

Countdown to the referendum vote

The countdown to the referendum vote has begun.

The intense clash of teachers' strongly-held views on bargaining policy and strategy that has enlivened staffrooms, association meetings and the *Newsletter* letters page since last spring's AGM is winding down.

On February 10 the referendum debate will officially end and, with the dispatch of the first mail ballots, the process of voting will begin. It will continue until

17:00 hours on March 12, the deadline for ballots to reach the BCTF.

The referendum stems from last spring's Annual General Meeting. The 1981 AGM adopted priorities for 1981-82 which committed the federation to push to expand the scope of bargaining to include all conditions of employment and to be granted, through a change in the law, the right to bargain collectively at the local level all terms and conditions of employment. Related to these priorities

was the AGM decision to hold a referendum to see whether or not the membership agreed with the AGM recommendation that the federation should seek new legislation giving local associations the right to choose arbitration, or strike action, to resolve contract disputes.

But at the same time, the AGM approved holding a referendum to determine the membership's view on this important, and contentious issue.

In keeping with the priorities set last spring, the federation has gone to great

lengths to ensure that there has been full study and debate on the issue over the past 10 months. Information on the range of bargaining options contained in the Yorke Report has been widely disseminated to locals. The letters page of the *BCTF Newsletter* has been thrown open to discussion of the issue, and the paper has featured articles on aspects of the topic as well. Almost an entire issue of the *B.C. Teacher* (November-December '81) was devoted to expanded scope of bargaining.

See "Precautions" page 4

BCTF Newsletter

VOLUME 21 NUMBER 8

BROADWAY PRINTERS LTD.

JANUARY 26, 1982

BCTF wins round on English placement tests

*John S. Church
Professional Development*

In February 1980, Brian Smith, minister of education, wrote to the then BCTF President, Al Blakey, to state that because "the service provided by the English Placement Test is intended for the post-secondary level," the ministry would transfer its administration from schools "to the jurisdiction of the post-secondary department." Within days the ministry issued Schools Department Circular 143 to indicate that "commencing in the 1981-82 school year, the entire administration of the English Placement Test will be conducted by the post-secondary institutions of British Columbia." Moreover, the circular noted that "the original purposes of individual student placement" no longer "in most cases" applied.

Imagine then the surprise and anger of teachers when in December 1981 a ministry announcement circular stated that the March 16, 1982 sitting of EPT was to be held in schools either during schools hours or after school. In the latter case, teachers were to be paid \$25 for

See "Exam" page 2



In a meeting with the BCTF executive, BCPVPA past president Hank Stefaniak (left), Michael Heron, second vice-president (centre) and Gordon Moffat, president, explain their reasoning in making a direct representation to the minister on consumer education.

Approached minister directly

Administrators' PSA draws fire of executive for policy breach

The PSA Council and the Representative Assembly will be asked to recommend what action should be taken against the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association for consciously breaching federation policy by making direct representations to the Minister of Education and the B.C. School Trustees Association on implementation of the consumer education program.

The BCTF Executive Committee decided to refer the infraction to these bodies after the BCPVPA executive, in a meeting with the federation executive on January 15, refused to reject their position favouring two-stage implementation of consumer education, which they had presented to the minister, and declared that, under similar circumstances, they would pursue the same independent course on another occasion, despite this being contrary to BCTF policy.

The decision followed a lengthy meeting in which several executive members strongly rebuked the BCPVPA executive for willfully ignoring federation policy and at the end of which President Larry Kuehn warned that the federation's response to the administrators' action would have to be carefully considered as it had important implications for the future of the organization.

"If nothing is done," Kuehn declared, "the whole corporate existence of the federation is in danger."

The controversy stems from the December 4-5 meeting of the BCPVPA executive which unanimously adopted motions directing the association's president to directly contact, by letter and by meeting, the Minister of Education and the BCSTA on the consumer education issue.

On the morning of December 8, BCPVPA President Gordon Moffat and Second Vice-President Michael Heron met with BCSTA President Gary Begin in Vancouver and then, in the afternoon, flew to Victoria for a meeting with Education Minister Brian Smith and Deputy Minister James Carter, presenting them with a brief.

After outlining the adverse impact the planned compulsory consumer education program would have on student programs and staff arrangements, the brief urged the minister to consider two alternative means of implementing the program. In option A, the administrators suggested that appropriate units of consumer education could be assigned to existing prescribed courses; in option B, the association suggested that the compulsory consumer education course could be

implemented but that students could be given the choice of taking it at the Grade 9/10 level or the Grade 11/12 level.

On December 17, the minister publicly announced that students would be given a choice of taking the compulsory course at either the Grade 9/10 level or Grade 11/12, and in his news release quoted from the BCPVPA brief in support of the move.

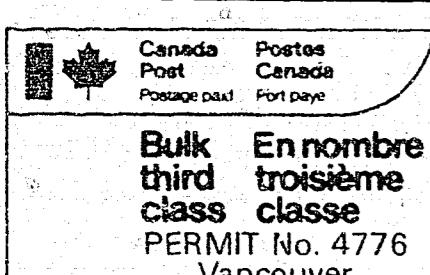
These actions by the BCPVPA were in direct violation of BCTF policy 35.14:

"That it shall not be the right of any provincial specialist association to make representations to any authority or agency outside the BCTF on any matter that is properly the concern of the BCTF."

and with a policy statement on the role of PSAs passed at the Fall '81 RA which states in part:

"It shall be the right of each PSA to foster professional development through activities which may include...
5) Through the BCTF, under the direction of the Executive Committee, influencing Ministry of Education policies and practices, including those relating to school programs, curriculum assessment im-

See "Administrators" page 3



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Executive favours study of best use of BCTF property

The Executive Committee will recommend to the February Representative Assembly that a Vancouver real estate consulting firm be engaged to develop a plan outlining options for how the BCTF's land holdings might best be utilized in the interests of the federation.

A unanimous recommendation from the building subcommittee that the executive recommend to the RA that Devoncore Real Estate Consultants Ltd. be retained to provide property development consulting services was narrowly approved in a 6-5 vote at the executive meeting on January 14.

The executive also decided, pursuant to by-law 5.15 and subject to RA approval, that the building management program budget allocation for consultant fees be increased by \$40,000 to provide funds for this project.

Devoncore President Herb Auerbach presented his company's proposal for developing a plan to enable the federation to get the maximum benefits from its Vancouver properties.

The first phase, he said, would involve a study of both the Sixth Avenue and Burrard and the Broadway and Fir Street parcels from the point of view of correct use, zoning, market trends and abutting land ownership. Following this, Devoncore would develop a plan recommending how BCTF needs and interests might best be met through redevelopment, sale of part (the company initially favours sale, lease or exchange of the Broadway and Fir parcel) or all of the property.



The BCTF executive considers the Devoncore property study proposal.

BCTF concerned about role in teacher preparation

**Tom Hutchison
Government**

Teacher education and certification were part of the executive's busy schedule at its last meeting. On Friday evening, January 16, the executive considered, with the teacher education committee, implications of the ministry's intention to study internship and competence testing as an integral part of teacher certification.

Mark Twain's comment that, "Everyone complains about the weather but nobody does anything about it," applies to teacher education. It is well complained about and studied. Here are some of the studies done in B.C. alone over the past decade or so: the COFFE Report (1969) a commission on the future of the faculty of education at UBC (which had a "shadow", SCOFFE, put out by students); the major Richmond conference (1974); the Windegard Commission (1975); the ministry's position paper on teacher education in B.C. (1975); UBC's ASSIST project (1975); the Joint Board of Teacher Education's McGregor Commission Report (1978); an external report to the president's review committee on the UBC faculty of education (1979); the BCTF's Flanders report which, though dealing with professional development, tapped into a deep well of discontent about teacher preparation (1980); the minister's forum reports which touched on teacher education (1981), and a major joint board report, prepared between 1979 and June 1981, arising out of the McGregor Commission.

Certainly the BCTF has no official place in the control of teacher preparation and certification. Our policies envisage partnership in the design of teacher preparation programs, teacher control over guidelines used in assessing teacher competence and a board of teacher certification on which teachers are the majority. What we have is: two members out of 12 on a joint board which is advisory and essentially powerless; some liaison with faculties; and three members, the majority, on a certification advisory committee with no legal status. Our recent efforts to push a Teaching Profession Act got nowhere.

In essence, faculties prepare, the ministry certifies, and teachers sit in as observers, except for their influence as sponsor teachers, on the processes that bring people into their profession.

On the horizon, teachers have to be concerned about the possibilities of testing of teachers, lengthy interim certifica-

BCTF Newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION
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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.

MEMBER: EDPRESS

CLIVE COCKING
Editor

ISSN 0709-9800

In developing this plan, Devoncore commits itself to working closely with BCTF representatives and in resolving, in its planning, such key issues as: present and future BCTF office needs; determination of best headquarters location; possible sharing of new facilities with other compatible organizations; incorporation of meeting-rooms that might be rented to the public; possible incorporation in any new development of co-op housing; possible benefits of financing with the aid of teacher trust and pension funds; impact of Vancouver's planned rapid transit system; one alignment being expected to pass close by the Sixth and Burrard property; physical site constraints; parking needs and whether it should be provided at no cost; and the extent to which the BCTF feels the need to own its own property.

The first phase, he said, would involve a study of both the Sixth Avenue and Burrard and the Broadway and Fir Street parcels from the point of view of correct use, zoning, market trends and abutting land ownership. Following this, Devoncore would develop a plan recommending how BCTF needs and interests might best be met through redevelopment, sale of part (the company initially favours sale, lease or exchange of the Broadway and Fir parcel) or all of the property.

The Devoncore proposal provoked considerable debate in the executive meeting.

Executive Member Marion Runcie opposed the proposal, arguing that the BCTF should not "encourage profiteering and the real estate spiral."

tions, regulated in-service, expiry of certificates and cheap internship programs. Experience from the U.S.A. shows legislatures and ministries dictating terms to the profession.

In the meantime, at BCTF initiative, a series of meetings among stakeholders in teacher preparation has begun, dealing with possible definitions and modes of implementation. There was interim agreement that teachers should aim at a consortium mode dealing with the professional phase of teacher preparation, and a major place on any board dealing with teacher certification. The BCTF will not countenance any system that sees the development of teacher centres as part of faculty, or any other external agency's mandate, or that envisages a provincial system of in-service co-ordination not determined by teachers' perceived needs.

Future Newsletter, BC Teacher and PD Bulletin items will consider where we are going in the pre-service preparation of teachers, teachers' professional development and teacher certification.

ATA praises Calgary adoption of reforms

The Alberta Teachers' Association has commended the Calgary Board of Education for its recent endorsement of reduced class size and teacher instructional time,

as recommended in the Kratzmann report. A major recommendation of the Kratzmann Commission was that the provincial government, through its School Foundation Program funding, enable school systems in Alberta to provide an average instructional work week of 20 hours and an average of 20 pupils for each teacher.

ATA President K. M. (Mac) Kryzanowski commented, "We are extremely pleased that the Calgary board has formally established as goals the Kratzmann 20-20 recommendations."

Recent samplings of public opinion by the board and the ATA local have shown strong support for such changes and for increased expenditures by the government to help bring them about.

Kryzanowski observed, "Unlike many systems in the province, Calgary Public may be financially able to begin working toward the 20-20 goals. However, I note that some of its trustees have said they are not sure if the board will be able to afford any or part of the cost of realizing them. We hope that this board's courageous display of responsiveness to its constituents, as well as its initiative and leadership in striving to better working and learning conditions in Calgary schools, will serve as an inspiration to the government. By acting to implement the recommendations of the commission it established, the government can ensure that such improvements in education accrue to all children in Alberta."

