

# Superintendents condemn cutbacks

In an extraordinary move, British Columbia's school superintendents have publicly condemned the provincial government's obsession with controls and cutbacks for not only endangering the future of public education but also the future well-being of the province.

The Association of British Columbia School Superintendents (ABCSS), representing 180 senior school board officials in the province, has recently abandoned its customary low profile and spoken out as "educational statesmen" in a 23-page

"Statement of Concern for Public Education in British Columbia."

In the carefully-reasoned paper, the superintendents attack the government's program of centralization and budget-cutting as having been undertaken in haste, without consultation or study, raising legitimate fears that "increased centralized control of education will create a static, inflexible, restrictive and fundamentally inadequate public education system."

The government initiatives, the super-

intendents state, have in effect imputed "incompetence and lack of integrity" to educators and to a school system based on local decision-making.

Disputing this, ABCSS argues for recognition of the professionalism of teachers and for the maintenance of local authority in public education.

"On this continent, principle, authoritative opinion and practice have long held that schooling is best served when control of education is kept close to the people," the superintendents write. But the gov-

ernment is rejecting this principle without any compelling rationale or supporting evidence.

"The net result of these actions is that the provincial government has contributed to the erosion of public confidence in the public school system. In particular, substance has been given to criticisms based primarily upon an unthinking acceptance of the relevance of the current debate on public schooling in the U.S."

There is no evidence, the superintendents write. But the gov-

See "B.C.'s future" page 2

## BCTF Newsletter

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### Surrey parents leading fight against layoffs

By David Handelman

In Surrey, parents are not only behind their teachers' struggle to preserve quality education — they're also right up front in the battle lines.

The insanity of mid-term layoffs of 32 classroom teachers, prompted by budget cuts of \$3.7 million, in a district with one of the fastest-growing student populations in B.C., is what has drawn the parents into the fray.

Betty Allinger and Marilyn Kerr, both members of Bridgeview Community School Council, are key examples of parents getting involved and showing leadership in defence of their children's education. They have been organizing public information meetings since January, the most recent being on April 17 when representatives of the Surrey School board, Surrey Teachers' Association, Surrey MLAs and parent groups combined to discuss the current state of public education.

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Surrey parents leading fight against cuts, Mrs. Betty Allinger (centre), Mrs. Marilyn Kerr (right) and children meet with Bridgeview Community School Coordinator David Chudnovsky (left) to discuss latest developments. David Handelman photo.

### New layoffs attacked

The new round of government-imposed teacher layoffs is false economy that will cost B.C. dearly in future as the "echo baby boom" hits the schools, BCTF President-elect Pat Clarke has charged.

Clarke attacked the provincial government for continuing its retrograde cutbacks policy as a number of school districts began issuing a new series of layoff notices to teachers.

Four districts recently wielded the axe, chopping 152 teachers from the ranks for the coming year:

- Kamloops issued notices to 108 teachers;
- Merritt cut 21 teachers;
- Terrace let 15 teachers go;
- Qualicum added eight more to the 23 teachers laid off earlier.

In Kamloops, the layoffs amounted to more than 12 per cent of the teaching staff and included teachers with as much as four years of seniority.

"This is only the beginning of the massive disruption our schools will face over the next few months," Clarke said in response to the new layoffs.

"The schools have faced constant cut-

ting over the past two years and there is no room left for reductions without substantial harm to students in the classroom."

Clarke warned that by the time all the government-imposed cuts are announced

in the coming weeks at least 1,500 teaching positions will have been cut this year, raising the total number of positions eliminated since June 1982 to about 3,000.

"These layoffs come at a time that en-

See "STA fights" page 2

### Peck entrenches "ability to pay"

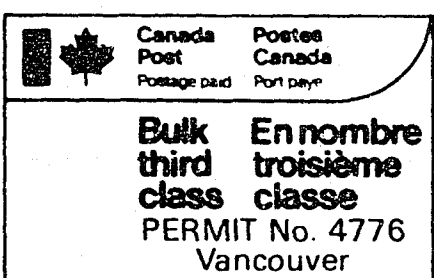
A nail was driven into the coffin of free collective bargaining for public sector employees by a recent decision by the compensation stabilization program commissioner.

Commissioner Doug Peck overturned a five per cent arbitration award to B.C. Government Employees Union members at the B.C. Institute of Technology on the grounds of inability to pay. The decision reiterated an earlier position in the case of Simon Fraser University.

Peck's rationale was ominous for the future of public sector bargaining: "I fail to see why public sector employees engaged in a process of wage rate determination should be entitled to go beyond the political judgment of the Government as to the level of funding it will maintain to provide a particular service. Once the political judgment with regard to the level of funding has been made, that sets the parameters within which collective bargaining must take place."

The decision gives a clear indication why the BCTF feels it essential to prepare a legal challenge, based on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, of recent provincial government legislation restricting public sector collective bargaining.

IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9





STA fights for rehiring rights for temporaries

From page 1

rolments are increasing as the 'echo baby room' starts to hit our schools," said Clarke. "The constant attacks on the school system by government represent a social policy for which there will be a high cost for decades to come."

Meanwhile, preparations for a new phase in the struggle to combat teacher layoffs continue. A two-day training workshop for local presidents was held in Vancouver at the end of March. While reviewing a wide variety of tactical and strategic matters, the workshop focussed particularly on means of informing the public of the real extent of the education crisis and of developing active public support in the campaign to preserve teachers' jobs and quality education.

In Surrey, where the board led off the new round with notices issued earlier to 32 temporary teachers, the local continues to be effective in building public support through communications programs and public meetings.

Mackenzie said that, while continuing to improve public support, the local is essentially waiting for the next shoe to drop. On May 1 the district will learn whether, as one of B.C.'s fastest-growing, it will be given a budget increase.

"If the board does not get any more money then we're looking at another 80 to 90 people lost in June," she said.

In the meantime, she said the local is attempting to exert pressure to get the board to negotiate a seniority agreement with rehiring rights for temporary teachers. This is vitally needed, she said, as temporaries have no seniority protection.

"This year," said Mackenzie, "we've got all kinds of people who have given long substitute service and temporary service and who were skipped over and brand new people brought in once again."

On this, the STA called on the BCTF Executive Committee at its April 13 meeting to formally request the Surrey Administrators' Association to reverse a position it had taken that undercut the local's current negotiations on rehiring rights for temporary teachers.

In March, the Surrey administrators had adopted a motion reading: "That the SAA go on record as being in support of the local autonomy of principals/supervisors/co-ordinators in the interviewing and subsequent recommendations to the board for the hiring of staff." The motion was communicated to the Surrey school district.

Mackenzie said that the administrators' position was effectively counter to the position of the local in attempting to negotiate rehiring rights whereby temporary teachers, on the basis of qualifications and previous satisfactory service, would automatically be appointed to open positions.

"There isn't the luxury any longer of being able to pick and choose as much as there used to be," said Mackenzie. "For the protection of our members, there has to be some obligation for the board and principals to recognize that length of satisfactory service qualifies temporary teachers for available positions."

The matter was brought to the BCTF executive after the Surrey local and administrators had been unable to resolve their differences. The executive endorsed the position of the STA and adopted a lengthy motion: expressing "its concern over this issue to the Surrey Administrators' Association"; requesting that the administrators withdraw their motion and indicate to the school district their support of the STA position on temporary teachers' rights; and that the matter be referred to the Representative Assembly for appropriate action.

2/APRIL 18, 1984

Editorial

Bennett's "new reality"

On March 19, 1984 the Kelowna Courier featured a news article by staff member Gordon Isfeld under the headline: "A welcome diversion from teachers' concerns." The article said in part:

*The education ministry's discussion paper on high school curriculum is a welcome diversion from the self-centred concerns of teachers, according to Premier Bill Bennett.*

*"For the last three years the total debate was on how big an increase teachers would get in their salaries," the premier said during a weekend interview in Kelowna. "[This] is not education. Thank goodness we're back on to it.*

*"I'm glad we're finally off the thrust that [B.C. Teachers' Federation President] Larry Kuehn has been on for the last three years of 'what is the education system doing to give more money to teachers for salary increases.' I'm glad we're finally talking about content."*

The newspaper clipping files and radio broadcast tapes in our office certainly reached formidable proportions in the past few years whether they have featured Larry Kuehn or other BCTF commentators. We are hard put, however, to find any mention of teachers' demands for salary increases until we start searching our files for commentary on the utterances of the premier and his government colleagues.

On the other hand, we note that in November 1981 the BCTF made a presentation to the Deputy Minister's Advisory Committee suggesting that the province was long overdue for a study of the secondary school curriculum. We further note that in May 1982 our proposal — having been taken to the minister of the day — was rejected on the grounds that such a study would be premature and unwise.

There are no prizes given for figuring out why we are constantly faced with such distortions from the government as in the above newspaper story. But for this writer it is getting hard to regard it as farce any longer — there are too many tragic stories assailing us in the land of the new reality.

Jim Bowman  
Government division

B.C.'s future in jeopardy with continued education cuts

From page 1

ents argue, that a centralized school system will perform better or at less cost than a locally-controlled system. In fact, they said public education is most effective when there is "a well-balanced partnership between the central authority and the local school board."

ABCSS points out in its paper that the government's new control measures — such as provincial examinations — tend to ignore the fact that teaching and learning are not mechanical processes capable of precise monitoring and rating.

"Those who seek quality through tighter and tighter control of schools and teaching are pursuing phantoms through a haze," they write. "In contrast to attempts at tight quality control, a burgeoning body of evidence now emerging from the study of effective schools indicates that concentration on conditions supportive of teaching at the school and district level are most likely to yield the desired results."

