

Wolfe turns down BCTF challenge

Provincial Secretary Evan Wolfe has declined a challenge by BCTF President Al Blakey to debate the indexing of teachers' pensions.

Blakey issued his challenge during his report to the Representative Assembly on October 2.

Wolfe wouldn't accept. He told reporters a few days later that his new pension legislation was "in the interests of

the teaches themselves," but that "to try to discuss those things in a public forum would be most difficult."

"I can't understand why he rejected our invitation," Blakey said. "It can't be that he's afraid. If his Bill 29 is such a good deal for teachers, he should be delighted to have a chance to talk about it."

"It can't be that he's not accountable. After all, he's got between \$400 and \$500

million of teachers' money in his pension fund.

"It can't be that he's not prepared for a debate. He's written to every teacher and school trustee in B.C. to 'explain' the new act to them, so he must have all the 'facts' at his fingertips."

"It can't be that he can't find time for the debate. We've booked the Orpheum Theatre for October 28, but if that date or place are inconvenient for Mr. Wolfe, we'll gladly change them."

"The only reason I can think of for him to refuse our invitation is that deep down he recognizes the injustice he's doing to

teachers, and he's too embarrassed to show his face in public."

Blakey wanted Wolfe to explain why the indexing limit was set so low for teachers, who lobbied quietly and reasonably against it, but raised much higher for civil servants, who conducted a series of walkouts and protest demonstrations to show their anger.

"It's this injustice that really galls us," said Blakey. "Teachers are being given class B treatment and we want Mr. Wolfe to tell us why."

"He'll have to face us sooner or later: either at our forum or on the hustings."

BCTF Newsletter

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Forums off to good start

If Education Minister Brian Smith expected his forums on education would demonstrate that the BCTF's staff and political leadership are out of touch with members' concerns, the first two days of his tour should have done much to dispel that.

Smith (and deputy minister James Carter and Carl Daneliuk, senior superintendent of public instruction, who accompanied him) heard little that was new. But instead of hearing it from Blakey, Kuehn, Bowman, Church and company, he was hearing from local association presidents, committee chairpersons, and ordinary classroom teachers.

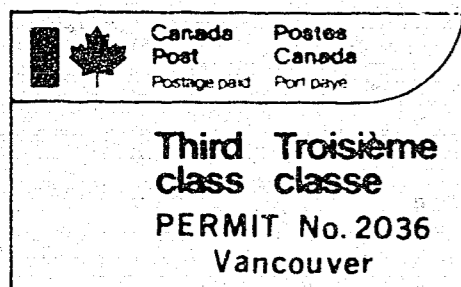
Subjects that came up in the first two professional forums, September 30 in Nelson and October 1 in Fernie, included curriculum matters, the Credit Allocation Plan, letter grades, scholarships, professional development days, elementary school self-assessment, school accreditation, the building manual, handicapped children, gifted children, teacher duties

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Making a point to the minister, Robert Cacchioni of Trail was one of many teachers who voiced their concerns at public and professional forums on education in the

Kootenays and on the North Coast. Education Minister Brian Smith's show will visit most major B.C. centres this month and next.



Bargaining rights campaign okayed

Action plan for restoration of full pension indexing outlined

The October 2-4 Representative Assembly adopted a goal and objectives for the federation's drive to broaden the scope of bargaining for teachers, and an action plan to restore full pension indexing.

The goal is to obtain legislative guarantees that will enable teachers to bargain on all terms and conditions of employment. At present teachers can legally bargain only for salaries and bonuses.

This goal is divided into two sub-goals: "collective bargaining at the provincial level on all matters of provincial concern, including pensions," and "expansion of collective bargaining rights at the local level to include all terms and conditions of employment."

The two objectives approved were: That the BCTF centrally initiate, co-ordinate and support a continuing

plan to achieve these ends (a work group has already been set up and charged with developing this plan); and

That the major force behind the plan must be membership action at the local level.

The assembly also asked the work group to include in its report to the January RA an outline of the legislative changes it would propose to achieve the federation's goal.

The representatives also adopted the following action plan for the pensions campaign, by a vote of 466-31:

1. BCTF Executive Committee recommends pensions campaign to the fall Representative Assembly (October 2-4).
2. Representative Assembly adopts pensions campaign, with restoration of full indexing as its primary objective.

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First contract in

Teachers in the Stikine school district have ratified a 1981 agreement that provides a 13 per cent increase in the cost of the salary grid. Other improvements include a 9 per cent increase in administrative allowances, increased isolation allowances, and increased professional development funds. The employer will also be paying 100 per cent of benefit pre-

miums (they had been paying 66.7 per cent) with the exception of salary continuance where teachers have agreed to pay 100 per cent (they had been paying 33.3 per cent).

Agreements chairperson Wayne Giesbrecht says he is happy with the settlement and indicates that it represents a total payroll cost increase of 13.9 per cent.

Letters

Description of boy 'insensitive, inaccurate'

I am incensed. I have read and heard so many inaccurate and insensitive and damaging remarks about Warren Lowe. To think that our *BCTF Newsletter* would add to this! I say, "Et tu, Brute."

Where did you get your information about this child? Trying to be positive, I strongly recommend that the reporter do more research with any future articles, keeping in mind one section of our Code of Ethics, which states that "The teacher speaks and acts toward pupils with respect and dignity . . . always mindful of their individual rights and sensibilities."

Allow me as Warren's former teacher to clarify some facts about this child.

Yes, Warren is autistic and has been blinded by cataracts. One can imagine the confusion and terror in Warren's mind as his world of vision gradually clouded over. During this time, Warren frequently asked, "What happened to the eyes? What happened to the color? I see the shadows."

Yes, Warren *can* talk and communicate his needs quite clearly, when he so desires. Part of his program was to encourage speech through various language activities. Warren made numerous meaningful and appropriate statements throughout the year. The data showed progress in this area.

Yes, Warren wears a helmet — not only for protection but also for security. We have all seen children carrying their special toy, trinket or blanket for security. There was one whole month when Warren refused to wear it. It is my belief that he will give it up for ever when he is ready.

Yes, Warren at times abuses himself. But what about those people who abuse themselves with alcohol and drugs? Warren needs a helmet and keeps his arms, when not in use, up in his sleeves. Is that so terrible?

No, Warren does *not* wear boxing gloves. He has two well-formed hands, which he generally keeps up in his sleeves. Part of his program was to encourage hand use. The data again show progress in this area.

He has control over his bowels. There are the occasional accidents, but this has happened with other children

that I have taught. Accidents are no big deal.

Yes, Warren needs constant supervision — but so does every other child in our school system. Our staff was frequently reminded that we were never to leave the children unattended during class time.

It was a challenging year for all of us who were involved with Warren's program. The data show progress in all areas. A full-time program should have been provided five years ago, so Warren could develop and extend the skills he already knew, such as language, fine- and gross-motor skills, some self-help skills, as well as acquire and practise new skills to reach his full potential, such as the orientation and mobility skills, sensory training and more self-help skills.

I cannot say enough about the work team who provided a tremendous amount of time, energy and resources. I have only praise and gratitude for their highly professional guidance and training. This team was developed specifically to train parents and other professionals throughout B.C., so that the handicapped could be serviced in their own areas. Warren's family support was also another major factor in contributing to the success of the program.

In conclusion, I hope that I have been able to enlighten those educators who are genuinely concerned about Warren Lowe. I have written because of the deep disappointment and anger I felt when I read the inaccurate and damaging comments in the *BCTF Newsletter*. What about the feelings of Mr. and Mrs. Evan Lowe, their children Warren, Audrey and Marcus? I sincerely hope, out of common decency, that a letter of apology be written to them for such unprofessional reporting.