Speaking in favour, Doug Smart said the present federation building is not flexible enough to meet new organizational and service needs and that "we don't need all this property if we're not going to use it."

President Larry Kuehn said he was against going ahead with the proposal at this time because the BCTF was in the midst of studying major changes in its organization and staff structure, which has implications for building needs. He didn't believe it would be possible to make a sensible decision on the Devoncore proposal until this reorganization was complete.

Countering that there never is a right time as the federation is always in a state of flux and change, First Vice-President Steve Norman urged that the proposal go ahead.

"We are not operating at a profit with our property," Norman pointed out. "It's expensive to hold on to."

In a recorded 6-5 vote the building subcommittee recommendation was accepted. Executive members voting for it included: Pat Clarke, Terry Eastman, Maureen MacDonald, Steve Norman, Joan Robb and Doug Smart. Those voting against were: Al Blakey, Larry Kuehn, Elsie McMurphy, Marion Runcie and Christina Schut.

Exam should be withdrawn

From page 1

invigilating the two and one-half hour exam. That was to be the payment in spite of a recent arbitration award in Victoria which granted teachers required "to perform, routine supervision during the lunch period payment at the rate of \$30 per hour or any portion of an hour."

Because many teachers questioned the action of the ministry in renegeing on its promise that the March 1981 sitting of the EPT would be the last time that the exam would be held in schools, the ministry has now released Schools Department Circular 159 to provide a third option.

This option requires principals and superintendents to submit names of students who will write the exam to the Educational Research Institute of B.C. ERIBC is then responsible for arranging that the students will be able to write the exam on a Saturday morning sitting later in the year.

The Executive Committee at its January 16 meeting adopted a motion urging teachers to select this third option as teachers then will not have to supervise the exam. Unfortunately, Circular 159, by cancelling Schools Department Circular 143, has the effect of legalizing the renegeing by the ministry. Nonetheless, Circular 159 is a partial victory in that it provides an important third option. The exam does not have to be held in schools.

The full victory will come when the exam is withdrawn. It is inappropriate to use students' writing skills to place students in literature classes. It is unfair to apply a test section designed for students whose first language is not English to all students. The test focuses heavily on noting sentence faults. "What is counted counts," and hence the English curriculum of the senior secondary school becomes unduly influenced by what the EPT measures.

Conditions under which students write are not uniform, nor are the multiple conditions and centres where the papers are marked standardized. Lastly, the results can be misused. A student's score from a sitting and subsequent placement can set in motion the powerful law of self-fulfilling prophecy. A student who on an off-day receives a low score may easily and prematurely be categorized as a poor student. Already the anonymity of many students has not been protected. Papers with names attached were released to a university researcher.

In summary, the teachers' primary concerns have been to seek what is best for students.

Administrators deny they were manipulated by the ministry

From page 1

plementation, and school organization and operation."

On January 6, President Kuehn and First Vice-President Steve Norman met with BCPVPA President Moffat to review the issue, following which he and his executive were invited to meet with the BCTF executive to discuss the matter.

Bu Kuehn informed Moffat, principal of David Thompson Elementary School in Kamloops, that the BCPVPA executive would be expected at that January 15 meeting to retract their December position on consumer education, to answer whether their direct representation to the minister and to the BCSTA was "a deliberately provocative act" and "part of a plan to separate from the BCTF", and to make a commitment to follow at all times BCTF policy on representation to outside agencies.

The joint meeting was attended by the full BCTF executive and the BCPVPA executive, including President Moffat, First Vice-President Clifford Smith (principal of Pleasant Valley Secondary, Armstrong), Second Vice-President Michael Heron (principal of Mt. Elizabeth Secondary, Kitimat), and Past President Hank Stefaniak (principal of Prince Rupert Secondary).

The discussion then turned to a review of the timing of the administrators' meeting with the minister and the position they presented to him. Heron said that because they believed Education Minister Smith was to imminently reaffirm his position on consumer education, they felt they had to quickly contact him to attempt to lessen the impact of the program. He said that on December 7 he and Moffat telephoned the federation office to speak to President Kuehn and John Church, acting director of professional development, but were unable to make contact, so the meetings with the BCSTA and the minister went ahead without this.

Noting that he and Church were in the building all that day, Kuehn protested that he found it "incredible" that they were unable to make contact with appropriate BCTF officers or staff but were able to make contact with "some very busy people in Victoria."

"That we reaffirm our position that if the minister is bound and determined to introduce a compulsory consumer education course, alternative B is acceptable as a compromise."

"That we reaffirm that alternative B would not eliminate any existing Grade 9/10 elective nor would it have a major impact upon the senior electives."

"That the decision for the PSA to make

representation directly to the minister and the BCSTA was not a deliberately provocative act, nor was it part of a plan to separate from the BCTF.

"That we inform the BCTF that our PSA executive will make every effort to follow BCTF policy on representation to outside agencies."

Beginning discussion, Executive Member Doug Smart said that, considering all the debate and policy development that had gone on concerning representation to outside agencies, it was totally inappropriate and unacceptable for the BCPVPA to take the action it did. "While you may not have set out to make it a provocative act, it clearly was," Smart said.

Kuehn asked whether the PSA executive would do the same thing again on another occasion.

BCPVA Past President Hank Stefaniak said that based on the information they had at the time, "quite likely my decision would be the same again." Supporting this position, Moffat said, "I certainly felt, and still do feel, that it was justified."

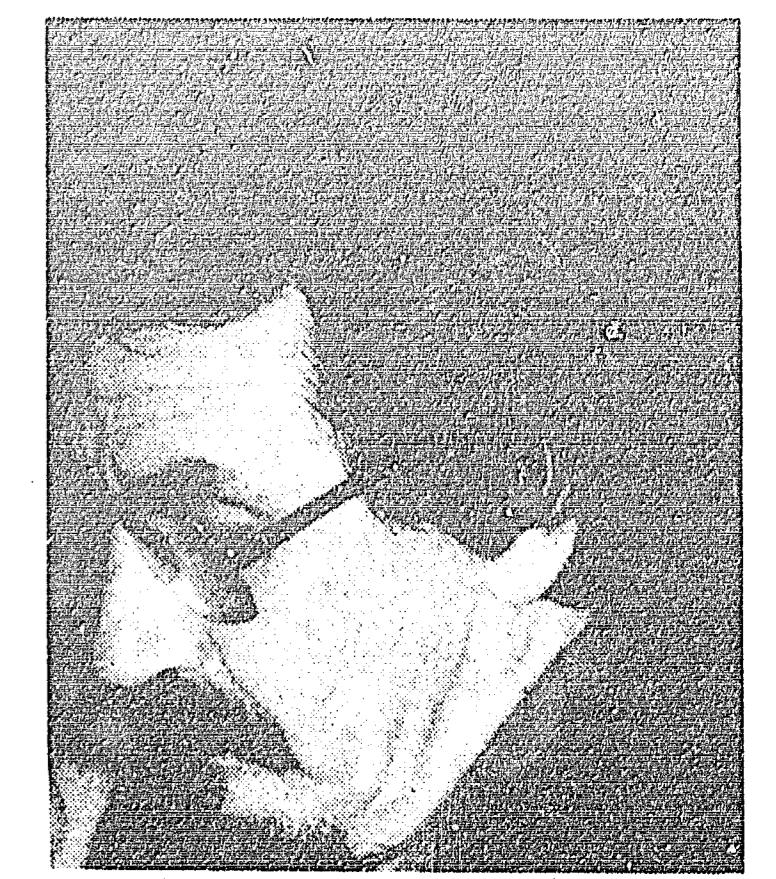
Heron pointed out that they had received information from a ministry of education source, which they believed to be "totally reliable", that the minister was determined to go ahead with a compulsory consumer education course. "We thought that the statement that the minister was about that week [of December 8] to reaffirm his position on Consumer Education 9/10 was an accurate statement."

Heron said the PSA executive believed that the BCTF's information that the chances of consumer education going ahead were dimming — due to Treasury Board opposition to granting the additional \$600,000 to \$700,000 needed for textbooks and the lack of a broad political constituency supporting the new program — was wrong. They had checked with Deputy Minister Carter, Heron said,

pended, he added, Smith was open to discussing this compromise.

Jim Bowman, director of the government division, took issue with Heron's earlier statement that the BCTF's information that the prospects of consumer education going ahead were fading was incorrect. He pointed out that the federation had received information of rising opposition from official and unofficial sources — teachers, trustees, parents. He emphasized three points: that in an early December meeting BCSTA and BCTF representatives had agreed that Smith needed to get off the hook; that the ministry's curriculum branch had already begun "slashing learning outcomes [of the consumer education course] to make it more acceptable"; and that the government was in dire financial straits and prospects of Treasury Board approving an additional \$600,000 to \$700,000 for textbooks was "remote." Bowman argued that, prior to the BCPVPA executive making its representation, all the evidence suggested that if the minister was about to make any announcement at all it would be one of "a retreat" on consumer education because of financial problems and opposition.

Past President Al Blakey then focused on the PSA executive's statement that they would "make every effort to follow BCTF policy on representation to outside agencies" and their admission that they would likely take the same action again in similar circumstances. Blakey criticized the group for their evident intention to



BCPVA President Gordon Moffat suggests that lack of input channels in the federation was part of the problem.

Executive Member Joan Robb protested strongly against this suggestion, pointing out that the PSA has exactly the same channels of input as any other PSA or member in the federation. "It appears that you don't view your PSA as equal to others but as more equal than others and that it has more rights than others," she said. "I find that offensive."

Prior to moving a motion on the issue, President Kuehn stressed that it was not a matter that could be ignored and that whatever the federation's response, it would be "a very significant decision" for

"You're putting forward a policy of having your cake and eating it too!"

the future of the organization. "There can simply be no excuse for what has happened in this situation," he said.

The Executive Committee then unanimously passed the following motion:

"That the BCTF Executive Committee request the advice of the PSA Council and the Representative Assembly on what action should be taken in regard to the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association actions in conflict with the following BCTF policies:

- 35.14
- "Fall '81 RA.
- "Some possible actions might be:
 - (1) take no action;
 - (2) reprimand the PSA;
 - (3) withhold the PSA's BCTF grant;
 - (4) suspend the operations of the BCPVPA for a period of time;
 - (5) withdraw recognition of the BCPVPA as a PSA organization of the BCTF."

IN FEBRUARY YOU WILL BE ASKED TO VOTE ON THIS QUESTION

BALLOT

The 1981 Annual General Meeting has recommended that the BCTF seek a change in the law which would enable a local association to choose either arbitration or strike action to resolve a contract dispute that cannot be settled by negotiation.

YES

NO

Do you agree with this recommendation?

Elaborate precautions taken to ensure smooth, fair vote

From page 1

An explanatory brochure has been sent to all members. BCTF officers and staff representatives have toured virtually all local associations presenting informational workshops — using print materials and providing videotapes — reviewing the options in bargaining impasse resolution.

Now, as the time for voting draws near, similar elaborate steps have been taken to ensure that the referendum vote is conducted smoothly and fairly.

One of the most complicated and crucial initial steps was to ensure that the BCTF's computerized membership name and address file was as complete and accurate as possible. Normally this file always contains some inaccuracy as it lists members from information supplied by school boards which is commonly anywhere from seven days to two months old. A drive was undertaken to encourage members to ensure that the BCTF had their up-to-date address information. A key element was the mailing of the referendum information brochure, "Golden Oldies", which was linked to *Newsletter* advertising warning members that if they didn't get the brochure they were not on the mailing list — and had better phone in their address.

