against management). Public servants' work stoppage is another matter.

In any event, I will be very, very surprised if we see or hear more of Bill C-28 before Parliament is dissolved, unless this Parliament goes on until the spring of 1979.

Education Minister Pat McGeer: Although I do not have any immediate comments on the proposed legislation, I thank you for forwarding your concerns to my attention.

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