

# BCTF Newsletter

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MAY 20, 1983

## Gov't exams halt sought, pending study

The BCTF will request the new minister of education to postpone administration of provincial examinations this year and to support a commission of inquiry into student evaluation and secondary school graduation requirements.

The Executive Committee called for urgent representations on the matter, earlier recommended by the AGM, after hearing some of the details of the problems the mandatory provincial tests will cause. A BCTF Professional Development Advisory Committee sample of teacher opinions had revealed widespread concern about the validity and fairness of the tests and the use of their results.

A brief is being sent to the minister arguing that the province-wide imposition of a battery of elementary and secondary achievement tests June 6-24 represents a radical departure from more than a decade of student evaluation policy and practice. It points out that the tests, which are to count in year-end marks, are flawed in terms of general principles of student evaluation and in some of their specific features. Specifically, the brief requests that the minister:

- order the postponement of the provincial examinations for at least one year;
- and support a commission to inquire into educational issues including student evaluation.

At the elementary level, all students will be required to take one-hour multiple choice tests in Grade 3 mathematics, Grade 4 reading and Grade 7 reading and mathematics. At the secondary level, students enrolled in mathematics 10 and English 12 (writing) will face one-hour exams and students enrolled in chemistry 12 and algebra 12 will be required to sit for two-hour achievement exams.

See "TEACHERS" page 2



UNITED PRESS CANADA PHOTO

*Teachers will anxiously wait to see what happens to education after victorious Premier Bill Bennett's smile (above) fades and, as predicted, the defeated NDP leader Dave Barrett (below) fades from provincial politics.*



DAN MULLEN PHOTO

## Election over, but...

# Struggle for education continues

The election is over, but the struggle goes on to maintain teachers' jobs, income levels and a quality public education system.

That is the determined response adopted by the Executive Committee in the wake of the May 5 re-election of the Social Credit government.

But the executive hopes this struggle can be carried on in a non-combative way. At its May 14 meeting, the executive also decided to seek an early meeting with the new (as yet unnamed) education minister to explore means of ending the conflicts and finding solutions to the problems in education.

BCTF President Larry Kuehn told the meeting that the victorious Bennett government would be unlikely to reverse its pattern of budget cutbacks and centralized control which had provoked stiff opposition from the teaching profession over the past two years.

"The result of the election is that it is back on our shoulders to maintain and improve things in the education system," he said.

In carrying on the struggle, Kuehn suggested the BCTF would need to maintain a strong, unified organization, develop strategy based on federation strengths and emphasizing local issues and to particularly seek more public support for education.

"We have to go back to building broader participation and support in the system, to mobilize people to speak up, not so much our own members, but to try to reach people in society who have an interest in education," he said.

Kuehn pointed out a number of specific problems that the profession will have to deal with in the coming year.

One of the most readily apparent is the under-funding of the public education system. He said that, with the recent return

of \$42 million, the system in most districts will be maintained until December, but that the federation will face a replay of last year's problems in January, 1984, or, more likely, in the following September.

In the coming year new education finance legislation will have to be introduced, he said, as the Interim Education Finance Act will expire. The government has the option of restoring some local financial autonomy, but he suggested it was more likely legislation would be brought in to make centralized control of education finance permanent.

Introduction of a new school act could also pose some dangers. "There is the threat," Kuehn said, "that if the government wants to be punitive, it could take away the compulsory membership provisions." Administrators could also be legislated out of the BCTF — something

See "BARGAINING" page 2

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## Forced back without contract, Quebec teachers struggle on

After a year of struggle, Quebec's teachers are still without a signed collective agreement and are currently forced to teach under terms and conditions imposed by the provincial government.

Following their strike in defiance of the government's Bill 105, which arbitrarily decreed all collective agreements, Quebec's 80,000 teachers were forced back into the classrooms on February 17 by an even harsher law, Bill 111, which threatened firings, loss of seniority, salary reductions and massive fines. It is, Robert Dobie, secretary-general of Quebec's Provincial Association of Catholic Teachers, told the BCTF's Annual General Meeting, "the most anti-union, anti-democratic law ever seen in this country."

Some slight progress, however, was recently made. A conciliator's report on the situation was rejected in late March by the teacher cartel (Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers, Provincial Association of Catholic Teachers and *Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec*). Subsequently, in mid-April, the cartel sought amendments to the decrees in bills 105 and 111 and these were agreed to by the government. The agreement saved thousands of teacher positions for the coming year and achieved better remuneration for those teachers declared surplus during the three-year life of the decrees — effectively a \$50 million gain.

But the fact remains that Quebec's

teachers have been forced back to work by law without achieving a signed collective agreement. And they still must fight five test cases in court, rather than deal with the 28,000 summonses issued under the government's harsh laws. All this means that the Quebec teachers' cartel faces a potential bill of about \$10 million in fines and legal costs in its unequal struggle to preserve teachers' collective bargaining rights.

There is no doubt, as CEQ President Yvon Charbonneau said in a letter to BCTF President Larry Kuehn, thanking him for BCTF support, that "that exercise of certain democratic rights has received a significant setback" in Quebec.

But Quebec teachers continue their fight for those rights and the support of their Canadian colleagues continues to be needed. At the end of April, contributions by Canadian teachers to the Quebec Teachers' Support Fund stood at \$751,989. Contributions from the BCTF total \$91,949, the federation granting \$28,000 of that and individuals contributing the remainder.

Robert Dobie, PACT secretary-general, reminded AGM delegates: "Our fight is your fight and your fight is our fight, and together the teachers of Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia and other parts of Canada must act in concert and together we will achieve our goals."

## Qualicum speech program restored after teacher, community protest

The co-operative efforts of parents, teachers and community groups successfully persuaded Qualicum school trustees to restore the district's speech pathology program.

This reversed a previous decision not to replace the district's only speech pathologist for three months of a seven-month maternity leave.

