

Parents say no more cutbacks

No more education cutbacks.

That is the message the public is sending — with growing emphasis — to the provincial government.

B.C.'s beleaguered teachers are no longer alone as increasing numbers of parents, trustees — and students — join them in demanding that Victoria halt plans for further education cuts.

"Within the last 10 years, in my experience, there has never been anything like this before," said BCTF President

Pat Clarke. "There never has been the level of involvement by parents in essentially an organizational and quasi-political way as there is right now. They're beyond bake sales."

The most significant indication of the changed public mood — aside from a rash of highly-publicized Vancouver student walkout and sit-in protests — was the Vancouver School Board's release January 28 of an independently-conducted survey which found that the great major-

ity of city parents oppose the government's education cutback policy.

The results showed that 72.7 per cent of parents surveyed disapproved of the policy, while only 11.2 per cent approved and 16.1 per cent were undecided. (With only the decided considered, 86.7 per cent disapprove while 13.3 per cent approve)

Parents were strongly in agreement that the cuts were having particularly harmful effects on education quality in such areas as teaching materials, individ-

ual attention for students, special groups or classes, extra-curricular activities and supervision and safety of children. The survey, which elicited a 92 per cent return rate with 1,749 responses, was conducted by former UBC Education Faculty Dean Dr. John Andrews.

At the news conference on the survey results, Chris Taulu, provincial parent coordinator for the Defend Education Services Coalition and a member of a

See "Heinrich" page 3

BCTF Newsletter

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FEBRUARY 4, 1985

Campaign launched to regain funding, bargaining rights

George North
Bargaining Division Director

The B.C. Teachers' Federation has adopted the twin strategy of fighting for increased service levels and carrying out an "unbargaining" campaign aimed at returning bargaining rights to teachers.

Efforts to restore adequate funding to public school education will focus on the two budgets due on February 15 for the January to June 1985 period and on March 15 for the 1985-86 fiscal year. It is the latter budget that is causing major concern with current cutbacks threatening 1,000 teaching positions and other major cuts in services.

A series of actions have been recommended by the BCTF Executive Committee and the January Representative Assembly aimed at regaining adequate funding levels and local autonomy in budget-setting and taxing authority. Among recommended actions at the district and zonal level are:

- zonal conferences of teachers, parents, trustees, support workers, college teachers, and others;
- formation of united service levels fight back committees;

See "Goal" page 2



King George Secondary School students Christine Bickle (at the mike), and (behind) Laura Campbell protest Vancouver School Board's plan to close the school due to budget cuts. Josh Berson photos.

CSP must be eliminated

Wage controls threaten BCTF

Arnie Myers
Government Division

The very life of the BCTF is under threat and the organization can only defend itself by fighting for elimination of the Compensation Stabilization Program.

That was president Pat Clarke's message to the Representative Assembly January 25.

Clarke reviewed the ways in which the CSP is being used to depress teachers' salaries: by making school boards' "ability to pay" its central concern; by prorating this spring's arbitration awards; by classifying teachers' career-progression increments as part of "annual salary increases"; by threatening teachers with the imposition of regulations which could force a 5-per-cent pay cut.

"The evidence is clear on what the CSP is and what it is doing to our salaries, what it has done to our rights," Clarke told the geographical representatives.

But, he added, "I don't think we're quite sensitive enough to what it can do to this organization. It can destroy it."

If the CSP makes it impossible for the BCTF to protect its members' livelihood, he said, the federation loses one of the fundamental reasons for existence.

If this happens, he said, the federation "will be on the verge of irrelevance, and it will be treated as such. That is how serious the challenge of the CSP is. And that is why we must engage in an all-out effort to dismantle it, starting now."

Clarke said the federation's position vis-a-vis the CSP is clear: "Teachers, like everyone else in this society, have a right to free collective bargaining. The CSP denies us that right."

The federation's aim, he said, is to regain that right for teachers.

The CSP is now an established fact of life in public-sector bargaining, Clarke

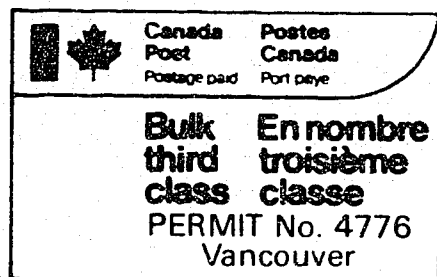
said; its life has recently been extended indefinitely.

"The CSP is forever," Clarke said. "As such it is an affront to every person in this society who cherishes freedom and equal rights."

The right to free collective bargaining is a fundamental, internationally-recognized right of employees, Clarke said. The International Labor Organization, an organ of the United Nations, has said that controls such as B.C.'s Compensation Stabilization Program are acceptable only for short-term economic emergencies.

(The ILO has just been granted permission to conduct an investigation of the CSP and other labor legislation in B.C. and three other provinces.)

Clarke's speech preceded passage by the RA of a strategy for the BCTF's spring campaign which has, as a key objective, elimination of the CSP.



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

Kitimat work-to-rule ends contract dispute

Kitimat teachers were able to satisfactorily resolve their dispute with the school board over contract stripping after a week-long work-to-rule campaign in late January. The contract has been restored to its original content and, as a result, teachers on maternity leave are being replaced with substitutes.

The dispute arose in late November when the Kitimat board negotiated a package deal with the ministry that included the non-replacement of four maternity leaves and other cuts in exchange for ministry approval to use capital and phase-in monies for operating expenses. Under the contract regular classroom teachers are guaranteed substitutes when on leave. The board sought to remove the applicable article through contract negotiations. When that failed, the school board stated its intention to unilaterally remove the article from the collective agreement.

Kitimat teachers, angered by the board's treatment of pregnant women, the mid-year disruption of classes and timetables and, above all, the board's attitude towards the collective agreement, decided to initiate an escalating work-to-rule campaign. The first week of the campaign saw the discontinuation of extra-curricular activities. Supervision duties would have been discontinued in the second week had the dispute not been resolved. The teachers, who were solid in their job action, received support from parents, students and colleagues in other locals.