In Warren's words, "It's yucky."
Maria Russell Martin
(Former teacher of the
South Cariboo autistic program)
Ashcroft

Ralph Maurer, who wrote the story
referred to, replies:

Ms. Russell Martin's criticisms concern a paragraph in the September

18 *Newsletter* describing Warren Lowe's handicaps. While I now realize that the descriptions I relied on were apparently exaggerated and that I should have asked Ms. Russell Martin for her own perceptions, I do not believe my attempt to describe the child robbed him of his respect and dignity, nor disregarded his rights and sensibilities. I simply tried to make clear the extent of the difficulties facing the child, his parents, Ms. Russell Martin, and the school board.

Thanks, Fred

Thank you to Fred Gale for his Chalk Talk article in the May 8 *BCTF Newsletter*.

He is not alone in his case against imposed elementary self-assessment and external evaluation.

E. Lundahl
Duncan

Resolution 113

It distresses me greatly to learn that the Spring Representative Assembly has voted in favor of Resolution 113 which originated in Kamloops. The resolution asks the BCTF "to strive to eliminate from the school system discrimination on the basis of . . . sexual orientation . . ."

The implications of this motion have never been made clear to me nor to the staff of our school who voted overwhelmingly against it. No clarification has come from our local executive, none has come from our geographical representatives who felt that they had to vote in favor of this motion. I think some answers are due.

This motion is unclear. What does the term "discrimination" mean and imply in this context? Is it discrimination at the hiring stage? And if so, how do we know the person practises deviant sexual behavior? Is this person a vocal banner-carrier for an aggressive group of sexual deviants whose home base is San Francisco? Does "discrimination" mean that he or she would be removed from the classroom if a group of concerned parents requested his or her removal?

The movers of this motion certainly believe in jargon. Whenever people don't want to call a spade a spade, they drag out the jargon of the left-liberal trendy "thinkers": open marriage, self-realization, sexual orientation, etc.

What does "sexual orientation" mean?

Where do we start and where do we stop when the jargon "sexual orientation" is trotted out? If the movers of this motion had homosexuals in mind, they should have said so in their motion and should have found out how it sounds in public.

The movers claim that the B.C. Human Rights Commission committed an "oversight" by not including "sexual orientation" in their policy. I don't think this was an oversight; it was a deliberate omission, just as the *Vancouver Sun* refused to publish "gay" ads and won in court because there is such a thing as "fair bias."

We have to look at the wider significance of this motion. As parent and teacher I am concerned about my children being taught by a self-proclaimed sexual deviant. Dr. Joseph Berger, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada (Psychiatry), Toronto, states in the February 4 edition of *Weekend Magazine* that:

- "The concept of the healthy homosexual is not accepted by most workers in the field."
- "... the predominant viewpoint of those most deeply involved with the understanding of homosexuality is that homosexuality is a failure, or a deviation in psycho-sexual development."
- "It is a pity that the impression is given . . . that homosexuality is a healthy adaptation of free choice to life . . ."

It is perhaps acceptable to have homosexual or other "sexual" persons in other professions but not teachers, who are often seen as role models by impressionable students.

What is the next step? Can we now, in the not-too-distant future, expect quotas for sexual deviants?

We do not tolerate mentally sick teachers in the classroom and I, for one, do not and will not tolerate having sexually sick (as perceived by the general public) teachers in the classroom. Let's not persecute them, but for the children's sake let's not encourage them, either.

A great number of teachers (and parents) deserve answers from those who supported this jargon-loaded motion.

Siegfried Puetz
Cape Horn Elementary
Coquitlam

Minister's tour starts out well

From page 1

(prep time, supervision, et cetera), pensions, scope of bargaining and class size.

Topics raised at the public forums, September 30 in Trail and October 1 in Cranbrook, include creation theories, curriculum issues, professional development days, class size, extracurricular activities, handicapped and gifted children, school facilities, private schools and the scope of bargaining.

Turnout for the professional forums was 75 people in Nelson and about 70 in Fernie. School boards presented briefs at the latter forum but not at the Nelson forum. The public forums drew 75 people in Trail, 50 to 60 in Cranbrook. Smith asked speakers to keep their remarks under five minutes and frequently responded to briefs, usually by thanking 2/OCTOBER 9, 1980

and praising speakers and adding a few noncommittal comments of his own. On some issues, however, he seems to have his mind made up.

When representatives of the local arts councils in Trail and Cranbrook asked for the establishment of a K-12 arts curriculum, Smith indicated that he was not sympathetic. The arts are not a frill, he said, but the "core" subjects take precedence; if everybody had their way, the school week would be 3,000 minutes long, not the current 1,500 minutes, he said.

It's also apparent that Smith feels the government has done its duty toward private schools. "How did you operate prior to government aid?" he asked of a private school representative who, at the Cranbrook forum, pleaded for a higher level of government funding. "Beware of coming to us with cap in hand for more money," Smith said. "You might get it but the world changes and we can't guarantee that your independence will not be limited."

One of the more effective briefs at the professional forums was given by Don Caskey of Grand Forks. In detailing the problems with the ministry's credit allocation plan for supplying textbooks, Caskey held up tattered, beaten books the plan's inadequacies force him to use. Jim Carter said: "That's the first time I've heard it laid out so clearly. It's a very real problem and it cries out for an answer."

The most effective briefs seemed to be those where speakers raised issues by

describing specifically how they were affected by them.

—Ralph Maurer
Editorial Assistant

Immerse yourself

The Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers' 1980 annual convention will be in Winnipeg from November 6 to 8.

For more information, contact organizers at Bureau de poste Alta Vista, C.P. 8843, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3H8.

BCTF Newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION
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RALPH MAURER
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Letters to the editor must be signed by and bear the address of the writer. The Newsletter may edit letters for brevity, clarity, legality or taste. Letters to the editor and signed articles contained herein reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily express official policy of the BCTF. Unsigned articles are the responsibility of the editor.

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Cincer commission criticizes board

Firing was within letter of law but violated spirit, report says

A review commission has concluded that the Peace River North school board acted within the letter of the law but violated its spirit in firing Hudson's Hope teacher Peter Cincer.

The commission said that, although Cincer's termination was in accordance with the School Act and regulations, "due process was not fulfilled."

It said the firing was a "grave disservice" to Cincer and to the students and citizens of Hudson's Hope and has been detrimental to the educational environment of the district.

The commission cites a number of complimentary comments about Cincer as a teacher and as a citizen, including some made by the three men involved in his firing, and says that if Cincer were to abandon teaching the profession "will lose an individual who has exhibited a remarkable talent for communication and teaching." It unanimously urges the BCTF to help him find another job.

It also recommends a series of amendments to the School Act regulations to give probationary teachers greater protection.

The commission was established by the BCTF on its own after the school board declined to participate in a joint review of Cincer's firing.

It consisted of Rev. John C. Hilborn, sociologist and pastor at Shaughnessy Heights United Church in Vancouver; Charles Arthur, a Vancouver secondary teacher and counsellor; and Pat Barron, a Nanaimo school trustee.

The commission visited Hudson's Hope in June and interviewed Cincer, school district officials, staff members at Cincer's school, members of the community, and one trustee. It was unable to interview either the chairperson or vice-chairperson of the school board.

The commission's report was delivered to the BCTF Executive Committee on September 27. This is the story it unfolds:

Peter Cincer, a well-qualified specialist in French and photo arts, joined the staff of Hudson's Hope Elementary-Secondary on September 1, 1978. Very soon it became clear that he didn't fit in.