"The 1981 Annual General Meeting

has recommended that the BCTF seek a change in the law which would enable a local association to choose either arbitration or strike action to resolve a contract dispute that cannot be settled by negotiation.

"Do you agree with this recommendation? YES — NO —"

On completing the ballot, members are to mail it, in a supplied self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope, to a special referendum post office box in Vancouver.

Prior to this, a tight control system will be followed to maintain the security of the mailing. The main precautions are that:

- no staff other than those who work in the department will be allowed into the data processing area while the address labels and master list are being run;
- no staff other than those who work in the department will be allowed into the production area while the ballots are being printed and handled;

• all "scrap" ballots (those ruined during printing) will be shredded the same day, or stored in the vault until shredded;

- ballots and labels will be stored in the vault and access restricted to records staff and administrative assistant Shirley Cox.

Members will receive with the ballot a short statement explaining the referendum vote. The ballot paper will consist of two halves: the top tear-off portion will not be received, the policy will be somewhat different. Staff will check with the post office and try to track down the errant ballot. If this is successful it will be sent on; if it fails to turn up, no duplicate ballot will be sent. That is a policy decision of the Executive Committee.

The counting of the ballots will begin on the morning of March 15. The Referendum Technical Committee (comprised of Gordon Eddy, Surrey; Dan Blake, Surrey; and Paddy Boyle, West Vancouver) will supervise the counting, which will be done by BCTF staff. The ballots will first be separated into "yes" and "no" votes. They will then be counted, in bundles of 50, and then a check made to ensure each bundle contains 50 and that they are all the same vote. If there is any discrepancy in the count, a member of the Referendum Technical Committee will check the count. Committee members, using *Roberts Rules of Order*, will also rule on what is an acceptable and what is a spoiled ballot.

The key points are that, for purposes of determining a majority, blank ballots will not be considered in the total. But if a ballot has no vote on it, but has a mark on it, it will be included in the total number of votes cast for purposes of determining a majority. The guiding rule for determining a spoiled ballot is where the intention of the voter is not clear — e.g. where the person makes an unintelligible mark or votes for both options. If the voter does not make a proper "x" — perhaps filling in the square or using a check mark — but whose intention is nonetheless clear, then the ballot will be accepted and included in the count.

The result of the vote will be publicized, the Executive Committee has decided, as soon as possible after March 15.

Questions and answers on the referendum

Would a "yes" vote mean that we would have to join the B.C. Federation of Labour?

No. Two large public sector unions covered under legislation of the type we would be seeking — the Health Employees' Union and the Nurses' Union — do not belong to the B.C. Federation of Labour. On the other hand, the BCTF did belong to the Trades and Labour Congress in the 1940s and 50s, while teachers were governed under compulsory arbitration legislation.

If there is a "yes" vote, how will the BCTF go about getting a change in legislation?

The BCTF would request the government to change the law. Political pressure would be applied through actions such as lobbying MLAs, seeking a commitment from both parties at the time of the next election, and publicizing to teachers the positions taken by each party. Obviously, the stronger the "yes" vote, the better the bargaining position the BCTF has with each party.

The executive has no intention of calling for job action by teachers aimed at getting a change in legislation.

What support would be provided by the BCTF to teachers in locals which decided to go on strike under new legislation?

Once new legislation is in effect the BCTF would have to set up an appropriate support system which would probably include strike pay. The amount of support and the rules of eligibility would have to be determined by a meeting of representatives from all locals. A system of support — including strike pay — would make sense since everyone is likely

to gain through precedent from improvements made by those who choose to strike to make gains which are otherwise impossible.

Sympathy strikes — strikes by teachers in one district with one employer in support of teachers in another district with another employer — would be ineffective and probably illegal, and this form of support is not proposed.

Support for colleagues is essential, but it must be within accepted guidelines.

Would the choice mechanism proposed in the referendum increase local autonomy?

Yes. Each local association would set its own bargaining objectives and would decide which are most important. If an impasse were reached, the local would decide whether the items at issue were important enough for a strike or whether a chance should be taken on arbitration. Different locals with different conditions and priorities would also have the option of choosing different strategies.

A bargaining system which provides flexibility of tactics and some uncertainty and the possibility of job action if it is to produce satisfactory results for the employees. If teachers were to return to complacency and a total dependence on arbitration boards to resolve disputes, they would also return to the inadequate gains of previous years.

A "yes" vote is necessary to maintain the momentum we now have in achieving improved working conditions for teachers.

Referendum Debate

Executive unanimous for "yes" vote

As members of the BCTF executive we are unanimous in our belief that a "yes" vote on the referendum is essential to ensure continued progress in the improvement of our working conditions.

Our experience this past fall clearly proved that our bargaining position was significantly strengthened by job actions taken over the past year. Boards perceived that arbitration was no longer the only consequence of failing to negotiate an agreement.

This is what the referendum is about. Strengthened bargaining power means the chance to gain more control and influence over what we teach, when we teach and how we teach — to have some professional rights.

None of us wants to go on strike. But we all recognize that the need may sometimes arise and we wish teachers in each local to have the right to choose the action — strike or arbitration — which is appropriate for their specific circumstances.

Therefore, we urge a "yes" vote on the referendum.

Al Blakey Steve Norman
Pat Clarke Joan Robb
Terry Eastman Marion Runcie
Larry Kuehn Christina Schut
Maureen MacDonald Doug Smart
Elsie McMurphy

Time for a new deal — from a full pack

Expanding the scope of bargaining under current legislation is like playing solitaire with a couple of cards missing. No matter how determined you are or how wisely you maneuver your cards, you can never complete the game.

As teachers, if we are serious about expanding bargaining and obtaining rights enjoyed by virtually all other organized employee groups, we must actively lobby for legislative changes...

A "yes" vote does not indicate nor mandate a province-wide strike vote over bargaining. A "yes" vote, however, will allow us to move one step closer to ensuring that all teachers in B.C. can enjoy a contract encompassing all terms and conditions of employment...

Of course, the answer to all of these questions is "yes." Certainly, when we

voted "yes" on the referendum, we are voting for change. However, we are voting for positive change — legislation that establishes a genuinely bilateral bargaining system capable of improving the conditions under which we work and protecting gains that have already been made.

Peter Northcott
Prince Rupert Secondary

Pressure group denies others right to choice

Several letters from Nanaimo have been published which do not reflect opinion held by the majority of the members of the Nanaimo District Teachers' Association.

...I have been disappointed with the tone of negative anxiety which seems to have permeated the arguments of those advocating a "no" vote. Let's ask ourselves a series of questions to see if there is a positive way we can approach the referendum:

- Do teachers in B.C. need the legislative right to bargain collectively at the local level all the terms and conditions of our work?
- Does present legislation unfairly restrict the rights of teachers?
- Does the present system of compulsory arbitration have severe limits on its ability to successfully resolve (or even address) all of the complex disputes which can arise in teacher/board contract negotiations?

• Does arbitration become a more meaningful and successful process when entered into voluntarily?

• Do teachers, when faced with a board's refusal to improve intolerable working conditions, need the same legally guaranteed democratic right as other workers — the right to strike?

• Do conditions vary enough from district to district so that arbitration will often be an acceptable means of resolving a negotiation dispute but occasionally job action may be the only way to improve an unacceptable situation?

• Does the AGM's recommendation to vote "yes" on the referendum ensure a local association's autonomy in its relationship to its board?

Of course, the answer to all of these questions is "yes." Certainly, when we

should have a choice according to individual conscience. I admit the right of such a group to make its opinions known, but I object to the tactics being used to manipulate and misinform the membership. Offering a free choice to members is not likely, I believe, to open the doors wide to a communist takeover, nor is it an insult to the deity. It is especially difficult to understand why some Nanaimo administrators should feel that freedom of choice for the membership should threaten their positions or interests. After all, the Terrace dispute began, I understand, over the treatment of two administrators. Can Nanaimo not stand an investigation into the appointment, promotion, and evaluation of administrators like the one that took place in Terrace?

It is said that the actions of the pressure group is "not important" and that "it just shows that teachers are only interested in money." I do not believe that the majority of Nanaimo teachers consider that teachers in trouble in Terrace are no concern of theirs, or that the only value involved in being a professional teacher is money, or that they, or other teachers in B.C., wish to protect the membership of the BCTF from democracy, open discussion, and free choice.

I also believe that BCTF members, anxious to win election to higher office in the organization, should be foiled in their attempts to use the referendum as a tool to further their own political careers at the expense of freedom and democracy in the BCTF...

N. Currier
Nanaimo District Senior Secondary School

Bring BCTF back to reality — vote "no"

Quite a referendum! Vote "yes" and you support strike. Vote "no" and maybe you support a strike.

I'll do my best and stubbornly believe "no" is opposite to "yes". I sincerely hope the passive majority of teachers exert themselves enough to vote "no" and bring the BCTF back to some sense of reality.

Doug Steinson
Chilliwack Senior Secondary

Not "Motherhood" — a "Big Brother" issue

The referendum statement is ambiguous and beguiling. The first part of the referendum asks if you wish a change in the law. To this proposition probably most would say "yes". The next part in the referendum suggests local associations should have the option "to choose". Again probably most would say "yes".

But after being charmed by such enabling requests the real bottom line merges: "Do you wish to add the option to strike as a means of resolving contract disputes?" To this the answer must be "no".

The strike option approach, however chosen, is not in our best interests. The costs involved in the strike option approach are high and the benefits few. Current evidence demonstrates that the average teacher settlements produced by negotiation and arbitration have outpaced the settlements of any other comparable group in B.C. Comparison with the BCGEU, a union with the strike option, reveals that teacher settlements are much superior:

BCGEU	Average Teacher Settlements
1979	8%
1980	8%
1981	8%

Further evidence as published in a recent BCTF document called "How Does B.C. Compare" indicates that we have done as well if not better in improving salaries and working conditions during the past decade as provinces that have full collective bargaining including the right to strike.

Let me summarize some reasons for voting "no".

1. The ambiguity in the wording of the referendum question alone necessitates a "no" response. Ambiguity is not acceptable when dealing with issues that so affect our financial, personal and professional well-being...

What appears on the surface to be a simple "Motherhood" issue is in fact a "Big Brother" issue. Provincial bargaining, the most likely tradeoff in our negotiations to achieve a strike option necessitates a shift to central control. Creation of a centralizing bureaucracy encourages a style of leadership that tells us how to

think, what to think and when to think. Individually and collectively we are too independent to let this happen. A "no" vote will ensure that it won't happen, at least on this issue.

Bill D. R. Friesen
President
North Vancouver Teachers' Association

Strike doesn't always mean full walkout

I support the choice option in the upcoming referendum. Some teachers are very concerned with the word "strike". They see strike as a full withdrawal of services. This need not be the case. This fall, teachers in six local associations took a form of limited strike action when they waged their work-to-rule campaigns. A strike is defined as "... an act or omission that ... restricts ... services." (This definition comes from the Labour Code of B.C.) Teachers in these six locals were forced to take very difficult actions in order to gain conditions, rights and salaries that they believed were fair.

Coming from one of the six locals that worked to rule, I hope that we never again have to take any job action but I want our local to have the right to make a choice. Conditions in our district have changed for the better but there is no guarantee that they will always stay that way.

Vote "yes" and give locals the right to local autonomy.

