

BCTF Newsletter

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Executive opts for flexibility on work-to-rule

Opting for flexibility in its response to the continuing cutbacks crisis, the Executive Committee has decided to call a provincial work-to-rule when circumstances warrant such action.

The executive made this decision at its November meeting following lengthy discussion of the fall Representative Assembly motions authorizing the Executive Committee to call a province-wide work-to-rule this month to back demands for restoration of education funding with at least a 6 per cent increase in 1983.

In the discussion, executive members expressed considerable concern about the timing and effectiveness of a work-to-rule campaign. There was a strong expression of the need to be flexible and to stage a province-wide work-to-rule at an appropriate time and as part of an overall strategy.

As adopted, the main motion read that:

- the dates of the province-wide work-to-rule be on the call of the Executive Committee;
- there be an intensive PR/advertising campaign prior to the provincial work-to-rule;
- bulletins on the campaign be sent to every member;
- the provincial definition of work-to-rule be:

- arriving no more than 30 minutes before normal school starting times;
- departing no more than 30 minutes after normal scheduled dismissal;
- preparing and marking at school only;

See "Work" page 2



BCTF President Larry Kuehn (right, background), VESTA President Kitty O'Callaghan (centre) and VSTA President Mike Gregory participate in Vancouver teachers' debate on work-to-rule. Vancouver teachers decided to conduct a school-by-school vote.

Mere 1.5 per cent net

Arbitration awards "increases" but real incomes still decline

The good news is that arbitrators did not slavishly bow to Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm's pressure for zero increases, but have awarded 1983 salary increases to B.C. teachers.

The bad news is that they are increases in name only as even the highest — 6.5 per cent — fails to match the current inflation rate.

"There are no real salary increases for teachers this year — they're all salary cuts," said BCTF President Larry Kuehn. "It's just a question of how much the cut is in real terms."

Arbitration boards have handed down 13 awards covering 62 school districts,

granting increases ranging from 3 per cent to 6.5 per cent — with the weighted average being 4.01 per cent.

Kuehn pointed out that, even before Compensation Stabilization Commissioner Ed Peck rules on these awards, they have already been effectively cut by 2.5 per cent, the amount equivalent to the five days' pay taken away from teachers by the School Services (Interim) Act. This means that, after this cut, the real average increase is only 1.51 per cent.

It's important, he said, that teachers clearly recognize that, with inflation running at 9.8 per cent, these awards do not represent gains but continued erosion of

real incomes. "Teachers need to remember this in avoiding the guilt trip which is being put on them by the minister and by (BCSTA President) Gary Begin and others."

Arbitration results on non-money items were mixed. Okanagan teachers lost their portability of sick leave. Victoria teachers lost their noon-hour supervision bonus, while Grand Forks teachers gained it. Kimberley teachers, however, made a significant gain in achieving a grievance procedure. And West Kootenay teachers made an important advance in obtaining severance pay provisions that provide 5 per cent for every year in service in severance pay if a teacher is released. (Action Update will have a district by district report of the arbitration awards.)

Larry Kuehn said the results were indicative of how the government had distorted the whole process this year. It began, he said, with the government depriving boards of budget authority and thus their ability to bargain, which forced an abnormally high number of districts into arbitration. It continued when Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm attempted to influence the outcome by publicly warning of layoffs if there were any salary increases and continued with an attempt to politically influence some appointments of arbitration board chairpersons.

"In four zones where there was failure to agree on chairpersons and where the minister of labor made appointments, those appointments were clearly politically-influenced," said Kuehn. "Derek DeBiasio, Vander Zalm's assistant, admitted that Vander Zalm had been in-

Unemployed teachers problem to be tackled by task force

A BCTF Unemployed Teachers Task Force is being set up to offer services — and hope — to the growing numbers of teachers thrown out of work by government budget cuts.

In recognition of the growing seriousness of the problem, the Executive Committee agreed at its November meeting to establish such a task force to be composed of two representatives named by the Provincial Association of Substitute Teachers and one each named by the Status of Women Committee and the Labor Liaison Committee.

The task force has been given a mandate to June 30, 1983 to:

- serve as an advisory body to the Executive Committee, staff and appointed committees;
- assist in developing and updating the

information package for unemployed teachers;

- develop and assist in the presentation of workshops for unemployed teachers;

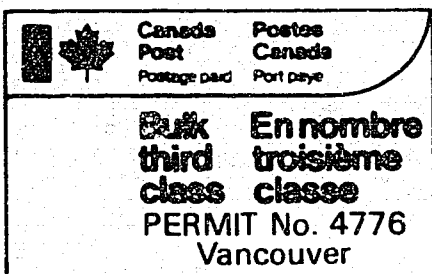
- help organize unemployed teachers;
- recommend on the establishment of a drop-in centre or centres.

"I see this as a very positive step — but a beginning, not an end," said Maxine Boag, president of PAST. She expressed hope that the task force would provide "concrete services" to the unemployed ranging from workshops on how to find employment to how to be an effective substitute teacher.

BCTF President Larry Kuehn agreed, pointing out that the task force is expected to assist in identifying needed

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See "Arbitration" page 2



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Work-to-rule seen leading job action

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- performing normally scheduled supervision;
- not sponsoring or supervising field trips;
- not sponsoring or supervising extra-curricular activities, including school-organized clubs, intramurals and teams.

• each local association set up a committee with the power to make decisions on whether any particular activity is included within the work-to-rule definition.

There was not complete agreement on all aspects of this and a recorded vote was taken. Executive members voting on the affirmative side were: Al Blakey, Paddy Boyle, Trevor Calkins, Pat Clarke, Larry Kuehn, Maureen MacDonald and Christina Schut. Those voting negative were: John Mackie, Elsie McMurphy, Doug Smart and Margaret Woodlands.

Later in the meeting a further motion on the issue was also adopted in a recorded vote. It called for "the work-to-rule to be an initial part of escalating job action, pursuant to the RA decision to confront the government, if necessary, to achieve our strategic objectives."

Voting for the motion in the recorded vote were Al Blakey, Paddy Boyle, Trevor Calkins, Pat Clarke, Larry Kuehn, John Mackie, Maureen MacDonald, Christina Schut and Doug Smart, while voting against it were Elsie McMurphy and Margaret Woodlands.

Task force aims at giving hope to the unemployed

From page 1

federation support services — such as help with unemployment insurance matters — and in facilitating unemployed teachers getting involved in the unemployment action centres being set up around the province, possibly helping in education programs there.

"We also expect that the task force will serve as a pressure on the government to respond to the really crazy situation we have where we've got at least 2,000 unemployed teachers — and probably more next year — and yet we have all sorts of unmet educational needs in the schools," said Kuehn.

But beyond this, he said a key role for the task force is to hold out hope to unemployed teachers during these hard times.

"We want unemployed teachers to continue to feel part of the teaching profession and we want those coming out of university not to abandon teaching as a potential career," Kuehn said. "Otherwise, when times change and conditions improve we will have simply lost a real resource for the system."

Planning for retirement

A series of seminars designed to assist teachers and their spouses plan for retirement will be held around the province in the new year. The schedule is as follows:

Teachers living in	Date	Place
Alberni, Qualicum and north Vancouver Island	February 12	Courtenay
Abbotsford, Mission and eastern Fraser Valley	February 26	Chilliwack
South Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands	March 18 (evening) and March 19	Victoria
Burnaby, New Westminster, Surrey, Langley, Delta, Richmond and Vancouver	February 15 (evening) February 22 (evening) and March 1	Burnaby

The seminars, being presented by Bruce Watson, BCTF Government Division, and the Retired Teachers' Association, will range widely over such topics as finances, housing and use of leisure time.

Further details on the times and locations of the seminars will be sent early in January to the schools in the areas where the seminars will be held.

Socreds eyeing courses in sex and gambling?

The provincial government recently spent \$70,000 of the taxpayers' money on a questionnaire.