The board decision came after an intensive political action campaign or-

ganized by parents and the Mount Arrowsmith Teachers' Association. Parents and teachers were most concerned about the impact that failure to replace the pathologist would have had upon the progress of those currently enrolled in the program. Concern was also expressed about the many children needing assistance who are currently on the waiting list for placement.

Working through the BCTF Grievance Procedure, parents and association officers organized a variety of representations to the board, which culminated in a well-attended public presentation to the board by parent spokespersons.

At the April 20 board meeting, parent Ron Schuler expressed the fear that without the assistance of a speech therapist, the children would revert to their old speech patterns and their progress would suffer a substantial setback.

"As parents, we felt that we couldn't stand by and watch the 'restraint' program used as an excuse to deny our children the help they needed," said Schuler. "I hope other parents across the province will take a similar stand if it is required."

The grievance was endorsed by parents, teachers from the affected schools, the Special Education Teachers' Association, the Primary Teachers' Association, as well as the Mount Arrowsmith Local.

## Collective bargaining is essential

During the last hundred years, teaching has developed from a job, to a career, to a profession. As Canada has grown and matured as a nation, so its teachers have expanded their role and established their expertise.

A key element in the development of teaching has been the establishment of professional teacher organizations. In all the provinces and territories of Canada there now exist professional teacher organizations that represent virtually all the teachers in Canada's public elementary and secondary schools. And in this respect, Canadian teacher organizations are unique.

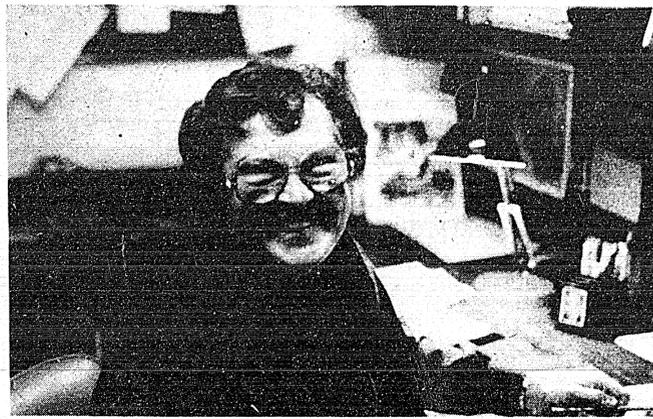
The characteristic that has given Canadian teacher organizations their unity and their strength has been the concept of automatic membership: the provision that, as a condition of his or her employment, a teacher will automatically be a member of the teachers' professional organization. This feature is now often taken for granted by teachers and others in this country, but it remains a feature that is distinctly Canadian.

For many years teachers looked to the established professions as the

model for their development. Fortunately, however, they came to place greater emphasis on a pragmatic approach, selecting some features of organization that were found in the traditional professions, and choosing other features from classical trade unions. The result has been that Canadian teacher organizations are now an eclectic blend of the classical stereotypes of the professions and the trade unions.

Indeed, it may be argued that today's teaching profession is the prototype for the future. For example, teachers recognized decades ago that, given their status as employees, the adoption of collective bargaining was essential if they were to have a meaningful voice in determining the teaching and learning conditions that would exist in the schools. Today, even the established professions are accepting this approach for establishing their relationships with the society they serve.

Stirling McDowell  
Secretary General  
Canadian Teachers' Federation



Margot Rose... honoured for work with community choir.

## Terminated in September, Citizen of Year in April

Quesnel music teacher Margot Rose likes the recognition she received in April an awful lot better than that she received in September.

On April 27, Rose was named Quesnel Citizen of the Year for her work with the Quesnel Junior Choir.

Last September she was named one of 24 district teachers to be terminated.

While she feels no bitterness toward the board, viewing their action as a pressure play to forestall further serious cuts, Rose admits to feeling "disappointed" last fall in receiving her notice, which was ultimately not acted upon. But she's very much pleased with the latest form of community recognition, a joint award of the city and the *Cariboo Observer*, presented her by Mayor Mike Pearce at a civic banquet. The *Observer* said, "Her time and effort have in a number of ways touched the lives of a great many Quesnel residents and the entire community has benefited."

Margot Rose, an elementary music teacher who serves several schools, started the Quesnel Junior Choir in 1972, two years after joining the district. It is a select group of 45 elementary and junior secondary students. While it was not started to be a competitive choir, it has achieved prominence in the province's music community.

"My philosophy is not one of competition," said Rose. "I feel that what is important for members of the choir is

participation, giving pleasure to their audiences and learning skills."

In February 1980, the Quesnel Junior Choir was invited to sing before the annual conference of the B.C. Music Educators' Association in Burnaby. Last May, the choir was chosen to participate in the B.C. Choral Federation convention at UBC and Vancouver's Orpheum Theatre under the guest direction of Simon Preston from Westminster Abbey, London. They were one of only a small number of children's choirs invited to do so.

"They sang in good company — with the Vancouver Bach Choir, the Amity Singers and the Okanagan Symphony Choir," recalled Rose. "It was an impressive thing to do."

In addition to teaching and conducting the choir, Rose presents choral workshops, clinics and adjudicates in music festivals around B.C.

## Joy Leach elected BCSTA president

Joy Leach, chairperson of the Nanaimo School Board, is the new president of the B.C. School Trustees Association.

She was elected by delegates to the BCSTA annual general meeting on April 23. Other elected officers include: Bev Rodrigo, chairperson of the Kitimat board, elected vice-president, and Gerry Kristianson of Saanich and Sue Irvine of Penticon, elected as directors.

## Elementary electoral politics:

# The campaign that education won

It was, without question, the most orderly all-candidates' meeting of the campaign.