The superintendents association suggests that schools will continue to develop as effective places of learning if:

- local school districts are perceived and treated as legitimate custodians of public education in their communities;
- the minister of education initiates a process to define the purposes, scope and program guidelines for public education, provides adequate base-line funding and

ensures equality of educational opportunity;

- local school districts have the responsibility and freedom to deliver effective educational programs to their communities within broad provincial curriculum guidelines;
- local districts have the right to levy taxes to extend and enrich the basic provincial educational program to meet local needs;
- the ministry provides funds to subsidize the exercise of educational options in school districts where local resources are limited;
- the ministry resists excessive standardization in areas where flexibility and professional discretion are critical (such as curriculum, testing, modes of instruction);
- efforts to improve the quality of education are based on knowledge of the educational process rather than "simplistic and anecdotal" information.

In conclusion, the superintendents protested that the government's transformation of education was based on an "ideological" rationale rather than a fiscal one, as often stated. While expressing a willingness to accept legitimate economy measures, they said "it is wrong-headed to believe that B.C.'s public school system is fat and extravagant" and that a pro-

Teacher reps sought for world education congress

A World Congress on Education and Technology will be held in Vancouver on May 22-25, 1986. Planned as an initiative of B.C. School Trustees Association, the world congress sites will be UBC for the conference and the PNE for technology exhibits.

The first of its kind, the congress is expected to attract 10,000 participants from around the world to discuss the impact of new technology on education, culture and global society. Seven themes will be explored:

- Teaching and learning;
- Management and technology;
- Employment and training;
- The future society;
- Innovations and applications;
- Special needs and interests;
- Policy and planning.

Committees for each theme will be appointed to recommend program objectives, session topics, speakers and instructional formats.

The B.C. Teachers' Federation is joining with the BCSTA in inviting teachers to apply for positions on the theme committees.

Work will begin this summer and extend through May 1986. Travel and accommodation expenses for theme committee work will be covered.

Interested teachers are requested to apply on a BCTF curriculum vitae form by May 14, 1984. For further information, contact Nancy Flodin or Betty Goto at the BCTF.

longation of the current cuts will hurt the education of many children.

The superintendents emphasized that B.C. could ill afford to reduce its commitment to public education, that continued budget cuts at the present level would be detrimental to the province's economy.

"Failure to respect and heed the educational and managerial principles presented in this paper will signal a refusal to acknowledge the wisdom of the past and society's vision of the future," the superintendents wrote. "The long-term well-being of our public schools will be clearly at risk, as will be the well-being of our society; and all individuals in it. There is an urgent need in British Columbia for public consideration of the question: 'What are schools for?' We believe that, even though the wider needs of society will be argued, the public's answer will nonetheless unhesitatingly affirm the belief that schools should strive to meet the discrete and special needs of each child.

"The members of the Association of B.C. School Superintendents would welcome the opportunity to play a significant part in such a reasoned and informed public debate. Our motive is that if the public schools are at risk, so are our children, and so is the future."

Ministry hearings give chance to make views known on white paper

The Ministry of Education has announced a schedule of public meetings to discuss the white paper on secondary graduation requirements.

Members are urged to attend and to make direct presentations of their concerns. This is the schedule:

- April 30 Terrace
- May 1 Prince George
- May 2 Williams Lake, Nanaimo
- May 3 North Vancouver
- May 8 Fort St. John
- May 9 Abbotsford
- May 10 Maple Ridge
- May 14 Kamloops
- May 15 Kelowna, Surrey, Cranbrook
- May 16 Vancouver
- May 17 Trail, Victoria

The BCTF will itself be making a formal presentation to the ministry and it would be helpful if copies of presentations made at local meetings were conveyed to the federation office in time for inclusion in a draft written by May 24.

Ken Aitchison: where the pun never sets

Clive Cocking  
Editor

Tom Hutchison, doubtless driven by pangs of guilt, finally confessed a few weeks after the event. "Ken," he admitted, "brings out the worst in all of us."

He was so right. Ken Aitchison, you see, is noted — no, he's downright infamous — around the BCTF building for his irrepressible love of that most dubious form of humour, the pun.

And Hutchison was rightly confessing his sins and those of others at a March 17 dinner honouring Ken Aitchison, editor of the B.C. Teacher, who retires at 57 this month after 22 years service to the federation. Speaker after speaker on that evening was guilty of inflicting on about 100 innocent guests in the Hotel Vancouver an appalling stream of pitiful puns.