The last question on that poll is reprinted below. We have *not, repeat not*, altered it in any way. This is just as it appeared on page 24 of the survey:

In general, are you strongly in favour, somewhat in favour, somewhat opposed or strongly opposed to each of the following:

	Strongly in favour	Somewhat in favour	Somewhat opposed	Strongly opposed
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Giving school teachers the right to strike

Premarital sexual relations

Legalization of casino gambling in B.C.

The results have not been, and are unlikely to be, announced. It is always possible though, given the vagaries of this government, that legislation, possibly with retroactive effect, may be introduced at the next sitting of the legislature.

The *BCTF Newsletter*, as a public spirited gesture is (if you will forgive the word) soliciting from its readers draft legislative amendments to the School Act which could succinctly accommodate this fascinating grouping.

Winning entries (within the bounds of good taste) will be published. All entries should be postmarked no later than January 31, 1983 and submitted to *BCTF Newsletter*, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9.

The winning entry will receive a suitable prize.

Arbitration panel admits teachers still losing with 6.5% award

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involved in deciding who they were going to be and they all came from management perspectives. Two of them were challenged by the BCTF for conflict of interest and withdrew their names."

But it was a good thing to see, said Kuehn, that a number of arbitration boards publicly protested this attempted political pressure play. He pointed to the statement in the award by the northwest Metro arbitration board (composed of chairperson Gabriel Somjen, trustees' nominee A. I. Guttman and teachers' nominee J. Baigent) which emphasized the requirement for impartiality under the School Act. "Statements by the minister of education," the board wrote, "about the very process which have the appearance of attempting to influence the process, especially when it is under way, are totally unwarranted and an improper interference in the judicial functions of this arbitration board."

Equally heartening was the fact that many arbitration boards not only ignored the political pressure but also specifically rejected the government and trustees' ability-to-pay argument. In awarding teachers a 6.5 per cent increase, the East

Kootenay zone arbitration board (composed of chairperson James Dorsey, trustees' nominee Rod Pearce, teachers' nominee John Brewin) wrote: "We have arrived at this figure after considering the (compensation stabilization) guidelines, the economy, the teachers' losses, inflation, other public sector settlements, including the recent GERB-BCGEU settlement valued by the (compensation stabilization) commissioner at 6.8 per cent, and other matters presented by the parties. In real terms it represents a decrease in 1983 spending power for the teachers, but in the current economic circumstances, it seems to us to be a fair and reasonable amount."

Noting that commissioner Ed Peck had accepted that 6.8 per cent increase, Kuehn emphasized that the teachers' arbitration awards are well within the government's public sector wage guidelines and should similarly be accepted when they come before Peck, as they are expected to this month. Nor should these increases, he said, lead to massive cuts in teaching staffs as Vander Zalm has threatened.

"If there are any firings of teachers, or reduction of school staffs through attrition, they can't be blamed on these low increases," said Kuehn. "The fact is that the government has told the school boards to expect even less money in 1983 than they had last year. It has cut their 1983 budgets by a further 3.5 per cent, on top of last year's major cuts. If the government would simply live up to its own guidelines and give the school boards a 6 per cent budget hike, the boards could not only maintain but improve present staffing levels."

BCTF Newsletter

CLIVE COCKING
Editor

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

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

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AGM '83 executive nominations deadline

Nominations for BCTF Executive Committee positions for 1983-84 must be received by the BCTF office no later than January 31, 1983.

The positions to be filled by the 1983 Annual General Meeting are: president, first vice-president, second vice-president and three members-at-large. The members-at-large whose terms will expire on June 30, 1983 are Pat Clarke, Elsie McMurphy and Christina Schut.

All local associations, district councils or groups of 10 members in good standing are eligible to submit nominations.

Further nominations may also be made from the floor of the Annual General Meeting.

For further information see by-law 5.5 on page 5 of your *Members' Guide*.

Executive raps TIHC for backing project using non-union labor

The Teachers' Investment and Housing Co-op has received a rap on the knuckles from the BCTF executive for its involvement in a development project using non-union labor.

The teachers' investment co-op is financing an apartment development on Dunbar Street in Vancouver being built and managed by a developer. The TIHC has explained that the arrangement was entered into by oversight and that involvement in projects using non-union labor is not general practice, but they are locked into the situation by the contract.

The Executive Committee voted at its November meeting to express strong opposition to the TIHC's involvement in such a project and, in doing so, they will urge the co-op to participate only in projects using union labor.

BCTF delegation meets provincial secretary over pension concerns

Pensions are still a BCTF priority despite the constant need recently to respond to government attacks on education.

President Larry Kuehn, First Vice-President Doug Smart and Bruce Watson, Government Division, met with Provincial Secretary James Chabot on December 14 to advise him of BCTF concerns. They focussed on four areas:

- bargaining rights for pensions;
- continued improvements in investment returns and a joint share in setting investment policy;
- long-term problems in the indexing provisions and joint discussions on any changes to the act.

Further meetings on all these items will be required after the federation has had an opportunity to develop specific policy.

During the meeting, Larry Kuehn complimented James D. Reid, on his work as superannuation commissioner. Reid, who has stepped down to take a position with Wm. M. Mercer Ltd., has always made himself available to the pensions committee, to members and to BCTF staff to discuss problems and improvements. At the same time, Kuehn welcomed his successor, John W. Cook.

North Vancouver Island teachers show commitment to Pro-D days

"I really needed to have something to motivate me — this day did it for me."

"A very enthusiastic and worthwhile day."

"The best workshops we have had."

These are some of the favourable comments north Vancouver Island teachers made in evaluating activities presented on November 25 in Port Hardy on one of the few district-wide professional development days held this fall.

According to PD chairperson David Mitchell, the date and theme of the program had been set long before the "Vanderlisms" of the fall.

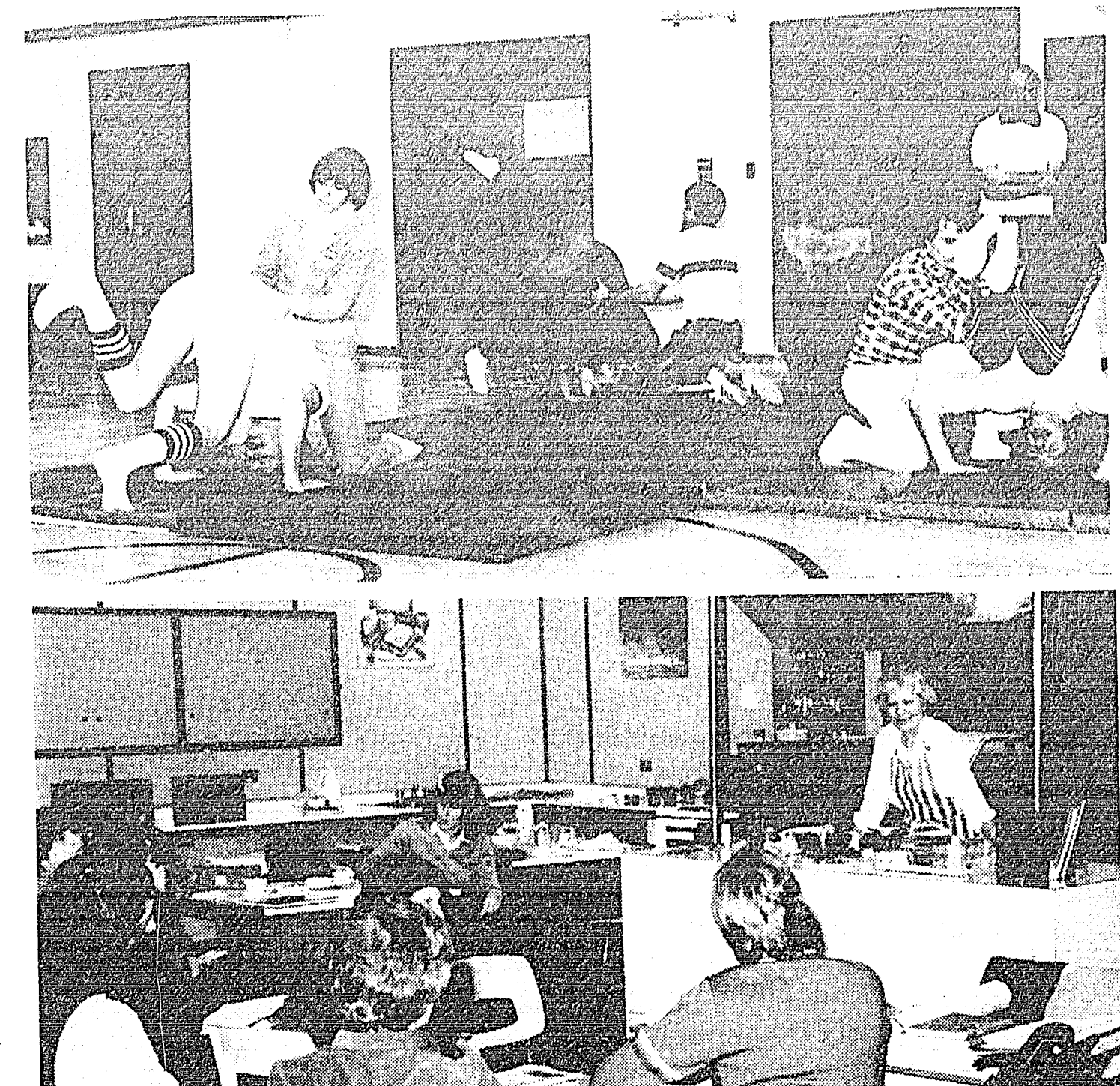
"For a while we weren't sure whether the day would go ahead as planned, but the local teachers voted overwhelmingly to oppose Bill 89," said Mitchell. "It was evident that Vancouver Island north teachers wanted their PD day in spite of the threats implied in Bill 89."

