

BCTF Newsletter

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Restraint plan violates rights, declares ILO

The International Labour Organization has condemned the provincial government's initial education spending restraint legislation as violating teachers' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

The ruling, from the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association, deals with a BCTF complaint submitted through WCOTP on the restraint measures brought in under former Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm. These were the Compensation Stabilization Act, which set controls on teacher salary increases, and the School Services (Interim) Act, which sets limits on school board budget increases and forced pay cuts on teachers.

The ILO committee has not ruled on a second complaint about the provincial government's harsh new restraint legislation imposed this past summer as the government has not yet replied to the ILO.

The ILO committee concluded that the government's legislative provisions which effectively cut teachers' salaries by chopping six to 11 days from the school year, despite the existence of collective agreements was "not consistent with the principles of freedom of association, all the more so because the legislation in question [was] apparently adopted without consultation with the workers involved."

The government's imposition of budgetary restrictions which made it impossible for school boards to fulfill their collective agreements on teachers' salaries was, the committee stated, "not consistent with the principle of free collective bargaining."

The requirement that teachers' negotiated salary agreements be submitted to the Compensation Stabilization Board,

See "Freedom" page 4



"Thought we couldn't do it, eh?" Kitimat teacher Karla Hennig seems to say to teachers' strike doubters, as she braves the cold in her stint on the picket line. Doug Thomson photo.

Meeting fails to end dispute on '84 funding

A top-level meeting has failed to resolve the controversy between the BCTF and the provincial government over how money saved during the teachers' walk-out is to be used in the education system. (See earlier story below.)

BCTF President Larry Kuehn, First Vice-President Pat Clarke, Government Division Director Jim Bowman and Education Minister Jack Heinrich met for about three hours on Monday, November 21, without succeeding in clearing up the disagreement in interpretation of the accord agreed to verbally by Solidarity representative Jack Munro and Premier Bill Bennett in Kelowna a week before which ended the walkouts.

The BCTF's understanding, as Kuehn has stated, was that the agreement included a key government commitment to maintain 1984 education funding levels at *close to* this year's level. This could be done by putting the approximately \$18 million in strike savings back into the system to reduce the impact of the planned \$25.5 million school budget cutbacks in 1984, using the funds to save 400 teaching and 200 non-teaching jobs.

The government's position, most recently enunciated by Premier Bennett on the BCTV's Webster Show on November 18, is that there was no agreement to maintain education funding in 1984 at 1983 levels, but that he had agreed that the savings should be retained in the system *this year* and be used to pay teachers to make up the three days lost during the strike.

Kuehn said later the BCTF was willing to have further discussions with the minister if his November 22 meeting with BCSTA officials produced new proposals.

Controversy clouds truce

An uneasy truce is holding between teachers and the provincial government following the end of Solidarity's province-wide escalating walkouts.

Sweet reason appeared about to prevail following settlement of the provincial government employees' strike and the verbal agreement achieved in Kelowna late Sunday, November 13, between Premier Bill Bennett and Solidarity representative Jack Munro, first vice-president of the B.C. Federation of Labour, on (as Munro put it) "an avenue to resolve the problems" which provoked the unprecedented job actions.

But within days of teachers returning to the classroom the climate abruptly changed back to one of bitter controversy as one of the BCTF's apparent major gains — maintenance of 1984 education funding at about this year's level — was put in question as first the premier, then the education minister, publicly disputed the federation's interpretation of the Kelowna agreement.

Under the circumstances, BCTF First Vice-President Pat Clarke warned teachers that the agreement is still "really quite tentative" and that there is, as yet, no basis for declaring peace in the conflict with the government. He saw two possi-

ble explanations for the government's position.

"They may be testing us again," Clarke suggested. "They may think now that Operation Solidarity is satisfied they can go after us separately and see if we've still got the resolve to hang together. Or, now that we're going into negotiations with the ministry, they may be simply staking out a bargaining position."

Either way, he said teachers must remain united, vigilant and determined.

The Bennett-Munro talks in Kelowna, which ended the massive province-wide walkouts, produced agreement on means of dealing not only with teachers' concerns but also those of other groups involved in the Solidarity Coalition. These are the points that were agreed to:

1. Funding for the education system for 1984 will be maintained at a level close to the current one. The government had planned to cut \$27 million from school budgets in 1984, in the first year of a three-year program that would, in effect, have cut budgets by 25 per cent from 1983 levels.