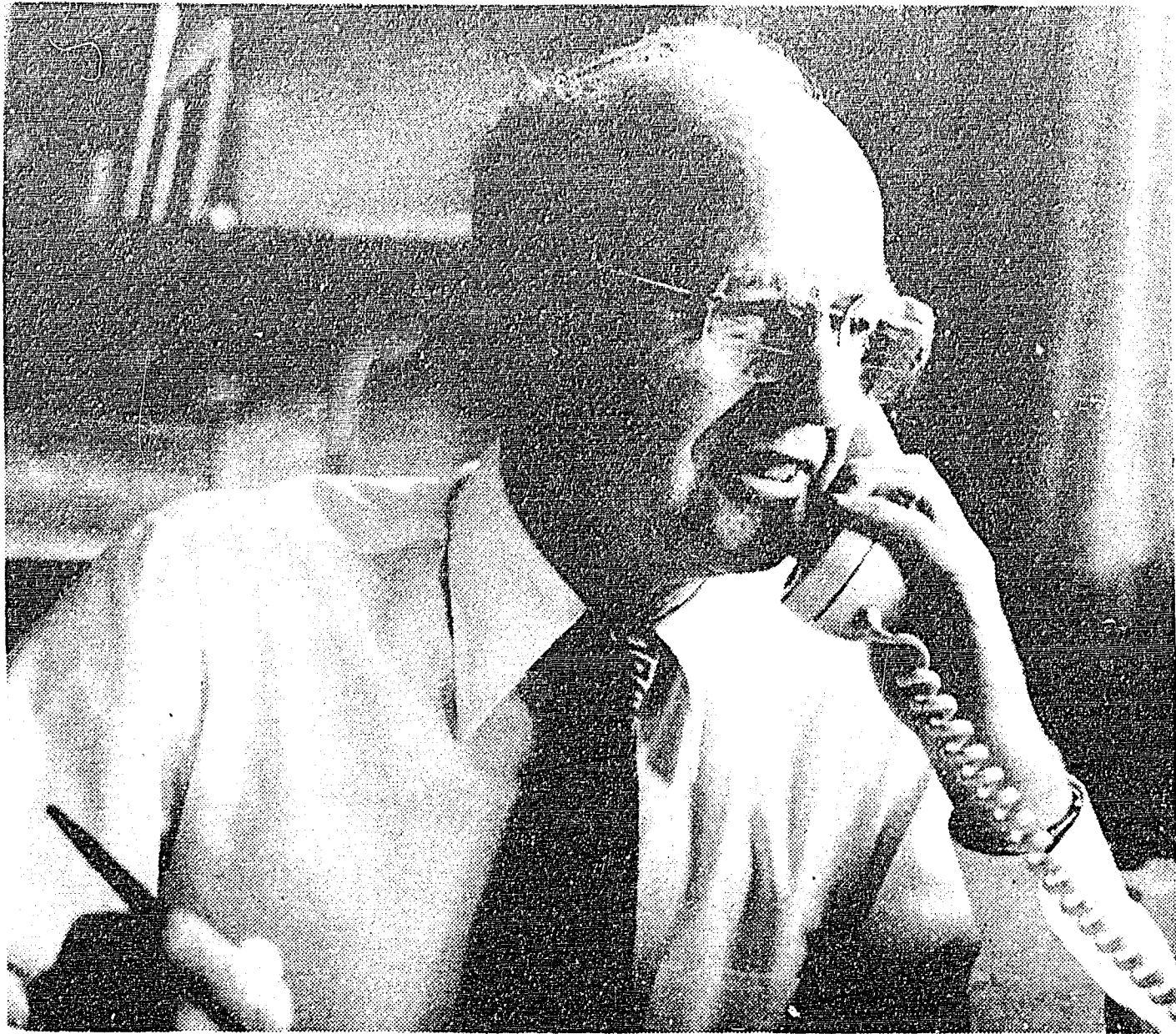
Hutchison, of the government division, who was master of ceremonies, started the shameless proceedings off with a groaner about St. Patrick's Day: "Is this the day in which Irish parents say they are thankful for small Murphies?"

It got worse. BCTF executive director Bob Buzzza featured Ken in a complicated joke about an "obscene clone fall", while Al Jarvis, of the policies and procedures committee, made Aitchison the victim of an auto parts department accident where it was "raining Datsun cogs."

Even Jim Bowman, director of the government division, who ought to know better, got into the act. He told an involved joke about Newfoundland sending fish to counter a famine in India which ended with a punchline of Premier Joey Smallwood's fishy telegram: "Nehru, my cod to thee."

Enough. There were also sincere tributes paid to Ken Aitchison for his contributions to the federation.

Hutchison, for one, reviewed Aitchison's long career with the B.C. Teacher, shaping its content and expressing BCTF professional positions in editorials. "A review of editorials in the magazine gives an encapsulated history of where the BCTF has been and what we stand for," said Hutchison, "and for many many years Ken



Retiring after 22 years with the BCTF, Ken Aitchison leaves the federation with a legacy of improved procedures — and a remembrance of his dubious (but delightful) humour.

was the person who articulated what we stood for in there."

He pointed also to Aitchison's organizational work in developing the BCTF policy and procedures handbook and in developing procedures for running the Annual General Meeting. "Ken," said Hutchison, "is going to leave us with a legacy by which we can express our democratic aspirations in probably the smoothest way that any organization has ever devised — and don't anybody ever forget that."

Finally, he noted Aitchison's dedication, as an editor, to maintaining the purity of the English language. "Ken has been one of the major watchdogs," said Hutchison, "in ensuring that we are not only an organization of professional teachers, but that we are also literate in our public expressions."