There was a "fundamental difference in approach to education" between Cincer, on the one hand, and his principal and the director of instruction on the other, the report says. The principal, Byron Dart, and the director, Ernie Reimer, felt that their community wanted a conservative approach to education, with an emphasis

on discipline, respect for authority, punctuality, good behavior, regular work habits and strict observance of the ministry curriculum.

Cincer, in contrast, liked to run a friendly classroom. He de-emphasized the difference in status between himself and his students in the belief that this would help them to grow in independence.

Conflict was inevitable, the commission says. Besides the philosophical difference, there was a clash of personalities between Cincer and Dart. The principal made it clear that he had an "intense dislike" for Cincer, and Cincer apparently reciprocated.

Did this "intense dislike" influence Dart's April, 1979, report on Cincer, the commission asks. As a result of Dart's evaluation ("less than satisfactory"), Cincer was placed on probation a month later.

Earlier, in February, Cincer had filed a learning conditions grievance on the grounds that disturbed children had been placed in his classes when a learning assistance teacher went on maternity leave and the board did nothing about it.

Did the filing of the grievance lead to

resentment against Cincer by the principal, the administration and the board, the commission asks. Why did the learning assistance teacher file a critical report on Cincer, and why did the administration consider another critical report written by a school secretary?

"It is most difficult to justify the 'firing of a teacher' for reasons of philosophical differences," the commission observes. "The democracy of which we are a part prides itself on the ability to accommodate a great array of political and social philosophies."

"However, it is quite feasible and expedient to use the legal instruments, provided in this case by the School Act, to extract a 'thorn in the side of the educational body of Hudson's Hope.'"

Cincer returned to his classes in the fall of 1979 on a probationary appointment. On November 23, Reimer, the director of instruction, who does not understand French, visited Cincer's French class and wrote a second report. He noted the philosophical conflict between Cincer and Dart, the school and the district, and judged Cincer deficient in discipline, lesson planning, and correction of students' work.

On December 12 District Superintendent Brian Frankcombe visited Cincer's classes and wrote what the commission calls "a fair and balanced report" which was generally favorable to the teacher. Frankcombe listed some deficiencies and suggested that Cincer "get assistance from any members of district staff, your school administration, or from col-

leagues, so that I can return to your classroom and find significant improvements where needed."

The commission felt this report struck an unmistakable note of optimism and "clearly expresses the intent of 'working together.'"

Cincer got Frankcombe's report on December 17 as classes broke for Christmas. But something apparently happened over the Christmas break to change Frankcombe's "optimistic" view.

On January 7, the first day of classes, Frankcombe told Cincer, according to the commission, that he "should resign or I'll have the school board terminate you because the children must be protected from you."

Cincer was shocked and asked for a final evaluation.

Reimer was assigned to write this report — wrongly, in the commission's view, because he had been involved in discussions with Dart and Frankcombe over the Christmas break that led to the decision to terminate Cincer.

"Not one of these persons should have been used for that final evaluation," the commission says, "because not one of them could have been other than predisposed toward finding Mr. Cincer 'wanting.' They already had done so!"

Reimer wrote his report on January 25. His judgment: "less than satisfactory." On February 13 the Peace River North board cancelled his appointment. He finished work on March 28.

Cincer asked for and got an interview

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BCTF Executive Committee considered report of review commission on firing of Hudson's Hope teacher Peter

Cincer at its September 26-27 meeting and decided to give the report wide circulation.

Asbestos hazard in B.C. schools?

Crumbly asbestos, used in the construction of many B.C. schools, has been discovered to cause cancer and an incurable respiratory disease, and a search has begun to identify asbestos hazards in this province.

Since the search-and-renovate program began early this year, three schools have been decontaminated. But Jim Doyle, the education ministry's superintendent of facilities, is worried that many districts haven't carried out a study yet to locate affected schools.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) describes the problem as "insidious." It says there is a fair chance that schools built between the mid-1940s and 1973 contain friable asbestos — the kind that crumbles easily in the hand — which can be deadly.

This material is found on beams, ceilings, walls or pipes. Builders used to

consider asbestos effective for fireproofing, insulation, soundproofing and even decorative purposes, because it is strong, flexible and wear-resistant.

In Ontario, a search similar to one being conducted in B.C. has discovered 150 schools needing decontamination.

Prolonged exposure to asbestos can cause asbestosis, a disease in which the lungs lose their flexibility and breathing is obstructed. Cause of death is usually a heart attack — the heart must work too hard to get oxygen from the lungs. There is no cure for asbestosis; all that can be done is to halt the disease's progress.

Asbestos fibres are also a carcinogen, and exposure to asbestos fibres can cause cancer of the lungs, throat or stomach, or mesothelioma, a cancer of the chest or stomach linings. Mesothelioma is inoperable and always fatal.

According to a publication of the

Canadian Union of Public Employees, one in five asbestos workers dies of lung cancer and one in 10 of mesothelioma.

Any bumping or hard use of asbestos by students, maintenance work, or heavy use of a floor above an asbestos-covered ceiling can result in the release of fibres from deteriorating material. No filter can remove these asbestos particles from the air.

The EPA reports that asbestos-related diseases generally have a latency period of 15 to 35 years or more, meaning that kids being exposed to asbestos in schools today may pay the price many years from now.

A study by the U.S. National Cancer Institute estimates that eventually between 58,000 and 75,000 cancer deaths a year in the U.S. will be attributable to asbestos, and that in the next 30 years some 17 per cent of all cancer deaths will be asbestos-related.

Doyle says the ministry is making available money to school districts to

remove or seal friable asbestos where it is found.

So far, schools in Nanaimo, Vancouver and Nelson have been identified and decontaminated. The Nelson school was decontaminated after the principal initiated a study.

Mike Marborough of the Workers' Compensation Board says teachers' own safety and the safety of their students should be of prime concern when an asbestos-removing operation is going on in the school.

Section 8.24 of the Industrial Health and Safety Regulations states that "no person shall carry out . . . any work process or shall operate . . . any tool, appliance or equipment when it is reasonably foreseeable that to do so would create an imminent danger to his health or safety or to the health or safety of any other worker."

—Mavis Lowry
Learning Conditions division
OCTOBER 9, 1980/3

SEPTEMBER, 1980

DISTRIBUTION: Superintendents
District Superintendents of Schools
Principals

The office of the Auditor-General has recommended that Ministries of Government verify the base numbers on which budgets are constructed and provincial grants are made. In the case of the Ministry of Education, enrolment information is basic data.

To verify this data the Ministry of Education will be conducting enrolment verification this fall. This will be conducted by Ministry personnel, teams or individuals, who will visit elementary and secondary schools, chosen at random.

The team or individual will provide the principal with a letter of introduction and authority and will request access to records and/or classrooms for the following:

1. An examination of registration procedures
2. A review of daily attendance recording procedures
3. A sample checking of transfer documents
4. A cross-check of permanent records with current attendance records
5. A random checking of actual class attendance
6. A review of current reports to the Ministry with those practices within the school.
7. Other reviews as deemed necessary.

Your usual cooperation and assistance is requested.

If any further information is required, please contact Mr. W.L.B. Hawker, Sr. Superintendent, Admin Services, 387-5409.

J. L. Canty
Senior Superintendent
Legislative Services

WLBH:dsc

Fall out for head count

Most Ministry of Education circulars deserve the serious consideration of every teacher. Others, however . . .

The federation's figurative eyes popped upon receiving a copy of Schools Department Circular 130, reproduced here. In response, BCTF president Al Blakey sent the following, not altogether serious, letter to deputy minister Jim Carter.