Much of the funding to be restored to the school system will come from the government's "savings" as a result of the teachers' strike. This will amount to

\$18-20 million. The money will not be returned to provincial general revenues as had been previously announced.

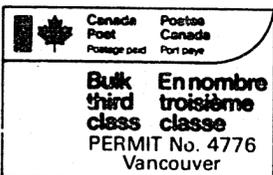
2. The government will recommend that all school boards negotiate with their teachers seniority, job security and severance pay clauses to exempt teachers from the arbitrary termination procedures of Bill 3. A model clause has been negotiated and ratified by the North Vancouver Teachers' Association and their school board, and approved by Compensation Stabilization Commissioner Ed Peck.

3. The government will establish an advisory committee to take submissions and make recommendations to the government on human rights legislation. This committee will include members of organizations concerned with human rights, rather than cabinet ministers or bureaucrats.

4. A similar committee will be set up to advise on labor legislation. It has been expected that the government would soon introduce major changes to the B.C. Labour Code.

5. Community Improvement Program grants will be restored to handicapped people who assist in a variety of commu-

See "No resolution" page 2



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

No resolution may mean more Solidarity action

From page 1

ity projects. The grants will be maintained through 1984.

6. Action will be taken to develop a rent review process to replace the rentals-man's office, which is being abolished under government legislation.

7. A process of consultation will be set up on appropriate levels and delivery of social services.

8. The government will make no reprisals against its own employees and will urge other public-sector employers to refrain from reprisals.

The controversy began again after Premier Bill Bennett described as "erroneous" BCTF President Larry Kuehn's statements outlining the above agreement. Specifically, the premier seemed to deny that there was a commitment to retain in the 1984 education budget money saved in the teachers' strike.

Education Minister Jack Heinrich further clouded the issue when he suggested that teachers would have to work three more days to make up for time lost in the strike — and that's where the saved money would go — or alternatively, the money could be put back in education budgets if teachers agreed to work for no salary on three non-instructional days.

Clarke said he expected this apparent confusion would be clarified in the coming negotiations with the government.

He emphasized, however, that one clear, important gain to come out of the three-day provincial withdrawal of service — the first since the one-day 1971 pensions strike — is exemption for teachers from arbitrary firings under Bill

3, the Public Sector Restraint Act. This issue is well on its way to resolution through local negotiations, he said, based on the North Vancouver model agreement which provides an orderly layoff procedure with seniority protection, recall rights and severance pay.

"That's the real value of the strike to this point," he said. "The North Vancouver deal was not acceptable last Monday [November 7] but then a week later it was."

The provincial government was playing hardball, said Clarke, when it intervened the day before the threatened teachers' walkout to get the North Vancouver School Board to drop an agreement achieved with the NVTAs which would have served as an acceptable model for all 75 school districts — and averted the strike.

"They thought that we would blow ourselves apart, I'm sure of it," he said. "Provincial Secretary Jim Chabot, in fact, said on television the other day that he figured we wouldn't get any better than half the teachers out."

As it happened, Clarke said, about 90 per cent of B.C.'s 28,000 teachers stayed out of the classrooms — even though only 59 per cent had voted in favour of the walkout. The reason for the difference, he suggested, is that most teachers are honourable people who respect the process of majority rule by democratic vote and that the membership generally understood that a weak commitment to the strike could have placed in jeopardy the federation's future as a strong organization representing teachers.

"Teachers have recognized that they do



BCTF President Larry Kuehn . . . in a daily news media briefing during the walkout.

have significant collective strength," Clarke said. "They know that they surprised a lot of people last week, including themselves maybe, and that having done that, that if the need arises again in the future, that they can do that and get some tangible results from it."

In conclusion, Pat Clarke pointed out that if the BCTF fails to obtain a satisfactory resolution to education issues in negotiation with the government by

November 28, then Operation Solidarity will be called on to make a decision about action to be taken.

"There are a variety of things that are possible and they could include another build-up to a general strike or some other kinds of responses," he said. "But we're still operating within Operation Solidarity and any steps we take toward resolving problems we will be using that body to do it."



Speaking through an interpreter (below), Darwin Juarez (above), executive member of the federation of Central American teachers' organizations (FOMCA), thanks the November RA for \$31,500 BCTF grant to aid his organization's development and work in combatting illiteracy.