Students at the only high school in town staged a walk-out on one day and a sit-in on another day to protest the direct and indirect effects on them of the cutbacks in education. Large crowds at two parent meetings during the week were also supportive of the teachers' position and critical of Victoria.

Under the agreement hammered out in a marathon negotiating session, the local association agreed to defer the board's contribution to PD funds as specified in the contract until July 1985. In response, the board agreed to reinstate the disputed article in both the 1985 and 1985/6 contracts and to reallocate sufficient funds to replace maternity leaves.

Grants up to \$30,000 approved for colleagues in Mozambique, Honduras

The Executive Committee has approved grants up to \$30,000 to the Mozambique and Honduran teachers' organizations on the recommendation of the W. R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund Committee.

The Mozambique Teachers' Organization will be given \$10,000 for the purchase of equipment and supplies. The Honduran Teachers' Organization will be given \$5,000, with a further \$15,000 set aside to meet a variety of needs as verified.

During 1984, the W. R. Long fund dispersed \$108,042 in grants, the largest going to the summer and winter Project Overseas programs (\$78,000), but with many other grants going to aid third-world teachers' organizations with literacy programs and provision of office and school supplies.

Student essay contest

In honour of the 85th anniversary of the IGDE, the B.C. chapter of the women's volunteer service organization is sponsoring an essay contest open to all Grade 10 students in the province.

The chapter will award a first prize of \$200, a second prize of \$150 and a third prize of \$100 for the top essays submitted on the theme, "Choices in a changing world." The essays must be 700 to 1,000 words in length and be submitted no later than **March 31, 1985**. For details contact: Mrs. Verna Allen, Education Secretary, Provincial Chapter, IGDE, 305-9502 Erickson Drive, Burnaby, B.C.

2/FEBRUARY 4, 1985

Executive leadership report

Priorities proposed for 1985-86

For 1985-86, the Executive Committee is recommending that the federation place its main emphasis on achieving further advances on three fronts successfully launched in the past year — building public support for public education, promoting a commission on education and obtaining full bargaining and professional rights for teachers.

These are the key elements in the executive's leadership report to be presented to the Annual General Meeting to be held in the Hotel Vancouver on March 31-April 3.

In the report's preamble, the executive points out that there was a significant growth in public support for public education during 1984-85 due to growing awareness of the magnitude of government cutbacks and the harm they were doing to the school system. Credit should be given to the federation for this development, the preamble said, as it had been given a boost by the BCTF's strategy of building networks of support and alliances with other affected groups.

The executive also noted that in a less public way the federation has developed a strategy for obtaining full collective bargaining rights including professional rights for teachers. The main obstacle is the government's Compensation Stabilization Program

which deprives teachers of most fundamental bargaining rights. The strategy is directed at ending teachers' subjugation to the CSP and, the executive suggests, should be pursued in 1985-86 or until the CSP is dismantled.

In supporting its specific recommendations, the executive also drew attention to the need to continue work within Operation Solidarity in a coordinated defence of public sector bargaining, the value of continuing the working and learning conditions campaign and the overall goal of fostering, as the report said, "a political environment in which the government will be forced to support a properly funded, child-sensitive, child-centred, democratic education system."

For 1985-86, the executive is recommending to the AGM that:

- priorities for action be:
 - a. restoration of funding for public education to 1981 levels;
 - b. restoration of local autonomy in education decision-making;
 - c. fair treatment for teachers, including access to free collective bargaining and full bargaining and professional rights;
- BCTF sponsor a provincial parent-teacher conference in the fall of 1985;
- BCTF work within Operation

Solidarity to develop a coordinated public sector strategy to ensure free collective bargaining for public employees;

- the federation conduct a working and learning conditions campaign in the fall of 1985;

- the federation, in conjunction with provincial specialist associations, develop a community relations program which will provide teachers an opportunity to demonstrate leadership in the advocacy of public education;

- and that the organizational capabilities of the federation be strengthened by:

- a. more direct financial support to small local associations for the release time of local association presidents;
- b. the development of an effective staff representative network in each local association and the promotion of federation services which would assist locals in developing such a staff rep network;
- c. improved support to provincial specialist associations in order to facilitate their participation in the accomplishment of the broad objectives of the federation;
- d. greater emphasis on direct field services to locals.

Goal is full bargaining rights

From page 1

- public meetings in schools to discuss the impact of further cuts;
- massive lobby of MLAs by broadly representative local groups;
- letter writing, petitions, public meetings, advertising;
- focus on autonomy and service levels at "Let's Talk About Schools" meetings;
- present concerns at February 11 opening of the legislature;
- inform public about anticipated layoffs and cuts in service levels;
- provide facts about real cost sharing between province and local tax base.

The other primary thrust of the federation is aimed at the government's wage control program that is strangling teacher collective bargaining. Arbitration boards are inhibited by legislation (Compensation Stabilization Act) that sets out "ability to pay" as a paramount consideration, a factor controlled directly by the provincial government. Arbitration awards ranging from 0 to 4.15 per cent and averaging 2.5 per cent indicate the insidious effect of the legislation which provides the CSP commissioner with direct control over the terms of final settlements.

Immediate actions involve challenging the inclusion of increments and prorating (cutting awards in half for the six-month contract). Locals are urged not

to negotiate awards downward nor to turn them or settlements into 18-month packages.

A key objective is to show the basic inequity and permanency of CSP and its specific discrimination against teachers on increments, pro-rating and ability to pay.

A membership awareness program will include a special issue of the *BCTF Newsletter*, target bulletins, direct mailings, videotapes and other techniques to provide teachers with data showing how they rank with other teachers, public sector and other B.C. employees, and the impact of reduced salaries on living standards, professional standards, lifetime earnings, and pensions.

Coupled with these discriminatory factors is loss of local school board autonomy in the bargaining process.

"Teachers are part of the public sector," the federation points out, "with common issues, problems and common solutions" that require unity of organizations representing public employees. Underlying the problems facing teachers in the bargaining arena is the lack of real rights to comprehensive collective bargaining, an issue addressed in the Task Force Report on Bargaining and Professional Rights.