The purpose of the day was to provide local chapters of PSAs with an opportunity to pursue identified needs. Each PSA,

or group, was given the responsibility of planning the activities with the district PD committee coordinating the activities.

The schedule for the day included such activities as a study of an integrated primary social studies program, language arts in the intermediate grades, a computer workshop, a home economics workshop, a music teachers' band workshop and physical education programs. The day ended with a dinner and dance and the induction of teachers new to VINTA and the BCTF.

"Teachers I talked to had two things to say," said VINTA President Norm Prince. "One was that the day was important in that it allowed teachers in this far-flung local to get together for the first time this year to share professional ideas and strategies in an atmosphere conducive to learning. The other was that teachers felt that their use of the day was an important expression of the need to maintain teacher control of PD activities and of non-instructional days. Hopefully this message will not fall on deaf ears."



Alert Bay P.E. teacher Karl Tarwitz (top, right) teaches colleagues gymnastic spotting techniques while (below, right) Margaret Eckford demonstrates microwave cooking.

Central American teachers' fight assured continued BCTF support

Central American teachers' organizations, struggling against poverty and repression, will be assured of continued BCTF support for their efforts to improve education and human rights conditions in their countries.

The Executive Committee made this commitment at its November meeting following a presentation by Joan Robb, Sunshine Coast Teachers' Association president and one of eight BCTF members who toured Nicaragua last summer at the invitation of the National Association of Nicaraguan Educators (ANDEN). The group (which included Tim Aimes, Rob Gage, Julia Goulden, Gary Onstad, Ellen Moffat, Linda Shuto

and Peter Thompson) was invited to Nicaragua to see the results of the 1980 National Literacy Crusade, to which the BCTF had donated \$30,000.

"We were struck by the devastation that the country has gone through, the overwhelming needs, the earthquake, the civil war, the floods and the destabilization attacks that are being well documented now," said Robb. "And by the circumstances of other Central American teachers who, unlike in Nicaragua, are suffering incredible repression."

Speaking to a series of recommendations on Central America, Robb pointed out that the BCTF had developed strong ties with various teachers' organizations

in that troubled region through its international assistance efforts (such as to Nicaragua's literacy crusade and humanitarian assistance to ANDEN, the El Salvadorean Teachers' Association). "We're suggesting that our links with these teachers' organizations be underlined and publicized."

One particular area of need, she said, is in assisting the development of the fledgling Federation of Central American Teachers' Associations (FOMCA) which is trying to provide professional development, communication networks, literacy techniques and moral support to hard-pressed member organizations in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama and Nicaragua. In Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, teachers' organizations face such harsh repression that they must operate basically clandestinely. On top of that critical problem, they have considerable basic needs — for paper, typewriters, telephones, duplicating equipment — to carry on their organization.

Acting on the group's recommendations, the executive agreed that the BCTF would cooperate with the various national teachers' organizations in Central America and with CTF to foster:

- greater understanding of the educational needs of the individual nations;
- support for progressive educational and social programs in each country;
- and to publicize human rights violations that occur in Central American countries.

The executive also agreed that the BCTF would communicate directly and through the CTF its concerns to Canada's minister of external affairs about the lack of a clearly defined independent Canadian foreign policy on Central America.

A recommendation that the major BCTF international assistance project in 1983 be financial aid to the Federation of Central America Teachers' Organizations was referred to the W. R. Long Committee for a report back to the January meeting of the executive.

Children's Rights Committee aims to help parents pursue complaints

Many parents, concerned about deteriorating learning conditions due to cut-backs, want to defend their children's educational interests but don't know where to turn.

"In many areas parents feel frustrated and powerless in dealing with the education bureaucracy," said Nelson Allen, chairperson of the BCTF Children's Rights Committee. "They often give up pursuing their complaints because there doesn't seem to be anywhere else to go."

This is not a healthy situation, he said, particularly in this critical period when quality education is under attack.

Allen made the comments in discussing his committee's report to the November BCTF executive meeting which advocated that the teaching profession establish procedures to assist parents in seeking resolution of complaints about their children's learning conditions. He held out the vision that such advocacy procedures could lead to strengthening of mutual support between parents and teachers in defence of public education.

Many parents, Allen pointed out, are increasingly concerned about the adverse impact of cuts on their children's education, particularly in special education

areas, but they find many obstacles in their way in pursuing complaints through the many layers of the school system. At the same time, he said, many parents are suspicious of the BCTF, seeing the profession as seeking parental involvement only in times of crisis and yet the two groups obviously have a mutual interest in maintaining education standards.

The Children's Rights Committee, he said, accordingly recommends that the federation put in place procedures whereby parents can represent their children's interests with the support and co-operation of the teaching profession. The procedures are seen as involving:

- distribution of information outlining basic learning conditions standards and procedures for parents inquiring into their children's placement and educational program and services;
- a complaint process involving the parents contacting the school first, then if not satisfied, the local teachers' association, and then if still not satisfied, the BCTF;
- a process whereby if teachers initiate a grievance directly concerning particular

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From Lighthouse district to Outhouse district

John Eggleton's voice was heavy with scorn as he spoke about how Castlegar board officials had brought the latest visitor — from Australia this time — around to his class at Kinnaid elementary.

"Every time a visitor comes to this district they bring him around to see the computer program and the gifted program," he said. "We're part show dogs."

Eggleton, who teaches elementary gifted students has an impeccable reason for being scornful: he was one of the 37 teachers the Castlegar board was going to terminate last fall.

Teachers in this district have not yet got over the shock of the events of last fall. They're still shaking their heads at the board's lack of understanding of the human and educational impact of its intended drastic cut of teachers and programs. With one callous stroke of the pen, the trustees were ready to eliminate many of the district's more experienced teachers — nine of the 37 had more than 10 years' experience — slash deeply into the academic core — as well as cut the district's innovative gifted and computer programs about which the board had always taken enormous public pride. All of which goes some way toward explaining why Castlegar teachers chose the slogan, *From Lighthouse district to Outhouse district*, in fighting the planned cuts last fall.

The terminations never happened and the Castlegar teachers take considerable satisfaction in the part they played in getting them withdrawn. "We've gone from 37 terminations to taking only one day off — the best record in the province — and basically we wouldn't have taken that off except for Bill 89," said Robert Cacchioni, president of the Castlegar Teachers' Association.