Don Walmley
President
Hope Teachers' Association

Teachers served well by present system

The choice option being proposed in the upcoming referendum is one that teachers should regard with skepticism.

As indicated in the workshop material there are trade-offs that one can expect if such an option was legislated. The current legislation covering those groups with the choice option has, in many cases, weakened, not strengthened their bargaining position.

Saskatchewan teachers, who have the choice option and the legal right to bargain for all conditions and terms of employment, actually have fewer items covered in their contracts than we do in

Only the choice option being recommended in the referendum provides the flexibility to meet the diverse needs of teachers in different situations.

Since we did so well in bargaining this year, why do we need to change the system?

The significant gains this year were made in a bargaining climate conditioned by the Terrace strike of last June, by job actions taken by a number of locals this fall, and by the referendum itself. The success was created by some teachers being unwilling to accept a continuation of salary increases less than the cost of living and inadequate working conditions; these teachers consequently took action.

A bargaining system requires flexibility of tactics and some uncertainty and the possibility of job action if it is to produce satisfactory results for the employees. If teachers were to return to complacency and a total dependence on arbitration boards to resolve disputes, they would also return to the inadequate gains of previous years.

A "yes" vote is necessary to maintain the momentum we now have in achieving improved working conditions for teachers.

B.C. (Yorke Report, 1981). The "trade-offs" are very limiting in that case.

In B.C. it is not unreasonable to expect some form of zonal or provincial bargaining as a trade off. Even zonal bargaining would make a mockery of "local" choice.

The present scope of bargaining must be expanded, but arbitration itself has served us well. Over the last ten years B.C. teachers have maintained their relative position when compared to other provinces in terms of salaries and have made great gains in terms of class size and pupil-teacher ratios.

Through hard work we have made the system work. Let's not risk it all. Vote "no" in February.

Stewart Grafton
Watson Elementary
Chilliwack

Right to strike is a basic human right

Why do teachers need the right to strike? Because without it we can never win the dignity we deserve as working educators. Every group of organized workers in B.C. has more contractual rights over its members' workplace lives than do teachers. Virtually every teacher group in Canada has more rights to bargain learning and working conditions than teachers in B.C.

Teachers often work in situations that are reminiscent of little feudal fiefs, with the administrator as feudal lord and teachers as his/her vassals. Without contracts guaranteeing working conditions, teachers often have to rely on their "good relationship" with the administration to avoid getting split classes, the worst facilities, most undesirable teaching assignments or grades, etc...

Nobody likes to go out on strike just for the hell of it. It costs too much in lost wages and (in the case of the school system) the students' educational needs. But surely there has to come a time when the managers of the school system must be told that teachers want certain provisions in their contracts as guaranteed rights and that "business as usual" will not continue unless these gains are won.

In this sense, the right to strike must be

Turn to page 8

JANUARY 27, 1982

Referendum Debate

Final arguments from two prominent members

THE AGM'S PROPOSAL makes good sense. I hope teachers will support it strongly in the referendum. The AGM proposal says that we can no longer simply rely on arbitration to settle our contract disputes and we cannot afford to rely solely on strike action either. The proposal is that locals should be able to choose between the two.

As a local association president who has been actively involved in bargaining, I believe that having that choice will strengthen our overall bargaining position. It will provide us with the opportunity to make effective and responsible decisions about the future of our work life at the local association level.

I will be voting "yes" in the referendum for three important reasons:

First, I'm voting "yes" because I think we need the choice option if we are really serious about bargaining learning and working conditions.

Arbitration is just too simplistic a system to deal with problems as complex as class size, preparation time and personnel practices. Teachers in my local have just been told by the B.C. Court of Appeal that arbitration isn't the way to achieve leave of absence provisions in our agreement — they should be agreed to by both parties.

It isn't surprising that arbitration hasn't produced results in non-money areas either in B.C., or in Manitoba, where all terms and conditions of employment can legally be arbitrated.

What we need to make improvements in our teaching conditions is the legal ability to put pressure on our employer to take our proposals seriously in negotiations — where it counts. The AGM proposal gives us that ability. If teaching really means more to us than just money, we can't afford to cling to the present arbitration-only system.

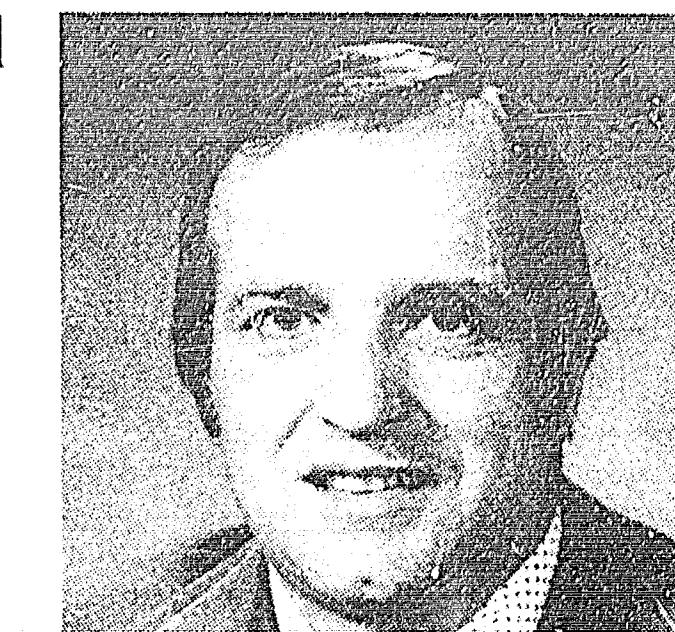
Some teachers have argued that we have done well under the present system of bargaining in B.C. and that, therefore, we should not change it. That's ridiculous.

When our colleagues in different parts of Canada have made some of the following gains: (a) a twenty-hour instructional week and better, (b) class size maximums below those in B.C., (c) due process for clauses for personnel matters and, until last fall, salaries, it is long past time that we overhauled our system of bargaining in B.C. To not do so would not only fail to serve our interests as teachers but also to short change future generations of students in this province.



Ken Novakowski says...

YES NO



...says Tom Krall

Second, I'm voting "yes" because the AGM's proposal will reinforce local decision-making about our bargaining.

Many local associations enjoy positive relationships with their boards and will likely reach negotiated settlements under any bargaining system. However, teachers with boards who refuse to negotiate in good faith can do little under present bargaining regulations. The choice mechanism in the AGM proposal would allow such locals the appropriate means by which to effectively change their situation. No teacher association is ever likely to take the decision to go on strike lightly, particularly when the choice mechanism allows the option of arbitration. The choice mechanism provides for local association decision: the BCTF cannot initiate a strike or make that decision for an association.

Unless you vote "yes" on the referendum you are saying that you lack faith in the ability of your colleagues to make careful and appropriate decisions about resolving bargaining disputes in their districts. Unless you vote "yes" on the referendum, you are denying yourself a future opportunity that a change in board or district might present in respect to the need for action.

If a strike were ever to occur in a local association, it is probable that monies from a central strike fund would be used to assist such unfortunate colleagues. The teachers on strike make the greater sacrifice; one made by their decision. Our support of the strike fund is offset by the benefits gained for all teachers when one association decides to take action. I'm prepared to place my faith in the democratic process and in the collective judgement of my colleagues in other locals by supporting such a strike fund.

Third, I'm voting "yes" because the choice option is the best way for professionals to bargain.

Some B.C. teachers have argued that having the right to strike is inconsistent with our status as professionals. Yet most other teachers in Canada and virtually all other professional employees in B.C. now have the right to strike. Does that mean they are less professional than us? I think not. Does that mean that a teacher who favours withdrawal of services because he/she has a class of 34 in a poorly ventilated classroom is less professional than a teacher willing to accept such conditions? I think not.

Unless you vote "yes" on the referendum you are saying that you lack faith in the ability of your colleagues to make careful and appropriate decisions about resolving bargaining disputes in their districts.

Unless you vote "yes" on the referendum, you are denying yourself a future opportunity that a change in board or district might present in respect to the need for action.

Voting "yes" on the referendum is keeping our options open. Voting "yes" is demonstrating confidence in ourselves, our colleagues and our future. Vote "yes".

Ken Novakowski is President of the Langley Teachers' Association and also presently serving as President of the B.C. Social Studies Teachers' Association.

B.C. TEACHERS must realize that we presently have proven strategies to resolve unacceptable working and learning conditions. Nanaimo's teachers in 1976 demonstrated that they were not prepared to compromise ideals during the CUPE/board strike/lockout. Shuswap teachers in 1980 found a means of making their trustees replace district administrators who were unreasonable and unfair. Terrace teachers in 1981 effectively resolved unhealthy and unreasonable personnel practices in their district.

These active local associations took appropriate actions under the existing bargaining model. They did not require a change in legislation to achieve what was just and fair.

There are those who erroneously associate teacher actions with the strike tactic. A strong B.C. Teachers' Federation is not tied to the outmoded strike tactic as a regular part of the bargaining process. Nor should it ever be locked into that inflexible model. Teachers should respond to the referendum with a resounding NO!

To begin with, the choice mechanism being proposed has not proven to be an effective bargaining model. Only the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation uses this model and their experience is a limited one. Originally, Saskatchewan had only strike as a means of settling an unresolved dispute and their federation worked diligently to have the arbitration process added to their model.

Labor leaders across North America openly recognize that the strike tactic is a 19th century bargaining mecha-

nism. Teachers frustrated with poor teaching and learning conditions, and harassed by poor personnel practices should not look to the strike option as the panacea for these ills. We have only to look at the Kratzmann report on the 1980 Calgary Public Schools strike to confirm that point.

Advocates for strike by B.C. teachers are quick to point out that the arbitration model is ineffective. Often more than 50 per cent of our 74 school districts end up in arbitration while in Ontario less than five per cent of their bargaining units resort to strike/lockout action.

Surely even the most ardent strike advocate can see the fallacy of that argument. Faced with a marginally acceptable package, teachers in B.C. will often opt for arbitration realizing that by presenting a strong case to an arbitration board, they will make bigger gains. Teachers in Ontario, faced with acceptance of the same marginal package or strike, often reluctantly accept the package. They have come to realize that the costs of strike are too great to pay except in the most extreme circumstances.

The four-month strike/lockout by Calgary's teachers in 1980 only confirms that strike is not an effective tactic for employees in the public sector. The public employer is not subjected to the economic pressures of the private employer. On the contrary, the public employer realizes economic gains during a strike/lockout situation. What a temptation that would present for some school boards! What a temptation that would present for some governments! The introduction of the strike option

would almost certainly bring with it lockout. Teachers would lose the use of current job action tactics because any form of job action would be countered by a general lockout.

B.C. teachers are able to negotiate for expanded terms and conditions of employment under the existing bargaining model. This year's thrust and the resulting impressive gains across the province are definite indicators that if teachers choose to become active and vocal, substantial advances can be made. Our present bargaining model, with its 74 units, allows B.C. teachers to whipsaw gains made from one local to another.

Public opinion of B.C. schools is on the upswing. Let's ride that crest and work towards goals that can be realized through tough negotiations and strategies that are unique and unpredictable. School boards are indeed beginning to recognize that changing times have created changing work expectations for teachers. Trustees are as anxious as teachers to avoid the doom and gloom consequences of the no-win strike/lockout bargaining tactic.

I am proud of the gains my coal-mining grandfather made under oppressive economic and living and working conditions. They used a tactic that was appropriate for their times. They did not have the organizational, economic and political clout that the B.C. Teachers' Federation realizes today. To resolve existing inadequacies, today's teachers need to use a more imaginative approach than the inflexible strike/lockout tactic.