B.C. walkout won teacher support across Canada

When B.C. teachers walked out on November 8 their colleagues in the rest of Canada were right behind them.

The BCTF office was deluged with letters and telegrams from provincial affiliates and local associations offering moral and financial support.

"The teachers of Canada applauded the courage and determination of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation in resisting the ignominious legislation being imposed upon your education system," declared CTF President Brian Shortall in one such wire. "Every B.C. teacher can be assured that colleagues across Canada will lend their strong support."

The executive committee of the Canadian Teachers' Federation promptly turned assurance into reality in establishing a B.C. Support Fund — which soon had \$15,000 in it — to assist in meeting legal and other costs of the walkout.

Bargaining wins seniority rights layoff protection

The major gain in bargaining this year is in saving teachers from the arbitrary firing provisions of Bill 3, the Public Sector Restraint Act.

That, however, applies only to those local associations which have negotiated strong Bill 3 exemption clauses and a small minority have not.

The other main result is that teachers will be getting only slight or no salary increases, although increments are being maintained.

At press time, 42 local associations had achieved negotiated settlements or agreements in committee.

A further 13 locals indicated that they would have to go to arbitration to resolve matters.

And negotiations were still underway in 18 districts. The ministry had indicated that, because of the strike, the bargaining deadline would be relaxed in an effort to avoid more arbitration cases. (The other two districts are still in multi-year agreements.) Bargaining has traditionally continued until arbitration boards actu-

ally meet. If a settlement is reached, it then goes to the arbitration board as a joint settlement.

The North Vancouver agreement, with its Bill 3 exemption clause giving seniority protection and severance pay in layoffs, and which was a key element in ending the provincial walkout, served as a catalyst for the achievement of exemption clauses, although there is variation in the strength of the protection they offer.

At press time, 21 locals had achieved Bill 3 exemption clauses, while 15 others had letters of intent from their boards to negotiate such clauses within two weeks. In three others there were indications that the boards were willing to negotiate exemptions. The status of Bill 3 exemption was unclear in other locals' bargaining.

Ft. Nelson, however, is one district which does not have any Bill 3 exemption clause as their settlement was achieved prior to the strike — before Bill 3 exemption became a negotiable issue. Clauses have not been negotiated in Quesnel and Nechako and the Kimberley board has indicated that it might write the protection into policy.

On the salary end, virtually all locals with negotiated settlements or agreements in committee have settled for modest or no pay increases. They range from .25 to 1.1 per cent.

"A learning experience"

Three days on the picket lines

Three days on the picket lines . . . It was, our correspondents report, a tremendous learning experience. Teachers learned a lot about their employers, their communities, their provincial government, their local unions, their colleagues — about themselves, individually and collectively.

A lot happened around the province in those three days, too much to attempt, at this stage, a synthesis of what the event will mean to the federation. The following vignettes, at least, give a sense of what it was like on the picket lines . . .

The first ugly incident occurred right at the start of the provincial walkout, on the morning of November 8. In **Windermere**, an irate man drove up to a teacher picket line in his pickup truck, shouted obscenities at the teachers, then drove off in a huff, knocking down teacher Fred Tomlin, who was shaken up but uninjured. The driver has been charged with dangerous driving.

Otherwise, it was not a walkout noted for conflict on the picket lines. Incidents tended to be minor: eggs and abuse hurled at picketers and here and there picket signs torn off by angry citizens. Elsewhere picketers were greeted with waves, shouts of support and free coffee and donuts.

One of our correspondents covering the Fraser Valley reported that he was surprised at the amount of public support in that area, noted for its conservatism. "I went around seven or eight schools in the Mission area with a picket captain and he would tell the people on the picket lines that the coffee and donuts people would be around soon. But they would say, 'that's okay, we're not in a big hurry because this guy in a camper has just stopped and given us coffee, or the lady across the street has just had us in for coffee and cookies.' They weren't in any hurry for teacher goodies because they had already had goodies from someone else."

At the Pebble Hill Elementary School in **Delta** one morning a group of angry parents showed up to picket the teacher pickets. A little while later another group of supportive parents showed up and began to picket the other parents picketing the teacher picket lines. Another first for Delta: three-wave picketing.

