

Teachers' pensions threatened

The Social Credit government has introduced legislation — Bill 29 — that would end full indexing of pensions of teachers and most B.C. public sector employees. The

effect could be to seriously erode the quality of life for retired teachers.

The story directly below details the BCTF leadership's plans to oppose the legislation. A detailed analysis of Bill 29 appears on the centre pages. On page 3, Bruce Watson of BCTF staff

summarizes the changes and recounts the history of the BCTF's fight for better pensions (the photograph at right was taken during a 1971 one-day pensions strike by teachers), and BCTF President Al Blakey comments on the legislation in light of other actions by the Social Credit government.



BCTF Newsletter

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MAY 26, 1980

Teachers will lobby MLAs on pensions

Blakey to lead presidents to Victoria this week

A delegation of teacher leaders will invade Victoria this week to lobby for the retention of full indexing of teachers' pensions.

Full indexing is threatened by Bill 29, an act to amend the Teachers' Pension Act, which is now before the legislature.

The large-scale lobby was organized by the BCTF on short notice to try to convince MLAs on both sides of the house that the proposed limitation on

indexing would create an unwarranted hardship for retired teachers.

It was the largest political action on pensions since the one-day teachers' strike of March 19, 1971, in favor of improved pension benefits for teachers already retired.

Presidents of all 79 local teachers' associations have been invited to attend, or to have a nominee attend, a special

briefing session in Victoria on Tuesday, May 27.

The presidents will then fan out through the corridors of the Legislative Buildings to seek out their local MLAs for discussions on the need to maintain full pension indexing.

"We think that face-to-face discussions with people from their own ridings is the best way to make our case to the legislators," BCTF President Al Blakey said. "We want them to know that retired teachers in their constituencies are going to suffer if they give consent to limiting indexing."

Bill 29 embodies many improvements to the pension plan for which the federation has been pressing for years, said Blakey. But the limitation on indexing is a threat that must be fought.

Under existing legislation, retired teachers' pensions are adjusted every three months, in line with increases in the cost of living.

Under Bill 29, pensions would be adjusted once a year. The adjustment would be based not on the cost of living but on the amount available in a special fund consisting of teachers' contributions (1 per cent of their salaries), a matching contribution from government, plus interest.

The effect of this change, according to the federation's Pensions Committee, would be to erode the value of pensions in times of high inflation.

At one point BCTF representatives had agreed to a limit on indexing, as part of a package of pension amendments.

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BCTF to investigate firing of teacher

The BCTF is launching an investigation into the firing of a Hudson's Hope teacher.

The teacher, Peter Cincer, charges that the district's director of instruction wrote an unfavorable report on him after senior district staff had already made up their minds that he must go.

Cincer and the BCTF have both tried without success to get Education Minister Brian Smith to review the case, and an ad hoc Hudson's Hope citizens' committee supporting Cincer has failed to change the board's mind. So the BCTF Executive Committee had decided to establish a three-person commission to investigate

whether the Peace River North school board observed both the language and intent of the Public Schools Act in its process for firing Cincer.

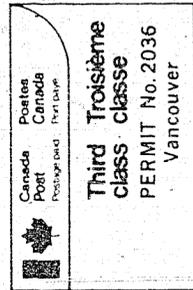
The board was asked to name one member to the commission, who would, along with the BCTF appointee, choose a chairperson. The board said no, saying it has fulfilled its obligations in the case by the Public Schools Act.

Cincer came to the district in September 1978, receiving a continuing appointment to establish a French

program and to teach English and photography at Hudson's Hope Elementary-Secondary School. Following a less-than-satisfactory report from principal Byron Dart in the spring of 1979, the school board changed his status to probationary. Last fall, his classes were visited once each by Brian Frankcombe, the district superintendent, and Ernie Reimer, district director of instruction.

Then, on January 7 of this year, Frankcombe suddenly told Cincer that he

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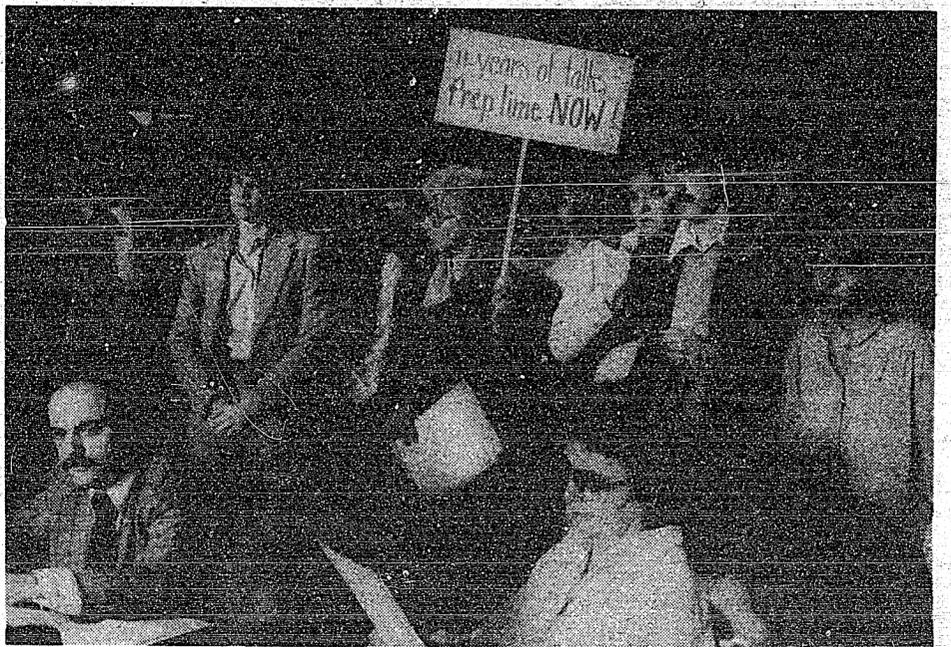
Burnaby teachers to take job action

Teachers in Burnaby, frustrated by 11 years of unsuccessful efforts to win preparation time for elementary teachers, are taking a hard line in negotiations with their school board this year.

At an emergency general meeting on May 13 attended by more than 600 teachers, the Burnaby Teachers' Association voted to stop all extracurricular activities on September 1, and to work to rule in November, if Burnaby's trustees don't provide elementary prep time.

The action was approved overwhelmingly, and the only opposition to the motions was from people who said the actions don't go far enough.

Later, more than 200 teachers jammed the Burnaby school board chambers and



Grim Burnaby teachers crowd school board chambers

forced a promise from chairperson Gary Begin that negotiations, which had been broken off, would resume.