Teachers here take equal pleasure from the fact that their involvement in last fall's school board elections resulted in the board's political complexion being markedly changed, with the election of three pro-education candidates. But this feeling is tempered by the realization that the old guard, with

four of the seven seats, still holds the balance of power. "We feel that we won a small battle, but the war is still going on," said Eggleton.

How Castlegar teachers won that round is worth reviewing. They were highly motivated to fight not only because of the board's insensitive treatment of long-time teachers and disregard for the quality of education, but also because the cuts were going to go

kend, why couldn't they have done it weeks ago."

This positive momentum was also not allowed to slip later when the campaign began for the November school board elections. Teachers jumped into the campaign to fight for education, with the CDTA officially endorsing candidates who declared themselves to be pro-education, and with individuals voluntarily working on behalf of such

"We feel we've won a small battle but the war is still going on"

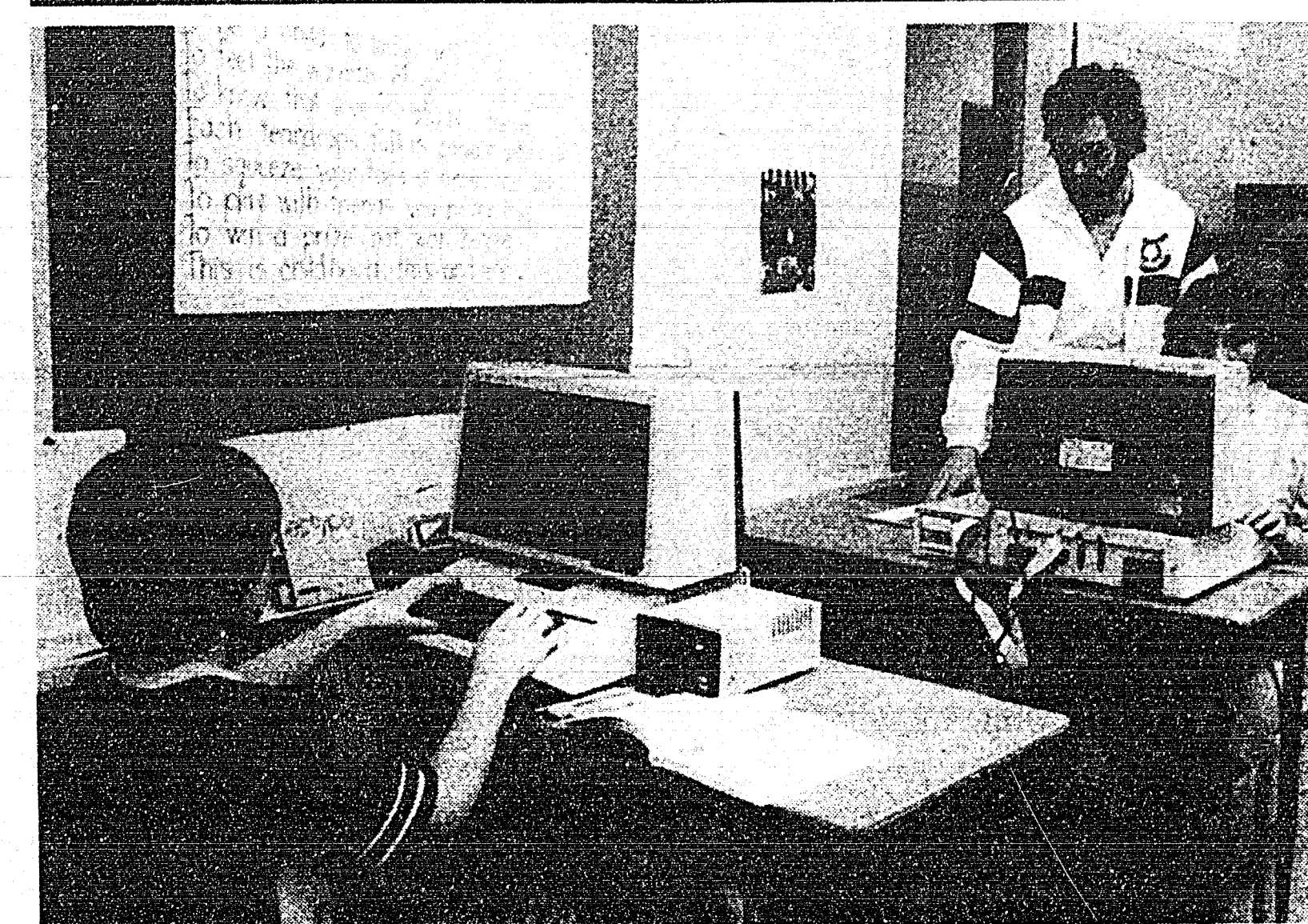
deeper financially than the trustees had indicated. CDTA analysis showed that, while the board said it needed to save \$202,000, the 37 terminations would in fact produce a saving of \$310,049.

The CDTA was able to muster about 150 teachers for the campaign, aimed at informing the public of the damage the cuts would do to their school system. School-based informational meetings were held, newspaper and radio ads were placed, CDTA representatives went on radio open-line shows — and an army of teachers canvassed the community, including rural areas, handing out leaflets door-to-door. The campaign successfully generated a great deal of support for education and a lot of anti-trustee feeling, expressed at a climactic public meeting in Castlegar attended by more than 800 citizens. A few days prior to the meeting, with the mediation assistance of local NDP-MLA Chris D'Arcy, the terminations were withdrawn — but it didn't have the appeasing effect trustees desired.

"They were roasted even more for that," said Eggleton, who is CDTA publicity coordinator. "The feeling was that if they could resolve it in one wee-



CDTA President Robert Cacchioni (above, right) and CDTA publicity coordinator John Eggleton (left) say cuts in Castlegar's already-lean budget are indefensible. John Eggleton (top, centre) discusses exercise with students in "show dog" gifted students program.



candidates. The effort paid off. Three pro-education candidates — Frank Finney, supervisor of special services in the Trail School district, Gregg Nichvalodoff, a Castlegar insurance manager, and Peter Kagis, a former Campbell River trustee and Trail supervisor of human resources — were elected, replacing two of the old guard who failed to run and defeating eight-year veteran trustee Vera Kanigan.

But encouraging though this development has been, the mood these days around district staffrooms continues to be one of suspicion and apprehension. No one has lost sight of the fact that the board is still dominated by the old guard. "We're just waiting to see what they're going to do next," said Kinnaid Grade 3 teacher Jennifer Carter. "We don't trust the board."

Certainly those teachers who faced

"Having received one termination letter you never feel secure again"



Computer teacher Rik Hall (left, centre), here assisting a learning assistant and a student, got his termination notice last fall just as the district acquired new computer equipment. The cutbacks crisis meant a close brush with termination last fall for librarian Leona Bozek (above, left) and reduced hours for library aide Paula Belton.

termination last fall now tend to live every day waiting for the other shoe to drop. "Having received one termination letter you never feel secure," says Leona Bozek, Kinnaid librarian for 13 years, who was on the termination list. Kinnaid Grade 6 teacher Joan Tuck feels much the same anxiety. Her name had been put on the list too because, as an administrative convenience, she had been named principal's relief while her primary staff function was to teach language arts, music and physical education. "I was just sick, absolutely sick, when I got my notice," she said. "I still get a horrible feeling thinking about what it was like."

CDTA President Cacchioni is also unsure how much impact three new pro-education trustees can make in improving teacher-board relations. Castlegar teachers have also had to fight a rearguard action this fall, he said, to protect some members from demotions. The board sent out directives to eliminate the positions of department heads and subject chairs on December 31, but strong protests won their retention at least until the end of the academic year. Similarly, the board sought to eliminate the principalship of a small school, Pass Creek elementary,

and the demotion of the long-time principal, Nick Verigin, back to the teaching ranks. CDTA protests won a guarantee that he would be maintained in the principalship at least until the end of June — but beyond that is uncertain.