Elsewhere on the picketing front, our Metro correspondent reported: "First day of strike in **Vancouver** and Vancouver teachers have been served an injunction banning picketing. At seven a.m. I approach a picket line of three VMREU workers and three anonymous young women who turned out to be thermostatting elementary teachers "out for a stroll in the morning mist." Say no more, say no more.

Upcountry in **Oliver**, our observer recounted how they do it up there. "The teachers were on horseback doing an easy circuit of the elementary school. I don't



know whether that's a human interest story or a horse story."

In **Abbotsford**, our man reported the following incident. Picture it. The rain is pouring down. Two lonely teachers are picketing, admittedly just on the school driveway. The principal storms out of the school and says, "You know you're not permitted to picket on school property." The picketers move off. The principal continues: "I have a whole staffroom — well, not quite a whole staffroom — full of teachers in there who are crying and are very upset. You're intimidating them!" When the picketers stopped laughing, they urged the principal to take a message inside: "We're not crying out here, tell them to come out and join us."

Our upcast correspondent sent this dispatch: "First day of the strike in **Powell River** and a teacher crosses the picket line, tries the front door of the school and finds it locked. He stands there until 8:55 when the principal leaves the picket line and unlocks the door. The teacher enters. The

principal rejoins the picket line. Shortly thereafter the teacher leaves the school to report elsewhere. The principal locks the school and returns to the picket line."

And yes, some boards tried to play hardball. In **Delta**, the superintendent's edict to principals was: "cross or resign." On Day One, three principals refused to go in, on Day Two another 20 administrators informed the superintendent they wouldn't be in school. This led to all schools in Delta being closed on Day Three.

The **Delta** superintendent was still being unpleasant after the walkout was over. One teacher who had been on an approved three-week leave of absence due to sickness returned for the first day on Monday, November 14 to receive a directive from the superintendent informing her that if she wanted to be paid for the three days of the strike she would have to write him a letter stating that she would have been prepared to come to work had she not been ill. The teacher has replied that she was on a duly authorized sick leave and has nothing further to say.

Things seemed a shade more cosy up in the **Creston** area — despite the 100 per cent walkout. Andy Leathwood, president of the Kaslo sub-local, was stuck for someone to babysit his two-year-old son while he took his turn on the picket line. So, naturally enough, he thought of his mother and she agreed. Mrs. Shelagh Leathwood is a school trustee in the Creston-Kaslo School District.

And in **Fernie**, parents and students picketed with teachers. One student sported our favourite picket sign: "I am your future politician — give me an education." An irrefutable argument for increasing education funding if there ever was one.

Politicians' propaganda refuted on public sector wage increases

Public sector employees can throw off their hair shirts: new evidence shows that their wage settlements have not been leading a dangerous inflationary spiral.

Analysis by the Canadian Teachers' Federation's economic service has demolished the favourite justification of federal and provincial politicians for their various forms of legislated public sector wage controls — namely, that public sector wage settlements were leading an inflationary spiral that could turn into economy-wrecking hyperinflation.

The CTF's economic boffins analyzed Labour Canada and Statistics Canada wage data for the years 1976 to 1982 and found that:

1. Base rate wage increases in private sector settlements **exceeded** those in total public sector settlements in each year between 1976 and 1982 except 1977 when they were identical at 7.9 per cent. Between those years, average annual increases in base rates were: private sector, 10.3 per cent and public sector, 9.5 per cent.

2. Base rate wage increases for teachers **lagged** behind base rate wage increases for the total public sector in each year

except 1982. Average annual increases in base rates were: public sector, 9.5 per cent and teachers, 8.9 per cent.

3. Regarding inflation, base rate wage increases for teachers **lagged** behind Consumer Price Index increases in five of the six years. Total percentage increases in the CPI between 1976-82 was 76.4 per cent, while teachers' base rate wage increases totalled 66.7 per cent.

4. Base rate wage increases for the total public sector **lagged** behind increases in the CPI in four of the six years. Over the period, the total loss in real public sector purchasing power was 4.4 per cent.

5. Base rate wage increases for the private sector **exceeded** increases in the CPI in three of the six years (1979, 1980, 1981) and lagged in the remaining years (1977, 1978, 1982). Over the entire period, total increase in private sector real purchasing power was 3.5 per cent.