Yet this wasn't because of indifference. The electioneering had been intense over the past 27 days with plenty of speeches, commercials, hoopla, candidates button-holing voters. Today the audience was full of each candidate's supporters, wearing campaign buttons. Signs were plastered up around the room: SUPPORT KEVIN/VOTE SOCIAL CREDIT; NDP IS THE ONE FOR YOU/VOTE JASON. The media was present, a Grade 7 crew — Guy Hartwig, Mike Hill and Mark Berezan — on hand to videotape proceedings.

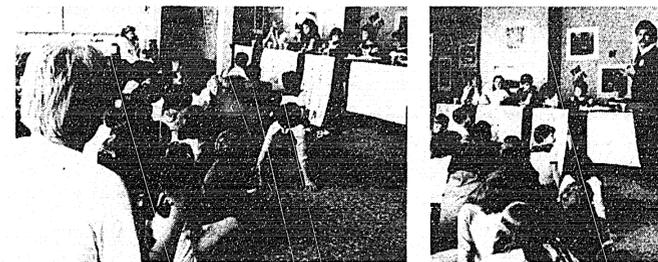
This was the final event in the campaign to elect a student government in Mike Lombardi's Grade 6 class at Viscount Alexander Elementary School in Coquitlam. The next day, May 5, the students would cast their ballots, just as their parents would do in the provincial government election.

On the platform, the party leaders — Mike Dawson, Liberal; Kevin Elsdon, Social Credit; Pam Kirkwood, Progressive Conservative; Jason Lange, NDP — were about to give their final pitches to their classmates and about 10 parents at the back of the room. The campaign issues were nuclear arms, unemployment and school activities.

Mike Dawson, the Liberal leader, began by describing his party's philosophy toward unemployment: "I believe that government should supply jobs, but that individuals should do something for themselves too." He said that his party opposed the expansion of nuclear weapons because "as long as we have nuclear bombs then human beings are going to be an endangered species." On school activities, he said he favoured a lottery to raise money to support an expanded program.

Social Credit leader Kevin Elsdon said his party would give "very effective government if elected." He said his party would create more jobs by making Vancouver Island mills produce more wood products and sell them to other countries. His government, he said, would try to persuade the U.S. to stop the nuclear buildup because "the nuclear missiles they now have can kill everyone in the world three times over." Elsdon also favoured providing more money for school activities.

Pam Kirkwood, the Progressive Con-



Candidates field questions from the voters (top) under the watchful lens of the videotape crew (above, left) and the watchful eye (above, right) of teacher Mike Lombardi.

servative leader, said her party favoured less government control but "if necessary would create jobs in highways and hospitals." On the nuclear issue, she said she was "prepared to start a children's march against nuclear war to show the government that kids care too." She would also work for providing more games at school.

New Democratic Party leader Jason Lange said his government would "create jobs and protect existing ones" and it wouldn't raise medicare fees. He said he would like a much wider range of activities — ranging from basketball to British bulldog to bike rides — opened up for students at the school. Opposing nuclear buildup, he said, "we want to tell the world leaders that there is no winner in nuclear war."

Then it was on to a replay of the campaign commercials developed by each party's supporters. First the radio: *Vote for Pam, she's the one. Vote for her*

*and school will be fun.... If you don't know who to vote for, there's only one choice — Social Credit. And then, inevitably, the television commercials... On the screen, a boy holds up a dirty sock and asks: Do you think politics stinks? The NDP smells like a Rose — Vote NDP.*

Following all the politicking and questions from the audience, Jim McNamee, the principal, had the final word. He complimented everyone involved in the month-long project — a Canada government studies unit developed by Mike Lombardi (and available through BCTF Lesson Aids) — and emphasized the importance of political participation in a democracy. "Listening to all of your speeches," he said, "I see that as adults the world in future years will be in quite capable hands."

Mike Lombardi explained that the unit was a regular feature of his class — last year they conducted their own municipal

election in conjunction with the Coquitlam municipal election. "It's a nice way," he said, "of bringing some of the reality of the election into the classroom."

Lombardi said the class began the government study by looking first at why we have laws. Then they reviewed who has had the power to form laws through the ages — from kings down to ordinary citizens in contemporary parliamentary democracy. Then the class talked about the different types of government, focussing on our system, how laws are made in it, and the nature and role of parties.

While conducting their own parallel campaigns, he said the students also closely followed the provincial election campaign. Each day they discussed the latest events, the issues, reviewed the campaign literature and looked at the advertising. "The kids were really turned off," he said, "by what they were seeing on radio and TV." On election day, they would witness what takes place in polling booths.

The reaction of parents had been very encouraging, said Lombardi. "We've had nothing but positive reactions," he said. "The parents appreciate seeing the school doing something in tune with what's happening in the world."

As for the results of the class election, Lombardi reported later that 30 ballots were cast and two were spoiled ("I gave them a lesson on spoiled ballots") The class elected Jason Lange, NDP, to be Premier with 14 votes. Pam Kirkwood, Progressive Conservative, received seven votes, becoming Leader of the Opposition. Mike Dawson, Liberal, got five votes and Kevin Elsdon, Social Credit, got two votes.

The class also gave its predictions on who would win the Coquitlam-Moody provincial seat, with most votes going for (the ultimate winner) Mark Rose, NDP, a total of 15. The other candidates, Doug Whitehead, Social Credit, received eight votes and Bill Stewart, Liberal, got five votes.

Lombardi said the class government would now go through the process of enacting a bill, probably on school activities, see it through various stages of debate and then, after an opposition day, wrap up the unit.

"We were wrong somewhere on the provincial trend, weren't we?" said Lombardi. "But we were right on what would happen locally."

## Learning conditions study set by CTF

The Canadian Teachers' Federation and York University are collaborating in a research study of students and the learning environment.

The study, to be administered by Dr. Ronald Burke of York's faculty of administrative studies, is intended to collect views of school-based educators on the changes that may have taken place within the past few years in areas relevant to student learning. A random sample of teachers, principals and guidance counsellors across Canada will be surveyed beginning in June.