Dear Mr. Carter:

We have received a number of enquiries concerning the contents of School Department Circular 130. In the light of recent developments in the pensions area a number of teachers are wondering if they are to be, once again, singled out for special treatment.

In attempts to alleviate those fears we have referred to the numerous commissions of enquiry established in the past year, that indicated the desire of the provincial government to seek out and bring to justice all those guilty of chicanery in whatever field of endeavor and we should therefore welcome one more attempt to place this province on a sound foundation of incorruptible practices.

We have also indicated to callers that we feel confident that the government will not restrict itself to an investigation of possible questionable practices in the classrooms of British Columbia. We assume that "raids" will be conducted at infrequent intervals on establishments where cartographers practise their trade

(particularly those who "draw" constituency boundaries). Banks will no doubt be requested to note the identity of those who draw out \$1,000-dollar bills, especially those originating in secret accounts. And it is probably a very safe assumption on our part to suggest that flying squads of investigators, by using hatpins and street directories, could conduct a very fair sampling of households whose occupants might be forging letters to the editor or buying shares in the Kaiser corporation.

As you can see we are entirely supportive of the ministry's actions as proposed in Circular 130. Indeed we hope that you will make an example of those teachers who, for instance, mark down one-half day's attendance for a child who was sent home at 10 a.m. for throwing up in the sandbox. Crimes of that ilk must be rooted out and the transgressors punished. The sanctity of the classroom register is obviously the keystone of fiscal responsibility.

We have one suggestion to make. To make it easier for ministry officials to satisfy teachers that they are who they are they could be dressed in uniforms. Black with lots of silver-braid; and of course armbands. Armbands with an appropriate and striking insignia. Perhaps a lamp of learning (couchant) surrounded by investigators (rampant) set in a sea of stupidity.

Yours very truly,
Al Blakey
President, BCTF

Women urged to get in on bargaining

Being present at the bargaining table is the only way women can make sure their contract concerns are represented, delegates to the BCTF Status of Women conference, held in Vancouver September 19 and 20, were told.

Kay Sigurjonsson, deputy executive secretary of the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario, said women are worse off than men in the teaching profession because the men do the negotiating and "it's easy for us to forget the rights of the people we are not."

"Everything that doesn't work in collective agreements is worse for women," Sigurjonsson said. For example, terms of part-time and temporary work, expenditures on — and class sizes in — elementary school, and leaves of absence for educational purposes, are all negotiable items that leave women teachers worse off than their male colleagues.

As for improvements in maternity leave, she said, "If women aren't at the bargaining table, it's the first thing given away." Women teachers should work together with other women's groups for improvements in maternity leave provisions, including paid maternity leave, which has long been common throughout Europe, she said.

Despite the "lip service" all educational administrators pay to the importance of the primary years in a child's education, less money is spent on primary-age children than at any other point in the education system, she said. In Ontario, the government spends \$4,000 a year on university students and only \$1,500 a year on primary school children. "If 70 per cent of elementary teachers were men, we would hear a lot more than we do about class size and prep time, and about noon hour supervision," she added.

And because only men are represented at the bargaining table, there has grown a myth that says the difficulty of teaching is in direct proportion to the size of the child taught, she said.

Sigurjonsson defended the seniority system as the best way for determining the

order of teacher layoffs when these are necessary, and challenged the view that women are better off with some other system of determining who stays and who goes when layoffs occur.

"The only other system (besides seniority) is some kind of merit rating, which can't help be subjective," she said. "It will almost always be decided by principals superintendents; by men. The work of women is never fairly valued, by women as well as by men."

Women would be foolish to accept any system but the seniority system, even though aspects of it do discriminate against women, she said. Instead, women should push to have seniority based on



Jane Turner, chairperson of the Status of Women Committee, uses her hands to make a point at the status of women contacts conference.

Nanaimo teachers win 60 minutes prep time

All elementary teachers in the Nanaimo District will receive at least 60 minutes of preparation time per week, according to the terms of an offer accepted by the local association late last month. Local president Doug Sommers reports that the board has agreed to

provide every primary teacher with 90 minutes of weekly preparation time and each intermediate teacher with 60 minutes.

One result of the settlement is the immediate hiring of four full-time-equivalent teachers for assignment to

music, French and physical education in the intermediate area. Additional techniques for providing preparation time are early dismissal of Grades 1 and 2 where practical, Kodaly music, librarian help where feasible and administrative relief.

In spite of teacher action, including refusal to perform extracurricular activities, the board refused to place the agreement into contract. It is, however, a firm commitment in school board policy

and a significant step toward a contractual arrangement.

"We recognize this weakness in the lack of contractual guarantees," Sommers said, "and we will be closely monitoring the situation in every school to see that the terms of the settlement are carried out."

—George North
Learning Conditions division

Good news for teachers in Campbell River study

There's good news for teachers in the results of a survey of some Campbell River high school graduates conducted by the Educational Research Institute of B.C.

Most students liked their teachers, thought they were doing a good job, found their course work challenging and generally liked their high school.

The ERIBC report was compiled from questionnaires filled out and returned in late 1979 by 217 people who graduated from one of Campbell River's two high schools in 1978. The study was undertaken at the request of the local school district.

Little in the report seems to support the ministry's push to introduce career education. The vast majority of respondents declared themselves satisfied with their secondary school experiences.

Students rated math and English as the subjects most appropriate to their present job and training; physical education was at the bottom of the list. English was considered most appropriate to personal interests, while social studies and mathematics were considered least appropriate.

More than 90 per cent of the grads said

they were challenged by the school work, and the vast majority felt the homework load was about right.

Small group discussions and teacher lectures, in that order, were the favorite methods of learning. They were followed by laboratories and individual projects.

More than 85 per cent reported favorably on the participation, interest, preparation and assistance of their teachers. Individual attention given by teachers was rated fair to excellent by 81.7 per cent.

Counsellors, the report shows, are used almost exclusively to help students plan their courses and their long-term educational goals. Few students perceive the counsellor's role as one of personal counselling. Two-thirds of students found their counsellors satisfactory.

More than 80 per cent found general school rules to be appropriate, and most students did not participate in extracurricular activities.

Overall, 87.2 per cent rated their school as fair to excellent. Only 10 per cent rated their school as poor. More than 90 per cent rated student friendliness as fair to excellent. Forty per cent rated school spirit as poor; the same percentage rated student involvement as poor.

Recommendations for improving or retaining defined features of the school centred on a return to basics in education.

At the time the survey was conducted, about half the respondents had jobs and 31.5 per cent had gone on to post-secondary education; 17.7 per cent were unemployed.

Motion may break impasse

The BCTF Executive Committee has moved to enable the provincial ombudsman to begin a review of a member's long-standing complaint against the federation.

The case involves Alexandra Pazitch, whose membership in the federation was terminated in 1974, and subsequently restored. She had asked the ombudsman to investigate the circumstances leading to the loss of her membership.

The executive, at its meeting of September 26-27, voted to recommend to the ombudsman that his office review federation files held in Ms. Pazitch's name and then to determine which other files held by the federation on behalf of individuals, if any, he wishes to review.

Gov't orders teachers back

Alberta's labor minister has ordered an end to the strike by Calgary public school teachers. The strike began May 27, closed classes for 42 days, and failed to solve the major issue — reduction in the number of hours of instruction.

The order, issued September 24, awarded teachers all the terms of the previous memorandum of agreement

The executive made this offer subject to the proviso that any reviews be within the general framework of the Ombudsman Act and without prejudice to the federation's basic position that it is a professional/occupational association, not a corporation.