Basic elements of the "unbargaining campaign" tied in with this spring's (March 1-May 31) timelines are:

- opening with salary and service level objectives;
- making the local case for salary and service level issues with boards conceding their inability to "bargain realistically" on these issues;
- continuing local bargaining on seniority/severance items including temporary part-time and substitute teacher rights;
- holding firm against concessions;
- holding pre-AGM meetings to seek agreement on approaching the provincial government to demand a return to local autonomy to re-establish local bargaining and an end to the Compensation Stabilization (wage control) Program;
- launching by locals of a public information program exposing loss of bargaining rights due to loss of local autonomy, including MLA phone blitzes and influencing MLAs on visits to their ridings;
- sending a bargaining delegation to Victoria to make a public statement on lack of local autonomy, and lack of bargaining rights due to CSP and absence of protection in other legislation.

The arbitration period, from appointment of arbitrators to the actual arbitration hearings for the 1985-86 contract, has been compressed from the previous 46 days into the month of May in the new set of government timelines, severely impinging on the validity of the process.

As a response to the bargaining strait-jacket into which teachers have been placed, the federation proposes that arbitrations be turned into public political single-case zonal sessions to allow parents, teachers and the public to see the basic unfairness of the process. Coupled with this are such possibilities as calling education ministry officials, including the minister, the CSP commissioner, trustees and other officials as witnesses. The intention is to involve teachers, the public, and the media at hearings on Saturdays where possible. Also considered are study sessions, release time for teachers and videotaping proceedings.

Local Presidents and bargaining chairpersons will be attending a two-day conference in Vancouver on February 15 and 16 to examine the spring strategy and develop plans for local implementation.

Heinrich attacked for confrontation tactics

From page 1

Vancouver school parent consultative committee, said the findings showed that: "The parents don't buy the government's restraint program. They don't believe there is a lack of money; they believe the government has got its priorities wrong."

Meanwhile, Education Minister Jack Heinrich was at the Vancouver Board of Trade bucking the tide with a speech trying to show that the cutbacks were not hurting education. In a statistic-filled address, Heinrich made a veiled attack on the Vancouver board for "creating amongst parents and students anxiety levels of gigantic proportions" and attempted to prove that the education cuts "had been relatively small" and that "sufficient resources are available if they are well managed." (See analysis pages 4-5.)

Heinrich's speech was widely condemned for playing fast and loose with education figures and it drew more disappointment than anger from teachers' and trustees' spokespersons.

"I would have hoped for a conciliatory, statesmanlike approach on the part of the minister and we didn't get it," said BCTF President Pat Clarke. "He is creating a more and more intense climate of animosity and taking it farther and farther away from a reconciliation for the benefit of the children of B.C."

BCSTA President Bill Lefeaux-Valentine deplored the minister's "aggressive" stance towards boards opposing the cuts. "It strikes me as almost bizarre because rather than trying for a consensus," he said, "there is a public attack on people who have been

elected by their communities. The gulf widens."

The first indication of the growing anti-cutback climate came back in November when the Metro Branch of the BCSTA adopted two strongly-worded motions:

- "We demand that the government fund education budgets for the short

budget year (January 1 to June 30) at the 1984 funding level plus an inflation factor;

- "We demand that the government return the right to tax the local economy to school boards for the period commencing July 1, 1985."

These themes were picked up and amplified at subsequent public protest



At a public meeting protesting cutbacks, King George Secondary School students Eric Davis (left) and Rex Owen, Jr., (right) study Vancouver map to see what school they would have to go to if King George was closed. Josh Berson photo.

RA calls for no fee increase

The Representative Assembly will recommend to the Annual General Meeting that there be no change in active membership fee for 1985-86.

In making this decision, the RA accepted the recommendation of the Executive Committee to maintain the status quo, rejecting a call by the Finance Committee for a cut in the fee.

BCTF President Pat Clarke told the assembly that this is not the time for a fee cut, noting that despite declining membership there has been no decline in demands for federation services, but rather increases in some areas.

Arguing that organizations have a tendency toward perpetual growth, Mike Duffey, chairperson of the Finance Committee, maintained that now was the time to halt the federation's continual growth and to roll back last year's fee increase, which he suggested, was "very unpopular" with many members.

The current fee for active members is 1.25 per cent of actual salary, from which 2 per cent is allocated to the Reserve Fund.

In its report to the AGM, the Finance Committee recommends that the 1985-86 membership fee be 1.15 per cent of actual salary, representing a decrease of .1 per cent from the present fee. Of this total fee, the committee recommends that the allocation to operations be .95 per cent (now 1.05 per cent) and that the allocation to the Reserve Fund remain at .2 per cent.

In its report the Finance Committee highlighted three developments during the 1983-84 fiscal year: a year-end surplus of \$1,195,020, a reduction in bank indebtedness and improvement in cash position with a year-end positive bank balance of \$1,064,895 and a further depletion (by \$234,510) in the Reserve Fund.

In supporting his committee's recommendation, Mike Duffey pointed particularly to the continual growth in federation activities and the upward trend in membership fees. "We are concerned that there has been continual increase in the fee over the last five years, from .86 per cent of mean teacher salary to 1.25 per cent of actual salary — a significant increase," he said.

Duffey explained that the Finance Committee's proposal would require a \$1 million cut in non-salary expenditures and that this could be achieved through

increased efficiency of operation, through elimination of some programs that are no longer as valuable as they once were and through a value-for-money examination of printing and meeting expenditures.

In presenting the executive's case, Clarke pointed to "significant increases" in demands for federation services in the teacher personnel area (regarding ethics, discipline, transfer, legal aid matters), in income security (with a great increase in the number of teachers on salary indemnity), and in the bargaining area — "all reflections of the kind of environment we're working in."

Commission idea wins support

Wes Knapp

Professional Development Division

The federation recently surveyed its local association presidents to find out what is happening in each district with the "Let's Talk About Schools" process, the Ministry of Education's provincial review of education.

The survey reveals that not too much is happening. However, this is likely to change as districts prepare for the February hearings. On the other hand, numerous locals reported that their superintendents were not too enthusiastic about the process. The districts that have begun planning are involving trustees and parents in the process. Teachers are not involved in the planning process.