"It is clear," the CTF economic service concludes in its bulletin, "that government propaganda accompanying the introduction of the various public sector wage restraint programs during 1982-83 was totally inaccurate."

BCTF Newsletter

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CLIVE COCKING Editor

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COMMENT

Great debt owed "radicals" of the past

by John H. Sutherland

In the October 5 issue of the *BCTF Newsletter* L. J. Stevens of Victoria, retired, states that he is "ashamed of ever having belonged to the BCTF" and that he is sure that "Harry Charlesworth would turn over in his grave, could he realize that his 'baby' had turned into a political organization."

That being the case, he should perhaps forego his pension as it is tainted with BCTF hands. Among others are those of such as John Burnett, now senior past-president of the BCTF, the late Hughie Creelman of Esquimalt, and the late Morris Thomas of Cobble Hill and Saanich. All were active, devoted and proud members of their organization. They disagreed vigorously among themselves at times and at times with the official policy but they all sacrificed much in their efforts to achieve a satisfactorily based pension plan and an increase in the \$65 per month paid to most elementary teachers in the Thirties.

Hughie Creelman and Morris Thomas, particularly Morris Thomas, were prime movers in forming the Rural Teachers' Association, a group considered highly radical at the time, but one which brought many rural teachers into the parent organization and did much to improve their lot.

Perhaps, too, if he knew a little better the history of the BCTF struggle for decent salaries, Mr. Stevens would be proud, as I am, to belong to an organization whose efforts have always been devoted primarily to the improvement of education and the betterment of the teachers' lot.

The salary he enjoyed and that now enjoyed by his family members came about, not as a gift or reward from appreciative employers, but as a consequence of the sacrifices endured by such loyal members as the late Roy Mountain of Langley. He and his 35 loyal supporters in the Langley local (most of them women)

stood up to the Langley School Board harassments and threats of being fired. They won for the BCTF the battle for compulsory arbitration, a tremendously important step forward at the time, as our federation was still on a voluntary membership basis and was sadly lacking financially.

Perhaps Mr. Stevens does not know that the AGM in 1942 voted by a significant majority for affiliation with the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada (the modern CLC). A distinct improvement in relations with school boards and in salary levels followed. I know for I placed the motion for affiliation before the AGM.

The conditions that prevail at any given period should determine the strategy and tactics necessary to achieve one's goal, provided, of course, that basic principles are observed. At that time those of us supporting affiliation had concluded that prevailing economic conditions and social attitudes were such as to nullify the arguments used to distinguish between teaching and working, that is between the term profession and union. It is my conviction that today the distinction is even less valid than it was in the Forties.

Furthermore, the term "small radical element" was in use then, as it is today, in the effort to break the unity that had been developed. And most of those teachers to whom the term was applied either were or became outstanding professionals.

Mr. Stevens' perception of the work of Harry Charlesworth is sadly wanting. During my term as vice-president and then as president, Mr. Charlesworth suffered a severe heart attack and was confined to his bed and then to his home for several months. It was a year before he could resume his full responsibility. As I lived not far from his home, I spent many

hours with him discussing federation affairs. I got to know him well, both personally and officially.

Before his heart attack, Mr. Charlesworth found a number of school boards refusing to meet with him; they considered him too "radical." On a number of occasions I met with a school board while Mr. Charlesworth sat outside. I would from time to time slip outside to consult with him. Then, too, Mr. Stevens should inquire as to who led the Victoria teachers' strike in the early days.

Harry Charlesworth was politically knowledgeable in the education field when membership was voluntary. He knew and worked with and on key figures in the politics of education. He knew how to work behind the scenes at a time when the federation was still vulnerable. But even when he disagreed with official policy, he always gave full co-operation. His federation stance was positive.

If all the teachers who disagree with federation policies were to adopt the negative approach revealed by Mr. Stevens little progress would take place.

I have been retired for 14 years. My pride in the organization in which I still have full membership grows. At a time when the rapid expansion of technology is changing economic and social relationships, the rising generation of pupils requires a much greater degree of training and education if it is to fit into the new society. I consider that the high level of co-operation the federation has achieved in its efforts to combat the narrowing of curricula and the centralization of control has revealed a maturity of judgment in both the federation members and their leadership.

Active in federation affairs for 30 years, John Sutherland, now retired, was president of the BCTF in 1939-40 and president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation in 1941-42.