BCTF President Al Blakey spoke to the general meeting, and in a strong speech

urged Burnaby teachers to act, and promised support and encouragement to the Burnaby campaign.

Noting that the B.C. School Trustees' *Turn to page 8*

Letters

Teacher-trustees have conflict of interest

I read with some unhappiness the article by Geoff Peters (BCTF Newsletter, April 17) on the question of conflict of interest that exists when school teachers or their spouses are elected school trustees.

The whole tone of the article is one of sneering cynicism, which is a pity as I believe that the subject is in fact a very serious matter and one dealing very much with conscience and the principle of freedom.

Conflict of interest situations are not, I think, a condemnation of the person elected. That is to say, a teacher sitting on a school board is not *per se* a dishonest man or woman. Rather it is that elected officials should not be in a position of having their loyalties divided. How can a teacher wrestle with his or her conscience when a matter comes before a board on which he or she, as a member of your association, is expected to follow the expression of the majority opinion yet is representing a majority of citizens who might have a different view? How does a spouse of a teacher react when the matter of school teachers' salaries is being discussed? He or she is in an impossible position.

Conflict of interest is only of concern in a free society in which men and women strive to achieve a just society. It is a noble concept which advocates, for example, that a judge should not sit on a case involving a friend or that a minister of the Crown should not be involved in decisions involving corporations in which he or she or a spouse has a large share interest.

The aspirations of our teachers are noble ones but so are those of trustees and consequently when the two are in conflict with each other there is a danger that both institutions can suffer.

I believe that the issue is so serious that the government of schools through local trusteeship is threatened when teachers sit on boards.

This debate is a worthy one for your members and not one for caustic comment. I am sorry that Mr. Peters is unable to understand this.

Peter Westlake
Trustee, Vancouver

More than meets the eye

My concern arises from a dilemma regarding our BCTF fees. When I voted to maintain fees at the same level, I did not expect that our local would be forced either to increase its fee or to cut its budget because of a shift in program costs from the BCTF level to the local level.

This shift, I feel, has occurred in one area previously and looks as if it may in another.

BCTF policy 13.D.64 supports the funding of travel and on-site expenses for regional conferences. The Representative Assembly has already suspended the on-site expenses for 1979-80. I believe these regional (zonal) conferences are of such importance that locals really have little choice but to make the necessary budget adjustments in order to ensure that a delegate will attend the meeting.

The Executive Committee, as I understand it, has also approved a recommendation whereby locals will be charged for the BCTF workshops. These workshops now will be thrown in to compete for the local portion of money allotted for these purposes. Clearly the 2/MAY 26, 1980

same amount of money will not buy the same level of service for the local.

What becomes apparent is that the membership will be required to pay a greater local fee in order to maintain the same level of service.

Further, I believe, these changes tend to be discriminatory in how they actually affect locals. I believe they oppose our principle of equal opportunity. Lastly I believe that they contravene the membership wishes in terms of fees; the membership has not been convinced of the necessity of a fee increase.

I have heard the rationale given for these changes and hope that the membership at large will oppose any form of indirect fee increase resulting from program costs being shifted from the federation level to the locals.

I ask that geographic representatives reconsider suspension of policy 13.D.64 and weigh carefully other moves to make the locals pay more for a service previously supplied by the BCTF.

Horst Giese
President,
Vernon Teachers' Association

Hargreaves in poor taste

Dreena used to pack a batch of them to the downtown pubs, where her friends, the local whores, would cajole their clients into buying them, first...

I had a sickly sensation of being in the wrong place, like an aspirant to the rabbinate with a summer job of selling pork pies at Nazi rallies...

"And then we're off to the Muckamuck for a bit to eat."

It is hard to believe that these statements were published in our own BCTF Newsletter (Geoff Hargreaves, April 17). Newsletter guidelines state clearly that the newsletter "shall be supportive of the goals, objectives, policies and procedures of the federation". We have a program designed to improve the status of women, a racism program aimed at eliminating just the kind of Jewish "joke" Hargreaves has concocted, and basic labor liaison principles endorsing the right to strike. How could the editorial board condone the sexist, racist, and anti-labor slurs contained in this article?

Newsletter guidelines also dictate "taste" in BCTF articles. References to local whores, pork pies at Nazi rallies, and a bit to eat at the Muckamuck (where workers have been on strike for two years) are offensive, tasteless, and totally unacceptable in our own professional publication.

The editorial board should take immediate steps to ensure that newsletter guidelines adopted by the membership are enforced, so that this type of offensive material will not reappear in our letterboxes, at our expense.

Anne Bauer
On behalf of the Staff Committee,
Boundary Community School,
North Vancouver

Hargreaves 2

We feel that Geoff Hargreaves' articles of March 13 and April 17 are inappropriate for publication in the BCTF Newsletter. We are dissatisfied with his sexist ("then Dreena used to pack a batch of them to the downtown pubs, where her friends, the local whores,

would cajole their clients into buying them, first.") and racist ("I had a sickly sensation of being in the wrong place, like an aspirant to the rabbinate with a summer job of selling pork pies at Nazi rallies") comments. We don't want to censure his ideas but his type of article is not fitting for a professional publication. Perhaps he should try a university rag.

Laurene Blume-Temoin
Heather Lockhart
Gayle Michalovsky
Terry Henry
S. Moore
E. P. Sexsmith
J. King
L. Locke
R. S. Birch
Maureen Fotos
Buckhorn Elementary School
Prince George

Substitute teachers get shaft

The spring RA will be dealing with "leftover" business from the Annual General Meeting. Among the business is a resolution that is of much importance to substitute teachers. The Coquitlam Teachers' Association put forward resolution 104 which states "that a major priority in negotiations for 1981 teachers' salaries be the attainment of category and experience placement for certified substitute teachers."

It is encouraging to note that the BCTF policy currently recognizes the growing needs of substitute teachers.

However, inadequate pay, benefits, and lack of full recognition of educational experience continue to be a major stumbling block. Boards are working hard to strengthen their position against any respectable demands brought forward by substitute teachers. Unfortunately, in some cases, such as Coquitlam, substitute teachers have lost hard-won gains. Categories 3 and 5 are no longer recognized by the board in this year's new agreement. This has resulted in a zero per cent increase in wages for two-thirds of the substitute teachers currently working in that district. Attempts at gaining benefits similar to fully employed teachers were futile. The board in Coquitlam insisted that it would include substitute teachers in the contract only if they were paid in the same manner as in neighboring local associations. In upholding their argument, a great deal of reference was made to metro school districts. The precedent in other districts of paying substitute teachers on only two payment schedules, based on two and four years of university, was used against the substitute teachers.