Ken Aitchison began teaching in 1949 after completing his bachelor of arts degree (majoring in English, social studies and physical education) and a year of teacher training at UBC. He

spent his first five years teaching in junior and senior secondary schools in New Westminster. In 1954 he transferred to Burnaby South Secondary School, where he taught English, was senior boys' counsellor and (drawing on his background as a sprinter) was coach of a number of championship track and field teams.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my teaching career," Aitchison recalled. "I still look back with pride at having won an Educator of the Year Award from the South Burnaby Kiwanis Club in 1957 and having a high school annual dedicated to me the following year."

Aitchison became involved in BCTF affairs almost from his first day of teaching, being invited to join a provincial public relations committee because he had studied journalism. This led to work with other committees, editorship of the local newsletter, local executive positions and ultimately provincial executive positions. (Along the way he also completed

bachelor and master of education degrees.) Aitchison was elected BCTF president for 1961-62.

Following this experience, he was appointed to the federation's administrative staff, quickly assuming a variety of roles. In paying tribute to Aitchison, Bob Buzzza said the diversity of his contribution had been overshadowed by work with the B.C. Teacher, the AGM and the international program. He cited Aitchison's part in the major BCTF reorganization in 1965, his development of Crisis Bulletins in the Bill 3 campaign, his reorganization of the BCTF Lesson Aids Service and the fact that he originated and edited the BCTF Newsletter for several years.

"From my perspective and that of many others, of all of the many meetings you have been responsible for, including BCTF and CTF annual general meetings, the one that was the most demanding and beneficial to us was the WCOTF in Vancouver in 1967," said Buzzza. "A truly superb job!"

One aspect of his federation work of which Aitchison is particularly proud has been his role in administering BCTF's international aid program. This started from a 1962 AGM decision to assess members \$1 each to assist colleagues in other countries. "It was the first such program in Canada and is still first in terms of the amount of money contributed per capita," said Aitchison. "In the 20 years since it was founded, BCTF fees going into it have amounted to \$1.25 million."

One question, however, remains to be answered about Aitchison: how did he get to be so addicted to puns? "It's always been there," he replied. "I really do love the language and so those gradations of meaning and double-meaning have a natural appeal. It's a disease, I guess."

Disease is right. At his retirement dinner, Aitchison was presented with a composite picture of all his B.C. Teacher covers and a book — 1001 of Ken Aitchison's Best Jokes. Typically, he couldn't resist a joke: "I'll bet it's written in blank verse."

It was. The blankest of blank verse.

Surrey public forums set to examine future of education

From page 1

Mrs. Allinger and Mrs. Kerr both feel that their most effective activity to date was a public protest at Surrey Place on March 12 while Premier Bill Bennett was unveiling plans for the Surrey extension to the ALRT. Although they had only three days prior knowledge of this day-time event, they were able to organize a rally of 60 parents from throughout the district. Mrs. Allinger noted that this was the first protest action of any type that many of the parents had participated in and that it went well, despite the fear created by the presence of RCMP paddy wagons, presumably to round up unruly protesters.

Media coverage of their protest was considerable and Mrs. Kerr felt that they had learned a great deal about how parent groups can use local media to their own advantage. She said it is particularly important to appear reasonable and non-radical to other parents who might be considering joining a protest.

"We are appealing to every parent and we're also trying to change parents' minds," she said. "You can't do that by being too radical."

Nonetheless, Mrs. Kerr admitted that she feared for the future of public education in B.C. She feels that the govern-

ment's aim is to privatize schooling and to make the type of education available to children dependent on how much the parents can pay in addition to taxes.

At Dr. Sinclair Elementary School in the Newton area of Surrey, Gayle Foyster has served as president of the Parent-Teacher Organization for three years. The layoff of a highly-respected teacher in February was the galvanizing force that led to several well-attended public meetings where representatives of the board, the STA, and the parents spoke. A delegation also met with Surrey MLA Bill Reid in his local office. The delegation was politely received but there has not yet been a response to the presentation. Sinclair parents also participated in the district-wide letter-writing campaign that saw 360 letters delivered to the Surrey MLAs in one day.

Mrs. Foyster feels that the public meetings have been successful because they have had a high level of parental and teacher participation. She is at times discouraged by the seeming lack of victories at this time, even small ones, but she is determined to continue the struggle against education cutbacks.

"I'll never give up!" Mrs. Foyster stated emphatically. "It's hard to be

optimistic and what I worry about is trying to keep these parents that we have involved to maintain their involvement indefinitely, to take their children's education seriously and to be concerned about the decisions that are being made."

To Moira Mackenzie, president of the Surrey Teachers' Association, these parent actions and similar actions at schools throughout the district have been very important in fighting the recent layoffs in Surrey.

Mackenzie now sees parents moving beyond the narrower interests of their own school into a concern for the system and public education as a whole. She feels that parents now realize that attendance at one school meeting is not enough, that a long-term commitment will be necessary to have any effect on government policy.