The ministry is only now getting the materials out to school boards. A videotape has arrived, along with the discussion booklets. Ministry briefing sessions are being conducted by Todd Rogers for superintendents in various regions.

The BCTF position on the review process remains unchanged. We will not have anyone on the Provincial School Review Committee. The "changes" announced by the minister do not adequately address our concerns. Specifically:

1. The timeline remains too short.
2. Funding for school districts to carry on the review is inadequate.
3. The document for submission to government will not contain recommendations.
4. We have not been consulted on teacher representation.
5. The process does not deal significantly with the funding crisis in education.

We are urging teachers not to be involved in the planning process at the local level. But we are suggesting that teachers, locals and PSAs make presentations once the hearings are underway. Federation assistance for the "hearings phase" will be available.

Meanwhile the federation's attempts to

meetings. At a January 19 Vancouver conference on education cutbacks, attended by more than 100 parents, trustees, teachers and school support staff from 11 metro school districts, a Metro Education Association was formed to fight to preserve quality education. As its first action, the association sent a telegram to Premier Bill Bennett calling on the government to:

- end all cuts to public education;
- restore autonomy to local school boards so that they can develop budgets based on local educational needs;
- provide the resources necessary to meet those needs;
- and to reply to the telegram by February 7.

A similar conference was held in Nanaimo on January 26, attended by more than 100 representatives from 11 island school districts. The conference agreed to form a network similar to the Vancouver one and to send an identical telegram to the premier. "People are starting to really unite," said Greater Victoria School Board Chairperson Carol Pickup.

Among other signs of more favourable public attitudes, support from parents and students was seen as a factor in a successful week-long work-to-rule by Kitimat teachers, which resulted in the board negotiating reinstatement of a contract clause providing substitutes for maternity leaves. Similar community support also aided a Surrey teacher work-to-rule campaign, which resulted in the board softening its position on provision of substitutes and agreeing to meet to resolve other issues.

He noted that the Finance Committee was recommending that spending cuts be made not in staffing or direct services to members, but in essentially non-salary areas.

"What that would mean is a cut of 20 per cent in the non-salary operation of the federation," Clarke said. "It was our informed opinion that cutting 20 per cent from that area of the federation's operations would result in inefficiencies rather than efficiencies."

Clarke said the executive acknowledged that the fee is significant and that there are areas of federation expenditure which can be controlled or cut back, but that this should be an objective for the following budget year.

get a public commission underway are proceeding. After two meetings of potential participants in a public commission, consensus was reached on the following points:

- a. There is an urgent need for an independent public commission on education.
- b. To be independent, the commission should be a royal commission or a privately-sponsored commission. Such a commission should, by definition, be sponsored by a broad spectrum of interests.
- c. A public commission should not operate during the same period as the hearings of the Provincial School Review Committee (February 1985).
- d. A further meeting regarding a public commission will be called by the Canadian Federation of Students, the B.C. Home and School Federation, the B.C. Chamber of Commerce and the B.C. Federation of Labour after the PSR hearings. All interested parties will be extended an invitation to the meeting.

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BCTF Newsletter

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

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 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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"Scatter-gun accusations and digital duplicity"



BCTF President Pat Clarke says teachers experience every day the real damage cutbacks are doing to education, increasingly school trustees like Coquitlam chairperson Jon Taylor (right) say the cuts have gone far enough and parents are organizing in opposition, but Education Minister Jack Heinrich says they're all "exaggerating the issues out of all proportion."

"We all ought to be grateful that Jack Heinrich chose the law and politics as his profession, rather than the teaching of arithmetic and logic."

It was in these caustic terms that Marjorie Nichols began her January 29 *Vancouver Sun* column in which she went on to flay the education minister for playing fast and loose with facts and figures about education in his speech the day before to the Vancouver Board of Trade.

She was not alone: the minister's speech has been roundly condemned for failing to face up to the real damage cutbacks are doing to public education and for continuing to try to provoke confrontation. *The Province*, for one, editorialized that "Heinrich's speech tried, with scatter-gun accusations and digital duplicity, to shift the anger back on to the school boards" — and then proceeded to point out some of his "digital duplicity."

Heinrich's theme was essentially that there's nothing much wrong with B.C. public education, the fuss is just being created by some school boards who are "exaggerating the issues out of all reasonable proportion." The main points he made to his business audience were that the government was providing enough money for quality education, teachers are well-paid, the funding system is fair, the money cut out the system has been relatively small and that B.C. stacks up with the best in Canada in its provincial contributions to education.

To keep the record straight, let's compare what Heinrich said with the facts.

HEINRICH SAID:
Enough money is being provided to the system to allow for quality education.

THE FACTS ARE:
The public disagrees. In the February 1984 BCTF public-opinion poll, 57 per cent of our sample opposed the education cutbacks. An independent poll of Vancouver parents, released January 28, shows 87 per cent want no more cuts. These parents were particularly concerned about deficiencies in teaching materials, individual attention to their children, special groups or classes, sports and other extracurricular activities, and supervision and safety of students.

4/FEBRUARY 4, 1985

HEINRICH SAID:

Boards are funded for elementary programs at the level of one teacher for 25 to 27 pupils, and 22 to 24 in secondary.

THE FACTS ARE:

- Funding does not take into account:
- locally-developed courses;
 - special education courses outside the ministry's definition;
 - French immersion programs;
 - Elementary counselling programs;
 - summer school;
 - small schools.

HEINRICH SAID:

Appropriate allowances are included for school supplies, heating, textbooks, transportation and all other resources essential to a learning environment.

THE FACTS ARE:

Funding arrangements do not make adequate allowance for rising costs of school materials. Statistics Canada's Education Price Index shows costs of textbooks, paper, chalk, and cleaning supplies have risen 44 per cent over the last three years, compared to 33 per cent for consumer prices. But the ministry's fiscal framework is tied to teacher salaries, which have been held down by wage controls.

HEINRICH SAID:

Funding provides an average of \$40,611 per year per teacher to cover base salaries, non-statutory and statutory benefits, plus teachers' pension plan contributions.

THE FACTS ARE:

According to the Ministry of Education Data Services Branch, the average classroom teacher in B.C. (5 years university training, 10 years experience) earns \$33,800. Heinrich pads his figure by including pension and benefit costs.