Many substitute teachers are new to the system and unfamiliar with policy and structure of the federation and the system under which they must survive. This further weakens their position. The most drastic result can be seen in their acceptance of reduced wages. In

Coquitlam, average earnings over the 1978-79 school year were \$5,517. This is less than one-quarter of the average teacher salary in B.C. of \$22,337, and substantially less than the current federal poverty line statistics.

The best way to remedy this unacceptable state of affairs is to coordinate and organize substitute teachers in all school districts, especially those in non-metro areas. A priority must be established to get all substitute teachers into local contracts. By joining their local association, they can become part of an organized bargaining unit and begin to resolve the inequities which currently separate them from regular teachers. Substitute teacher groups currently in contract will continue to be hampered by other districts not taking these initiatives.

Michael Proniuk
Coquitlam

Hargreaves 3

As a teacher coming from a German-Jewish background, Geoff Hargreaves' metaphor is as ill-placed as "an aspirant to the rabbinate with a summer job of selling pork pies at Nazi rallies."

A satire trading for its metaphors on racism couldn't really be humorous to teachers... or could it...!???

K. Blume-Temoin
Prince George

Is the ministry interested?

On behalf of the Coquitlam Teachers' Association, I asked the Ministry of Education last December 13 for five copies of the *Administrative Handbook for Elementary and Secondary Schools, Draft II*. We wanted to give our executive the change to peruse the document in detail.

After getting no reply, we received a call from the ministry to confirm whether we had requested them. That call came on March 26. We finally received our copies on March 28, only four school days before the deadline for submission of responses.

It appears from this that the ministry is not going out of its way to make a critical analysis possible.

Geoff Peters
President, Coquitlam Teachers' Association

Phys ed conference

The sixth annual Conference on the Teaching of Physical Education in B.C. will be held June 12 to 14 at the University of Victoria.

More than 400 delegates are expected to attend the conference, which will feature Don Bailey of the University of Saskatchewan as keynote speaker. More than 30 workshops are scheduled on teaching at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels.

For more information, contact F. L. Martens at the School of Physical Education, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria V8W 2Y2.

BCTF Newsletter

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Private industry pressured Wolfe

Business gets 'indexing' — but workers don't

By Al Blakey

Intense feelings on the subject of pensions have existed throughout the history of the BCTF, and even produced a one-day province-wide strike by teachers in 1971.

The major issue in that strike — adequate pensions to maintain a decent standard of living for retired teachers — is also the key issue in the current Social Credit pensions legislation.

Teacher struggles in the late 60s and early 70s produced pension benefits based on two cornerstones: a reasonable basic pension at the time of retirement and maintenance of the value of that pension over time through increases indexed to the inflation rate.

It is indexing that is under attack in the bills now before the legislature.

The government has bent to pressure from private industry to put a limit on indexing. When BCTF representatives spoke to Evan Wolfe, the provincial secretary who is in charge of pensions, he indicated that the reason the government would not back down from the limit to indexing was because private companies could not offer full indexing to their employees.

He did not claim that the government could not afford to maintain the standard of living of pensioners. Indeed, such a claim would be ridiculous from a government with a billion-dollar surplus.

So the argument is that because private industry does not have fully indexed pensions, public employees must not have them either. We set a "bad example" and make private industry employees ask for equality; thus the government is putting a limit to indexing which will produce less than full indexing in a time of high inflation.

Those same forces which led the government to put a limit on increases for pensions, two days later got from that same government an increase to 10 per cent in the amounts that rents can be added — because lower amounts would not allow landlords to keep up with inflation.

News accounts have also carried

reports about how the businessmen (including Sam Bawlf, former Socred cabinet minister) behind a convention centre in Victoria have a commitment from the city for a subsidy for several years based on 1978 dollars: another way of saying full indexing.

Businessmen know that to maintain profits in a period of high inflation you have to increase your income at least as

much as your costs are inflating. The same is just as true for pensioners.

But who is the major beneficiary of inflation? Many studies have shown that it is government.

Certainly the government's Crown corporations — in which most of our pension funds are invested — benefit. They borrow our money and repay the fund years later in dollars which are not worth as much, along with interest which has generally been at a rate lower than inflation. In the meantime, the value of the Crown corporation has gone up with inflation (with the possible exception of B.C. Rail).

In return for this benefit to government, it has up to now guaranteed the payment of both our basic pension

and our indexing. The proposed limit to our indexing is based on a change from government guarantee to terminal funding.

Thus, the government gains a guarantee that indexing won't cost it more in the future.

The Crown corporations continue to have their guarantee of fixed rates on our money already invested, even as the value of their assets goes up with inflation. Only the pensioner is without a guarantee that he or she will not suffer from continued high inflation.

This is simply not good enough. Teachers deserve to maintain the dignity of a decent standard of living throughout their retired life.

Teachers need a fully indexed pension.



Teachers in Victoria during one-day pensions strike in 1971.

The campaign for better benefits

1970 • AGM approved major proposals to government for legislative action

• teachers voted 88 per cent in favor of strike action if amendments not satisfactory

1971 • amendments proposed by government gave inadequate adjustments to existing pensions

• teachers hold a one day strike on March 19

1973 • existing pensions were increased from 3 to 66 per cent

• improvements for "short" service teachers

• salary averaging period reduced to 5 years from 7 years

• right to a pension at age 60 reduced to 10 years from 20 years of service

• portability provisions were improved

• sex discrimination in actuarial tables for early retirement and joint life options

and between rights of widows/widowers was removed

• government contribution rate was increased

1974 • pensions in payment were increased

• automatic full consumer price indexing on a quarterly basis commenced as of July 1, 1975

• the 2 per cent per year formula was applicable at age 60 to 65

• teachers with 35 years of service may retire at age 55 or older on the 2 per cent per year formula

• teachers with 10 years but fewer than 35 years of service may retire on a reduced pension between 55 and 60

• final salary for deferred benefits and for calculation of pension after a teacher has been on an approved salary continuance plan is indexed

with changes in the consumer price index

• government contributions were made equal to teacher contributions as of January 1975

1976 • teachers and government contribute 0.5 per cent each towards the cost of indexing

1978 • teachers and government contribute another 0.5 per cent each towards the cost of indexing

1979 • right to make a double contribution and receive service credit while on maternity leave