Teaching is a stressful occupation. A strike/lockout model brings with it additional stresses to which the membership should not be subjected.

B.C. teachers need to send a strong message to the federation leadership. Teachers obviously support the federation's objective of establishing a broader scope of bargaining. A "no" response to the referendum question should indicate strong support to continue the fight without making the strike/lockout tactic a part of the regular bargaining mechanism.

Let's use strategies and teacher actions that are appropriate for our times!

Tom Krall is a teaching principal at Uplands Park Elementary School, Nanaimo, a Nanaimo GR and a former member of the Executive Committee in 1978-80.

Bargaining impasse resolution: the options and their implications

David Yorke

BCTF Associate Counsel

The 1981 Annual General Meeting decided to recommend to the membership of the federation that the BCTF seek a change in the law which would enable a local association to choose either arbitration or strike action to resolve a contract dispute that cannot be settled by negotiation.

This summary* is an attempt to encourage a considered and rational approach to discussing the [referendum] issue, by providing some basic information about, and some basic arguments for and against, the various "impasse resolution mechanisms" that are found in employee bargaining in Canada.

In all bargaining systems, every attempt is made to encourage good-faith bargaining leading to a voluntary, bilateral agreement that both sides can live with. In most cases the legislation provides for some third-party "mediation" or "conciliation" to help the two sides reach an agreement. In most bargaining systems, over 90 percent of all contract disputes will be settled by these means. In a small minority of cases, the parties cannot agree, either on the terms of a settlement, or on a mutually agreeable method of resolving the dispute (such as voluntary arbitration). To deal with those cases, the law governing the bargaining specifies the impasse resolution method that will be used to end the dispute.

Thus, the referendum question is not on how all teacher bargaining disputes

will be resolved. It is about what the last resort will be in the cases where extensive attempts to negotiate a settlement have failed.

In spite of many attempts by employee relations experts to devise "a better way," only three basic impasse mechanisms are found in legislation governing the bargaining of Canadian teachers, and other employees. They are:

1. Strike/lockout

A strike is the full or partial withdrawal of services by employees, to attempt to induce the employer to agree to the terms and conditions of employment they are proposing. Generally, the employer has a corresponding right to "lock out" employees, to obtain their agreement to the terms being offered. This action generates economic and other forms of pressure on both sides, as well as demonstrating to each other the commitment they have to the bargaining issues in dispute. The strike/lockout, by these pressures, softens the bargaining stance of both parties and eventually forces them, however reluctantly, to come to an agreement.

2. Compulsory arbitration

Compulsory arbitration is a mechanism which substitutes the decision of an outside party for the agreement of the bargaining parties. At some point (which in the case of B.C. teachers is set out specifically in the legislation) the parties are obliged by law to refer issues in dispute to an arbitrator, or arbitration board. The arbitrator, who is agreed

upon by the two parties, or in default of agreement, by some government or judicial official, hears the data and views presented by both sides and issues an award, which settles the issues in dispute. The award is binding on both parties.

3. Employee — choice

Employee-choice is a system in which either arbitration, or strike action, may be employed in the event that negotiations fail. Which method is used is determined by the employee side at some specified time in each round of bargaining. Their choice binds both sides. Once it is made, the bargaining proceeds, and in case of impasse, must be resolved by the method elected by the employees.

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Strike/lockout: positive

1. It is the method that is most consistent with the principle that there should be agreement between employees and their employer on the terms under which work and services are performed.

2. It is the only method in which both sides retain ultimate control over the final outcome. A proposal may be insisted on,

or resisted, for as long as it is regarded as important enough to be worth the costs.

3. Bargaining is focused on the matters that are of real concern to the two sides; extraneous issues inserted as tactics are filtered out.

4. It produces the greatest and the most effective pressure to conduct serious bargaining and reach agreement, as there are serious costs that both sides are aware of, in the event of failure to agree.

5. There is a cathartic effect — conflict that exists between the parties is brought into the open and dealt with, which can improve relationships in the long term.

Strike/lockout: negative

1. There is economic loss — the wages of the employees stop coming in, offset only by partial strike pay which other employees indirectly provide. Financial obligations continue.

2. In a public service strike, there is little economic pressure as there are no "profits" being affected. Other forms of pressure (social/political) must be substituted if a strike is to be effective.

3. A school board may lock out a group of teachers which may be unwilling to strike and have little bargaining power.

4. Personal relations with supervisors, other teachers, family and parents may suffer as a result of events in a strike/lockout.

Compulsory arbitration — positive

1. There is no economic loss, apart from the costs of the arbitration proceedings.

2. There is rarely personal discomfort of any kind.

3. It is an inherently conservative process.

Because arbitrators look to existing standards on which to base their awards, arbitration does not engender "breakthroughs" or advances in comparison to other groups, and often results in a gradual falling back in standards.

4. Arbitrators are unfamiliar with the system they make decisions about. Thus, they strongly tend to restrict awards to money matters only, and refuse to make decisions about operational matters such as workload, assignment or content of duties, and personnel matters. Arbitration is not equipped to handle "expanded scope" issues.

5. No test of membership commitment is required, with that pressure being replaced by rational advocacy and the ability to rely on levels of salaries and conditions achieved by other sectors of the economy.

6. Arbitration is not equipped to handle "expanded scope" issues.

7. Arbitration is not equipped to handle "expanded scope" issues.

8. Arbitration is not equipped to handle "expanded scope" issues.

Compulsory arbitration — disadvantages

1. It is not bilateral decision-making. It does not require (or promote) agreement between the parties.

2. Decision-making is not based on the principles of equality and fairness.

Advantages

1. It provides the flexibility to tailor the resolution mechanism to the specific dispute.

2. It is a straightforward money dispute, the local may elect to arbitrate; if it is an important or complex working conditions issue, the local may believe that the only effective resolution would be by strike action.

3. There is continuity of delivery of educational services. There is no disruption of programs and planning, the employee-relations process not having any direct bearing on the education process.

4. Arbitrators are unfamiliar with the system they make decisions about. Thus, they strongly tend to restrict awards to money matters only, and refuse to make decisions about operational matters such as workload, assignment or content of duties, and personnel matters. Arbitration is not equipped to handle "expanded scope" issues.

5. In non-money matters, it is difficult or impossible to construct an objective standard to measure the conflicting claims of the two sides, and hence decisions are not rational in that sense.

6. There is a chilling effect on real negotiations, because both sides have nothing to lose by reserving their real bargaining positions for the arbitrator. There is a disincentive to make the reasonable concessions which lead to agreements.

7. Having a choice carries with it the possibility of membership division over which choice to elect, and individual dissatisfaction that an unacceptable choice has been made. (This, of course,

cannot arise when there is no choice between impasse mechanisms.)

2. It may be accompanied by "trade-offs" in other areas of the legislation.

Existing employee-choice systems have either placed restraints on the conduct of strike action ("cooling off" periods, or "designation") or have limited the scope of items that may be arbitrated (though not limiting what may be agreed to). A change in the bargaining structure towards a larger unit might also be joined with a change in impasse mechanism.

3. While either the pure right to strike or the right to arbitrate all conditions would each require convincing government to change the law, the task of persuasion might be greater because of the relative rarity and advantages to teachers of employee-choice. A case would have to be established that the services provided, and bargaining position of teachers, is analogous to employees who presently have access to that mechanism.

None of the above advantages or disadvantages is inherently conclusive. All must be considered and weighed in arriving at the decision that will best suit the needs of B.C. teachers in bargaining the terms of their compensation and work lives.

*This is a shortened version of David Yorke's summary of basic factors in the referendum debate. Local presidents have been sent copies of an expanded discussion of this topic along with other referendum information.

Referendum Debate

From page 5

seen as a basic human right. This right was one of the fundamental issues in the struggles of the Solidarity union in Poland prior to the current imposition of martial law. Interestingly, some of the same people who crow the loudest about Polish freedom, have no hesitation in denying Canadian workers the basic rights that Polish workers fight for. Teachers in B.C. have no legal mechanism guaranteeing their right to strike to win contract demands.

The current referendum on what kind of mechanism teachers want for resolving contract disputes with their employers offers us a first step towards redressing this injustice...

It's high time that we demand for ourselves the same rights which other workers in the society have. This will create the conditions for teachers to bargain with some strength and stop begging school boards for learning and working conditions handouts.

It will also create the conditions for greater unity of action between teachers and other workers in the educational system and the public sector as a whole. Quebec teachers have gone a long way down this road. It shouldn't surprise us that the Yorke report reveals that they have the best learning and working conditions clauses in contract in the whole country.

Bob Rosen
Holly Elementary
Surrey

Bargaining results shows system works

A crucial issue facing all teachers [next] month will be the referendum. We have been inundated with reasons from the executive as to why we need the option of strike. We are told that this option would enable teachers to bargain for items such as learning and working conditions apparently denied under the School Act. We are told that the option would restore a balance between teachers and trustees in the bargaining process. We are being led to believe that we would decide our own fate in implementing this change.

This writer for one has grave concerns over this rationale. I plan to vote "no" for the following reasons:

- 1) During the past negotiating year salary awards have ranged from 16.5 per cent to 18 per cent and above both through negotiated settlements and arbitration awards.

This examination of impasse resolution mechanisms considered technical definitions of each, examples of Canadian jurisdictions mandating each, the advantages and disadvantages of each, and an explanation of the recommendation of the 1981 Annual General Meeting that the third option, employee choice, be preferred. I believe this is entirely in keeping with the direction given by the AGM that there be full study and open debate, and I resent the implication that I would not present a balanced view.

The foregoing comments are not to suggest that I do not have a personal view. I do. I firmly support the employee-choice option.

It is very clear to me that while some kinds of disputes may well be settled through third-party arbitration, some other kinds of disputes, such as when teachers' professional judgements are involved, must be resolved by the principals themselves. To take advantage of what can work best for varying issues at varying times, we must have the right to choose whichever mechanism is best suited to the nature of the particular dispute. Only a vote in favour of the employee-choice option can begin the process to legislative change that would bring about this right for B.C. teachers.

Amrit Manak
James Thompson Elementary
Richmond

Choice option best for expanding scope

We have just concluded one of our most successful bargaining seasons. We achieved salary increases which will help to restore our position relative to other employee groups. We also made major gains on scope of bargaining items. Our gains were made because of a well organized, highly co-operative campaign conducted at the provincial, zonal and local

levels. They were made because teachers were committed to expand their scope of bargaining and were willing to use diverse tactics.

This fall, most local associations and boards reached agreement without impasse. However, twelve locals were forced to resolve impasses. Six submitted their contracts to arbitration and six others took work-to-rule job action. In other locals this year, teachers used other tactics including strike, "in dispute", political action and media campaigns to resolve impasses.

Teachers in a local must have the right to take the action they believe is necessary for them to achieve their objectives. No local association should be denied the right to choose the method of dispute resolution most appropriate to its membership.

We believe that the most effective method for B.C. teachers to continue to expand our scope of bargaining is to continue to give local associations their right to autonomy. It is imperative to support the choice option in the upcoming referendum. The political leadership of the federation is to be commended for setting the stage for local bargaining this fall.

The readiness of boards referred to by Kirby was not evident in all districts. Metro locals were met with a stone wall when it came to negotiating scope items. In Langley, the board's reluctance to negotiate anything other than salaries and bonuses into our agreement was met by strongly supported demonstrative actions by Langley teachers. The result was a good final settlement with several working conditions items in a single agreement.