HEINRICH SAID:

If the (PTR) had remained the same (as in 1975/76), then in September 1984 there would have been 24,664 teachers ... In fact we have 26,623.

THE FACTS ARE:

School programs have expanded greatly to meet the needs of every child. For example, special education

programs increased by 150 per cent from 1973 to 1982. These programs did increase the PTR. Special education programs added since 1976 include those for:

- severe behavior problems;
- autistic children;
- severe learning disabilities;
- severe, profound handicaps;
- Educable mentally handicapped children;
- physically handicapped children;
- gifted students.

THE FACTS ARE:

The drop in per-pupil costs is little less dramatic (because of declining enrolment) than the drop in board budgets. But it still amounts to a drop of 15 per cent in real dollars.

HEINRICH SAID:

Only recently, as a result of (budget) reviews, we provided an additional \$3.7 million over the next six months.

THE FACTS ARE:

The ministry made an error in its November budget

"We all ought to be grateful that Jack Heinrich chose the law and politics as his profession, rather than the teaching of arithmetic and logic."

— Marjorie Nichols, *Vancouver Sun*

One student in every 3.5 currently enrolled in the B.C. public school system benefits directly from special education programs.

HEINRICH SAID:

The amount of money that has been taken out of the system has been relatively small. In 1982, school district gross budgets were \$1.699 billion. In 1985/86, the gross budget provides \$1,624 billion, a reduction of \$75 million or 4.4 per cent.

THE FACTS ARE:

When inflation is taken into account, district budgets in 1985/86 will be 18 per cent lower in real dollars than they were in 1982.

HEINRICH SAID:

Our gross operating expenditure per pupil in 1982 was \$3,500. In 1985/86 our funding targets allow for spending of \$3,460 per student, a difference of \$40 per pupil.

calculations, using incorrect salary figures for part-time teachers. Its January correction of this error produced an additional \$3.7 million for boards across the province.

HEINRICH SAID:

School boards continue to have the responsibility for managing the system.

THE FACTS ARE:

Board management consists of applying limited funds, which they cannot increase, to a provincial curriculum which they cannot control. Their management is reduced to deciding which cuts will do the least harm.

HEINRICH SAID:

Salary increases in 1985 will cause a problem ... I have not made any provision for salary increases in 1985.

THE FACTS ARE:

Salary increases were awarded to teachers by respected, independent arbitrators, appointed in

accordance with the School Act. These arbitrators listened to all the evidence produced by both sides and decided teachers should have a modest increase this year, after two years of essentially no increases. Teachers' salaries should not be singled out for exceptional treatment.

HEINRICH SAID:

In 1980 the (salary) increase for the teaching profession ... was just under 10 per cent; in 1981, it was something like 13.5 per cent; 1982, something between 17.5 and 19 per cent; 1983, 3.5 per cent; 1984, 0 per cent. (The five-year average was) something in the order of 9 per cent.

THE FACTS ARE:

From 1980-1984 B.C. teacher salary grids rose a total of 50 per cent. In the same time the Vancouver Consumer Price Index rose 51.8 per cent. Not only have teacher salary increases not been exorbitant, they have actually slipped slightly behind inflation.

HEINRICH SAID:

British Columbia devotes similar resources to education as other provinces.

THE FACTS ARE:

Here's how B.C. funding really stacks up with the rest of the country, based on some standard measures:

- Per-capita expenditure on education (1982/83):
B.C. \$536 per year Rank: 10th
Canada (av.) \$696
- Percentage of persona' income spent on education (1982):
B.C. 4.4%
Canada (av.) 5.0
- Percentage of provincial budget spent on education (1982/83):
B.C. 15.5%
Canada (av.) 21.2
- Percentage of Gross Provincial Product spent on education (1981/82):
B.C. 6.2%
Canada (av.) 7.5

HEINRICH SAID:

The funding assumes that every teacher will face an average of 22 to 27 pupils for the full five-hour teaching day. All preparation, marking and extracurricular activity are assumed to be conducted outside of the five-hour teaching period.

THE FACTS ARE:

The assumption needs overhaul! Some preparation must happen during the school day, particularly in labs and shops. As it is, ministry figures for 1983 show the average "unassigned" time as 8.7 minutes per day for an elementary teacher and 28.6 minutes for a secondary teacher. Reducing these times to zero has minimal impact on class size.

HEINRICH SAID:

If (boards) allow very small classes for optional subjects, then the class-sizes for core subjects will be larger.

THE FACTS ARE:

Optional courses are still part of the graduation program. Boards, especially in smaller districts, must accept smaller classes in electives to deliver strong graduation programs. Is it seriously suggested that all elective classes enrolling fewer than 22 students be eliminated?

HEINRICH SAID:

In days gone by ... the provincial coffers could support expansion. That is no longer the case.

THE FACTS ARE:

Parents and teachers are not calling for "expansion" of the system — only for the provision of adequate resources to maintain it. In real-dollar terms, education costs have dropped dramatically.

Government spending is a question of priorities:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| • Cost of ALRT system | \$854 million |
| • Expo 86 | \$806 million including \$126 million from B.C. government |
| | \$311 million deficit |

- Expo trees (imported)
- Studies on tax-free zones

\$1 million

HEINRICH SAID:

B.C. teachers (salaries) were, as of September, 1984 the second-highest in the land. Only Ontario exceeded that. B.C. was followed by Alberta, Quebec and the others.

THE FACTS ARE:

In B.C., because cutbacks, the average teacher salary has been pushed up; lower-paid junior teachers have been fired, better-paid seniors have been retained. A recent Canadian Teachers' Federation survey shows that B.C. teachers' salaries, on grid, now rank toward the bottom of the list of provinces.

FEBRUARY 4, 1985/5

Task force sought on administrators' role

The Representative Assembly has called on the Executive Committee to implement a proposed Task Force on the Role and Responsibility of Principals as soon as possible.

The RA took the decision in a 346-182 roll call vote at its January 26 meeting, following an extensive review of the long-simmering dispute between the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association and the BCTF and the as yet unsuccessful efforts to resolve the dispute.