These issues reflect the basic problem with the previous board, said Cacchioni. That is, that it has operated on a "Prussian concept of rule" issuing orders that it expects teachers to obey without question. And school superintendent John Holden contributed to the climate of discontent, by refusing to communicate fully with teachers or to involve them in cooperative solutions, said Cacchioni. "He doesn't provide the leadership the board needs on educational issues."

But what irritates Castlegar teachers most is the knowledge that the cutbacks initiated by the provincial government are not justified — certainly not in their district which has operated on lean budgets for years. In the last five years, Cacchioni notes, the Castlegar school district's spending on students has been \$1.8 million less than the provincial average for school districts. In the B-1 — teachers' salaries — section of the budget, the district's operating cost is \$100 less per pupil than the provincial average, he said, and \$119 less per pupil from the average of districts in their zone. Yet Castlegar student PLAP scores in mathematics and reading have been in the top 20 per cent province-wide — and have been the subject of ministry research.

"If Vander Zalm is any kind of businessman," said Cacchioni, "I think that if he came to Castlegar and talked to the people involved, he couldn't possibly make a case for cutting anything out of the budget."

But Castlegar teachers have no illusions that Vander Zalm is likely to soon stop his attacks on teachers and public education. They know the cutbacks war is going to be a long, hard one and they want to be around for the finish.

"The more we've been discriminated against," said Cacchioni "the stronger we've become."

Perspective

Jim Bowman
Government Division

Isn't politics in B.C. marvellous? Whenever the Socreds are clobbering someone you can bet that a lot of the tumult is planned to deflect an examination of their own shortcomings or discredit anyone who challenges their hegemony in the political arena.

During legislative sessions they bash the 1972/74 NDP government, claiming that the return of the Socreds saved us from the darkness, the flies, the locusts and all the rest of that stuff in Exodus.

When the legislature is not in session but things don't look too good for them in the public opinion polls or the media, they bash teachers. They are very good at bashing teachers, damning us as incompetent and selfish. This year's campaign against the chalk-and-talk brigade was particularly skilful and the Socreds should be congratulated by all who cherish the fine arts of deception and propaganda.

The volatile Bill Vander Zalm has become our most relentless scourge, lashing us repeatedly on hotline after hotline with manipulated statistics. Seventeen per cent salary increases this year, he cried, 59 per cent since 1978: more teachers, fewer pupils; and then the 4/JANUARY 10, 1983

coup de grace, a 76 per cent increase in per-student costs between 1978 and 1982.

"Foul play," we cry. According to the Employers' Council of B.C. everybody was negotiating 17 per cent increases in November, 1981. The cost per student in total had risen 62 per cent, not 76 per cent. Our protestations have fallen on deaf or unsympathetic ears. The government has continued its attacks, posing as the last bulwark protecting citizens from the greedy teachers.

You have to admire their *chutzpah*: they're like the kid who murdered his parents and then pleaded for mercy because he was an orphan. The Socreds can, in the same breath, take credit for integrating disabled children into the regular school system and blast school boards for hiring teachers to look after those students. They can talk blithely about B.C. riding the prosperity wave of high technology and appoint a minister of education who wants us to count woolly mammoths on an abacus. They can run a commuter service for cabinet ministers on the jets provided by taxpayers, but get off long enough to damn the profligacy of everyone in education.

Are the Socreds right in portraying education as the

greediest consumer at the public trough? An examination of the estimates of revenue and expenditures for the years the government likes to quote, 1978/79 and 1982/83, shows that this is not so.

In the comparative-expenditure stakes the clear winner is the Ministry of Industry and Small Business Development. Its budget, in the past four years, went up a whacking great 296 per cent. Anyone who wants to ask the honorable Don Phillips to explain that can go ahead. I wouldn't ask him the way to the Labour Relations Board because he's the champion Socred speaker on the plagues of 1972-74.

The most interesting ministry, Municipal Affairs, is in fourth place. Interesting because up to three or four months ago that ministry was run by the honorable William Vander Zalm, self-proclaimed enemy of high expenditures and fat in the system. At first glance it would appear the estimates for Municipal Affairs only went up 35 per cent from \$257,099,413 for 1978/79 to \$346,221,217 in 1982/83, but the 1978 figure included approximately \$68 million for housing, which is now in a separate ministry. That means that under Mr. Vander Zalm the comparable portions of the budget went up 83 per cent.

Here's the top of the expenditure hit parade. Some adjustments have been made (because of changes in portfolios during the four years) to make the comparisons valid. You will note that you have to go down to ninth place to find education.

	1978/79	1982/83	% increase
Total provincial budget	\$4,280,350,000	\$7,232,000,000	69
Ministry of Industry and Small Business	29,166,038	115,593,171	296
Ministry of the Provincial Secretary	122,160,836	245,051,358	100
Ministry of Health	1,156,351,556	2,236,586,249	93
Ministry of Municipal Affairs	189,089,395	346,221,217	83
Ministry of Human Resources	552,515,648	986,259,580	78
Ministry of Highways, etc.	357,366,589	634,171,000	77
Ministry of Finance	102,704,435	179,745,884	75

Ministry of Attorney-General	186,676,087	314,892,013	69
Ministries of Education and Universities	1,032,846,805	1,728,140,138	67

Education was one ministry in 1978 but became two, shortly after that. In 1978 it was estimated that the cost of running the minister of education's office would be \$119,793. By 1982 the cost of operating the two ministers' offices was estimated at \$464,128, an increase of some 287 per cent. The additional responsibility of ministering to government telecommunications hardly merits that kind of exorbitant increase, although that noted critic of expenditures in the public education system, Dr. Patrick McGeer, who is one of the ministers responsible, will no doubt find an increase of almost 300 per cent in four years easy to justify.

Also note that:

- Grants to private schools went from \$9,156,008 to \$17,734,328, an increase of 94 per cent.
- Grants to universities were \$208,602,857 in 1978 and \$363,596,359, in 1982, an increase of 74 per cent.
- Grants for public schools (K-12) went from \$591,589,968 to \$966,085,922, an increase of 63 per cent.

- The cost per student in the public system went from \$2,228 (actual 1978) to \$3,614 (estimate 1982) which is 62 per cent.

Premier Bennett is on record as questioning the increase in the number of teachers in the past few years. The estimates for the operation of his office show the following:

Premier's office	Staff	Estimates
1978-79	10	\$237,961
1982-83	17	\$709,124

That's an increase in costs of 198 per cent in four years.

The evidence from the financial statistics is clear. Education had not been the fatted calf of government expenditures. It appears that the government has a compulsion to find scapegoats to divert attention from its own ineptness and inadequacies.

Teachers are as aware as other citizens of the parlous economic circumstances that exist in this province. They are not unwilling to share in adversity if they can share in prosperity. But they resent being singled out for crass political exploitation by a government that is as extravagant in its ways as it is bereft of philosophical and moral fibre.

Windermere firings stopped by strong teacher protests

Bargaining this fall took place with an education minister telling you that if you took more money you would lose more jobs — in June.

Bargaining for jobs suddenly became a reality in Windermere where the school board sent termination notices to eight teachers, seven of them elementary teacher-librarians.

So while the minister was publicly saying there would be no terminations this school year, the Windermere school board made a pre-emptive strike for December.

For the record Terrace substitutes

A story in the October 6, 1982 *BCTF Newsletter* about the impact of budget cuts on substitutes said that the Terrace school district is not hiring any substitutes. This is incorrect. Terrace is hiring substitute teachers, but only for teachers who are ill.

Burnaby teachers' president

The November 24, 1982 *BCTF Newsletter* wrongly identified Ivan Johnson as president of the Burnaby Teachers' Association in a caption under a photograph of metro presidents announcing a "Speak out for public education" information campaign. D'Arcy Bader (unable to attend that meeting due to bargaining) is BTA president and Johnson is vice-president.

Letters

Vander Zalm cartoon insults boilermakers

The cartoon published in the November 24th *Newsletter* is an insult to the boilermakers. No worker should be associated with Vander Zalm or the Sacred destruction of public education.