The next Surrey Teachers' Association action will be to hold a series of public teach-ins on the future of education in May.

Parental involvement in the future is critical to the defense of public education, in Mackenzie's opinion. She concluded: "Unless we develop meaningful relationships at the school level, we're always going to be vulnerable to the media and dictatorial changes. Although it will require giving teachers the confidence to allow parents to have meaningful input into the school, that's where the strength

for public education lies for the future. Parents will appreciate, respect, and become part of the process that way."

David Handelman teaches at James Ardiel Elementary School in Surrey.

Conference examines how government cutbacks hurt children and families

A BCTF conference set for May will examine the impact of government cuts in social services on children and families.

The "Children in Crisis" conference, sponsored by the BCTF Children's Rights Committee, will explore three main areas of concern: social support services needed by children and families; children's legal and human rights issues; and children's rights advocacy. The conference will be held at UBC on May 10-12.

Alan Farber, a Vancouver lawyer and specialist in child advocacy, will give the keynote address on Thursday evening, May 10. Conference panel participants include: Dr. John Gossage, a New Westminster pediatrician and expert on child abuse, Roop Seebarn, president of the B.C. Association of Social Workers, and David Vickers, a former deputy attorney-general and legal expert on child advocacy.

For further information contact John Hardy in the BCTF office.

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BCTF Newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION  
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CLIVE COCKING Editor

The BCTF Newsletter is published by the B.C. Teachers' Federation pursuant to policy statement 36.26 in the Members' Guide to the BCTF. The BCTF Newsletter Editorial Advisory Board, which reports to the Executive Committee, serves in an advisory capacity, assisting the editor in interpreting and implementing newsletter policy.

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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## Teachers' pension plan investments show gains

The investment returns on the teachers' pension plan continue to improve. As of last December the annual rate of return was 10.4 per cent which meant a real return after inflation of 4.6 per cent.

Since January 1981 the ministry of finance has been investing the money in government guaranteed securities or in short term notes in order to obtain the best possible return. As a result, these investments, during the past year, earned 11.6 per cent, a real return after inflation of 5.8 per cent.

Investments are monitored quarterly by an investment committee attended by employee representatives in all the public sector pension plans. Proposals are now being discussed with this committee which should bring about even greater returns in the future.

## Pension improvements await legislative action

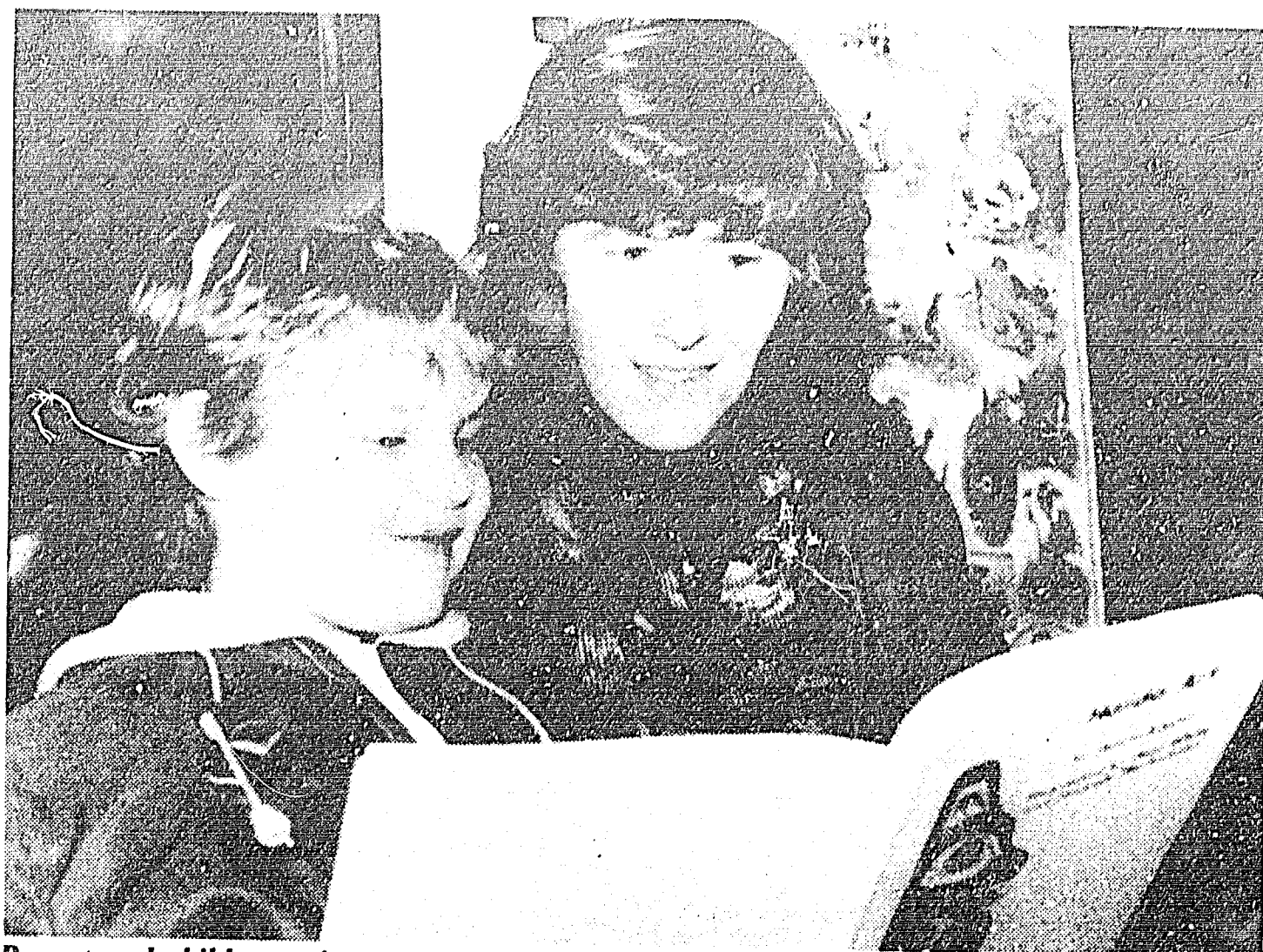
The Pensions Committee and the Superannuation Commission have agreed on a number of significant improvements to the Teachers' Pension Plan.