"One of the greatest frustrations for a CTF president in dealing with decision-makers is their general lack of response to concerns that have not been documented by research," said CTF President Greg O'Keefe. "For this reason I urge teachers who receive these questionnaires to take the time to complete and return them. A high response rate will enable us to speak more forcefully on behalf of our children and teenagers."

Results of the study will be published in the fall of 1983.

## Opinion

### Clip-clopping steadily backward into the future

When I think of computer education in B.C. the image of a blacksmith always comes to mind because that's where we're at: busily preparing people for jobs that no longer exist. To support the contention that B.C. is falling behind, I will attempt to give you an idea of how we compare with some of the other provinces in Canada and some other nations of the world.

In Canada, Quebec recently announced that it intends to spend about \$150 million over five years on computer education. Ontario has committed itself to buying \$10 million worth of machines and spending \$5 million on a program to develop educational software. Alberta's program, announced last year, is already in motion and has introduced 1,000 machines into its schools and has produced excellent computer literacy recommendations which are eagerly sought after by B.C. educators.

But what about B.C.'s effort? We started out like a house on fire in

1979 with JEM project and a pilot project in 1980-81, but for the last two years there has been very little. Sure, there has been a few puffs of smoke: Software Development Fund (any programs submitted have never been heard from since), CHOICES (was tested but is now on hold), and PEMC (the underfunded understaffed software center).

Internationally, how do we look? There is very little doubt in the world today that Japan is quickly moving to dominate sophisticated technological industry. Their educational standards in science and mathematics are considerably higher than those of other industrialized nations. But don't sell the U.S. short. There is a movement in the U.S. similar to that which occurred in 1957 when the Soviet Union put up the first orbital satellite Sputnik. When a state governor such as Bruce Babbitt of Arizona or a former governor, Jerry Brown of California, make opening addresses at educational computing conferences, it would seem that in some areas of the U.S.

computer education is being examined at a much higher level than it is in B.C. From where I sit, it doesn't appear that the minister of education, let alone the premier, has taken a serious look at computer education. At our stage of progress can you imagine Mr. Bennett giving the opening address at the next CUEBC conference?

We have a long, long way to go. So, why aren't we addressing computer education? Are we poorer than Ontario or Quebec? Do we lack computer expertise? (We could always import some from Ontario.) Is it really a fad like the hula-hoop as Erma Bombeck says? I don't know why, but I certainly hope that the government has the answers for the present students of our system when they attempt to find a job in the future.

There just isn't much demand for blacksmiths anymore.

Barry Underwood  
President  
Computer Using Educators B.C.  
MAY 20, 1983/5

## Applicants sought for Hilroy Awards

The Roy C. Hill Foundation, through the Canadian Teachers' Federation, each year awards two Hilroy awards to B.C. classroom teachers who have developed new ideas for improving teaching practices. The awards are worth \$1,500 each. Three additional awards are available across Canada for great merit at \$3,500 and one for \$5,500 for outstanding merit.

The description of the project should be sufficiently clear and specific to stand on its own merit without additional material. Related booklets, brochures, sketches or diagrams may be included with the application if the applicant feels they are essential, but tapes, slides and other such materials should not be submitted. A notation can be made, if appropriate, that such materials are available.

The deadline for receipt of application forms at the BCTF is October 31. Awards are made in the new year. For application forms, contact Thelma Weinreich at the BCTF office in Vancouver, toll free 112-800-663-9163.

## BCTF reaffirms condemnation of anti-semitism, racism

The BCTF has publicly reaffirmed its condemnation of the teaching of anti-semitic and other racist material.

The decision by the Executive Committee to reaffirm long-standing BCTF policy in a news release was prompted by concern over widespread news media misrepresentation of the position of the Alberta Teachers' Association in a controversy over the dismissal of an Alberta teacher for teaching his theory of a world-wide Jewish conspiracy as historical fact. In the release, BCTF President Larry Kuehn said the ATA's provision of legal counsel for the teacher had been misrepresented.

"The ATA, like the BCTF, has an obligation to ensure that due process is provided for any member who is accused of violating his or her professional

responsibilities," Kuehn said. "That does not mean, as one editorial put it, that the ATA has 'defended [the teacher's] right to spread paranoia.' Like the BCTF, the ATA has taken a public stand against both racism and stereotyping. No one should be misled into believing that teachers or their professional organizations condone the teaching of racist doctrines."

Kuehn noted that the ATA has been asked by several of its members to hold a disciplinary hearing of the fired teacher on a charge of unprofessional conduct under the association's code of ethics. The hearing could lead to the teacher's expulsion from the ATA and the loss of his teaching certificate. Kuehn pointed out that similar procedures exist under BCTF's code of ethics.

## Teachers' work conditions receive attention of ILO

Conditions of work of teachers received positive attention from the governing body of the ILO when the report and recommendations of the Joint ILO/Unesco Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers were presented on March 1.

The Workers Group of the Governing Body came out strongly in support of the recommendations, which included a proposal for preparation of a convention on the status of teachers. The chairman of the Workers Group, Gerd Muhr, also drew the attention to the recommendation from

the ILO meeting on Conditions of Work of Teachers (1981) that a permanent Joint Committee on Teachers be created. The problems encountered by teachers in their work fully justify the existence of such a committee, he noted.

Besides reviewing the application of the status recommendation, the joint committee had discussed the treatment of allegations of violations of the provisions of the recommendation, and proposed an updating of the recommendation.

The positive attitude taken by the governing body towards teachers' issues is an indication of an increased interest in

## Donald Rahrnick wins first BCSLA award

Donald Rahrnick, teacher-librarian at John Oliver Secondary School in Vancouver, has been awarded the first Award of Merit given by the B.C. School Librarians' Association.

The award honors a practising teacher-librarian who has made an outstanding contribution to school librarianship in B.C. A new award, it is intended to be given on an annual basis whenever a deserving individual has been nominated.