Battle continues on provincial exams

There may have been a truce called on the main battlefield with the provincial government, but skirmishing continues on another key front.

The BCTF has not eased up in its fight against the education ministry plans for mandatory province-wide Grade 12 examinations.

The lack of consultation in the plan's development and the inappropriateness of the tests (particularly their weighting of 50 per cent of year-end marks) have aroused solid opposition among teachers.

At the November 4-5 Representative Assembly, GRs voted to request the Minister of Education to postpone implementation of the Grade 12 exams and to appoint a commission to study student evaluation.

If the minister does not appoint a commission, the RA authorized the federation to appoint its own three-person commission with a \$100,000 budget to carry out the evaluation study as soon as possible.

The assembly also decided to advise local associations to: adopt the executive committee's position of advising members not to participate in the preparation or marking of the exams; support parent and student efforts to ensure fair and just evaluation; support the work of the commission on student evaluation; and publicize existing evaluation practices and the potential detrimental aspects of mandatory province-wide testing.

From page 1

Freedom to associate, bargain collectively, curbed by legislation

the committee attacked as "not only liable to discourage the use of voluntary collective bargaining, but that it is also incompatible with the principle of non-interference in the collective bargaining process by the public authorities."

The ILO committee also criticized the government's attempts to prohibit teachers' striking, declaring that prohibition of public sector strikes should be confined to genuine essential services where interruption of services would endanger life, safety or health of large segments of the population.

The second complaint before the world labour body concerns Bill 3, the Public Sector Restraint Act, Bill 6, the Education Finance (Interim) Amendment Act and Bill 11, the Compensation Stabilization Amendment Act.

Coquitlam school wins fourth Gallup award in student journalism

For the fourth consecutive year, 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 School is the only school outside of the United States to win the award in recent years. *The Catalyst* scored 967 points out of a possible 1,000. This is the highest score ever made by *The Catalyst* in international competition.

In addition to winning the Gallup Award in the last four years, *The Catalyst* won the same award in 1974 and received an International First Place Award in 1976 and 1978. The contest judges commended *The Catalyst* for the quality of writing, news coverage and layout.

4/NOVEMBER 22, 1983

Award honours teacher's love of history

A Kamloops teacher who loves history and wants all his students to share that love has won a national award for distinguished contribution to the teaching of history and social studies.

Wilfried Schmidt, a teacher at John Peterson Junior Secondary, was one of five teachers across Canada to recently receive the History and Social Science Teacher Award. The award is granted annually by the *History and Social Science Teacher*, a University of Western Ontario professional journal, to recognize individuals for promoting aspects of history and social studies.

Schmidt, who is active in his PSA, said he was delighted with the award: "It's a nice honour."

A grades 9-10 social studies teacher, he has spent the past six years researching a book on Sandon, the famous 19th century mining town in the East Kootenays, which is nearly ready to be written.

Born in Germany in 1944, he came to Canada with his family at the height



Wilfried Schmidt . . . wants all his students to love history as he does.

of the Cold War. The confusion caused by his reception by Canadian youngsters triggered his interest in history.

"I came from Germany when I was 12 and suddenly these kids were calling me a Nazi," Schmidt recalled. "I didn't even know what that was. I think I've always carried the burden — why the war, why Hitler — and history was one way of setting my soul straight."

Schmidt went on to study history, specializing in Middle Eastern studies, at Simon Fraser University before beginning teaching in 1972. He knows that his fondness for history shows.

"I love history with a passion," he said, "and I think that comes across when I teach. I want everyone to love it as I do."

After completing the book, he said his ambition is to teach at the senior secondary level. "My big desire is to teach History 12," he said. "It's the socials course for Grade 9 but on a grander scale. It's the prize plum."

Public sector-bashing attacked

It is unacceptable that governments, under the pretext of economic restraint, should make teachers into second-class citizens by denying them the right to free collective bargaining, the secretary-general of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession told the annual conference of the International Labour Organization in Geneva.

Norman Goble told the 1,850 delegates from 138 member countries that throughout the world teachers have special need for the protection of the ILO since, because education policies are closely linked to social and political purposes, they are vulnerable to charges of political bias and to changes in political climate. "Attacks on the freedom of association and expression of teachers, or members of any other union," he warned, "are attacks on democracy itself."