1980 • quarterly indexing to cease as of January 1, 1981

• annual fully-funded increase to commence on January 1, 1982 to the extent of funds accumulated in the inflation adjustment account

• teachers and government will contribute 1 per cent each to the inflation adjustment account

• teachers will contribute an extra 0.5 per cent towards the cost of the basic benefits

• government will contribute an extra 3.2 per cent towards the cost of the basic benefits

• pensions granted when salary limits were in effect and prior to the 5-year salary averaging will be increased in July 1981 and teachers and government each will contribute 0.1 per cent for 8 years to pay for these increases

• reinstatement provisions improved for those who did not withdraw contributions

• eligibility requirements for part-time teachers are improved

• teachers will receive service credit while on salary indemnity through a single contribution

• transfer provisions are improved

• refund interest will be set by regulation and will be at a higher rate

• right to make a double contribution and receive service credit while on unpaid leave of absence

—Bruce Watson

Bill 29: a detailed analysis

Amending legislation

(a) Quarterly indexing in line with the full changes in the Canadian Consumer Price Index will be discontinued after January 1, 1981.

(b) Teachers and government will contribute 1 per cent each to an inflation adjustment account. This account will consist of:

- i) teacher and government contributions;
- ii) net interest earned on this account;
- iii) interest on that portion of the pension fund relating to existing pensions which is in excess of the interest assumed by the actuary.

(c) Commencing January 1, 1982 and annually thereafter the lifetime portion of allowances shall be increased by a uniform percentage.

(d) The total capitalized value of the increases shall not exceed the amount in the inflation adjustment account as of the preceding September 30; also the increase shall not exceed the increase in the consumer price index in the 12 months ending on the preceding September 30.

(e) If the allowance has been in effect for less than a year, the increase will be prorated.

(f) Persons under age 60 in receipt of reduced pensions will continue to have their increases deferred to age 60.

(g) The final average salary for deferred pensions will be adjusted up to December 31, 1980 as at present (full CPI) and will be adjusted thereafter to the date of the granting of the pension in accordance with the regulations.

Amending legislation

(a) Teachers will contribute 6.5 per cent to finance the basic pension benefits (including CPP).

(b) Government will contribute 9.2 per cent to finance the basic pension benefits (including CPP). (See also item below on CPP contributions by school boards.)

Amending legislation

(a) The pension plan will reimburse school boards the employer costs of the CPP contributions; the minister of finance will reimburse the pension plan for these costs.

Amending legislation

(a) Lifetime portion of following pensions to be increased as indicated on July 1, 1981:

Pension granted in 12-month period ending June 30 of:	Percentage increase
1962	3
1963	5
1964	7
1965	8
1966	9
1967	9
1968	9
1969	9
1970	10
1971	11
1972	6
1973	6

(i) Where a person's pension was based on an average salary which was less than the actual average salary earned, the lifetime portion of the pension, including any increase under (a) above, shall be increased on July 1, 1981 by the percentage difference between the average of the

Indexing of pensions

BCTF request

The 1980 AGM directed the Executive Committee to instruct the Pensions Committee to maintain the objective of fully indexed pensions. This was communicated to the provincial secretary on April 16, but no reply, other than Bill 29, has been received.

Prior to the 1980 AGM the federation request was as follows:

(a) Indexing should be incorporated into the pension plan and should be guaranteed through a fund specifically established to pay indexed supplements on a terminally-funded basis, i.e., the capitalized value of the indexed supplements when granted would be transferred to the pensions account.

(b) A total of 2 per cent of payroll, shared equally between teachers and government, should be allocated to the indexing fund.

(c) Interest on that portion of the pension fund relating to existing pensions which is in excess of the interest assumed by the actuary should be allocated to the indexing fund.

Contributions for basic pension benefits

BCTF request

(a) The level of funding for the basic pension benefits should be the Intermediate Funding Level as defined in the 1974 actuarial valuation.

(b) The contribution rate for teachers to the Teachers' Pensions fund and the Canada Pension Plan should total not more than 6.5 per cent to finance the basic pension benefits.

(c) The contribution rate for the provincial government to finance the basic pension benefits should be the difference between the teacher contributions and the amount necessary to meet the Intermediate Funding Level and shall be at least equal to the teacher contributions.

(d) The provincial government should continue to guarantee payment of pensions.

Canada Pension Plan contributions by school boards

BCTF request

The minister of finance, and not the Teachers' Pension Plan, should reimburse school boards the employer cost of Canada Pension Plan contributions.

Adjustments to existing pensions

BCTF request

(a) Adjustment to pensions as recommended by A. B. Wiggins in his joint report to government and the BCTF in 1975. This report made two recommendations:

i) That a varying percentage increase should be applied to those pensions granted between 1962 and 1973 to compensate for the change in the salary-averaging period for benefit calculations from 10 years to 7 years to the present 5 years.

ii) That pensions be re-calculated using actual salaries earned for those persons whose salaries for pension purposes had been restricted to \$10,000 and/or \$12,500.

i) That a varying percentage increase should be applied to those pensions granted between 1962 and 1973 to compensate for the change in the salary-averaging period for benefit calculations from 10 years to 7 years to the present 5 years.

ii) That pensions be re-calculated using actual salaries earned for those persons whose salaries for pension purposes had been restricted to \$10,000 and/or \$12,500.

Effect of amendments

(a) The amendment does not meet the new (1980) BCTF policy.

(b) If the amendment had been in effect this year, it would not have fully taken care of inflation.

(c) The contribution rate to pay for indexing has not been changed.

Note: An agreement-in-committee with the commissioner to change the indexing to a terminally-funded basis was attained in 1978 but no legislation was forthcoming.

A concern that indexing under this agreement-in-committee would not meet current inflation led the 1980 AGM to direct the Executive Committee to maintain the objective of full indexing.

Amending legislation

The 10-year limit on the right to reinstate where the teacher has not taken a refund has been removed.

Amending legislation

(a) For purposes of determining an employee's eligibility for an allowance, every calendar month in which the person made a contribution is considered as a month's service.

(b) The pension will be based on the number of equivalent full-time months of pensionable service.

actual salary earned and the average used in the original calculation.

ii) The increase shall not exceed \$250 per month.

(c) Teachers will contribute 0.1 per cent from July 1, 1981 to June 30, 1989 as their share of the cost.

(d) Government will contribute such amounts as the lieutenant-governor in council prescribes as its share of the cost. (Note: The provincial secretary has stated that government will pay the same amount as the teachers.)