David Schreck
205-122 East Fourteenth
North Vancouver

Support for teachers in Central America a fundamental issue

I was encouraged by Joan Robb's comments on Nicaragua and the struggle of the people of Central America as reported in "Nicaraguan teachers offer lesson in courage" (*BCTF Newsletter*, October 28, 1982).

I agree with her when she says that we, as teachers, have much to learn from the "strength, courage, determination, work, organization and solidarity" of the teachers in Nicaragua. In fact, I would go further than Joan Robb and say that the BCTF's continued commitment to teachers in Central America is directly linked to the success of our struggles for education in British Columbia.

Helping the people of Central America at this most important juncture of their troubled history is what I would call a *fundamental issue*. When compared to the fear, the massacres, the flagrant violations of human rights and the contempt for the barest standards of life, our problems become relatively insignificant.

We as teachers must deepen our commitment to fundamental issues that face the survival of our planet. By not addressing the essential questions like Central America or nuclear disarmament, we are doomed to fail in our attempts to alleviate the problems that are relevant to us in British Columbia.

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If we do not take on the fundamental issues that face our planet, we will be destined to play in the same arena as the B.C. government, having no supporting context, no foundation from which our present demands could emerge in clearer focus as part of a total picture of commitment.

I am not suggesting that public relations should be our motive for offering this support. Nonetheless, your report on our support of the Nicaraguan teachers does reflect an aspect of our federation's commitment to education that is too easily ignored by our media.

David Reid
Gulf Island Secondary

Schools should not ignore or exaggerate the Holocaust tragedy

On page six of the November 24 *Newsletter* is a brief by George Major under the title "The Holocaust is totally ignored." He notes that two eastern professors complain that it was being "... inadequately treated" in B.C. texts. He quotes one of his colleagues as saying, "Outside of some gory pictures and limited commentary, there is little on this murderous event."

I think "The Holocaust" has been given an unwarranted amount of coverage. I am 29, and I doubt that a day, much less a week, has gone by since I learned to read without some broadcast, periodical or book decrying it anew. Frankly, I am tired of it.

Certainly, it was a tragic event, and a historical one. As such it bears note in history texts, but space proportionate to its importance. If space is allocated simply on the basis of body counts, then Cambodia's 20 million loss deserves more space than Belsen & Co. If human suffering on an epic scale is the criterion, then the siege of Leningrad ought receive

trustees and parents. When the board moved to fire teachers, it seemed indifferent to loyalty, service and goodwill that had been developed over the years.

At a meeting of teacher-librarians on December 6, the decision of the minister was conveyed to the group. They felt compelled to ask the board in an open letter for time to speak at the January meeting on the value of librarians in elementary schools. Gerrian Donahue, who chaired the meeting, said that normally this time had been set to do curricular work, but now it was being used to draft a letter to the board.

"Receiving a termination notice has been an extremely traumatic experience for each of us, our families, and our colleagues. We are naturally relieved to have the news the notices are to be rescinded, but we would like to express to the board the great amount of personal distress of all involved," said the teacher-librarians in their letter.

Sally Dearn honed in on the confusion of the philosophy that occurred in the termination of librarians when she says: "Our librarians teach. These are classroom teachers who have got extra training, specialized skills to help children, and they are the ones who get blown away in this kind of political game."

She thinks the confusion in philosophy arises from the superintendent, Geoff Tagg, who came to Windermere from Alberta where the policy is for librarians in elementary schools to be clerk-typists. "But our librarians teach," she insists.

"Teachers understand the problems the board has," Dearn went on, "but there are other ways of resolving the problem. Teachers now feel badly used by the board, that the board has played politics with their livelihood. We feel let down."

more than passing mention. For examples of industrial-scale ferocity, Stalin's extermination of 35 million Kulaks is at least as good an example.

I do not suggest that the event or its lessons be forgotten, for it was significant. But it was not, as some would have us believe, the single greatest tragedy of this century. If our history texts no longer portray it as such, then I think it is a good thing.

David Danylyshyn
Zeballos Elementary

"Vicious attack" on minister protested

Mr. Jim Bowman's vicious attack (*BCTF Newsletter* November 24, 1982) on the minister of education in particular and the Sacred government in general failed to put anything, but his own extreme hatred, into perspective.

Bowman's use of derogatory labels for those who oppose his own political bias does not encourage support for him nor for the teachers. Such articles as Bowman's could fit into the Communist *Pacific Tribune*, except that theirs are presented in a more intelligent manner.

When 80 per cent of a budget goes to administration and salaries, it is difficult for the reader to believe that the recipients are unduly concerned about the 20 per cent that goes to schools and supplies. And is innovation dead? Dedication and efficiency are not bought with dollars.

In 1928, my first salary was less than one day's pay for 1982 teachers.

Now, I am loathe to identify myself as a retired teacher and share the disrepute into which the ravings of President Kuehn has brought our profession.

In contrast to the self-centred attitude of 1982 teachers was ours when in 1929-1930, all pension deductions of teachers were confiscated to re-establish the B.C. Teachers' Pension Fund. Imagine the howl of Kuehn were such a plan enforced

UBC education student wins prestigious Sherwood Lett award



Cynthia Southard

Cynthia Southard, a fourth-year education student, has been awarded the University of B.C.'s prestigious Sherwood Lett Memorial Scholarship.

The \$3,000 Sherwood Lett scholarship pays tribute to the late Chief Justice Sherwood Lett who rendered distinguished service to UBC, to his profession and to his country. The winner is selected annually on the basis of academic achievement, personal qualities, participation in student activities and of leadership and service to the university.

Southard, who lives in Vancouver, is specializing in psychology and physical education in preparation for a career as an elementary teacher. A former competitive skater, she has coached and judged at the national level of skating. In addition to being involved in campus intramural athletics, she is on student council as External Affairs Coordinator.

The Sherwood Lett scholarship was last won by an education student in 1971.

today! We were proud to do our part to refund the pension plan and to ensure security for all who use it after retirement.

If Kuehn and the first vice-president would honestly admit their real priority — the salaries — the image of our profession would improve. No one appreciates hypocrisy.

A.C.L. Hughes
Retired, Vancouver

NBTF did not campaign in New Brunswick provincial election

I would like to clarify a statement contained in the October 28, 1982 edition of the *BCTF Newsletter*.

On page 3, you report that New Brunswick teachers "played an active role in the campaign and some attribute the size of the Conservative victory to that involvement". There was no organized campaign carried out by any of the teacher organizations in New Brunswick. Teachers of course are involved in working for the different parties as individuals but there was no provincial campaign for or against any of the parties.

The Liberal Party had suggested early in the campaign the possibility of asking teachers to accept a voluntary rollback but this suggestion quickly dissipated and was replaced with a statement that all contracts would be honored. The same commitment had been made also by the Conservative Party.

New Brunswick teachers extend to British Columbia teachers their enthusiastic support and best wishes for a successful campaign against the current injustices being inflicted upon them with respect to their collective bargaining rights.

Wayne Nightingale
Executive Director
New Brunswick Teachers' Federation
Fredericton, N.B.

Vancouver parents get voice in hiring school administrators

Vancouver School Board has agreed for the first time to include parent representatives on shortlisting and interviewing committees for principal and vice-principal positions.

The board made the decision on November 29 after Gary Onstad, then chairperson of the personnel and staff services committee, told fellow trustees that district parents had expressed concerns about not being involved in the selection process of school administrators.

In advocating the new policy, Onstad noted that Toronto had successfully involved parents in selection committees and assured the board that the parent representatives would be "very sensible people."

The board agreed to the change, but stipulated that:

- a different parent representative would serve on each competition;
- the individual would be selected by the District Parent Representatives;
- the same representative would serve on both shortlisting and interviewing committees for a position;
- and that the representative must have a child at the level of schooling for which they are interviewing.

The shortlisting committees will also include representatives from the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association, Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association and Vancouver School Administrators' Association.

Ultimate goal is to pressure gov't. to restore funding

From page 3

children, they would seek parental involvement and support to make it a joint grievance:

- a process whereby if parents initiate a complaint requiring school board or government action, teachers would endeavour to make it a joint parent/teacher grievance.