Goble pointed out that a number of countries, prompted by the economic slump, had introduced policies of retrenchment which had led to complaints of infringements in ILO collective bargaining principles.

"Cuts in public services often go together with violations of the bargaining rights of public service unions," the WCOTP secretary-general declared. "We go further, however, and maintain that these violations are often the result of a political decision to undermine the ability of the unions to oppose policies of retrenchment which they consider to be unnecessary and harmful to the public interest."

He suggested that economic justification for such government interference was untenable and that if it was based on alleged difference in status between em-

ployer and employee, this thesis had been repudiated long ago by international conventions. And, he went on, if it was based on a determination to reduce the power of unions, then "we are witnessing a regression to the conditions which led to the founding of the ILO" and it must be aggressively fought.

"We find it quite unacceptable that governments, on the pretext of economic restraint, should forsake their role of employer, renounce their obligation to negotiate with public-sector unions, and seek to impose unilaterally, through regulation or legislation, the kind of settlement that they could not hope to arrive at through bargaining. We find it equally unacceptable that teachers, on the grounds that they are public servants, should be denied the right to take the steps normally open to workers' organizations to pursue the defense of their interests when negotiations reach impasse."

Letters

Spiteful anti-gov't articles produce only more rancour

Spiteful articles, drawings and ditties against first Vander Zalm and now Bennett, are not productive of anything but more rancour. Teachers who are concerned about the state of today's society should realize that these politicians have not proceeded with any malevolent intent. Faced with problems inherited from previous inept politicians of all colours, they are now compelled by an equal ineptitude to attempt cosmetic measures intended to smooth over the social disruption of deeply-rooted social wrongs.

Rather than act like hyenas squabbling over the leavings of the lion, teachers should look to some inspiration other than the disproved theories of Marx and Keynes which lead their followers to blame the greed of other people for social ills, and to imagine that hatred, invective and social disruption will lead to a better deal for working people. A philosophy in accord with the nature of human beings and the forces of the universe has been propounded in the past by men like Thos. Paine, Henry George, Tolstoi, and Winston Churchill, and is being upheld today by people like Professors Cord, Gaffney and Andelson. A serious study of this philosophy will show how earned income enjoyed by the worker can be vastly increased by the diversion of publicly earned funds to the public treasury and the retention of individually earned wealth,

untaxed, in the hands of the providers of goods and services. This philosophy does not blame the "vicious" character of anyone for social ills, it merely deplores a general lack of knowledge.

E. A. Bryan
Retired teacher
Chilliwack

BCTF efforts to defend teachers' rights backed

In response to retired teacher L. J. Williams' attack on the BCTF (*BCTF Newsletter*, October 5, 1983), I want to protest.

Thanks to the BCTF's all-out effort on behalf of retired teachers, their pensions were protected. I feel sure that the BCTF, whether under Harry Charlesworth, Charlie Ovans or Stan Evans and their successors, has always tried to work for professional and personal development of its members.

I support the BCTF in its efforts to ensure that the rights of teachers and their pupils will not be eroded during this time of crisis.

Taimi Hindmarch
Retired Teacher
Saturna Island

Teachers should make sacrifices for economy

I heartily endorse the sentiments expressed by L. J. Williams (October 5 *BCTF Newsletter*). Teachers are now better off than ever before. Surely they can

make some sacrifices for the country's economy?

I had thought that teaching was a profession but, in my opinion, the BCTF officials are not acting in a professional manner. They sound like left-wing radicals to me.

If all the energy they spend on threats was turned to constructive channels, these problems could be solved amicably.

R. Skoda
Retired teacher
Ucluelet

Letters on Keegstra will not affect ATA discipline process

I was chagrined to note that in your newsletter, Volume 23, No 3, a letter from a Clarence Tifenbach urging B.C. teachers to write to our president with respect to Mr. Keegstra.

Like the BCTF, the ATA has a fully developed discipline procedure which exemplifies the principles of due process and natural justice. It is not subject to influence by letter writing campaigns. Mr. Tifenbach has been misled by media reports with respect to the facts which are other than as he presented them in his letter to you. Nonetheless, I wish to assure the teachers of British Columbia, that the association's discipline process is adequate to the task and that I am confident that through it, justice will be done.

B. T. Keeler
Executive Secretary
Alberta Teachers' Association