Donald Rahrnick received the recognition for his commitment to professional growth through continuing education and research, sharing ideas through workshops and publications and for developing a school resource centre



program that is a model for other teacher-librarians. Rahrnick, who is a part-time lecturer in librarianship at the University of B.C., will spend this summer as a consultant evaluating and rewriting the library program curriculum for the University of the South Pacific in Fiji.

public sector employees groups. This is to be warmly welcomed because of increasing attacks on public service groups by their employers. Cuts in public budgets have caused increasing unemployment and worsened working conditions. Widespread infringements of trade union rights have led to a sharp increase in the number of complaints to the ILO.

Typical of these is a complaint brought by the Japan Teachers' Union and other public service unions, co-signed by WCOTF. In its response the ILO reaffirmed that whenever basic bargaining rights or the right to strike are forbidden or subject to restrictions, adequate safeguards of workers' interests, such as speedy and impartial conciliation and arbitration procedures in which the parties can take part and in which awards are fully and promptly implemented, must be guaranteed.

Among WCOTF complaints pending before the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association, there are three complaints against the Government of Canada on this same issue.

## Task force to examine role of administrators

A task force has been struck to examine the role of administrators in the BCTF.

The Executive Committee took the decision at its May meeting following presentation of a draft paper, "A Time for Change", from a committee of the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association which outlined concerns about perceived constraints on administrators in BCTF policies and practices. The task force, consisting of three BCTF executive members and three BCPVPA executive members, is to make recommendations to the fall RA and a meeting of the BCPVPA.

## UTAC to remain open

The BCTF Unemployed Teachers' Action Centre will continue in operation for another year.

The executive decided at its May meeting that the centre, which was to close June 30, should remain open until July 15 and then, after a vacation break, reopen to serve the unemployed from August 22 until June 30, 1984.

## Post-secondary aid cuts by feds may also hurt schools

The federal government's decision to impose its "6 and 5" restraint program on federal cash and tax transfers for post-secondary education will mean a loss of \$102 million to the provinces in 1983-84.

It could also ultimately mean more cuts in provincial elementary and secondary school spending.

In percentage terms, the increase in federal grants to the provinces for post-secondary education in 1983-84 will be reduced from the previously-planned 9.8 per cent to 7 per cent (the extra point beyond 6 per cent being for population increases).

While under the Federal-Provincial Financial Arrangements Act it is up to the individual provinces to decide how to allocate the reduced grant between post-secondary education and health care, federal Finance Minister Marc Lalonde has indicated that post-secondary education would be the likely victim, noting that many provinces have already restricted spending increases in that sector to 6 per cent.

"If the provinces do, in fact, make their colleges and universities bear the entire brunt of the cutbacks, it could impose serious hardship on post-secondary education," warned Dr. Wilf Brown, Canadian Teachers' Federation economic director, writing in the CTF publication *Link*. "Also, if the cutbacks are passed on to other areas of provincial spending, elementary and secondary education could suffer adverse consequences as well."

## Trustees adopt new policies

The annual general meeting of the B.C. School Trustees Association produced some interesting, if not significant, policy decisions.

Over 60 resolutions were presented dealing with matters ranging from the finance formula to fine arts to computer education. The following are capsule highlights of the decisions:

### Carried

**Finance formula:** a proposal that the proposed new finance formula contain a return to board autonomy such as existed under the previous formula with time for significant trustee and community input before new legislation is enacted.

**Public school systems funding:** a proposal that the government increase funding for public school education to at least 1982 funding levels.

**English placement test:** a proposal supporting abolition of the English placement test and the proposition that post-secondary institutions be responsible for information required beyond that provided by a student's transcript.

**Computer education:** the proposition that the ministry of education seriously consider computer education as part of a core curriculum, with funding.

**Provincial year-end testing:** an expression of concern to the minister of education about the implementation of a provincial year-end testing program without prior consultation with school boards.

**Fine arts:** a resolution supporting the arts as an essential part of the core curriculum.

**Teacher arbitration awards:** a proposal that the School Act be amended to provide that all arbitration awards be released at 12:00 January 5 of each year.

**Teacher training:** a recommendation that the ministry of education and joint board of teacher education implement a

teaching skills course such as Project TEACH, Project PRIDE or Teaching Through Learning Channels for all teacher trainees in B.C. universities

### Defeated

**Education finance:** a tax formula that would place more responsibility and control with local taxpayers and less with the provincial government.

**Teacher bargaining:** amendments to the School Act repealing all sections relating to teacher bargaining and amendments to the B.C. Labour Code permitting teacher associations to be certified as trade unions, but included a contingency amount in the budget in case labour code provisions subsequently apply.

**Teachers' professional act:** a recommendation for a teachers' professional act that would establish (separate from the above union) a professional association for all teachers that would be compulsory for all



Joy Leach... newly-elected BCSTA president

## Letters

### Why anti-Socred bias in Newsletter insert?

I have received and read your April 19 special election insert edition. May I ask a question that I have put to many teachers and still don't fully understand why there doesn't appear to be a representative answer:

If the BCTF purports to represent all teachers; and all teachers represent all political parties and all political thought; and if all teachers wish to be represented by a professional organization, why does the BCTF make it so apparent in all of its literature, in particular throughout its newsletter, that it is anti-Social Credit and pro-NDP?

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that education has been the centre of attention and of grave concern throughout the province throughout the last two years. The BCTF believes it's been of grave concern ever since 1971 when in its Bill 3 campaign it adopted an anti-Social Credit position announcing its objective as defeat of the government. In the *BCTF Members' Guide*, page 97, it states the belief "that the only way to improve conditions for education was to get rid of the government, which was obviously anti-education and anti-teacher". As we all know, the BCTF also had problems with the next government which was NDP. Are you truly representing all of your members when you continue to take a policy of attacking the government that is setting educational policy rather than trying to work with them?