Allen emphasized that the intent of the plan is not to file grievances against the performance of individual teachers on behalf of parents, but to focus on adverse learning conditions caused by the government's budget cuts over which teachers have no control.

"Ultimately our aim is to link up with the parents of students and to put pressure on the government to put resources back into the system that have been chopped out — that's the bottom line," said Allen.

The executive agreed that the Children's Rights Committee should continue work on developing a procedure for assisting parents in raising and pursuing complaints about the appropriateness of their children's learning conditions. They agreed further that drafts of the procedure be field tested before a recommended procedure is brought to the Executive Committee early in 1983.

Pension credits changed slightly for leaves of absence

If teachers wish to receive pension credit for days when on leave of absence without pay, they may apply to make a double contribution.

Otherwise, effective January 1, 1983, when teachers take leave of absence without pay, their pensionable service is reduced by .05 of a month for each day of absence to a maximum reduction of 1.0 for any one month. This is a slight change from previous practice. For further information see page 92 of the *Members' Guide*.

John Church and Jurd Kirby retire

"It's more a change than retirement"

Retirement if necessary, but not necessarily retirement.

That seems to be the way two prominent BCTF administrative staff members view the formality of official retirement. Far from slowing down, both John Church and Jurd Kirby have plans that will keep them about as busy as they were in their previous respective capacities as acting director of professional development and director of economic welfare.

"It's more of a change that I'm looking for than a retirement in the sense of quitting work," said Church, who might have been speaking for the both of them.

Staff records will show that John Church officially retired on January 14, 1983, after serving 18 years on BCTF administrative staff, following an equally lengthy career as a social studies teachers and curriculum consultant. The records will similarly show the retirement of Girard ("Jurd") Kirby on November 30, 1982 following 16 years teaching and 17 years on federation staff.

BCTF President Larry Kuehn praised John Church for the influential role he has played over the years on staff, committees and study groups in helping shape federation curriculum and professional development policy -- and, by extension, influencing the impact the BCTF has had on education generally. Church was awarded the 1982 Fergusson Memorial Award in recognition.

"John Church is one of those exceptional people whose mind doesn't grow older and get more rigid with age, but is somebody who becomes more and more open and is always looking at new ideas and looking to the future," said Kuehn. "His contribu-



John Church



Jurd Kirby

tion to the federation and to education in the province has been outstanding."

Picking up on this, Mike Zlotnik, who resumes the position of director of professional development following academic leave, emphasized Church's capacity to generate ideas and to stimulate the thinking of his colleagues. "He's an incredibly young man for his age."

John Church indicated that he isn't about to change his pattern of life. "I've been heavily involved in reading and writing about education in the past and I expect to continue to do that," he said. "And I hope to continue to do things, special assignments for the BCTF."

Kuehn also paid tribute to the work of Jurd Kirby who, from very early in his teaching career at Lake Cowichan was active in pressing for improvements in teachers' economic conditions. "He certainly was a very dedicated worker on behalf of teachers for many years in trying to maintain and improve their relative economic position," said Kuehn. "And he was

respected not just by the people who worked with him on the teachers' side but also by those on the other side."

Jurd Kirby confirmed that his interest in teachers' welfare started early — he was a salary chairperson after his second year in teaching — and arose out of simple necessity.

"I wanted to be a teacher," he recalled, "but I deplored the salaries we were paid then. I was getting \$200 a month in those days and it wasn't enough to survive on: I had to work weekends driving a truck. So it was either change my career or get involved in salaries."

Kirby also hasn't planned a life of retirement ease. He intends to do free-lance work in his field — he was the BCTF nominee in the recent North Vancouver Island arbitrations — assisting unions with arbitrations, mediation and negotiations. But he's going to set aside a little time for picking up new activities.

"I'm going to develop some new hobbies — like learning to play the saxophone," he said.

Vice-principals' reporting restricted

The ministry of education has clarified legal restrictions on vice-principals becoming involved in the writing of teaching reports.

The clarification is contained in a November 1982 Schools Department Circular issued shortly after a concern raised locally was transmitted by the federation to the Ministry of Education.

A legal opinion is cited which states that a vice-principal can only make written reports on the work of any teacher when he/she has either been specifically authorized by the school board to exercise the powers of a principal in the absence of a principal (Regulation 40) or if he/she has been assigned by the school

board to the position of temporary acting principal (School Act section 119). In the absence of such authorization or assignment, the vice-principal has no authority to prepare written reports on the work of any teacher.

The circular was distributed shortly after a local concern about vice-principals writing teaching reports was communicated to the Teacher Personnel Committee. TPC asked BCTF solicitor Des Grady for comment. Grady concluded that the practice was an "invalid delegation of authority" except when all the conditions set out in legislation have been fulfilled. On that basis federation officers approached the ministry asking for and obtaining the clarification.

Foundation gives \$100,000 to help school cultural events

The Vancouver Foundation has offered to provide a further \$100,000 to help school children throughout B.C. continue to benefit from attendance at musical and dramatic performances staged by groups who create special productions for young people.

This new grant of \$100,000 is the largest ever made for these performances and comes on top of a total of \$170,000 provided for them in the past by the foundation.

"Our provision of this additional money comes in response to general economic hardship and reductions in school budgets which may deprive children of this valuable aspect of their learning," said Dr. J. David McGann, executive director of the foundation. "It will also

have the side benefit of assisting creative artists in various performing groups."

Superintendents of the 75 school districts have been advised by letter that they can draw from \$500 to \$7,000 from the Vancouver Foundation on a matching basis to supplement funds raised by local authorities.

February 28 is the deadline for acceptance. Money allocated to districts not used by that date will then be re-allocated to others which do match the foundation's offer.

In his letter to the school superintendents Dr. McGann suggests the funds be used for performances by 16 musical and dramatic organizations which function throughout B.C.

Student newspaper wins top award

For the third year in a row, Coquitlam's Centennial Senior Secondary School newspaper, *The Catalyst*, has won the George H. Gallup Award, the highest award given by the Quill and Scroll Society of Iowa State University in its annual high school newspaper competition.

Quill and Scroll is an international honorary society for high school journalists with a membership of over 12,000 high schools throughout the world.

Centennial was the only school outside the United States to win the award in 1980 and 1981. *The Catalyst* scored 946 points out of a possible 1,000, the highest ever made by the newspaper in international competition. In addition to the current three-year winning streak, *The Catalyst* won the same award in 1974 and received an International First Place Award in 1976 and 1978.

The Catalyst is produced by the students in the journalism class at Centennial. The editor of the editions adjudicated was Harvey Cashore. Other staff members were: Shelley Page, assistant editor; David Richardson, editorial editor; Doug Wright, sports editor; Dina McInnes, business manager; Kathie Dunsmuir and Lea-Anne Whitson, advertising managers; and Chris Pearce, exchange editor. Reporters were: Anne Holme, Bill Liske, Stuart Royan, Rita Parikh, Brad Funston, Keith Olstorn, Shelley Reeder, Jennifer Washtock, Julie Veljacic, Wendi Mulligan, Theresa Kotlyak, and Ben Cashore.

Advisers for the newspaper are teachers Frank Shepherd, Ward Eby, Robert Wilson and Anita van Ginkel.

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Vacancies

BCTF Assistance Society

Ten BCTF members are needed to serve one-year terms as "special members" of the BCTF Assistance Society.

These members attend the annual general meeting and special general meetings of the society. At least four directors are elected from society special members. Applicants must be from the Lower Mainland.

Application deadline is **February 25**. For more information or curriculum vitae forms, contact Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office.

Reminder — Fergusson Award Nominations

Nominations for the 1983 G. A. Fergusson Award must be received at the BCTF office no later than **February 18**. Please refer to the article in the November 24 newsletter or call Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office for information.

Pensionable service not affected by compulsory days off

The compulsory closing of schools by boards will not affect pensionable service.