(b) The following would be the procedure for implementation:

i) Calculate the highest average salary using actual salaries and the averaging period in effect at the time of retirement.

ii) Calculate the single life pension.

iii) Reduce the single life pension using a table for deficiency in contributions based on \$3 per month per \$1,000 annual increase in pension.

iv) Adjust in normal manner (age and options).

v) Apply percentage increases as recommended by Wiggins to compensate for changes in averaging period.

vi) Apply indexing to time of effective date.

vii) The adjustment is to be applied effective the implementation date and is not to be retroactive.

viii) The net cost of the adjustment is to be shared equally.

ix) The cost should be amortized over a period of years.

Note: It was suggested that a set per cent of payroll 0.5 to 0.2 per cent be established and from this determine the number of years over which the extra contribution would be collected.

Reinstatement in the pension plan

BCTF request

(a) No change where contributions have been refunded.

(b) Where contributions have not been refunded:

i) remove the 10-year limit on the right to reinstate;

ii) reduce the subsequent required service to five years when returning from an absence of more than three years.

Part-time teachers

BCTF request

(a) Part-time teachers should be eligible for pension after 10 calendar years of contributions.

(b) The benefit should be based on the number of equivalent full-time months.

(c) The 10-year period for reinstatement should be met after 10 calendar years of contributions.

Effect of amendments

(a) The amendment partially meets the federation request in that the amendment makes it possible for a teacher who left contributions in the fund and was absent for more than 10 years to reinstate the earlier service after a return of 10 years.

(b) The question of length of service subsequent to return will be subject to further discussion over the next year.

Effect of amendments

(a) The amendment meets the federation request.

(b) The amendment refers to all teachers, whether part-time or not, who have made contributions in a calendar month.

(c) The present requirement that a person be employed for a certain number of years after again re-entering service will be met provided the person is employed on a continuous basis.

Pensionable service credits while in receipt of Salary Indemnity Fund benefits

BCTF request

(a) Teachers should receive pensionable service credit while in receipt of benefits from an approved Salary Indemnity Fund plan upon the payment of contributions at the single rate.

(b) The SIF benefit period should replace the one-year period now in the Pension Act Regulations during which a person may make a double contribution.

Effect of amendments

(a) The amendment meets the federation request.

(b) The present regulation probably will remain in effect to cover any teachers who might not be eligible for SIF.

(c) The Income Security Committee will be making a recommendation that SIF pay the required contribution on behalf of the teacher as has been past practice.

Continuation of pension rights when a person transfers from the service of an approved employer to service as a teacher under the Teachers' Pension Act

Amending legislation

A teacher who was previously employed by an approved employer(s) and who enters teaching within three years and who had an entitlement to a pension from his or her previous employment, may receive a teacher's pension provided the total service in the plans is at least 10 years.

BCTF request

Provision for pension protection for a person who moves from employment under an approved employer to employment as a teacher under the Teachers' Pensions Act.

Note: i) At present, this protection is in effect for a person who moves from service under the Teachers' Pensions Act to service under an approved employer.

ii) Approved employers include:

- Government of Canada including employment as a teacher in Yukon and Northwest Territories.
- University of B.C., Simon Fraser University, Victoria University, Acadia University.
- B.C. Hydro.
- Employers to whom the Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec Teachers' Pensions Acts apply.

Effect of amendments

The amendment meets the federation request.

Amending legislation

(a) The amendment makes provision for a regulation whereby refund interest is calculated, on or after July 1, 1980, on all accumulated teacher contributions.

(b) The provision that interest is paid only on contributions made for more than one year and only for a period of up to 10 years of absence has been removed.

BCTF request

Interest paid on refunds and on voluntary contributions should be increased to the net earned interest rate of the pension fund, lowered to the next per cent, for the calendar year previous to the refund being taken or the voluntary contribution being converted to an annuity.

Effect of amendments

The amendment meets the intent of the federation request in that the lieutenant-governor in council may now set interest rates on all refunds payable.

Bill 29: an analysis (continued)

Agreements with other pension plans

Amending legislation

The amendment gives the commissioner wider powers to make agreements with other plans.

BCTF request

A widening of the provisions permitting agreements with other pension plans.

Effect of amendments

The amendment meets the federation request.

Wartime, military service purchase

Amending legislation

The amendment makes provision for a regulation governing the purchase of wartime, military service.

BCTF request

Provision for a regulation rather than individual orders-in-council to permit purchase of wartime, military service.

Effect of amendments

The amendment meets the federation request.

Notes

1. In addition to the above amendments which were in response to federation requests, the act has been amended to change the accounting process for the pension fund. The fund will now be divided into two accounts; the Inflation Adjustment Account and the Basic Account. The latter will include all the assets of the fund other than those in the Inflation Adjustment Account (see first item). Individual contributor records will continue to be maintained, also the capitalized value of an allowance or portions of an allowance shall be calculated in accordance with specific regulations.

2. The following improvements in the Teachers' Pension Plan were made over the past year through orders-in-council in accordance with existing legislation:

(a) **Interest on Voluntary Contributions.** Commencing January 1, 1979 interest on voluntary contributions is calculated at 6% per annum, compounded annually.

(b) **Maternity Leave.** Double contributions are permitted by those teachers who are granted unpaid leave of absence for maternity subsequent to April 26, 1979. Contributions are restricted to a period of six months for any one pregnancy.

(c) **Leave of Absence.** Double contributions are permitted by those teachers who are granted unpaid leave of absence for any purpose subsequent to August 31, 1979. Contributions are restricted to a period of 20 teaching months during the teacher's career less any previous period of time for which double contributions were made.

Letters

Did our committee really say that?

The Newsletter for April 17 included the following statement from the Pensions Committee:

"The Pensions Committee doesn't agree, but AGM delegates want the BCTF to aim for fully-indexed pensions. A motion was passed telling the Executive Committee to instruct the Pensions Committee to pursue that policy."

It was a great shock to the membership to learn that our Pensions Committee would like to work against the welfare of the members. Surely it is extreme nonsense to have any committee of the BCTF working against our interests. If the above is a correct quote, the Pensions

Committee should resign before they do real damage to the cause of retiring teachers. Fixed pensions are only slightly better than no pensions, as those who try to exist on them will confirm.

I do have a suggestion for our Pensions Committee, if they object to fully-indexed pensions. The government could contribute the full share of their dues in cash to each retiring teacher. With the individual teacher's pay cheque deductions added to the government share, a profitable investment could be made to provide similar protection to fully-indexed pensions. Since the government finances many projects from pension funds, they are unlikely to welcome such a policy.