Kirby suggests that one of the more significant developments came "not out of negotiations, but out of arbitration awards in Greater Victoria and Golden". The Greater Victoria award is terrific. It is identical (even better) to one gained in Langley through negotiation and mass pressure by the local on the board with the objective of achieving a duty-free lunch break for all Langley teachers. Surely the Langley clause and the improvements gained in noon supervision in 29 other locals through negotiations this fall had a telling impact on the arbitration board in Victoria.

I was not "wandering the province", I went to three locals in my zone. I was not "preaching the Executive Gospel on impasse mechanisms" whatever that may be, I did co-facilitate a workshop that examined the three options that exist in Canada for resolution of bargaining impasses: (1) arbitration, (2) strike/lockout, (3) employee choice of arbitration or strike/lockout.

This examination of impasse resolution mechanisms considered technical definitions of each, examples of Canadian jurisdictions mandating each, the advantages and disadvantages of each, and an explanation of the recommendation of the 1981 Annual General Meeting that the third option, employee choice, be preferred. I believe this is entirely in keeping with the direction given by the AGM that there be full study and open debate, and I resent the implication that I would not present a balanced view.

The listing of local highlights reporting on gains in negotiations is impressive. B.C. teachers did well. It is indicative of what an active profile and appropriate pressure can do.

Dale Lauber
Yvonne Hartup
Ron Pratt
Anne Milliken
Ken Novakowski
Langley Teachers' Association
Bargaining Team

Arbitration unlikely to make breakthroughs

As teachers who participated actively in bargaining this fall, we would like to make some comments regarding the remarks of BCTF Economic Welfare Director Jurd Kirby as reported in the last issue of the *Newsletter*.

Kirby refers to the readiness of trustees to bargain freely and openly this fall and the fact that a good deal of amicable settlements were reached with no show of force at all. He offers no comment on why this was the case this fall and not the year before or the year before that. Clearly, the BCTF scope campaign and upcoming referendum and the teacher strike in Terrace last June had a considerable amount to do with trustee readiness in some districts. The political leadership of the federation is to be commended for setting the stage for local bargaining this fall.

Teachers in a local must have the right to take the action they believe is necessary for them to achieve their objectives. No local association should be denied the right to choose the method of dispute resolution most appropriate to its membership.

We believe that the most effective method for B.C. teachers to continue to expand our scope of bargaining is to continue to give local associations their right to autonomy. It is imperative to support the choice option in the upcoming referendum. The political leadership of the federation is to be commended for setting the stage for local bargaining this fall.

Bastion school trustees were especially outraged that so many principals took part in the strike and were adamant in stating that they would not be rehired. Mr. Wood B. Superintendent, a principal for 18 years, said, "How come BCGEU gets a 14 per cent indexed pension and we get 8 per cent. All the ferry workers did go on strike for three days. I'm deeply disappointed that the government wouldn't listen to our reasonable arguments. I can understand firing mere teachers, but how could they fire me, I make more than the Prime Minister?"

Several of the ex-teachers are now working at Harmake, but the adjustment has been difficult. One ex-teacher said he couldn't cope with the stress of suddenly being put into a higher income bracket.

The board did say, however, that the 13 first-year teachers will not be fired, only disciplined, because they didn't know what they were doing and were led astray by those who should have known better.

An interesting result of all this is the hospitalization of 37 teachers who are members of a group known as the V.V.S.S.M. (Very Vocal Short-sighted Minority). These teachers had worked themselves into an emotional frenzy at their regular "Walk All Over Us" meeting. After chanting "We told you so" for two hours, 30 members of the group proceeded to repeatedly walk into a brick wall; seven others received severe whiplash when they pulled their heads out of the sand too quickly. Mr. Dean Short-Sighted, leader of the group, commented "This is nothing new for us."

As well, our local has just had the B.C. Appeal Court tell us that it is beyond the jurisdiction of an arbitration board to rule on maternity leave or any other leave of absence. This was a final result of a 1979 arbitration. Our local gained leaves of absence clauses in our agreement this fall through negotiation and pressure on our board. The suggestion in Mr. Kirby's remarks that arbitration as a process can somehow lead to breakthroughs is highly questionable.

I was not "preaching the Executive Gospel on impasse mechanisms", whatever that may be, I did co-facilitate a workshop that examined the three options that exist in Canada for resolution of bargaining impasses: (1) arbitration, (2) strike/lockout, (3) employee choice of arbitration or strike/lockout.

This examination of impasse resolution mechanisms considered technical definitions of each, examples of Canadian jurisdictions mandating each, the advantages and disadvantages of each, and an explanation of the recommendation of the 1981 Annual General Meeting that the third option, employee choice, be preferred. I believe this is entirely in keeping with the direction given by the AGM that there be full study and open debate, and I resent the implication that I would not present a balanced view.

The listing of local highlights reporting on gains in negotiations is impressive. B.C. teachers did well. It is indicative of what an active profile and appropriate pressure can do.

One trustee claimed he could smell alcohol on the teachers. Another said that teachers set a poor example for their students. One teacher, who refused to be identified said, "we had no choice, they won't bargain with us."

Minister backs firing of teachers

VICTORIA Education Minister Beany Smithe today put his full support behind the firing of 500 Bastion City teachers. These teachers staged an illegal one-day strike to protest the mismanagement of their pension fund. The strike leaders, members of the Bastion T.A. executive, are still being held in custody. Notes smuggled out from the jail indicate that the prisoners are being mistreated.

Apparently, their cigarette ration is limited to three per day.

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Perspective

Out of bureaucracy's womb — a radical birth

Jim Bowman
Government Division

Reading schools department circulars, issued by the Ministry of Education, is not something that preoccupies most teachers but an exception should be made in the case of Circular 157, entitled, "Administrative Handbook Revisions", issued in December 1981. The prosaic language in which it is written should not lull readers into thinking that it is just another dull announcement and part of the fallout from the bureaucratic wars between the federation and the Ministry of Education. In the context of this province's education system Circular 157 is a very radical document.

In part it states:

"The Minister in an address to the BCTF indicated that in Circular 144 the phrase *in consultation with teachers* should have been included in some cases after the word *principal*. The inclusion of this phrase is to ensure that, where appropriate, consultation will take place prior to decisions being made. These changes were not made when Circular 144 was incorporated into the Administrative Handbook and will be included in the first revision."

Before analysing the importance to teachers of that statement, the gestation period of Circular 157 should be examined so that readers will not "give to necessity the praise of virtue." The ministry has been brought reluctantly to this birth and it deserves little credit.

The nature of Circular 144 has been described previously in these pages. It appeared only after a great deal of preparation and subsequent to a large number of public and professional forums conducted by the minister. Issued in March 1981, it provided advance notice of a number of amendments to the Administrative Handbook. Those amendments affected letter grades, reporting on students, permanent record cards, curriculum requirements and time allotments for both elementary and secondary schools, program planning, graduation requirements, locally developed courses, school program evaluation, consumer education, and non-instructional days. As you can see, all matters of consequence to teachers.

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The board did say, however, that the 13 first-year teachers will not be fired, only disciplined, because they didn't know what they were doing and were led astray by those who should have known better.

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The listing of local highlights reporting on gains in negotiations is impressive. B.C. teachers did well. It is indicative of what an active profile and appropriate pressure can do.

If teachers are "professionals", why must we beg, resort to mob action or illegal work stoppages? To maintain the dignity of the profession we must be able to fully bargain as equals with both the school board and the government. I strongly urge you to vote "yes" on the upcoming referendum.

I. Neill-St. Clair
Quarterway Elementary
Nanaimo

News and views from the Bastion Times

These articles recently appeared in the *Bastion Times*:

R.C.M.P. battle rioting teachers

BASTION CITY About 35 RCMP officers, including some from as far away as Duncan and Port Alberni who responded to a request for emergency assistance, had their hands full at last Tuesday night's regular school board meeting. The trouble began when about 30 placard-carrying teachers, demanding A.P.D.T., invaded the meeting. Irate trustees, claiming that the teachers had only been trying to get preparation time for seven years, asked the teachers to leave. The trustees then returned to the number one item on their agenda which

Editor's note

No further letters concerning the referendum issue will be run until the conclusion of the voting period, March 12.

The expanded scope of bargaining campaign allowed many locals to begin addressing some of the economic and professional injustices experienced by substitute teachers.

PAST is also concerned about other discriminatory aspects of substitutes' working conditions, which Boag feels could be addressed in bargaining next year. "Substitutes suffer because of unfair hiring practices, from receiving little or no credit for experience as substitute teachers, from not getting any of the regular teachers' benefits, and from not having professional development allowances," said Boag.

Ralph Sundby, of the BCTF's government division, outlined other concerns the federation has in relation to its voluntary active members.

"Compulsory BCTF membership is a top priority for PAST," Boag said, "and as the Minister of Education has disregarded our request for changes in the School Act, we can look to our local

associations for assistance in achieving this important objective next year."

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Ralph Sundby, of the BCTF's government division, outlined other concerns the federation has in relation to its voluntary active members.

"The federation is contemplating a new fee structure for substitute members," he said, "such as setting the membership fee

the target times for Grades 1 to 7 in the various subject areas. We have inserted the bracketed words:

"The preceding target time allotments provide guidelines that ensure all subjects of the curriculum are taught to each class. Principals [in consultation with teachers] are responsible for adjusting time allotments in response to the needs of students. However, if a significant adjustment affecting whole classes or grades is made to time allotments this information must be filed with the superintendent of schools. Principals [in consultation with teachers] must ensure that the individual student's timetable includes an emphasis on basic skills in language arts and mathematics and some instructional time for fine arts and physical education activities. This requirement is not intended to interfere with the principal's ability [nor those of his colleagues in the school] to adjust timetables."

Now some of you must be wondering what all the fuss is about and I wouldn't blame you. Good schools have never been run by ministry dictates and a great many teachers and principals work harmoniously together to meet the needs of students without taking much notice of who's telling them what they may or may not do in the schools. But it isn't like that everywhere or with everyone.

Last November 30 in a reference to these time allotments in the Administrative Handbook during a panel discussion at the University of Victoria the deputy minister of education quite properly pointed out that they were "target" times. He went on to say that administrators "still have to meet the needs of that community and those students in what you feel is the best mix. And a number of administrators have been surprised at that but indeed that is the answer."

That elicited the comment from one member of the audience that "as a superintendent I have to say that's not the message that's"

Mr. Carter then brought down the house by saying "Of course it's not, people don't read carefully." He then went on to state, "It's a very clear message. If you take the Administrative Handbook and read it carefully it talks of target times; it talks of flexibility." With those comments, plus Circular 157, no teacher need feel trapped by general demands that seem unreal to a particular situation. In consultation with principals all kinds of adjustments can be made to programs and time allotments. The consultation must be genuine, not democratic veneers on dictatorial pronouncements. Both the ministry and the BCSTA at their joint conference on "consultation" held in late August 198

Letters

Fernie resents hint of poor settlement

... A recent news release from the BCTF has given Fernie the dubious honor of having achieved the lowest percentage salary settlement in the province. We understand that it was the intention of our president, Mr. Kuehn, to give the public an idea of the range of salary settlements achieved in B.C. locals, and that perhaps, if 15.25 per cent was the low point, that teachers fared very well on the average. But we also feel that it is an indirect form of adverse publicity to neglect to put the settlement in proper context of total achievement and climate.