An increase in the interest rates to be credited to contributions when a teacher takes a refund and to be charged when payments are made to the fund for leaves of absence and reinstatement is now awaiting an order-in-council.

A change in the dates when refunds may be given and the right of appeal to the Teachers' Pension Board for retroactivity in the granting of a retirement pension are awaiting approval of the provincial secretary and then legislation.

The following major items have been approved by the provincial secretary and now await legislative action:

- improvements in the reinstatement provisions for teachers who have had periods of absence and who left their contributions in the plan;
- provision for the option of a 15-year guarantee;
- provision for adjusting salaries of part-time teachers to reflect real dollar earnings during the final five years (making pensions of part-time teachers proportionate to those of full-time teachers).



Parent and child examine reader, part of locally-developed curriculum materials aimed at increasing intercultural understanding in the Queen Charlottes.

## Queen Charlottes readers project fosters cultural understanding

There's nothing like the introduction of new curriculum materials to draw a crowd up in the Queen Charlottes.

Especially when the materials have been created by local teachers, drawing on local history, legends and culture, and are designed to foster greater intercultural understanding and communication among islanders.

That's what happened back on February 23 when young and old, white and native, packed the Skidegate reserve Longhouse for the unveiling of curriculum materials developed with the aid of a \$1,000 BCTF curriculum grant.

"The Skidegate Open House was a celebration for education, especially of locally-developed materials which help reach out and serve the needs of all students within the community," recalled Queen Charlotte Elementary Secondary School teacher Jenny White, who was coordinator for the project.

The materials were developed to enhance three newly-published primary level Queen Charlotte Island Readers

(part of a projected 21-book series) produced under the direction of two Masset teachers, Jeannie Markowsky and Dawn Adams, with the aid of local artists and writers. Dealing with native art, culture and legends, the readers (*Haida Art, The Weavers, Bears and Berries*) were funded by a special district grant from the ministry of education.

During the open house, islanders were entertained by student songs and skits, puppet shows and slide presentations. But the highlight was the display of the locally-developed curriculum materials. Aimed primarily at developing language skills, the materials included comprehension activities, learning centres, slide sets, puppets and research projects.

The curriculum materials are available in kit form and teachers interested in learning more about them can do so by writing: Queen Charlotte Island Readers, Curriculum Development Project, Queen Charlotte School, Box 70, Queen Charlotte, B.C. V0T 1S0.

## Strike discipline idea would abrogate basic freedoms of citizens

The March 20 issue of *The Province* reported that [the BCTF] "Executive Committee will consider penalties for those who refuse to strike."

Those who are on these committees should carefully read the Charter of Rights and Freedoms — The Constitution Act of 1982. Under the section on fundamental freedoms, the charter guarantees, among other things, that every one has freedom of conscience and religion and freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression.

The president of our local association said before the November strike that we were to follow our conscience. Now the BCTF executive wants to take away the above-quoted fundamental freedoms, and force everyone to co-operate with actions decided upon by political activists.

My rights as a Canadian citizen would be violated for these reasons:

- as a Christian, it is against my religious beliefs to become involved in politics;
- as a responsible citizen, it is against my personal beliefs to engage in illegal acts of civil disobedience;
- as a teacher, it is repugnant to me to use children as pawns in political maneuvering and take away their right to undisturbed education.