The Pensions Committee might note that we won the right to fully-indexed pensions some time ago, so they don't have to pursue the policy further. The membership must feel relieved that the Pensions Committees of other eras endeavored to serve the interests of the members.

V. Coulter,
Port-Coquitlam

Bruce Watson replies

BCTF Economic Welfare staff member Bruce Watson replies:

The item in the April 17 BCTF Newsletter was not a statement from the Pensions Committee but part of a report on decisions taken at the AGM.

The Pensions Committee in its report to the AGM (pages 71-72 of the Reports

and Resolutions booklet) continued to support the 1978 and 1979 AGM decisions on indexing, i.e., terminal funding of indexing based on a contribution rate of 1 per cent each from government and teachers.

Resolution 127 from Burnaby was debated at the AGM and passed, i.e., the Executive Committee was advised to instruct the Pensions Committee to maintain the objective of fully-indexed pensions.

Upon the passage of this resolution, BCTF policy was changed from that which existed in 1978 and 1979.

When Bill 29, the amendments to the pension plan, was reviewed by the Pensions Committee on May 16, the committee was in complete agreement that the indexing proposal in the bill was contrary to the new policy and therefore was unacceptable.

behalf on several occasions and offered help and advice, has suddenly been transferred from Hudson's Hope to Fort St. John. No defensible reason has been given.

Victoria lobby

From page 1

Implementation by government of the package was delayed for two years. In the interim the rate of inflation has increased to the extent that it became clear the agreed limit would hurt retired teachers.

As a result, this year's Annual General Meeting instructed the Executive Committee to press for continuation of full indexing.

Why read? Find out

The International Reading Association is sponsoring the First Rupertsland Regional Conference on October 16 to 18 in the Winnipeg Convention Centre. The

theme will be "Why Read In The Eighties?"

The program topics will include tests and the classroom teacher, the parent's relationship to the reading process, and recent research in reading.

Program participants will include university professors, reading specialists, school administrators, teachers, psychologists and librarians.

For registration information contact Drucie Hogle of the International Reading Association, Box 352, Postal Station C, Winnipeg R3M 3V3.

Glenboro get-together

Tiger Hills School of Glenboro, Manitoba is holding a centennial celebration and is inviting all past teachers to attend. For more information contact Garth McIntyre, Glenboro School, Box 550, Glenboro, Manitoba.

Daycare studied

The Lower Mainland United Way is undertaking a study of day-care policy in B.C.

Briefs, recommendations, policy statements or letters should be sent to the Director, Project Day Care, Social Planning and Research, United Way of the Lower Mainland, 1625 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver V6J 1T9.

Hydro: a poor investment

B.C. Hydro's 9,000 employees will not come under the ceiling the provincial government plans to clamp on the indexing of pensions for the rest of B.C.'s public-sector employees. That's ironic.

One of the reported justifications for the ceiling is "poor investment" of the various pension funds.

The teachers' pension fund is largely invested in B.C. Hydro bonds.

'Family choice' conference unbalanced

BCTF staff member Mike Zlotnik attended an international symposium, sponsored by Simon Fraser University, called Family Choice, Schooling and the Public Interest, held in Vancouver from May 7 to 9. He wrote this report:

The hours of tape recordings and the papers prepared by some of the participants in this symposium deserve substantial study over an extended period. Here, I will give my initial impressions of the symposium:

(1) The program suffered from a lack of balance — too much of the program was spent on presenters arguing the merits of the voucher system of funding education as opening up "family choice". (Under such a system, parents would receive vouchers representing their children's share of the education budget; the parents could then sign these vouchers over to the school of their choice.

Peter Bergen, an Alberta separate school superintendent, John Waller, former president of the B.C. Federation of Independent School Associations, American academics Stephen Arons and Joel Spring, Rhodes Boyson, the U.K.'s undersecretary for education and science, and John Coons, who led an unsuccessful campaign to have a referendum on vouchers in California, all came on as voucher advocates.

Bill Burt, national director of the American Libertarian Party, and Canadian economist E. G. West advocated tax credits instead of vouchers. There was little opportunity to explore diversity and parental choices through the governance and participation processes within the public school system.

Former BCTF president Bill Broadley, UBC education professors Vince D'Oyley

and Donald Fisher, and David Kirp, who teaches public policy at the university of California (Berkeley), advocated pursuing choice and diversity through the public school system.

(2) Many criticisms of the public schools were made, not just by voucher and tax credit advocates but by public school supporters as well: the tendencies for administration to squeeze out diversity, presumptions of parental incompetence in education, the professionalization of educational administration, monolithic indoctrination, daily lives of school personnel lived in contradiction to values of minority rights and dissent, discrimination against the poor and the working class, sexism, racism, the moral relativism flowing from value neutrality.

Donald Fisher of UBC pointed out two telling assumptions of the voucher system advocates. By operating on the assumption that the institution of education is isolated from other social institutions, public education can be scapegoated for problems and conflicts in other social institutions. Secondly, by assuming that education is an economic good, subject to scarcity in the same way as diamonds and oil, neo-conservatives try to justify the privatization of a public good.

(3) Teachers will hear more about the debates over governance raised at the symposium. Conflicts over values and interests and over who shall control the kind of teaching and modelling of values was sharp. Some speakers came out clearly for parental choice to a degree that represented carefully controlled indoctrination of children. Others, such as Broadley and Kirp, saw a need for



Public school critics John Coons, left, and E. G. West share thoughts.

balance between parental, community, professional and governmental control.

(4) An anti-union, anti-BCTF position was expressed by a few speakers.

Donald Erickson, chief researcher for the study on Consequences of Funding Independent Schools (COFIS) apparently frustrated by the controversy over and problems with his study, lashed out at the BCTF for failing to co-operate or even reply to his offers to participate. (In fact, BCTF representatives had met with Erickson but were not satisfied that Erickson's design and his need for speedy decisions could resolve their concerns.)

(5) Bill Broadley's presentation should be made available to BCTF members. It was short, clear and persuasive.

Teachers can expect increasing pressure from private interest groups to move in on public education. The influence of large corporations in the

publishing, computer and electronic communications fields is growing. Lobbyists for public funding of private schools in the U.S. have been arguing that B.C.'s Independent Schools Support Act has demonstrated the feasibility of public funding of private schools. Erickson has been able to get \$400,000 in National Institute of Education grants to support his COFIS study on the basis that B.C. represents a social-political "experiment" with possible applicability to the American education scene.