The federation has been locked in disagreement with the ombudsman for almost a year on the question of whether he has jurisdiction to investigate BCTF matters.

Section 11 of the Ombudsman Act would empower the ombudsman to investigate matters involving professional associations, but that section has never been proclaimed, or made effective.

The federation has asked that this section be proclaimed but the provincial cabinet has refused.

The federation has also suggested that the ombudsman get a court ruling on whether he has jurisdiction over the federation, but the ombudsman has declined to do so.

except the disputed 23 hours' instruction time per week. In the memorandum, teachers' salaries and allowances are increased by 10.5 per cent in each year of the two-year agreement. The parties have until February 24 to resolve the hours of work dispute. If no resolution occurs by that date the labor minister will appoint a public emergency tribunal which will try to bring about an agreement on or about March 31. Otherwise the tribunal is

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662 respond to LC questionnaire

What conditions in the classroom need the most improvement? To help find out, the BCTF's learning conditions and professional development divisions distributed a questionnaire to participants in the BCTF summer conferences, local association presidents, staff representatives, members of the BCTF committees, and other teachers.

The questionnaire asked teachers to suggest areas in which the federation should carry out studies. So far, 662 people have responded.

The results show that only 54 per cent

consider their teaching conditions to be satisfactory. A breakdown of responses shows that 34 per cent named heating and ventilation as the biggest problem; sound level was cited by 18 per cent and 16 per cent are unhappy with their school grounds.

Teachers seem a little more satisfied with classroom supplies, where the biggest complaints involve audiovisual supplies (10.7 per cent complained), physical education supplies (8.5 per cent complained), and music supplies (7.9 per cent).

Smith asked to study Shuswap

The federation has asked Education Minister Brian Smith to intervene in what it considers deteriorating personnel conditions in Shuswap school district.

Problems first came to light last spring when Shuswap teachers asked the BCTF to establish a commission to investigate concerns regarding "personnel practices and related matters."

The BCTF responded by appointing Frances Fleming, retired Ministry of Education official, Leo McGrady, Vancouver labor lawyer, and David Janzen, North Vancouver school principal, to look into the concerns.

Their report, completed in late June, was turned over to the Shuswap school board in mid-July.

The report has now been given to the education minister with the request that he "take immediate action to cause resolution of the situation before it deteriorates further."

"It is our belief that the primary authority for establishing appropriate conditions rests with the school board,"

total rather than continuous service to the school board. Thus, if a woman works three years, takes time off to raise a child, and is rehired, she would go onto the lists with three years of seniority.

Women should also push for a policy of offering part-time teachers full-time work as soon as it becomes available. Many women who reluctantly accept part-time work because no full-time work is available get trapped and are never given full-time jobs, she said. In fact, boards like it that way because good part-time teachers are hard to find, she added.

Sigurjonsson also warned teachers to get all their agreements with their boards into contract. "When there was a teacher shortage, there was informal bargaining in that boards had to compete with each other for teachers," she said. "That

changed. . . . That clout (you had) runs out when the board feels it holds the upper hand.

"Anything that is in board policy can be changed overnight by the board," she said. "Anything you don't have in a collective agreement, you don't have."

Five years ago, Ontario teachers won full bargaining rights and the right to strike with a campaign of militant action, including "mass resignations" because strikes were illegal. Her own organization is considered conservative, she said, but "when we got the right to strike five years ago we found to our astonishment that we like it; it's working. Nobody likes a strike, everybody loses something. But it's a fundamental and important right."

She said 98 per cent of contracts in Ontario are settled without a strike.

Radio editorial supports BCTF stand

From an editorial on Kamloops radio station CHNL on September 9.

Many people became very upset when BCTF President Al Blakey announced recently that teachers would be demanding a salary increase in the order of 18 per cent when contract negotiations open this fall.

On the surface it seems like an inordinately high demand.

But Blakey had one very good point. The average 9.6 per cent pay hike teachers received a year ago has already been wiped out. While all of us are losing ground to inflation . . . the modest settlements . . . are putting teachers in a position where they are losing a great deal more. They are losing status.

They after all hold an exceedingly important position in our society. To a great degree, it's the teacher who moulds the way our children think . . . how they learn and essentially then how effective they will be as adults.

The average salary for a teacher in School District 24 is between \$23,000 and \$24,000 a year. To reach that stage, they

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Salary indemnity fund improved

The BCTF's long-term sick leave plan has been improved, and payments under the plan this year will be 8 per cent higher than last year in real terms.

At its September 26-27 meeting, the Executive Committee, on the recommendation of the Income Security Committee, adopted a new table of payments for the Salary Indemnity Fund.

In its report to the executive, the committee said a close study of the plan's strong financial position makes the increase possible.

A teacher at the lower end of the salary scale on long-term sick leave will now get 65 per cent of gross salary under the plan. A teacher with an average salary will get about 58 per cent of gross salary. A teacher at the top end of the salary scale will get about 54 per cent of gross salary.

ESL teachers

A panel discussion on the acquisition of English as a second language will be the highlight of the 1980 annual conference of the B.C. Speech and Hearing Association, October 25 at the Sheraton Plaza 500 hotel in Vancouver.

The panel discussion, which begins at 1:30 p.m., is open to non-members. For more information on the panel or conference, contact Robin Rogers, Conference Committee, B.C. Speech and Hearing Association, 2125 West Seventh Avenue, Vancouver. The phone number is 683-3019.

Catalyst lauded

A B.C. student newspaper has again won international recognition for excellence.

The *Catalyst*, from Coquitlam's Centennial school, has won the Gallup Award, the highest award given by the Quill and Scroll Society, at the annual high school newspaper competition.

The Quill and Scroll Society is an international honorary society, based in Iowa, for high school journalists representing more than 10,000 schools throughout the world.

The *Catalyst* had previously won a

Gallup Award in 1974 and an International First Place Award in 1976 and 1978.

The contest judges commended *The Catalyst* especially for the quality of its writing and the scope of its coverage. They found it "close to professional in many aspects."

The Catalyst is produced by journalism students at Centennial under the sponsorship of Frank Shepherd and Ward Eby.

Political action

The BCTF Political Action Committee has put together an active program for 1980-81 with two different workshops entitled School Board Elections and Key Communicators.

Instead of regional workshops this fall, the committee is offering help at the local level for those undertaking a school board election program. Key Communicators is a new workshop designed to help the local identify influential decision-makers and ways of approaching them.

Notice of the Political Action Committee's willingness to assist has been sent to all local presidents. Those presidents who expressed an interest in one of the workshops during the summer conference are now requested to confirm a date for the workshop.

Members of the committee are Ann Fall, Dave McClean, Toto Miller, Harley Rothstein and Barb Parrott.

Retirement party

A party to honor retired teacher Keith Simpson will be held November 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the school where he taught for many years, Gladstone high school in Vancouver.

Tickets are \$5 and must be bought in advance, either by telephoning Gladstone school at 872-1661 or by writing to J. Allen, care of Gladstone Secondary School, 4105 Gladstone Street, Vancouver V5H 4Z2.

Tecumseh reunion

Tecumseh Elementary School in Vancouver is holding a 70th anniversary celebration and reunion on October 17 at the school, 1850 East 41st Avenue.

Celebration organizers are looking for photographs, memorabilia and just plain memories of the school. If you have something to contribute, or want more information on attending, contact Neila Skinner at Tecumseh.

Playhouse tours

The Vancouver Playhouse's student program will again be offered for the 1980-81 season.

Special rates on performances on the main stage at Queen Elizabeth Theatre and at the Granville Island Waterfront Theatre and the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, are available for student groups. Also included in the program are study guides, tours of the production centre, and discussions with actors, directors and other members of the production staff.