As a trustee I am an elected official. The minister of education is also, and there are many others who are elected in order to try and represent what they believe is the best interests of their constituents and the community. For over 10 years the BCTF has been exchanging bashing and confrontation

with the provincial governments and encouraging the same politics in local school boards and other organizations. It is well known that there are many members of the BCTF that do not support this continuous chaos. Sure, governments are often hard to deal with but probably the BCTF often suffers from the same malaise.

By the time this letter appears in print we may have a new government and a new education minister. Is it possible for the BCTF to shake hands and this time not come out fighting?

Graeme Waymark  
School Trustee  
Vancouver

### Newsletter insert "blatant misuse" of members' dues

As a teacher in the province of British Columbia and, therefore, a member of the BCTF, I am appalled at the blatant misuse of my monthly membership dues. I have before me the April 19, 1983 issue of the *BCTF Newsletter* complete with a "special election insert".

Since when does it become the job of the BCTF to point out to its membership how they should or should not vote? I expect my funding to go towards improving our profession through lesson aids, defining the curriculum, providing in-service personnel and/or workshops all geared toward improving the education of the children in our classrooms. Why not boast of the good things that are happening within the teaching ranks instead of bashing others?

I am ashamed of the unionistic tactics used by my "professional representatives" (and I can only use those terms loosely). It comes as no surprise that teachers as a whole are not respected in

our province when the vocal representative body (the BCTF) uses its powers and membership funding to attack the government in the manner it does.

Perhaps it is time that the 'silent majority' spoke up in order to be treated like the hard-working professionals we strive to be.

Laurina Harrington  
North Poplar Elementary  
Abbotsford

*With respect to the above comments by Graeme Waymark and Laurina Harrington about the April 19 BCTF Newsletter special election insert, several points need to be made:*

(a) no dispassionate observer would deny that the confrontations of the past two years were provoked by provincial Social Credit government actions detrimental to public education;

(b) the BCTF tried, without success, to work with the government but the former education minister, Bill Vander Zalm, repeatedly showed himself more interested in scoring political points;

(c) decisions by representative policy-making bodies (executive, RA, AGM) clearly demonstrated the membership's anger and frustration with the government and determination to fight its anti-education policies;

(d) the BCTF Newsletter, as is its role, reflected the concerns and priorities of the federation as they were at the start of the election in the special election insert.

That insert did not tell members how they should vote. Admittedly, the material was predominantly critical of Social Credit education policies. But the bottom line is that the BCTF had good, substantial reasons to oppose that government's approach to public education and that is what the BCTF Newsletter was reflecting — as it has done throughout the education crisis.

— Editor

### Support staff quiet efficiency at AGM noted and appreciated

We wish to express our thanks to the support staff whose efficiency and dedication do so much to make the Annual General Meeting function smoothly.

Because the support services function so well they are not always highly visible, but we do not wish to leave the impression that they have gone unnoticed. We have noticed and we very much appreciate the work done for us.

Mike Campbell  
Chairperson  
Resolutions Committee

### Referendum urged on labour code decision

The BCTF AGM approved a policy which seeks to have teachers in B.C. included under the labour code. I am concerned that this decision probably does not represent the wishes of a majority of BCTF members. Both the BCTF executive and the AGM have, in the past, demonstrated a capacity for being out of touch with the real wishes of the membership. I believe, therefore, that the BCTF should seek a broader measure of support before pursuing so important a policy.

The process by which AGM delegates are selected and the process by which BCTF executives are elected does not guarantee that these people are aware of the wishes of the general membership. The BCTF has quite a few policies that do not represent the wishes or the views of a majority of its members, but in most cases these may simply be shrugged at and ignored. Something basic that affects each BCTF member as profoundly as this labour code policy does, however, is worthy of deep concern.

Let us not pursue this policy on any basis as demonstrably unsound as a vote at the AGM. Surely, for something so fundamental as a total change in direction for the federation, a referendum of the membership is required.

Fred Calhoun  
Queen Elizabeth Sr. Secondary  
Surrey

### Tragic if members become divided over bargaining goals

The decision of the BCTF Annual General Meeting supporting teacher inclusion under the B.C. Labour Code should be seen as a symbolic statement of the BCTF's opening bargaining position with the government.

We are serious about our desire for full bargaining rights — the same rights to negotiate that all other working groups take for granted. It is immaterial whether our bargaining rights are covered under the School Act, the labour code or a special teacher bargaining act. The objective is to get a guarantee of those rights from the government.

Through their previous education spokesperson, Bill Vander Zalm, the Social Credit government has stated that teachers should have fewer rights. Proposed School Act revisions, (now postponed) were removed to include provisions that would have eliminated our ability to negotiate working and learning conditions provisions we now have. Since this is in direct conflict with our stated objective of full bargaining rights, the AGM decision on the labour code must be seen as an initial bargaining position. We know from salary negotiations that we must always start from a position of strength, not the bottom line.

It disturbs me that some opponents at the AGM failed to understand that we are in effect entering a high stakes poker game. They seem to want to show all the cards now and destroy any chance of gaining bargaining rights in the future.

Some members are also attempting to suggest that this is an issue of "professionalism" vs. "unionism." This is a red herring at best. At worst it is a deliberate attempt to prevent us from gaining the rights the great majority of teachers support and which other professionals working primarily as employees (nurses, college instructors) already have.

It will be a tragedy for our future professional gains if we are to descend into divisiveness based on a misunderstanding of bargaining strategy.

We must now enter into a "bargaining process" to determine what rights will be granted by the government. The nature of these rights and where they will be enshrined is a matter for negotiation. Our strong initial position will help us to move the government from its initial hardline stance.

Membership unity is critical right now if we are successfully to achieve our goals.