Let us roll back a few months to the original objectives and strategies for this bargaining year. The highest priority for the province was expanded scope of bargaining. It was understood that "scope" items were to be settled first. It is logical to assume that obtaining agreement on ten or more scope items would be unacceptable if the corresponding wage package was decreased by the cost of these items. As Mr. Kuehn pointed out, we did not buy the "slice of the pie" argument. In other words, we had no intention of "buying" our improved working conditions with our own money.

On the other hand, some locals were forced into the opposite dilemma. They

were offered high wage settlements if they agreed to drop the scope items. We can certainly understand that our colleagues in Prince Rupert were presented with an offer they couldn't refuse...

behind the provincial average were offered higher wage settlements than those of us whose relative position in the province was high...

What do we want?

Meanwhile in Fernie, a package of 24 items had been sewn up by late September. There was a collective shudder of anticipation from the BCTF executive when it was feared that a low wage settlement would outweigh the gains made under expanded scope. The prep time, educational leave, portability of sick leave, leaves of absence, etc., no longer received priority. We were "selling out".

We were also told that achieving portability of sick leave up to 100 days from anywhere in the province for, albeit, future colleagues, was no big deal — after all, this would be province-wide very shortly and had been dropped from the list of provincial objectives. Maybe so (we'll be waiting!), but it is a fact that the Fernie board wishes to attract teachers to the district, and bargained accordingly. We need to stop comparing settlements. If the only comparison is salaries, then let that be the priority and stop pretending that class size et. al. are number one.

Second, we hope that it will become apparent that, unlike salaries and benefits, it is impossible to put a price tag on improved working conditions and that we need to stop comparing settlements. If the only comparison is salaries, then let that be the priority and stop pretending that my true opinion of Gonzaga or its programs in education.

Gonzaga has offered an important and valuable service to teachers in the Interior where B.C. universities have been unable or unwilling to do so.

I should point out that as Professional Development Chairperson in Kelowna I was responsible for organizing several Gonzaga offerings, and encouraged their acceptance in this district.

At the time Gonzaga introduced its courses in British Columbia there were concerns expressed as to their acceptability in terms of the standard of teacher education in this province. These have been positively addressed since then. My offhand remark was really only a recollection of those early concerns about the Gonzaga program.

I hope any members offended by the remark will accept this explanation and my apology for any slight they may have felt.

Pat Clarke
BCTF Executive
Kelowna

Local input needed on new bargaining plan

At the November meeting of the North Central District Council the matter of organizational changes to the BCTF to facilitate bargaining was discussed at length. In (President Kuehn's) memo to the Executive Committee (GVT81-0973A), titled "Scope-Related Organizations", no provision is made to allow local associations to provide input. The council is concerned that the reorganization of the federation will occur without the Executive Committee determining what the needs of the local associations are or without the Executive Committee being fully aware of the effects of gains made this year to expand the scope of bargaining.

Some of the specific concerns raised at the council meeting were:

- (1) What has been the effect of having standing committees involved in bargaining on tasks and services normally provided by these committees? Many locals in managing to expand their scope of bargaining have extended the length of the bargaining time. While local committees negotiate, what has happened to such things as inservice programs, learning conditions, class size surveys and the like? A committee is only capable of doing so much.

(2) What will be the effect on a local association if the BCTF is reorganized without knowing what services the local association wishes to be provided with? For example, how would a local association continue to monitor class sizes if reorganization does away with the Learning Conditions staff by reassigning them other responsibilities?

(The President's) memo suggests that a decision will be made by February 11, 1982. The North Central District Council requests:

(1) The Executive Committee extend its time frame on BCTF reorganization in order to answer these questions and any others that may occur;

(2) The Executive Committee make provision for local associations to provide input on this matter...

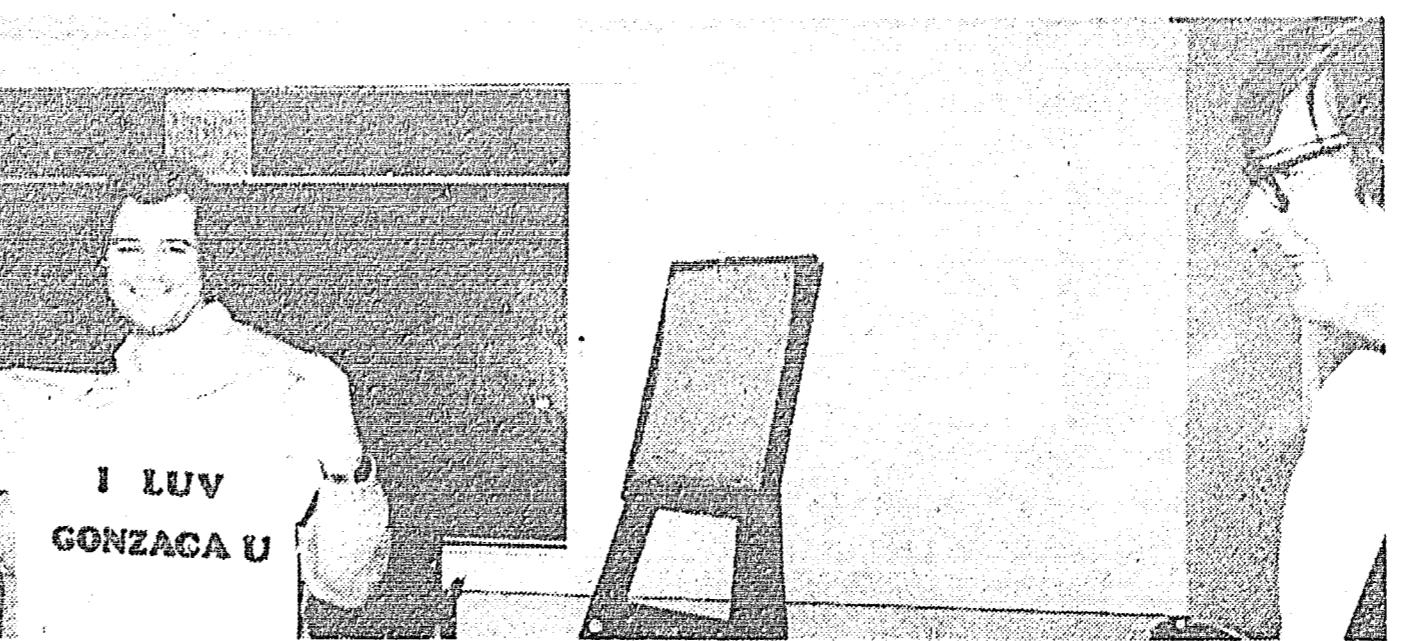
Ken Smith, economic welfare, advises that Langley teachers achieved a 17.95 per cent salary increase on grid in 1981 bargaining and not 17.01 per cent as reported in the January 7 *BCTF Newsletter*. Similarly, the salary increase for Richmond teachers should have read 18.30 percent.

* * *

Bruce Watson, economic welfare, advises that retired teachers were given notice of higher health benefits deductions with their September pension cheques and that the *BCTF Newsletter* (December 3, 1981) was wrong in intimating that the B.C. Superannuation Branch was late in informing the B.C. Retired Teachers' Association of the increase. The *Newsletter* apologizes for the error.

Charlie Wyse
Chairperson
North Central District Council
Williams Lake

Executive news round-up



Executive member Pat Clarke enjoys gift of a tee-shirt reflecting his views (see p. 10) of Gonzaga University.

BCTF reorganization under discussion

Reorganization of the BCTF's internal structure to meet new priorities will be a major topic of discussion at the February 14-16 meeting.

The Executive Committee, at its January 14-16 meeting, decided to submit a series of recommendations to the RA for shifting several program responsibilities to different divisions.

This has been made necessary by the creation of a new Bargaining Division and the determination that the division and the Professional Development Division give greater emphasis to service to local associations.

The Executive Committee agreed to submit this recommendation to the Annual General Meeting. At its November meeting, the executive had endorsed the program, a joint scheme of the Canadian Farmworkers Union and Frontier College, which aims at assisting immigrant farmworkers to acquire English language proficiency as a means of ending their economic exploitation and assisting their integration into Canadian society.

Directors of instruction facing ineligibility

If the spring Annual General Meeting approves a bylaw amendment, directors of instruction will no longer be eligible for membership in the BCTF.

The Executive Committee has approved a recommendation to the AGM urging that by-law 1.1(c) be amended to read: "Exclusions: Officials of the Ministry of Education, District Superintendents of Schools, Superintendents of Schools, Assistant Superintendents of Schools, and Directors of Instruction shall not be eligible for active membership in the federation."

At its November meeting the executive, acting on the advice of the fall RA, had approved a resolution calling for deletion of the provision in policy 22.A.04 which made directors of instruction eligible for membership and that a by-law amendment be prepared for the AGM.

The RA had urged this action on the executive as a result of concern over the directors' conflict of interest between their management responsibilities and their roles as members of local associations.

Executive members voting on the affirmative side were: Al Blakey, Pat Clarke, Terry Eastman, Larry Kuehn, Maureen MacDonald, Elsie McMurphy, Steve Norman, Joan Robb, Marion Runcie and Christina Schut. Opposed was Doug Smart.

New membership fee plan forwarded to '82 AGM

Membership fees will again be on the agenda of the Annual General Meeting this spring.

The Executive Committee has decided, in a recorded 10-1 vote, to recommend to the 1982 AGM that calculation of active and voluntary active membership fees be based on a percentage of each member's actual salary, including allowances, if any, rather than on the estimated mean salary of federation members."

"Education costs have risen, not unreasonably, for a variety of reasons," Kuehn said. "Costs of fuel, transportation and supplies have all been subject to inflationary pressures. Teachers salaries have also increased, but they are still below the 1976 level in real-dollar terms."

"This government is simply not providing adequate support for education out of its general revenues. Changes must be made immediately to prevent erosion of the level and quality of public school education."

Newsletter rapped for UVic program report

Dr. Arthur Kratzmann, University of Victoria dean of education, has written a letter to the BCTF executive complaining that the *Newsletter* had misrepresented a proposed UVic program for independent school teachers in its December 3 coverage of the executive's response to the plan. He charged that the news story gave the wrong impression that the program was for Catholic school teachers, rather than for all independent school teachers, and that it failed to indicate that students would need to have a bachelor's degree before entering the program, which would involve summer courses and practical work. The executive directed the president to reply to Dr. Kratzmann.

** The editor accepts the validity of these criticisms and apologizes for the error.*

AGM to consider new priorities for '82-83

The Annual General Meeting will be asked this spring to dedicate the BCTF to continue the fight in 1982-83 for expansion in the scope of bargaining and for increased teacher influence on educational decision-making.

These are the key elements in a statement of priorities for the coming year which the Executive Committee adopted unanimously for recommendation to the AGM.

To carry out these priorities, the executive urged that the focus of federation activities be on:

- Co-ordination and support for bargaining the terms and conditions of employment into contracts at the local level and for effective administration of these contracts;

- Support for local association actions, up to and including job actions, taken to achieve bargaining objectives;

- Action to maintain an education finance formula which provides:

- (a) equity in opportunities for students throughout the province, and

- (b) authority at the school district level for making significant budget decisions;

** Further information on exact times may be obtained from your local association.*

Victoria the culprit in education finance

BCTF President Larry Kuehn says there is only one culprit in the current controversy over increased school taxes — and that is the provincial government.

Kuehn said, in a statement issued to the news media on January 19, that the provincial government is deliberately squeezing homeowners for more school taxes while drastically reducing its own share of the costs of education.