The Superannuation Commission has advised all boards that if teachers work each day school is in session, full pensionable service will be credited. Pension contributions will be deducted on the actual earnings paid by the board. These earnings will also be used in the calculation of pension benefits.

If teachers are absent through work stoppages outside of any agreement with their board, pension contributions cannot be made unless the board states that such absences are leaves of absence without pay.

Pensioners get increase

Pensioners who are eligible and who have been in receipt of a pension for a year or more will receive a 10.3 per cent increase in their pensions on January 31. Teachers who retired in June 1982 will receive 5.1 per cent. The 10.3 per cent is the increase in the Canadian Consumer Price Index for September and is the maximum increase permitted by the Pension Act.

Vancouver Island unites to fight education cuts

Members of the education community on central and northern Vancouver Island are joining forces to defend education services against provincial government cutbacks.

The decision was made at a conference December 3 and 4 at Malaspina College in Nanaimo, where representatives of education workers and post-secondary students held talks around the theme "Don't Forget the Future." The conference was sponsored by DESC, the Defend Education Services Coalition.

Ross Fraser, president of the Malaspina College Faculty Association, said the group decided to hold regular information sharing meetings beginning in January. "Our aim is to tell one another and the public what is happening at all levels of education in regional and local terms," Fraser said. "We realize that we all face a common problem in dealing with a shortfall in funding. If we don't band together and fight back, edu-

cation services in our area are going to be severely curtailed in the next year."

Hosts for the conference were the faculty association, the Nanaimo District Teachers' Association, and locals 1858 and 606 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Local 1858 represents Malaspina College workers; local 606 school board employees. Also in attendance were representatives of the Malaspina College Student Society and the Pacific region of the Canadian Federation of Students, and presidents of three district teachers' associations in the region — Norm Prince of Vancouver Island North, George Gardner of Campbell River, and Walter Bergmann of Mt. Arrowsmith.

In an opening address, CUPE researcher Gene Errington linked government cutbacks in education and other social services to the operation of "Reaganomics", and suggested that professionals who deliver social services have been fooled into thinking they are part of the

Teachers' education fight backed by NDP, unions

For embattled teachers, support from others is good news.

The B.C. Federation of Labour was particularly supportive at its fall convention. The convention significantly endorsed a motion from the Prince Rupert Labour Council "That the B.C. Federation of Labour support the B.C. Teachers' Federation in their opposition to educational cutbacks." It also approved an International Woodworkers of America resolution demanding that "the provincial and federal governments not compromise the education of our children, but increase and expand educational programs so our children will be qualified to fill the highly technical fields we are importing people to fill."

The Hospital Employees' Union at its fall conference also passed motions of support for education and, in their most recent newsletter, enclosed the BCTF flyer, *Defend Education*.

Education was a priority item as well this year for the NDP at its provincial convention. A variety of resolutions were passed on the need for resources in such areas as: early childhood education, ESL, pre-school services, special education and college access to academic and vocational programs. There was also emphasis on the need for province-wide studies to shape future planning, especially for early childhood. Most significantly, the convention passed comprehensive resolutions in education finance aimed at local autonomy, equal opportunity and access to education, and 75% financing of education from provincial general revenue. And the convention also passed the IWA resolution.

In Vancouver, a group of parents from school consultative committees has organized a petition to the government asking that the school board budget for 1983 be increased by an inflation factor of 6 per cent.



Gene Errington of CUPE attacks B.C.'s version of "Reaganomics."

process by which such decisions are made.

"We're sucked in," Errington said. "We think we have a say." In fact, she argued, it is incumbent upon professionals to stand up for the constituency they represent, a constituency "under attack."

REUNIONS

Britannia Secondary

Britannia Secondary School, which was established in 1908 and is now the oldest continuing secondary school in Vancouver, is holding a Diamond Jubilee Reunion on Friday and Saturday, **May 13 and May 14, 1983**. All former students and teachers and their guests are invited to attend the multi-faceted celebration, which will include school tours, class reunions, receptions, stage production and dance. Further information may be obtained by phoning Norval Brown, 266-0081, or writing Britannia Diamond Jubilee Reunion, c/o Britannia Secondary School, 1001 Cotton Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V5L 3T4.

Vancouver Technical Secondary

The 1958 graduating class of Vancouver Technical Secondary School is planning a 25-year reunion on **May 21, 1983**. Former teachers and students are asked to contact Dawn Repin, 1405-53A Street, Delta, V4M 3E9 (943-7322).

How pensioners can ease their tax burdens

The tax man cometh and it's best to be prepared. The following is a summary of our understanding of the income tax provisions affecting pensions, pension contributions and retirement gratuities incorporating the federal government proposals of December 7, 1982. But note that the proposals must be approved by parliament, so further changes may result.

Pension income deduction

- Up to \$1,000 of eligible pension income may be deducted for income tax purposes.
- If you are under age 60, this deduction is available *only if you did not transfer any pension income* to your Registered Retirement Savings Plan or to your registered pension plan (Teachers' Pension Plan), effective January 1, 1982. This restriction does *not* apply if you are in receipt of a CPP disability or survivor benefit.
- Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan benefits do *not* qualify.
- Refunds of contributions from the Teachers' Pension Plan do *not* qualify (effective January 1, 1982).
- Pension income transferred to the taxpayer's RRSP does *not* qualify.
- Eligible pension income includes 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 and if you have not claimed this deduction as qualified pension income qualify for the pension income deduction.

Pension income transfer

- Any amount of pension income, including OAS, CPP, refunds and pension benefits received from an estate, may be placed in the taxpayer's RRSP and deducted from taxable income without affecting the normal contributions limits for RRSP's. See Contributions to RRSP. (Use Revenue Canada form T2097.)

- However, if this is done, the \$1,000 pension income deduction may *not* be used by those under age 60.

Transfers between registered plans

- Money may be transferred directly between a registered pension plan, such as the Teachers' Plan, and a RRSP or vice versa without tax deduction. No change. (Use Revenue Canada form TD-2 or T2033).

Interest

- 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.

Contributions to Teachers' Pension Plan

- Contributions from current earned income to a registered pension plan (such as the Teachers' Pension Plan) may be deducted for income tax purposes. No change:
 - (a) up to \$3,500 for *current* service, and
 - (b) up to \$3,500 for each year of eligible *past* service.
 Any excess over \$3,500 paid into the pension plan may be carried forward to be used as a deduction in future years. This means that monies paid for reinstatement, for unpaid leaves of absence, for pensionable service under the interprovincial pension agreements and for military service purchase may be deductible within the limits permitted by the Income Tax Act.

Contributions to RRSP

- Normal contributions to an RRSP may be deducted for income tax purposes. No change. (See also above, Pension Income Transfer and Retirement Gratuities.)

- (a) the lesser of \$3,500 and 20% of earned income *minus*

- (b) any contributions made to a registered pension plan (Teachers' Plan) for both *current and past* service.

Retirement gratuities

- Lump sum retirement gratuities may be paid 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 gratuity *or* for each year of service recognized in the Teachers' Pension Plan, whichever is longer. If this is done, the gratuity is not subject to income tax. Such payments do *not* affect the normal contribution limits for RRSP's or pension plans. (See Contributions to Teachers' Pension Plan and Contributions to RRSP.) For direct transfer to an RRSP or registered pension plan use Revenue Canada form TD-2.

Notes

- If a teacher can not tax shelter all of the retirement gratuity because of the above limits, the tax impact could be lessened if the portion not sheltered was paid over a period of years. In this way only the portion received each year would be income for that year.
- The portion of the retirement gratuity received each year could be the amount considered necessary for the living costs of the recipient. The recipient could then pay all of his/her pension income into an RRSP and be taxed only on the portion of the retirement gratuity received that year. If pension income were paid into an RRSP, the \$1,000 pension income deduction will not be permitted for those under age 60. (See Pension Income Transfer.)
- Since RRSP's generally are credited with higher interest, it is preferable to transfer a retirement gratuity into an RRSP rather than making an extra voluntary contribution to the Teachers' Pension Plan.

For further details, contact Revenue Canada.