The proposal for a task force, which the executive postponed considering at both its October and November meetings, essentially called for a thorough examination of the role and responsibilities of principals in the light of legal requirements, BCTF policy and expectations and possible School Act changes.

The conflict, which had arisen out of the experience of the November 1983 withdrawal of services, is focussed on the BCPVPA's May 1984 six-point statement of principles on "The Role and Responsibilities of Principals and Vice-Principals Within the BCTF," which appears to indicate a desire for special status within the federation. The main controversial elements are statements that "the School Act shall be of paramount importance in governing the actions of principals and vice-principals," that principals and vice-principals "cannot participate in some forms of job action" and that they should have "an organizational representation that provides for their interests on appropriate BCTF and local association committees."

In the RA discussion, BCTF President Pat Clarke noted that the June 1984 RA had called on the administrators' PSA to withdraw the six-point statement but that this had not been done by the time of the fall RA. Subsequently, he said, Second Vice-President Margaret Woodlands, a member of that PSA, reported that the requested action had still not been taken by administrators' fall zone council. Thereupon the executive directed him, Clarke said, to meet with the chairperson of the PSA Council and the president of the administrators' PSA to examine the issue pursuant to policy statement 33.12(b)1, the first step in dealing with a PSA alleged to have breached BCTF policy, the meeting being held on January 19.

Cabinet approves new pension policy for leaves of absence

The provincial cabinet recently approved an order-in-council modifying slightly, and for a specific time, the regulation governing the purchase of pensionable service for a leave of absence.

The order-in-council provides a member with the opportunity to purchase up to three years of leave of absence under the following conditions:

- the leave is granted by a school board approved between January 1985 and June 1985 for a period not exceeding three years;
- the teacher resigns at the end of the leave and commences drawing his/her pension at the end of the leave;
- the teacher provides written proof to the Superannuation Commission of the leave and of his/her acceptance of the resignation/retirement condition noted above; and
- the teacher pays a double contribution on or before the end of the leave, with that double contribution based on the teacher's salary during the last complete month of employment immediately prior to the commencement of the leave.

A member wishing to make use of this provision must be 55 years of age or older at the termination of the leave and meet the eligibility requirements of the Teachers' Pension Plan. The provision is not available to those who are 65 years old or have 35 years of pensionable service.

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"There was not agreement", he said, "between the parties on the question of whether the action of the PSA, in issuing the six points, constituted conduct harmful to the federation and was outside the mandate of a PSA as outlined in policy 33.04. There was a consensus in the discussion that in a strict interpretation there had been to date no specific violation of a federation policy."

He said at this point he would have to report to the executive that the PSA's statement is still outstanding and that the matter remains problematic. He suggested that given the current circumstances the BCTF should not become involved in a major internal battle.

"Our main concern in this matter should be to avoid that," Clarke said, "lest we risk a plague of all our houses."

BCPVPA President Gerry Powlik told the assembly that his PSA had discussed the issue at three meetings in the fall and had proposed some minor amendments to the terms of reference to the proposed task force. He said they adopted three motions:

"1. That the zone rep council encourage the formation of a BCTF commission to examine the role and responsibilities of principals and vice-principals in the BCTF;

"2. That the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association president be authorized to negotiate with the BCTF president the terms of reference, the type of commission, the membership of the commission and other relevant matters;

"3. That this BCTF commission review and recommend the revision of relevant BCTF policies and procedures so that a clear set of professional standards of practice for principals and vice-principals are defined that will recognize the fact that they have to meet the ideals of the teaching profession, the requirements of membership in the teachers' organization and carry out specific responsibilities prescribed by the province and local school board authorities."

In response to a question from the floor, Powlik indicated that the BCPVPA had not yet withdrawn the six-point statement.

In moving adoption of the task force recommendation, Dale Gregory (Coquitlam) deplored the confrontation situation and urged both sides to take no action that would worsen matters.

"I would hope that as a group we could avoid fighting among ourselves and direct our energies at a common enemy," Gregory said. "I urge you to support the concept of a task force to allow reasoned study and debate on this issue."

Asked whether adoption of the task force motion would preclude disciplinary action against the PSA, Pat Clarke said the two matters — the six-point statement and the task force — were separate and a decision on disciplinary action would be up to the executive.

First Vice-President Elsie McMurphy expressed strong doubts that a task force would resolve the issue, noting that the BCTF position on the role and responsibilities of administrators was clearly defined at the 1984 AGM and that the BCPVPA had defined its "bottom line" position by not withdrawing its six-point statement.

"What we see, basically, are two predetermined positions," she said. "The position of the BCTF, as determined by the annual general meeting — the whole body, which includes all of us — is that principals shall be members with the same rights and responsibilities as other members. We have on the other hand a group of our members saying that, yes, we should be members, but not with the same responsibilities."

Several other speakers also spoke against the task force idea, arguing that the federation did not have the time or energy at the present to deal with the issue.

Pat Clarke was also not optimistic when asked directly whether he personally wanted a task force. He said that while he had originally proposed the idea to create a climate of goodwill and possibly resolve the issue, he recognized that there is "a legacy of distrust" on both sides that presents a major obstacle. Clarke expressed strong doubt that the task force was the answer, but that he did not personally know what was the answer.

Second Vice-President Margaret Woodlands suggested that a task force could be an effective means of resolving the complex issue, citing the good work of the Bargaining and Professional Rights Task Force.

"We have some differences of opinion as to what is law and how our policies

relate to law," she said. "I think the only way we can resolve this conflict at the present time is to come up with the task force and some form of compromise."

RA Co-chairperson Colin Scott, a member of the administrators' PSA, argued that if one round of talks between the differing parties fails, then new people should be enlisted and that this process should be followed until the talks produce a solution.

"I shudder to think where we would be if, in terms of disarmament talks, we took the attitude that some people are advocating now," he said, "where they say if the disarmament talks break down, we don't have the time to talk about it any more, let's push a few buttons. And I simply cannot agree with that kind of attitude."