I want to know why the BCTF executive thinks they have the *legal authority* to force or coerce members into (or penalize for not doing) illegal acts, or take actions contrary to their personal and/or religious beliefs. I want to see a copy of the law which allows associations to abrogate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The [AGM] resolution to support trade unions goes too far beyond educational issues. How could those 100 delegates disgrace teachers by going over to the Pennyfarthing site, and by their presence endorse slashing tires, assault, name-calling, vandalism, and throwing dog excrement? This year will be very shameful for BCTF unless reasonableness returns soon.

Patricia Dimsdale  
Cassiar Secondary

## Vacancies

Please note that some of the following application deadlines fall on different dates. For more information on how to apply or on the various committees, please contact Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office. Applications should be submitted on standard curriculum vitae forms. Some local association offices and/or presidents have extra forms; they can also be requested from Jacquie Boyer. Most committee appointments will be made at the June 22-23 Executive Committee meeting.

### CTF Committees

Application deadline is **May 9** for all but CTF Trust Fund which is **June 1**.

#### Ad Hoc Committee on Pension Reform

This committee will consist of three CTF members and a chairperson who is a member of the CTF Board of Directors. It will hold two 2-day meetings in Ottawa during the 1984-85 school year. Terms of reference are: to monitor, study, report and make recommendations to the board on matters relating to implementation of pension reform; to review existing policy and develop new policy and action resolutions dealing with pension reform initiatives. Applications received from BCTF members will be reviewed at the May 11-12 Executive Committee meeting and nominations will then be forwarded to CTF for selection.

**Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability in Education** Committee will consist of four CTF members as per the Pension Reform Committee and will also meet twice during **4/APRIL 18, 1984**

ing 1984-85. Terms of reference include identification of problems, issues and trends, and recommendation of appropriate CTF publications, policies and meetings. Please check the above committee for application procedure.

**French Language Commission** One BCTF member will be appointed to the CTF French Language Commission. This commission advises the CTF on matters concerning the education of francophone students and is studying the political, social and cultural impact on the francophone minority of classes or schools where French is the language of instruction. The commission's working language is French.

**CTF Trust Fund** There is one vacant position of trustee-at-large of the CTF Trust Fund. A BCTF member has held this position which is for a term of three years. Trustees serve as members of a national decision-making body and not as representatives of the nominating body. The fund was established in 1965 as a means of handling and accounting for sums of money which were collected from sources other than CTF fees and which were earmarked for application to special purposes. Interested members should contact Jacquie Boyer for an information sheet on the fund.

### BCTF Committee Vacancies

**Bargaining Committee** One co-ordinator is required for the metro zone. Applicants must be nominated by a local

association within the zone. Deadline is **May 22**.

Application deadline for most of the following BCTF committees is **June 1**. Most terms are for three years effective July 1.

**B.C. Teacher Editorial Board** (1 vacancy); **BCTF Newsletter Editorial Board** (1); **Education Finance Committee** (1); **Finance Committee** (2); **Investigation Committee** (4); **Judicial Committee** (3 to be elected at June RA. Application deadline is **May 25** and applicants must be approved by secret ballot of local general meeting or delegate assembly); **Labor Affairs Advisory Committee** (2); **Policies and Procedures Committee** as corresponding members from outside the Lower Mainland (2); **Professional Relations Advisors Committee** (1); **Racism Committee** (3); **Teacher Education Committee** (1); **Teacher Personnel Committee** (3); **Racism Committee** (3); **Rights of Children Committee** (3); **Status of Women Committee** (3); **Working and Learning Conditions Committee** (2); **W.R. Long Solidarity Fund Committee** (1).

### Representatives to Other Agencies

**Teacher Qualification Service** One BCTF representative is required. TQS is a joint operation of the BCTF and the B.C. School Trustees Association whose purpose is to define categories of teacher qualification and to evaluate the academic-professional preparation of teachers. Knowledge of teacher preparation programs and/or salary administration plans would be desirable.

## Unemployed teachers AGM presentation merited Newsletter coverage

The BCTF has shown a tremendous amount of support for unemployed teachers through its creation of the Unemployed Teachers' Action Centre. It came as somewhat of a surprise to those of us at the centre, then, when the March 29 edition of the *BCTF Newsletter* made no reference whatsoever to the very moving presentation made by unemployed teachers to the AGM. A great deal of thought and effort went into this presentation, and the effect it had upon the AGM delegates could not be described as being unworthy of note. Currently, as many as one in five B.C. teachers are not employed in their profession. That the BCTF views this situation with considerable concern is clearly illustrated by the federation's continuing support of UTAC as well as by its invitation to unemployed teachers to make themselves heard at the 1984 AGM. That this concern is not reflected in the *BCTF Newsletter's* otherwise thorough coverage of the AGM is, we hope, an unfortunate journalistic oversight on your part, not an indication of the seriousness with which you view the unemployed teacher's plight.

Ken Piercy  
Editor, *UTAC Newsletter*  
Vancouver

*The Newsletter gave a comprehensive report of AGM news but space did not allow all aspects to be reported. An effort will be made to include a feature on unemployed teachers in a coming issue.*