Geoff Peters  
BCTF Bargaining Committee  
Roy Stubbs Elementary, Coquitlam

### Librarians united in protesting school library cuts

As BCLA/BCSLA liaison person, I was very pleased to read the article "Publishers, librarians unite in protest", which appeared in the February 15, 1983, *BCTF Newsletter*.

I was concerned, however, that mention was only made of public librarians when in fact the British Columbia Librarians' Association also represents college,

university and special librarians, all of whom are actively supporting the important role played by the school libraries and teacher-librarians in our education system.

We owe each and every one of them a heartfelt thanks!

Lynn Shoop  
Coordinator of Library Services  
School District of Nanaimo

### Alberta teachers press for policy on teacher-librarians

I noted with interest an item in your newsletter in which Sally Dearn attributed a proposed, but unsuccessful termination of teacher-librarians in Windermere, to a confusion in philosophy. The source of this confusion was the superintendent, Geoff Tagg, who came to Windermere from Alberta where the policy is for librarians to be clerk-typists. But, she pointed out, "Our librarians teach". ("Windermere firings stopped by strong teacher protests", January 10, 1983).

In fact, there is no policy in Alberta relative to staff or program for school libraries. This situation has long been an impediment to school library development in the province, but one that your Alberta colleagues hope will soon be addressed.

Last year, Education Minister David King requested that government prepare an initial statement regarding school libraries to "outline the issues relative to their operation". That paper has been prepared and the environment is now one of deep and abiding silence while we await distribution and reaction.

Sally Dearn's explanation of the teacher-librarian's role as a "classroom teacher who has extra training and specialized skills to help children" and who

active teachers and optional for non-active holders of teaching certificates.

**Compulsory BCTF membership:** removal of compulsory membership.

**Compulsory BCTF membership for principals:** a recommendation that would have made membership in the BCTF for principals elective or voluntary.

**Royal commission on education:** a proposal that there be a royal commission to inquire into and report about the educational process in B.C.

**Teacher layoffs:** a detailed resolution that would have amended section 153 of the School Act, but carried a proposal that the minister of education make immediate changes to section 153 of the School Act to ensure that school boards could lay off teaching employees in an orderly manner, should the need arise.

Precise wording of any of these resolutions can be obtained from the BCTF records department.

## Letters

are partners with classroom teachers in the teaching/learning process is one that we support. The implications of this role are not, at this time, generally understood throughout the province.

The future awaits!

Bev Anderson  
President, Learning Resources Council  
Alberta Teachers' Association  
Calgary, Alberta

### Universities thank sponsor teachers

I have been asked by my colleagues on the Tri-Universities Field Services Committee to convey our joint thanks to the many teachers who have acted as sponsors and associates for our student teachers during this academic year.

This has been a difficult year for public education in B.C., especially so for public school teachers. The controversies over funding, the spectre of loss of jobs, the brunt of government cutbacks have all significantly lowered teacher morale and captured teacher concern. Yet, we have all found our students welcomed in classrooms as future colleagues, teachers were sympathetic with them in regard to the shortage of jobs in their chosen profession, and they were treated most ethically in professional discussion over current provincial controversies.

Our sincere thanks to all who have helped our student teachers.

W. K. Cross, Director  
Professional Studies  
University of Victoria.

On behalf of  
R. Mitchell  
Director of Student Teaching  
University of British Columbia

June Wyatt  
Director, P.D.P.  
Simon Fraser University  
MAY 20, 1983/7

## Regina to host '86 WCOTP assembly

The World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession has accepted an invitation issued by the Canadian Teachers' Federation that WCOTP hold its General Assembly in Canada in 1986.

The biennial meeting will bring together some 600 delegates representing six million teachers from 125 teacher organizations in 85 countries.

## Engineering science faculty opens at SFU

Simon Fraser University's new faculty of engineering science will enrol its first students this fall.

The four-year program, aimed initially at graduating 25 students a year, will concentrate on computing, communications systems and on microelectronics. Launched with a \$500,000 provincial grant, the faculty hopes eventually to triple its graduate output and to expand into industrial automation and robotics, biotechnology and bio-chemical processing.

## Information available on financial aid for educational leave

After several years in the classroom, a period of educational leave can often be a great benefit to a teacher's professional development.

But the problem usually is how to swing it financially.

Formal educational leave-provisions with pay in teacher contracts would be the most satisfactory solution — but such leaves are difficult to get.

There is, however, hope. Various universities, foundations, institutes and councils offer financial support for study programs in education. In addition, there are deferred salary leave plans and income tax advantages to teachers who take a year of educational leave.

The BCTF offers an information service to its members about the various financial assistance programs available to support members' educational leave. For information and a brochure call Thelma Weinreich at 731-8121 in the metro area, or toll-free 112-800-663-9163.



## "Grey Fox" musical score wins Genie for Vancouver teacher

The ideal musical score for a film should be unobtrusive, almost subliminal, says Michael Baker. It should unify the mood and action of the film but not become the focus of the audience's attention.

That comment is appropriate in more than one way because, as a successful, prolific composer, Michael Baker's work has given pleasure to a great many Canadians without them being aware of who was responsible. Although well-known in music and film circles — even as far away as Czechoslovakia — he is still relatively unknown to audiences.

That may be changing. Michael Baker, who teaches music part-time at Vancouver's General Gordon Elementary School and the University of B.C. (music appreciation and film scoring) has just won the Canadian film industry's top award, a Genie, for his musical score for the film, "Grey Fox." It's his second Genie; the first was for a musical score for a short documentary, "Nails", by the same director, Philip Borsos, which also was nominated for an Academy Award.

When he's not in the classroom, Baker, a graduate of UBC's music school, is busy

composing. So far he's written 62 compositions for voice, orchestra, dance, guitar and organ — as well as eight film scores. His accomplishments include: a ballet entitled "Washington Square" which was recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra, a song in honour of Terry Fox which was sung by 2,000 students at a Nights of Music concert and a fanfare for the Queen which was played by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in March at the B.C. Place stadium.