Following the vote on the recommendation, Clarke outlined to the meeting the terms of reference which the executive had proposed, but had not adopted, for the proposed task force:

- "a. To study the role and responsibilities of principals as defined by current legal definitions and by expectations;
- "b. To study the expectations of the BCTF with respect to its members and to determine if these are compatible with the expectations and the legal responsibilities of principals;
- "c. To study the implications of any change in role and responsibility of principals in proposed revisions of the School Act;
- "d. To recommend whether the policies and structures of the BCTF are compatible with the expectations and legal responsibilities of principals;
- "e. If the task force finds an incompatibility to recommend changes in membership or changes in the policies of the BCTF;
- "f. To report on the effects on the general membership of any proposed changes in membership or policies;
- "g. To complete the work outlined in the terms of reference as soon as possible, but not later than in time for a report and recommendation to the 1986 AGM."

BCSTA conference focusses on current issues

"When teaching is right everything is right," according to Marva Collins, founder of Westside Preparatory School in Chicago. Mrs. Collins will be the keynote speaker at a conference, "When Teaching is Right . . ." sponsored by the B.C. School Trustees Association on February 14-16 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver.

The conference will be chaired by Dr. Bernard Shapiro, Director of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. A panel discussion, "Effective Teaching: It All Depends," will include the perspectives of Dr. Daniel Birch, UBC's Dean of Education, Ken Jesse, Superintendent, Red Deer, Alberta and Dr. Al Siebert, Portland State University. Six workshops will focus on professional development, instructional supervision, leadership and motivation, the future of teaching, school-based management and public support of schools.

Dr. Milt McClaren, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, will be a featured speaker addressing, "The School District's Search for Excellence."

Information regarding registration and conference fees can be obtained from the B.C. School Trustees Association, 1155 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, telephone 734-2721, or through school district offices.

Wage controls make bargaining "a farce"

George North

Bargaining Division Director

The BCTF Bargaining Committee has described the current collective bargaining process for teachers as "an expensive, time-consuming farce" that can only be changed by removing the Compensation Stabilization (wage control) Program, returning taxing and budget-setting powers to local school boards and establishing full bargaining rights.

The round of bargaining for the six-month 1985 January to June contracts saw the province's 13 arbitration boards under pressure from Compensation Stabilization Program Commissioner Ed Peck and the minister of education to bring down minimal awards. Direct interference in the fall bargaining and arbitration process had the effect of keeping settlements at a 2.5 per cent provincial average even though seven negotiated settlements averaged fractionally under 3 per cent. Moreover, most boards clearly had the ability to pay salary increases in the abbreviated contract period, many of them carrying over surpluses from 1984, indirectly arguing that teachers should increase their subsidy to the school system.

Direct and blatant CSP-government interference in the bargaining/arbitration process occurred in a series of events, starting with letters from Education Min-

ister Jack Heinrich on August 14 delaying budgets until late in the year and October 15 stating that the delay was intended to be "scrupulously neutral" on the issue of ability to pay. Subsequent actions, however, made the neutrality claim rather hollow.

November 9. A telegram from Heinrich to school boards announced that financial forecasts would likely be available by November 15 (the arbitration deadline). In the meantime, he hoped boards would "maintain the quality of education within the ability of the taxpayer to pay" which should "remain paramount in your deliberation."

November 13. The government passed legislation allowing the CSP commissioner the right to pro-rate settlements of more or less than 12 months.

November 15. At least a score of boards and teachers were in negotiation on the eve of the arbitration deadline when Heinrich sent another wire that brought discussions to a halt. "Please do not utilize earlier projections when making assumptions related to ability — to — pay settlements," he instructed boards. "It would be prudent to await the new target," he said, adding the obvious: "salary agreements may be finalized after the time for arbitration has passed."

November 15. CSP Commissioner Ed Peck issued Administrative Circular 12

announcing that a six-month contract could be pro-rated to 50 per cent of the guideline figure which he determined as the average of his own current approved settlements.

November 27. Associate Deputy Minister of Education Glenn Wall announced the government's method of killing a plan under which Courtenay teachers would have been paid on a 12-month basis. This and a similar plan in Langley would have permitted 3 per cent salary increases and avoided layoffs. The ministry simply announced reduced grants to make the proposition unworkable.

December 6. On the eve of the first arbitration hearing (Chilliwack, December 8) CSP Commissioner Peck sent letters to four of the boards with six-month settlements at 3 per cent and the one at 2.75 per cent informing them that "your reported plan exceeds the guidelines established after October 11, 1983. In these circumstances you are requested to provide an adequate explanation for the apparent excess or alternatively you are requested to reach or establish a plan that is within the guidelines."

December 12. Responding to an immediate local reaction to his letters, Peck stated that: "My letter requested you to provide an alternative explanation for the

apparently excessive compensation increase negotiated by the parties. I understand that the parties wish to make submissions in this regard; my decision of December 6, 1984 stands at this time."

The fact that Peck acted when he did was clearly aimed at influencing arbitration boards. His swift action in December compares with the 5½ months he took to respond to a .5 per cent arbitration award to Kitimat teachers a year earlier.

The next round of teacher bargaining that gets underway in March for the 1985-86 school year promises the following scenario: boards will claim inability to negotiate because of inability to pay; the same argument will be put to arbitration boards in May after budgets have been finalized; if perchance anything comes of the arbitration process, the wage control commissioner will overrule the results.

It is in this gloomy context that the Bargaining Committee sees removal of CSP as the key target not only for teachers but for the whole public sector. Bargaining must focus on the provincial government that so far has been able to put the onus for bargaining problems on the school boards. arbitration boards and its Compensation Stabilization Commissioner Ed Peck who has conceded the obvious, that his job is not neutrality but that it "is a wage control program with limited flexibility . . ."

Letters

Governance Commission wants your views on BCTF decision-making

At its meeting of November 23-24, the BCTF Executive extended the timelines of the Commission on Governance. The Commission will now submit its final report to the 1986 AGM. It will submit an interim report to the 1985 Summer Conference and the 1985 Fall Representative Assembly. The new timelines allow for a more in-depth study of the governance of the BCTF.

The Commissioners are now starting with a clean slate. We are asking questions about how an organization with a membership of about 28,000 can best meet the needs of those members and how such an organization can institute effective efficient decision-making processes to which all members have access.