While it is exciting to be involved in an experiment with so much controversy and significance, B.C. teachers will need to be especially clear about the justification public schools in which they teach. For the private schooling and voucher plan lobbyists will subject public schooling to severe criticism in the years ahead.

Private schools offer unashamed elitism

Two hundred years ago, Thomas Jefferson declared that people had a right to be educated, at public expense, to a level which would make them capable of defending their interests. (He did not, apparently, believe that this right should be claimed by slaves, of which he owned a large number.) That ability, Jefferson asserted, was sufficiently provided for by three years of elementary schooling.

It is clear that what Jefferson was really saying was that all freeborn children, even those of the lower orders of society, had a right to the minimum amount of schooling that would guarantee that they would not be the helpless victims of exploitation — but only that and no more. He asserted no universal right to be set upon the ladder that led to preferment, to occupational and social promotion, to power over others. The only right was to a floor underfoot; access to the ladder was a privilege to be bought or fought for.

The distinction between the floor and

the ladder was maintained until the very recent past. It was only in the mid-60s in Canada, that there was any real acceptance of the notion that equality of opportunity required that children be given not only an equal chance of access to schooling but an equal chance to succeed in whatever kind of studies, at whatever level, suited the potential ability of the individual.

That generous notion is now being vigorously contested. Even the Secretary-General of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, who is a champion of the rights of the disadvantaged, has recently said "No-one questions the need for a publicly-financed basic education for everyone, but ... it seems unreasonable for the public purse to carry the entire burden of an over-lengthening process of education". In the 1980s we may well experience very strong pressure from those who would like to restore the floor-and-ladder concept, and

who would prefer to see the level of the floor held as low as possible. We may also see an attempt to set controls upon access to the ladder which will favor those who are already favored in the circumstances of their home life.

A rather nasty manifestation of this attitude is appearing in the aggressive line being taken by some private schools, whose managers seem to think the time is ripe for vigorous recruitment. Their general message is that the public school system has offered too wide a ladder, and has been at fault in not kicking enough kids off it. To these unashamed elitists, it is simply provocative to point out that the public schools are now doing for 50 per cent of the population what they used to do for 15 per cent.

In concert with the political opportunists and confused academics whose voices we have been hearing for some time, the merchants of privilege accuse the public system (in defiance of all evidence) of having abandoned "standards". What they really mean is that their ladder should be considered to be the real one. The growth of the private schools is

not exactly a massive phenomenon, but it should be watched, because it does not represent, as some of them assert, a quest for "value for the shrinking dollar", but a search by parents for a guarantee of preferment for their children. It is a resurgence of elitism in reaction against the success of the public schools in providing, for the underprivileged, more than a Jeffersonian minimum.

It would be a misfortune for Canada if the public school system were to be forced back, in imitation of the private schools, into the premature and inappropriate selectivity of the past. It would be an outrage if the private schools were helped to influence events in that direction by grants of public money — a goal which their lobbyists are energetically pursuing. To buy an alternative style of education, and to claim social status for it, may be the democratic right of the affluent in a free society. The proposition that such a purchase should be subsidized from the public purse is surely indefensible.

—Norman Goble

Secretary-General,
Canadian Teachers' Federation

Pilot program ready to go this year

Since January, the BCTF has been developing its program for training sponsor teachers.

Its purposes, in collaboration with the public universities' education are: effective sharing of supervision between teachers and universities; identification of, and training in, basic teaching communication and human relationships skills; how to assist incremental progress in student teaching skills; how to measure

success and to enable the evaluation process to be on of learning and growth.

This pilot program is seeking participants in the training program which begins in August. A BCTF News in staffrooms gives details. Approximately 40 teachers will participate in the program which begins with a short course held at UBC from August 10 to 15. These teachers will form a nucleus of trainers for future programs.

Art teachers meet

The 1980 conference of the Canadian Society for Education Through Art will be held in Victoria October 14 to 18.

The conference presents B.C. teachers with a chance to exchange with other teachers ideas and experiences related to the development or imagery and the importance of that to the process of education.

Conference organizers want teachers to develop ideas for presentation at workshops and other sessions. For more information contact conference chairperson Geoffrey Hodder at the University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria V8W 2Y2.

Various appointments announced

The Executive Committee at its May 8 to 10 meeting made a number of appointments and nominations to various bodies.

Named as BCTF representatives on the Canadian Teachers' Federation delegation to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession 1980 annual meeting in Brasilia were Pat Aders, former BCTF president; Pat Brady, BCTF general secretary; Bob Buzza, former BCTF president; Bill Broadley, and Art Reed. Mary Coggins was named as an observer.

The following were nominated to serve on Canadian Teachers' Federation committees: Norm Ornes on economics of education; Sheila Pither on teacher welfare; Sam Phillipoff and Janet Mort on quality and innovations in education; Pearl Roberts on status of women; James Hinds on the commission on French as a second language; and Jean Guy Gelinas on the French language commission.

Mike Campbell of Abbotsford was

appointed to the BCTF Policies and Procedures Committee.

Doug Black of Coquitlam, Santosh Dey of Shuswap, Richard Guenther of Peace River South, Hugh Hossack of Burnaby, David Manders of Vancouver Island North, Alfred Molyneux of Comox, Patricio Ramirez of Richmond, Ken Strong of Greater Victoria, John Vogt of Prince George and Bruce Wood of VSTA were named to the ministry's Science Safety Project Committee.

Ken Baker of Kettle Valley, Margaret Craig of Prince George, Lorraine Donovan of Fort Nelson, Colin Laine of New Westminster, Linda Lewis of Coquitlam and Maureen O'Leary of Campbell River were nominated to the ministry's Curriculum Enrichment Committee.

Hilroys available

The Roy C. Hill Foundation, through the Canadian Teachers' Federation, each

year awards two Hilroy awards to B.C. classroom teachers who have developed new ideas for improving teaching practices.

The awards are worth \$1,200 each and provincial winners are eligible for a national award, worth an additional \$3,800.

Application deadline each year is October 31. Awards are made in the new year. For more information and for application forms, contact Nancy Flodin or Joy Silverton at the BCTF offices in Vancouver.

NVan adopts bill

The North Vancouver school board has adopted in principle the bill of children's rights and responsibilities passed by the BCTF Annual General Meeting.

Trustees instructed superintendent Rod Wickstrom to report back to the board with suggestions for publicizing the bill in the school district. Wickstrom says the issue will be discussed at an upcoming meeting of district principals.