For more information, contact the Vancouver Playhouse at 575 Beatty Street, Vancouver V6B 2L7. The phone number is 684-5361.

Montessori centre

A Montessori training centre has been established in Victoria and the first course will begin October 14. For more information contact the Pacific Montessori Society at 1262-C Rockland Avenue, Victoria V8V 3J3.

SPACE linkup

SPACE, the Society for the Promotion and Advancement of Career Education, has its third annual workshop November 20 to 22 at the Sheraton Landmark hotel in Vancouver. For more information and to register, contact Denny Crees at 4995 45th Avenue, Delta V4K 1K4 (telephone: 946-0194).

Languages

Courses for language instructors teaching French, English as-a-second-language, and other modern languages are offered this fall by the University of B.C.'s Centre for Continuing Education.

The courses are also appropriate for teacher-trainees, tutors and volunteer workers.

Programs will be developed on request on new teaching techniques and also on language skill improvement for teachers instructing in languages other than their native language.

Other services offered include consultation and advice on curriculum materials and approaches, teaching and learning resources, research, evaluation and curriculum development.

For more information contact the Language Programs Division, at the Centre for Continuing Education, UBC, Vancouver V6T 1W5. The phone number is 228-2181.

English teachers

The 1981 conference of the Canadian Council of English Teachers will be in Vancouver May 11 to 16.

The conference theme will be Growing with Language. For more information contact Viviane McClelland, 6891 No. 3 Road, Richmond V6Y 2B9.

Sex education

Planned Parenthood of B.C. and Vancouver Community College are offering two workshops for sex education teachers. These workshops will examine current issues, research, teaching and counselling approaches related to sexuality and sex education.

A workshop for elementary school teachers and counsellors will be held October 24 and 25 at VCC's Langara campus. A workshop for secondary school teachers and counsellors will be held on November 7 and 8, also at Langara. The \$30 fee for each workshop includes lunch on both days.

For more information, contact Lezlie Wagman of Planned Parenthood at their offices, 101-96 East Broadway in Vancouver. The phone number is 872-8737.

London calling

The Inner London Education Authority is recruiting in Canada to ease a shortage there of teachers of mathematics, physics, chemistry and industrial education.

For more information, contact Ann Dahl at the BCTF office.

Vacancies

Terrace
(School District 88)
History and English teacher needed for Grades 11 and 12, beginning January 1 or sooner.
Apply to Frank Hamilton, Superintendent, Terrace School District, Drawer 460, Terrace V8G 4B5. Telephone: 635-4931.

Cincer report

From page 3

with the board, which it was not required to grant. BCTF President Al Blakey appealed to the board to reconsider its decision; it took no action.

With Blakey's support Cincer appealed to the minister of education to investigate; the minister declined.

Cincer also appealed to the provincial ombudsman, but he does not have the required jurisdiction.

Shortly after getting his dismissal notice Cincer "went public." And that, the commission says, seemed to strike district officials as "the gravest sin of all."

There were public meetings and Cincer released documents relating to his case. There was evidence of substantial community support for Cincer and for his "less structured approach" to education.

But the board had acted within the law, and Cincer's firing stands.

The BCTF Executive Committee decided to give wide circulation to the commission's report, and to encourage local associations to use it at the minis-6/OCTOBER 9, 1980

ter's forums "to illustrate the appalling absence of due process for teachers in B.C."

—T. A. Myers
Editor

Building manual

From page 8

which the ministry is proposing each school should have, could serve as a lunchroom, they say.

Community groups, parents, students, custodial staff and teachers should be involved in planning school facilities, which should serve wider community needs. The ministry likes this idea, which the current manual discourages.

BCTF staff member Mavis Lowry, who worked with the committee on the recommendations, says suggestions from the BCTF's various provincial specialist associations on classroom facilities which was a major part of the recommendations, were also well received and will probably form the basis for that section of the new manual.

The new manual is expected to be in seven parts, of which only the first is nearing completion.

Editorial

From page 5

must acquire first a proper education themselves, and have about four years post-university training, along with a degree.

They earn only about \$2,000 on average more than does a garbage man in the city... a sub-foreman on the sanitation detail earns close to \$21,000 a year... with a little overtime, more. Certainly garbage collection is essential, but it doesn't take a great deal of skill.

Preparing our youngsters for success in the real world does.

Therefore, one can't react too violently to the latest teacher demands to improve their income.

The old adage of "you only get what you pay for" certainly applies to the teaching profession.

Calgary strike

From page 4

charged with making a binding award on the issue.

It is difficult to see how the teachers will make any gains in the dispute now that the tradeoff for salary increases has been

removed. Previously teachers were prepared to give up 1 per cent of their salary increase in each of the two years for the reduction in instructional time from the current 23 hours, 20 minutes for 22 hours, 40 minutes in 1980 and 22 hours in 1981.

—Ken Smith
Economic Welfare Division

CNIB gets ministry contract

The Ministry of Education has asked the Canadian National Institute for the Blind to provide orientation and mobility training for visually-impaired students in the public schools.

The training is designed to make visually-impaired students feel comfortable in their physical environments and to teach them to move about with confidence in their homes, to and from school, and in school.

The CNIB will employ two full-time instructors to train students during the life of the contract, which expires March 31 but may be renewed, according to the ministry.

Stress counselling program approved

A BCTF-operated stress counselling service is expected to be in operation by next spring, as a result of a series of recommendations passed by the fall Representative Assembly.

The recommendations were prepared by an ad hoc committee on stress, consisting of Nora Grove of Vancouver,

Cliff Faulkner of Arrow Lakes, Quentin Docherty of the Sunshine Coast, and Linda Shuto of the BCTF's Professional Development division.

In its report, the committee concluded that stress is a priority concern of teachers, that the major sources of stress are rooted in unsatisfactory working and

learning conditions, and that the current bargaining rights campaign may ultimately change those conditions. However, until learning and working conditions do improve, the committee urged, an effective, locally-based referral program should be adopted.

GRs budgeted \$35,000 for the program this year. Local stress teams or contact persons will provide counselling and a referral service. Local associations participating in the plan will establish

stress action committees to publicize stress services already available, find out what services are still needed, and work with local professional development agreements and learning conditions committees to get at the cause of stress.

The plan grew out of a 1979 Annual General Meeting motion asking for a feasibility study on a stress counselling service. The fall 1979 RA studied the issue more closely and came up with a long list of ideas and suggestions.

Begin speaks to Fall RA

Gary Begin, president of the B.C. School Trustees Association, issued somewhat oblique warnings to geographical representatives at the October Representative Assembly on a number of current issues.