Under the current education finance formula, Kuehn said, the government can shift the balance between provincial and local contributions to suit itself. This year the government has chosen to reduce its share of the basic education program to 32.5 per cent (down five percentage points from last year), thus forcing local taxpayers to raise 67.5 per cent of the costs.

This means local taxpayers will have to contribute \$890 million, an increase of 26.8 per cent over last year, while the provincial government puts up \$427.6 million, an increase of only one per cent.

This lopsided hike in local taxes results from a massive 28.7 per cent increase in local property assessments, Kuehn said. He suggested number of ways by which the government could offset this distortion:

- a substantial direct grant to homeowners;

- a reduction of the assessed value of property, on which taxes are calculated, from 10 per cent to eight or nine per cent;

- a reduction in the basic levy for homeowners;

- or direct grants to local school districts.

Kuehn said the government has ignored all these options and instead is following a considered policy of shifting education costs onto local property.

He said attempts by the minister of education to blame school boards for increased taxes are "total nonsense."

"Education costs have risen, not unreasonably, for a variety of reasons," Kuehn said. "Costs of fuel, transportation and supplies have all been subject to inflationary pressures. Teachers salaries have also increased, but they are still below the 1976 level in real-dollar terms."

"This government is simply not providing adequate support for education out of its general revenues. Changes must be made immediately to prevent erosion of the level and quality of public school education."

Fergusson nomination deadline February 20

Nominations may be made by any member of a local association and should be backed with as complete information as possible.

Nominations for the 1981 Fergusson Award must be received by the executive director at the BCTF office no later than February 20.

Pre-retirement seminars

The Retired Teachers' Association will be holding a series of seminars in the new year to help prepare teachers who are about to retire. The schedule is as follows:

Teachers living in	Date	Place
Nanaimo, Lake Cowichan, Cowichan	January 29 - 30	Resources centre, Nanaimo
Coquitlam, Maple Ridge	February 8, 15, 22 (evenings)	Centennial school, Coquitlam
East Kootenay	February 12 - 13	Cranbrook
Summerland through to Kettle Valley and Princeton	February 26 - 27	Penticton
Howe Sound, West Vancouver, North Vancouver	March 4, 11, 18 (evenings)	Resources centre, West Vancouver
Greater Victoria, Sooke, Saanich, Gulf Islands	March 12 - 13	Victoria
North Coast and Smithers	March 26 - 27	Terrace

January 30 and February 27 "Under the Winter Sky"

Greater Vancouver Regional District parks department and the Vancouver Planetarium Community Astronomy Program are jointly sponsoring a family educational-recreational event at the Campbell Valley Regional Park in Langley. "Under the Winter Sky," which will be held from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday, January 30 and on Saturday, February 27, will consist of an entertaining nature walk in the crisp winter air, a hot campfire supper and a chance to explore the winter sky with powerful telescopes. The charge is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 12 and under. Reservations: 731-1155.

February 5-6

"Tuning-in on Education"

The Adlerian Psychology Association of B.C. will hold its 3rd annual "Tuning-in on Education" Conference on February 5-6 at Simon Fraser University. Planned for interested educators, counsellors, parents and students, the conference will feature Dr. Roy Kern, University of Georgia State, and more than 30 B.C. presenters discussing such topics as family counselling, the democratic classroom, special education, report cards and homework and guiding the young child. Contact the Adlerian psychology association for more information: 874-4614.

February 17 - 19

Hospital-Homebound Teachers

The fourth annual conference of the Hospital-Homebound Teachers' Provincial Specialist Association will be held February 17 - 19 at the Broadway Holiday Inn in Vancouver. The conference will feature the PSA's new film about B.C. hospital-homebound programs, "I Went Back to School Today." Conference fee is \$65. Information: John Bell, 3530 Inverness Street, Port Coquitlam, V3B 5A3 (phone: 942-8691).

March 4 - 6

BCCLEA Annual Conference

The B.C. Council for Leadership in Educational Administration will hold its 1982 annual conference and AGM on March 4 - 6 at the Hyatt Regency in Vancouver. The conference theme is: "Shifting Power Structures: Implications for Education in B.C." Information: 273-5461.

March 4 - 6

Spring PITA Conference

"The Middle Years — Keys to Success" is the theme of the spring PITA conference on March 4 - 6, which is being hosted by the Coquitlam Intermediate Teachers' Association. To register contact: Joan Mitchell, Baker Drive Elementary, Baker Drive, Coquitlam.

March 4-6

Challenge Education Conference

Simon Fraser University's education faculty is presenting a three-day working conference at Vancouver's Sheraton Landmark for elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators in planning Challenge Education programs that teach students to pursue excellence through units of their own design. Key speakers include: Dr. Maurice Gibbons, SFU education professor and author of *The New Secondary Education: A Phi Delta Kappan Task Force Report*; Dr. Gary Phillips, Director of the Challenge Education Project under the sponsorship of the Institute for the Development of Educational Ideas (I/D/E/A) in the U.S. and Dr. Bob Samples, author of *The Metaphoric Mind*. To receive registration materials or further information contact: Challenge Education, Continuing Studies, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C., V5A 1S6 (291-3792; 291-4565).

China seeking English teachers

Would you like a completely different teaching experience?

The People's Republic of China is looking for 10 to 20 teachers of English to teach in China next year. The BCTF has agreed to help recruit teachers.

If you are interested in applying for one of the positions, write Ken Aitchison at the BCTF office for information on the application procedure.

Qualifications are:

- five years of experience in teaching regular English, modern or contemporary English, American and Canadian literature, and non-fiction writing;
- recent experience in teaching English at the senior secondary or post-secondary level;
- knowledge of reference resources;
- experience in teaching English as a second language, although not required, is preferred.

Successful applicants will teach Chinese university instructors, post-graduates and undergraduate English major students in large or medium-sized cities, and will receive information about specific teaching assignments before they leave Canada. Appointments will be for

one year, but may be extended. Preference will be given to teachers who will be on leave from their usual teaching positions.

The Chinese students, most of whom will be college instructors, want to improve their facility in concise spoken and written English, and to better comprehend English or American literature. They will have a working knowledge of English already.

China is offering:

- round-trip travel for each teacher (for a full academic year of service), spouse, and children under 12;
- salaries, depending on qualifications, experience and work load, of 360 to 800 Chinese dollars a month (the Chinese dollar is worth \$1.30 Canadian);
- free housing, free transport to and from work to place of residence, and free medical insurance;
- a holiday allowance, equivalent to about one month's salary, full year of service is completed;
- a termination allowance, equal to half a month's salary.

The school year in China has two semesters: the first from September to February; the second, from February to July.

Applications must be submitted to the BCTF office by the end of February.

BCTF donates \$500 to Ona Mae Roy fund

The BCFF will donate \$500 to the Ona Mae Roy Scholarship Fund from the president's discretionary fund.

The Executive Committee decided at its January 14 meeting to make the donation to the new fund, established in honor of Ona Mae Roy, past-president of the Home and School Federation and a long-time supporter of education and teachers, who died recently.

Members may make individual contributions to the memorial scholarship fund at: P.C. Home and School Federation, No. 4, 774 Columbia Street, New Westminster, B.C. V3M 1B5.

Vacancies

Policies and Procedures*

The vacancy on the Policies and Procedures Committee has not been filled. For more information or curriculum vitae forms, contact Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office. Application deadline is February 24. This position is for applicants from the Lower Mainland only.

*Third posting

Income tax changes and teachers' pensions

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Economic Welfare

The income tax changes in federal finance minister Allan MacEachen's recent budget has aroused a great deal of concern among teachers, especially retired teachers, as to how they may be affected. The following is a summary of our present understanding of the income tax provisions affecting pensions, pension contributions and retirement allowances incorporating the proposals of the November 12, 1981 federal budget and the additional changes announced on December 18. Since the proposals must be approved by parliament, further changes may result:

1. (a) The \$1,000 pension income deduction, not including OAS or CPP, is now limited to pension income received as part of an annuity for life (i.e. a monthly pension) and *only* if no contribution is made that year to an RRSP or to a registered pension plan, such as the Teachers' Pension Plan *other* than a contribution to a registered pension plan that was deducted at source from employment income before commencement of pension payments (effective January 1, 1982).
- (b) Refunds of contributions to the Teachers' Pension Plan no longer qualify for the pension income deduction (effective January 1, 1982).
- (c) Annuity payments from an RRSP or an RRIF if you are over age 65 or if these payments resulted from the death of a spouse still qualify for the pension income deduction.
2. Any amount of pension income, including OAS, CPP and refunds, may be placed in the taxpayer's RRSP and deducted from taxable income. However, if this is done, the \$1,000 pension income deduction *may not* be used (effective January 1, 1982).
3. Money may be transferred prior to retirement without tax deduction between a registered pension plan, such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, and an RRSP or vice versa (no change).
4. Interest on money borrowed for contributions made to RRSP's and to registered pension plans, such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, after November 12, 1981 is *not* deductible. However, interest on money borrowed for contributions already made to an RRSP or registered pension plan may still be deductible; please refer to the local Revenue Canada office for assistance.
5. Payments for an Income Averaging Annuity Contract made after November 12, 1981 are not deductible *unless* the annuity contract provides that all amounts to be received are paid to the annuitant before December 31, 1982. Such an Income Averaging Annuity applicable to 1981 income may be purchased up to March 1, 1982.
6. There is no change in the regulations covering deductions of contributions from current earned income made to a registered pension plan (such as the Teachers' Pension Plan): —
 - (a) up to \$3,500 for *current* service and

- (b) up to \$3,500 for each year of eligible *past* service with any excess over \$3,500 paid into the plan carried forward to future years. This means that monies paid for reinstatement, for unpaid leaves of absence, for pensionable service under the inter-provincial pension agreements and for military service purchase may be deductible within the limits permitted by the Income Tax Act.

7. There is no change in the limits covering contributions made to an RRSP: —
 - (a) the lesser of \$3,500 and 20% of earned income *minus*
 - (b) any contributions made to a registered pension plan (Teachers' Pension Plan) for both *current and past* service.

These are the regulations governing retirement allowances:

8. (a) Retirement allowances *paid to teachers who retired on or before November 12, 1981* which have not been tax sheltered may be rolled over into a registered pension plan (Teachers' Pension Plan) up to December 31, 1981 or into an RRSP up to March 1, 1982.
- (b) Retirement allowances *paid to teachers who, prior to November 12, gave a written commitment to retire no later than December 31, 1981* may be rolled over into a registered pension plan (Teachers' Pension Plan) up to December 31, 1981 or into an RRSP up to March 1, 1982.
- (c) Retirement allowances *paid to all other teachers* may be rolled over into a registered pension plan (Teachers' Pension Plan) or into an RRSP subject to a limit of \$2,000 for each year the teacher was employed by the employer paying the allowance *and* was a member of the employer's (teachers') pension plan.

Note: This is the provision outlined on December 18, 1981 by the Minister of Finance. However the actual wording will have to await the legislation as there is a possibility the limitation may be based only on the years the teacher was a member of the Teachers' Pension Plan.

- (i) If a teacher can not tax shelter all of the retirement allowance because of the above limits, where existing plans permit the tax impact could be lessened if the portion not sheltered were paid over a period of years. In this way only the portion received each year would be income for that year.
- (ii) The portion received each year could be the amount considered necessary for the living costs of the recipient. The recipient could then roll over all of his/her pension income into an RRSP and pay tax only on the portion of the retirement allowance received that year. If pension income were rolled over into an RRSP, the \$1,000 pension income deduction will not be permitted. (See paragraph 2 above.)

Members should contact the local Revenue Canada office for individual assistance.