Loretta Ceraldi, president of the North Vancouver Teachers' Association, says she is "pleasantly surprised" by the

board's action, and that to her knowledge North Vancouver's is the first board in the province to adopt the bill.

Speech therapy

Surrey school district is holding its third annual Speech Therapy Conference, June 2 and 3 in the Surrey Inn Travelodge, 9850 King George Highway.

Featured speaker will be Dr. Frank Wilson, editor of the Canadian Speech and Hearing Association's journal, *Human Communication*, and author of a widely-used voice disorders kit.

For more information, contact the Surrey School District at 14225 - 56th Avenue, Surrey, V3W 1H9.

Bass needs help

Jeri Bass of the Racism Task Force needs a copy of an old B.C. textbook for her research into ethnology. Anybody with a copy of *Trees and Shrubs (Food, Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of B.C.)*, written by James Anderson and published by the Department of Education in 1925, is asked to contact Bass care of the BCTF offices in Vancouver.

BCGEU book well worth studying

A Union Amongst Government Employees: A History of the B.C. Government Employees' Union, 1919-1979. By Bruce McLean.

A Union Amongst Government Employees is an account of a group of workers who have followed the route from an independent association to a union affiliated to the B.C. Federation of Labor. It is, therefore, completely contrary to the route followed by the BCTF, whose members have decisively rejected any affiliation with the labor movement, even to the extent of joining a consultative committee of public service workers.

However, it behooves teachers to learn from the experiences of others. Our aim is to obtain the benefits of a union, such as those given by the B.C. Labor Code on working conditions, while retaining those benefits given by belonging to a profes-

sional body. The two are not incompatible.

The book shows that an association formed in 1919 had died by 1921, not to be resurrected until 1942. A series of quotations illustrates the bias against the government employees' organizing. "If they must join a union, let them get a job somewhere else."

Despite strong opposition, particularly during the years of W. A. C. Bennett's Social Credit administration, the association struggled on. However, no real change occurred until 1969, when the association became a union; three years later, a government more sympathetic to its employees was elected. Since then, they have gone from strength to strength.

With its format of an historical section followed by a "human side" section, the book is very suitable for classroom use. Any teacher who wishes to develop a course in labor history will find it invaluable. The Social Studies Curriculum Group, which is selecting material for the new courses, should keep it in mind.

—Graham Smith
Chairperson, Labor Liaison Committee

Budget, AGM on RA agenda

The federation's 1980-881 budget and Annual General Meeting leftovers are the main entrees on the geographical representative's menu for the Spring Representative Assembly, May 29 to 31 in the Sheraton Landmark hotel in Vancouver.

GRs will examine a proposed \$6.4 million budget sent to them by the Executive Committee, which has spent its last three meetings going over it. The \$6.4 million figure is an increase of 11.5 per cent over last year's \$5.7 million budget.

Examination of the inch-thick proposed program and budget statement is expected to take up two of the three days of the RA. That leaves just day three for the 146 GRs and alternate GRs to deal with 18 motions referred to them by the AGM, in addition to:

- A report on the Vernon 3/4/5 leave

of absence plan, prepared by the Agreements Committee;

- Small-group discussions on labor liaison; and

- Elections of RA chairpersons and members of the RA Agenda Committee, Ombudservice and Judicial Committee.

Issues that may arise under unfinished AGM business include Quebec, sexual orientation, the right to strike, sex education, the rights of substitute and part-time teachers, and education finance.

Reviewers wanted

Canadian Materials, the journal of Canadian learning resources for teachers and librarians, needs reviewers.

The journal reviews all media, including non-print, produced for professional library and classroom use.

Secondary and post-secondary teachers are preferred. Reviewers are not paid.

For more information, contact Adele Ashby, Editor, Canadian Materials, Box 197, Station M, Toronto M6S 4T3.

Prep time fight heats up

From page 1

Association former president, Rubymay Parrott, had recently defended B.C. teachers against charges by a U.S. trustee that they are too militant, Blakey said: "Maybe that's one of the problems. Maybe for too long teachers have been too nice.

"The latest answer of the school board, to set up another committee (on prep time), is an answer I personally find unacceptable," he said. "Now it's up to you. You can begin to speak up and act. The decision is yours.

"But I want to assure you that whatever that decision is, whatever that action is, (the federation) is firmly and full committed to supporting you."

BTA president Marion Runcie described how every year since 1970, when the teachers made prep time presentations at budget time in the fall, 8/MAY 26, 1980

they were told it was a learning conditions item that should come up in the spring; but each spring they were told it was a budget item and should properly be discussed at budget time.

Nine locals had sent letters and telegrams of support to the Burnaby local since the news spread that Burnaby's executive was proposing an extracurricular work stoppage, she said.

The Burnaby motion was put in four parts:

- That all current extracurricular activities be wound down between now and the end of the school year, and that no new activities be taken up;

- That teachers will withdraw from all extracurricular activities on September 1 unless the district provides prep time;

- That teachers will work to rule in November if there is no provision for prep time in the provisional budget; and

- That a political action campaign to inform the board, parents, students and the community about the issue be initiated.

Urging adoption of the first part,

teacher Ivan Johnson said that "anything less would be complete capitulation; anything less would have dire consequences in future negotiations with the board."

One teacher, Gordon Smith, suggested a full work stoppage because that would be more effective than withdrawal of extracurricular time, which would result in bad publicity for teachers anyway.

"I'd urge you to consider a recommendation for a strike vote," he said to loud applause.

The first two parts of the motion passed overwhelmingly. Smith moved an amendment to the third part to the effect that the BTA would adopt a work-to-rule campaign, rather than merely consider it. His amendment, and that motion, also passed overwhelmingly.

Work-to-rule was defined as working only from 15 minutes before school opening until lunch, then five minutes before the end of lunch-hour until the school day ends. "The only way to convince the school board that we need preparation time is to show them what

happens when we don't do preparation," said one teacher.

Following the meeting, the teachers present signed letters critical of the trustees' response to the issue, and more than 200 teachers later filed into board chambers to present these letters.

Trustees refused to place the issue of prep time on their agenda, but the teachers stayed in the hot, cramped little room for an hour until the board finished its business and invited questions from the public, as is its custom.

Board chairperson Gary Begin promised that negotiations, which had collapsed, would resume. At these new negotiations the board said unassigned teachers could be used to relieve classroom teachers, but would offer no contractual guarantees of prep time. Burnaby's representative assembly rejected the proposal.

Teachers are asking for five hours of prep time per week for all teachers. Now, secondary teachers get 3½ hours of prep time per week and elementary teachers get none.