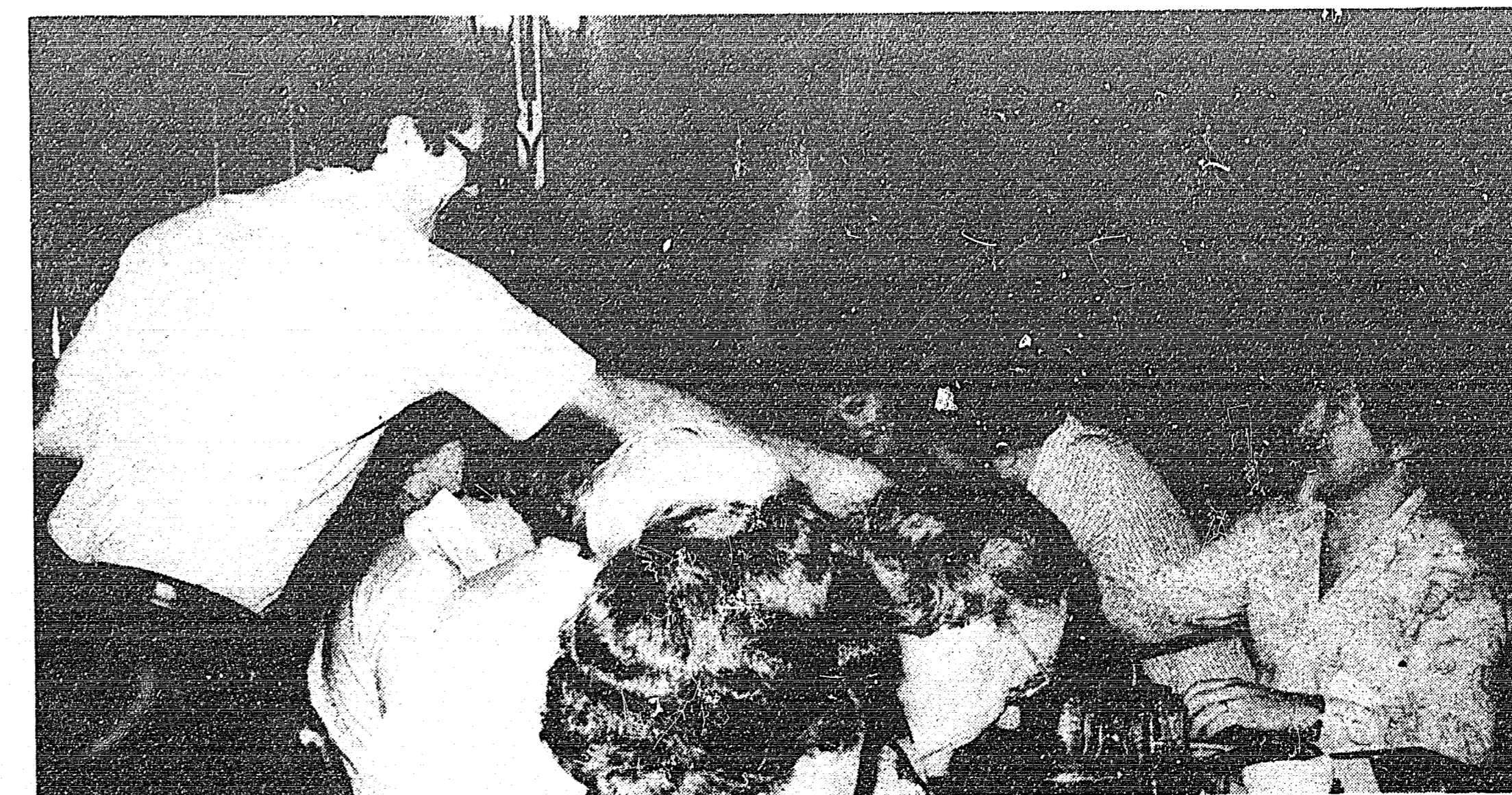
On class size and preparation time: "When we sit down together to translate the pupil/teacher ratio into class size and into teaching loads acceptable to all, then I think that's a good sign. But when school boards hide behind management rights, or teachers use students as pawns in the game of reduced hours of work, then the (teacher/trustee) partnership is threatened and the children become the losers."

On the possibility of job action to support the BCTF pension campaign: "The trustees of this province are committed to making sure that the government of the day, regardless of what party it is, gives every employee group a fair shake... But when people threaten to break the law on contracts with school boards in order to make their point with government, then the partnership suffers and the children again become the losers."

On the BCTF commission on personnel practices in the Shuswap School District (see story, page 5): "I am less optimistic when I hear of a BCTF program that produced a witch-hunt for administrators... We (trustees) could of course seize the opportunity to deal with teachers using the principles and procedures of the BCTF commission in Salmon Arm as a model for due process and justice in employment."

"But that would mean public appeals for the removal of incompetent teachers and the naming of those teachers; public airing of all that dirty linen without giving the accused any opportunity to present their case..."

"We must reject all forms of kangaroo courts, be it a kangaroo court of parents after teachers' hides or a kangaroo court of teachers after administrators' hides..."



Scrutineer Neil Worboys collects ballots from GRs in election for new Federation Appeals Board.

Bargaining rights plan okayed

From page 1

- Campaigns opens:
 - President challenges Provincial Secretary Evan Wolfe to debate pension issues.
 - Information about the issues distributed to local associations.
 - Teachers' pension concerns put forward in news media.
 - Prepare provincial political action campaign.
- Political Action Committee develops plan in preparation for next provincial election.
- BCTF personnel available to locals to train pension advocates to develop local action programs.
- BCTF issues target bulletins, other information as campaign progresses.
- Local actions in support of campaign carried out between October and January.

8. BCTF Executive Committee evaluates progress and adjusts program as necessary (November 7-8 and December 5-6).

9. Public media campaign on restoration of full indexing of pensions during January.

10. Local associations hold general meetings, consider early dismissal of classes, in-school study sessions (continuing but peak in January).

11. Representative Assembly meets January 29-31, 1981, and makes recommendations to membership concerning strike action.

a. Local executives visit staff to test strike support.

b. Processes, ballots and balloting for referendum on strike.

c. Strike timing.

12. Mass lobby by teachers when Legislature opens.

13. Annual General Meeting (April 12-15, 1981) considers further actions.

RA presented with slimmer budget

The Executive Committee has made cuts to the 1980-81 budget, as the spring Representative Assembly told them to do. The reductions didn't amount to the 3.7 per cent budget cut the spring RA had hoped for, but that didn't seem to bother the geographical representatives this time.

In fact, GRs at the fall RA turned down an executive recommendation to cut the budget further by eliminating a professional development grants program; added \$35,000 for a new stress counselling service; and added \$25,000 to pay for a response to a controversial study of private schools.

Last spring GRs, presented with a budget of \$6,447,863 — 12.5 per cent bigger than the previous year's — told the executive "to review the proposed budget with the objective of further reducing the program expenditure section of the 1980-81 budget up to a 3.7 per cent change."

In meetings over the summer and in September, the executive made cuts totalling \$286,288, or 4.4 per cent. However, they also added to the budget, so the net decrease presented to the RA is only \$160,833, or 2.5 per cent.

The executive's report to the RA, given by First Vice-president Larry Kuehn, indicated that further cuts are possible, as "some committees request to make their views on proposals known before executive action (and) some proposals have been postponed to the next executive meeting."

"The Executive Committee has

eliminated some activities and trimmed others to produce a limited budget reduction, but has not gutted programs, as would be necessary to totally balance revenues and expenditures within this financial year," the report states. GRs will have to make a decision on the balanced-budget question next January, when the winter RA must make a 1981-82 membership fee recommendation.

Few of the cuts will have a dramatic effect on teachers' lives. The larger cuts:

- Proposed provincial conferences on education finance and racism were cancelled, saving, respectively, \$10,000 and \$20,000.

- Public relations grants to locals were cut almost completely, from a budget \$20,000 to \$3,500. The budget for the community relations program, School Talk, was reduced from \$81,000 to \$65,600. In addition, killing the BCTF News saves \$9,750.

- The \$40,000 budget for renovations to the BCTF building was wiped out completely.

The major budget increases:

- \$10,000 to allow for pilot projects to be undertaken by the Racism Committee.

- The cost of the BCTF commission to examine the firing of Hudson's Hope teacher Peter Cincer. The bill came to \$7,500.

- Telephone rates went up, and the BCTF's annual telephone bill jumped \$15,000.

- The computer services budget increased by \$38,168, despite the fact that projected expenditures on computer rental were cut from \$57,698 to \$21,848.