Baker has just written a tone poem for Anne Mortifee's latest show, a musical score for Jack Darcus' new film, "The Deserters" and is currently writing a score for a film on the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

Michael Baker — a self-described "music freak" who has enjoyed Bach and Mozart since he was four — is confident that there are classroom spinoffs from all this work.

"I love working with children, teaching kids," said Baker. "I'm sure that they benefit because I bring my love of music into the classroom and I introduce them to a lot of the classics."

## Vacancies

One BCTF representative is required. This centre is geared mainly for students and is experience-oriented. Students are actively involved with exhibits, programs and workshops. Meetings take place approximately three times per year. Applications should be submitted on BCTF curriculum vitae forms by **June 14**. For more information or vitae forms, please contact Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office.

## Changes made in BCTF staff lineup

There will be some new faces in BCTF administrative ranks in the coming year, but overall the changes will represent a .5 position reduction in administrative staff.

In the professional development division, **Marian Dodds** of Nelson, a former member of the BCTF Status of Women Committee and a bargaining prime zone contact, has been appointed to a two-year term as co-ordinator of the status of women program. **Ed May** of Coquitlam has been appointed to a second two-year term to co-ordinate the program against racism. **Susan Crowley** of Prince Rupert has had her term appointment extended to June 1984 during Nancy Flodin's maternity leave; she will continue to co-ordinate the stress program and provide field service. The federation has also entered into a five-month, 30 per cent time contract with BCTF computer associate **David Porter** of North Vancouver to serve as an educational technology consultant. The 20 per cent time contract with **Barry Underwood** of Campbell River to provide general computer education information has been extended for a year.

Three assistant directors have been named in the bargaining division. **Al Cornes**, formerly of Alberni, has been granted a continuing position after a two-year appointment. **Elaine Jacobson** of Smithers, currently a member of the BCTF Teacher Personnel Committee, has been given a two-year appointment, while former First Vice-President **Steve Norman** of Vancouver has been given a one-year appointment in the division.

# Calendar

### SFU computer institute May 29 - August 26

Simon Fraser University's computing science department is offering a non-credit summer computer institute for teachers and high school students.

**Programming Project Organization, July 5-14**, is for teachers who write their own software in BASIC, supervise programming projects in BASIC, or give courses in BASIC programming. Enrolment limit is 20, fee \$150.

**Workshop on Structured Programming** is for high school students and their parents and focusses on structured programming using high-level Programming Language One. Available three Sundays, **May 29 - June 12**, eight hours per session, or **Monday-Friday, August 22-26**. Limited enrolment, \$75 for students, \$125 for students accompanied by a parent.

Further information and registration details: Mrs. Elma Krbavac, Computing Science, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby (phone: 291-4675).

### Speech and language conference

June 4-5

The sixth annual Surrey school district speech and language conference will feature Dr. Ellyn Lucas Arwood, author of *Semantic and Pragmatic Language Disorders*, who will give a presentation on **8/MAY 20, 1983**

diagnostic and remediation techniques in spatio-temporal, semantic and pragmatic language disorders. Fee \$40, students \$25. Further information and registration details: Speech/language conference, Surrey School District #36, 14225-56th Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V3M 1H9 (596-7733).

### Non-attending child symposium July 4-8

The University of B.C. education clinic will present a symposium on the non-attending child on July 4-8, designed to be of interest to special educators, psychologists and classroom teachers. The fee is \$150. Further information and registrations: Dr. O. A. Oldridge, Education Clinic Coordinator, Education Faculty, University of B.C., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z5.

### Summer mathematics workshop August 30-31

The B.C. Association of Mathematics Teachers' 10th mathematics summer workshop August 30-31 will feature 80 sessions of interest to mathematics teachers through levels K-12. Keynote speaker will be George Ivany, SFU Acting President. Pre-registration fee is \$35, students \$20. Further information

and registrations: Tenth Summer Workshop, 4488 Skyline Drive, North Vancouver, B.C., V7R 3H1.

### Children: the focus of Administration

October 20-22

Hosted by the Council on School Administration and the Alberta Teachers' Association, the annual conference of the Western Canada Educational Administrators in Edmonton, October 20-22, will explore the theme, "Children: the Focus of Administration". Key speakers include: Alberta Education Minister David King, Dr. Frierson of the Nashville Learning Centre and Dr. Mitchell of the University of Alberta. Further information and registrations: Dr. J. Atcheson, 9807-106th Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 1C2.

### Reunions

#### Bralorne School Reunion

Teachers who have taught in Bralorne are reminded of the Bralorne school reunion to be held at Gunn Lake on **July 2**. Further information: Mrs. Margaret Pasacreta, Box 135, Lillooet, B.C. V0K 1V0.

#### Burnaby Central

Burnaby Central Senior Secondary School is planning a 25th reunion for **October,**

**1983**. Interested former teachers and students are urged to contact Mrs. Brenda Harfield at the school, 4939 Canada Way, Burnaby, V5G 1M1 (299-5771).

#### Victoria Normal School

A reunion of the Victoria Normal School classes of 1935-36 is being planned. Interested former classmates are urged to contact: Iris (Taylor) York, Ste. 5, 2768 Satellite, Victoria, B.C. V8S 5G8 (598-9089).

#### Vancouver Normal School

A reunion of Vancouver Normal School 1932-33 class is planned for **August 16**. It will be held 2-5:30 p.m., King Edward Room, Library Tower, Langara Campus, Vancouver Community College. For planning purposes it is important that those intending to attend drop a note as soon as possible to: Vancouver Normal School Reunion, c/o Retired Teachers' Association, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6J 3H9.

#### RTA coffee party

Reminder: the annual coffee party of the Retired Teachers' Association is scheduled for Saturday, **September 24**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at the UBC Faculty Club. Newly retired teachers are especially welcome.