The pensions/bargaining rights action plan, also approved at the fall RA, will be paid for out of the reserve fund, and thus will not be a charge against the operating budget.

BCTF committee appointments made

The *BCTF Newsletter's* editorial advisory board has three new members this year. Herb Couch of Nelson, Garth Holmes of Cariboo-Chilcotin and Teresa Wilkinson, the president of the Hope Teachers' Association, were appointed to three-year terms by the Executive Committee this summer.

Other recent committee appointments:

Sam Fillipoff, (VESTA) was appointed to the *B.C. Teacher* editorial board.

David Brear (VESTA) and Frieda Stoochnoff (Central Okanagan) were nominated for the ministry's Coalition on Children, Youth and the Law.

Peter Bayley (Kitimat), James Brown (Vernon), Jim Chow (Saanich), Annabelle Echols (Surrey), Janice McRae (Burns Lake), Chris Morley (Kelowna),

Renee Norman (VESTA), Nancy Randall (Kamloops), Patricia Silver (Richmond), Bernadine Sproul (Nelson), and Lindsay Watson (Richmond) were nominated for the ministry's Elementary Fine Arts Revision Committee.

Trevor Calkins (Victoria) and Peter Moll (Trail) were appointed to the Education Finance Committee.

Mike Duffey (Prince George) was appointed to the Finance Committee.

Christina Schut (Revelstoke) was appointed to the Labor Liaison Committee.

Robert Sullivan (Kitimat), Alice McQuade (Delta) and John Wright (Hope) were appointed to the Pensions Committee.

Colin Forbes (Mount Arrowsmith) and Les Phillips (Coquitlam) were

appointed to the Income Security Committee.

Geoff Peters (Coquitlam), Jed Astin (Vernon), Kate Noakes (Revelstoke) and Julie Schultis (Shuswap) were appointed to the Investigation Committee.

Mike Suddaby (Maple Ridge), Joanne Broatch (VSTA), Ron Schindler (Surrey), Connie Edwards (Victoria), and Julie Lutz (Revelstoke) were appointed to the Professional Relations Committee for three-year terms; Leigh Farrell (North Vancouver) and John Haak (South Okanagan) were appointed to two-year terms.

Hinda Avery (Vancouver Island North), Marian Niemann (Nelson) and Jane Turner (Burnaby) were appointed to the Status of Women Committee.

Richard Taylor (Kamloops) and Catharine Thomas (South Okanagan) were appointed to the Teacher Education Committee.

Ed May (Coquitlam), John Wright (Stikine) and Val Parker (VESTA) were appointed to the Racism Committee for three-year terms; Audrey Bragagnolo (VSTA), Vilma Dube (Nanaimo) and Ghamim Harris (Kamloops) were appointed to two-year terms; Lloyd Edwards (Surrey), Pamela Webber (Saanich) and Gary Withers (Victoria) were appointed to one-year terms.

David Janzen (North Vancouver), Geoff Peters (Coquitlam) and Frances Worledge (VESTA) were appointed to three-year terms on the Teachers Personnel Advisory Committee; Pat Clarke (South Okanagan), and Sheila Park (Kamloops) to two-year terms; Jan Eastman (Delta) and Rod Sherrell (Vancouver Island North) to one-year terms.

Karam Gopaulsingh (Burnaby) was appointed to the Teacher Qualification Service.

Terms are for three years, unless otherwise specified.



Slightly skeptical but willing to listen, parent chats with Carnarvon Community School teacher during Vancouver's first School Talk evening. School Talk, a BCTF-developed community relations program, is being piloted in Vancouver elementary schools.

Building manual to be revised

The *B.C. School Building Manual* is undergoing its first major revision since 1967. The Ministry of Education's response to the BCTF's 23 recommendations on what that new manual should contain has been good; differences have arisen on only a handful of issues.

The manual, containing regulations governing the specifications to which a new school must be built and what portion Victoria will pay, has long needed an overhaul, and members of the facilities services branch of the ministry began earlier this year to revise it and the accompanying *Guidebook for the Preparation of a Capital Expenditure Program*.

The BCTF's Schools, Buildings and Grounds Committee was at the same time preparing a list of recommendations, which were presented to the ministry in June.

The most important of these recommendations are:

- A new classroom should have at least 900 square feet (most classrooms are 784 square feet). This is one of the major areas of difference with the ministry, whose officials argue that small spaces are better for conserving energy.

- Schools should have at least 2,700 square feet of space plus 33 feet per student, except for schools with no more than 50 students, which should have 47 feet of space per student. The ministry showed some sympathy, but resisted the suggestion to impose minimum requirements.

- Estimates of a school's capacity should be based on a formula of 25 pupils per classroom, rather than 30. The ministry agrees, but not completely; their proposed formula comes close to the 25 figure proposed by the BCTF. That figure is important, because a school cannot ask for new construction until it is filled to "capacity." A kindergarten classroom with 25 children in the morning and 25 in the afternoon is considered below "capacity."

- The new manual should allow for construction of facilities as needed to permit implementation of new programs. The facilities services branch agreed, and says efforts are being made to improve communication with the programs branch.

- The size of a school site should be based on minimum, not maximum, guidelines. Again, the ministry is wary of minimum guidelines but a compromise is likely.

- A widely-ignored section in the current manual calling for the provision of lunchrooms should be enforced, the BCTF recommended. The ministry has indicated this will in fact probably be removed. A multi-purpose free room,

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Committee vacancies

More information about these vacancies can be obtained from Lise West at the BCTF building.

Rights of Children

The Executive Committee has established a Committee on the Rights of Children, with the job of promoting and safeguarding the rights of children and of advising and assisting teachers on mainstreaming issues.

Applications for the five committee positions — two three-year positions, two two-year positions, and one one-year position — are now being sought.

The new committee's terms of reference are:

1. To design an action program to increase teacher and public support for the rights and responsibilities of children.
 2. To design an action program to ensure that appropriate programs, resources and services are available to
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children with special needs, and their teachers.

3. To monitor the ministry's activities and interagency activities and concerns in order to provide recommendations to the BCTF including interagency involvement.

4. To monitor interministerial activities in respect to children with special needs.

Two students will be invited to participate in an advisory role.

The committee will receive staff support from Fred Long in the Professional Development division.

Application deadline is November 26.

Canada studies

The Canadian Teachers' Federation has established an advisory committee on Canada studies and has invited the BCTF to appoint one member. Applications are sought.

The committee will act in an advisory capacity to the CTF's program for the encouragement of the continued development of Canada studies.

Income Security Committee

The Income Security Committee advises on the various income security schemes, such as long-term sick-leave plans, available to BCTF members. This committee has one vacancy for a two-year term. Application deadline is October 24.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee, which oversees the BCTF's financial and accounting policies, has one vacancy for a three-year term. Application deadline is October 24.

Review commissions

When a teacher is fired because of alleged incompetence, a review commission, similar to boards of reference, is appointed by the ministry to study the

dismissal. One of those appointed is chosen from a list of names submitted by the BCTF. Deadline for application for a BCTF nomination is October 24.

Boards of reference

Under certain circumstances when a teacher is fired the Ministry of Education sets up a committee to study the dismissal. These committees, called boards of reference, include one member chosen by the ministry from a list of nominees submitted by the BCTF.

Teachers who want to be nominated to sit on a board of reference must apply to the Executive Committee before October 24.

Transfer review committees

Transfer review committees examine cases in which teachers have appealed transfers. Teacher representatives on these committees are chosen as for review commissions and boards of reference. Deadline for application for a BCTF nomination is October 24.