We are anxious to receive input from interested groups and individual members. We would like to know what services and information you need from the BCTF. We would like to know how you feel you would most effectively participate in decision-making processes. We would like to hear about the aspects of the present governance of the BCTF that you think are ineffective. If you had an opportunity to re-design your relationship with the BCTF, how would you re-design it?

The Commissioners have set March 15, 1985 as the deadline for submissions. We would like to hear from as many members, committees and groups as possible. One word of caution however: we don't think we can handle more than 28,000 submissions!

Christina Schut
BCTF Commission on Governance
Revelstoke

Teachers using Maclean's promote critical thinking not cigarettes, alcohol

We feel compelled to firmly rebut Mr. John Collins' letter which appeared in your October 4th issue, with the following outline: "Cigarette, alcohol ads make Maclean's magazine dubious teaching aid".

Maclean's position as a national magazine is that of a "common carrier" of advertising. If an advertisement is in keeping with the laws of the land and is not deemed in itself to be offensive to morals or tastes, then Maclean's has a certain responsibility to accept it.

Maclean's General Manager, Mr. Paul Jones, has expressed concern that the beverage alcohol advertising should not overwhelm the other advertising content of the magazine. In fact, since becoming a weekly magazine, when approximately 33 per cent of all advertising lineage derived from this category, we have made efforts to diversify the advertising base of the magazine, so that currently this category represents about 25 per cent of the magazine's advertising content.

Extensive research has demonstrated that print advertising for beverage alcohol products is not correlated with increased alcohol consumption. There is, however, a correlation between print advertising and brand-switching. So, we think it is fair to say that acquiring a share of an existing market — not creating a new market — is the goal of these advertisers.

We at the In-Class Program feel that every student needs to learn critical analysis of all writing, including advertising, since students will, throughout their lives, be continually inundated with promotional material. Often included in our monthly teaching kits which accompany the magazines are activities geared toward just such an analysis.

Teachers who use Maclean's in their classrooms are certainly not hucksters of any advertisers' products. They are innovative educators involving their students in the exciting, relevant world of current information and events.

Susan McLeod
Manager
Maclean's Educational Division
Toronto

BCETA executive members offer clarification on Communications 11/12

In response to the articles, "New" "bonehead" English attacked" (October 4, 1984), and "Communications 11/12 committee disputes article" (November 9, 1984), we, the members of the B.C.

English Teachers' Association executive named in the original article and alluded to in the letter by the committee which followed, would like to clarify a number of points.

At the outset and perhaps most importantly, it must be stated that at no time during discussion with the newsletter staff or with anyone else, was the integrity of the Communications 11/12 committee, its evident hard work or its professionalism questioned. If anyone has felt that this was the case we ask the committee to accept our apology. On the contrary, we, and we're sure we speak for all of B.C.'s English teachers, do appreciate the hard work and many hours put in by members of the committee on our behalf. We also recognize the fact that the members of the committee worked to realize changes in the draft. Any suggestion to the contrary is, in our opinion, a result of misleading reporting on the part of the newsletter staff.

The use of the expression "bonehead", purportedly by J. Terpening, is an inaccuracy and, although in the article it seems as if this was an expression used to describe the course, the expression was, if we understand the intent of the article's author, an unfortunate label which might be applied, by people outside the education system to the course. It was, and is, J. Terpening's concern that this not happen.

Furthermore, a statement ascribed to G. Madoc-Jones concerning the responsibilities of members of curriculum committees to speak out against changes which they believe are not in the best interest of students was part of a general discussion of the issue and was not intended to imply that members of the Communications 11/12 committee had not or were not doing that. It is, as has been mentioned, apparent that they were acting on this principle and had contacted the BCTF about certain concerns.

The B.C. English Teachers' Association Executive and its members have always been and will always be concerned about the betterment of the teaching of English in this province. We know that the members of the committee share the same concerns. In times when teachers, more than ever, need to work together to better education in this province our

desire is to promote unity, not disagreement, among colleagues.

Geoff Madoc-Jones
Corresponding secretary, BCETA
Jon Terpening
Vice-President, BCETA

Apology

The BCTF Newsletter editor would like to apologize for his mishandling of the Communications 11/12 issue.

It is clear now that he did not have the complete story when he reported (October 4, 1984) on the objections being raised to Communications 11/12. When the editor was approached by G. Madoc-Jones and J. Terpening on the matter, their criticisms appeared valid as they were being expressed by BCETA executive members, the course had been similarly condemned by one secondary school English department and the issue was about to be raised at the RA. With this in mind, and as the Newsletter was right on deadline, the editor went to press without seeking comments from the Communications 11/12 committee. That was an unfortunate mistake brought on by haste, as was the quoting of remarks by G. Madoc-Jones and J. Terpening.

The editor sincerely apologizes for any embarrassment his reporting of this issue has caused the Communications 11/12 committee. — Ed.

BCTF Pensions Committee answers criticisms of proposed policy changes

In the January 10th issue of the BCTF Newsletter, Guy Hawkins and Lillian Zachary raised six issues of concern over the proposed revision to BCTF pension policy on which I would like to comment.

1. Financial security of the fund. At this time, the assets of the teachers' pension fund exceed \$1.5 billion and they're invested with an average rate of return of 10.4 per cent. The plan is subject to periodic evaluation by an independent firm of actuaries who have stated they "do not see a threat to the financial health of the pension fund." Indeed, our pension plan is among the most secure in Canada.

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2. *Early retirement.* Rather than inhibiting early retirement, as suggested by the writers, the proposed policy, in fact, calls for flexibility in retirement dates, and for a phased retirement plan. It is the committee's view that teachers should be permitted to select their own retirement age with the appropriate actuarial costing, and also should be permitted to draw a partial pension to complement a partial teaching assignment.

3. *Inflation and deferred pension.* The assertion by one writer that a member receiving a deferred pension would have the benefit calculated on "a percentage of salary they were receiving 25 years ago" is totally inaccurate. When a member leaves teaching prior to normal retirement age and subsequently draws a pension years later, the salary that is used to calculate the pension is indexed upward to account for inflation by the same percentages that were applied to the pensions that were paid over the period of deferral. Therefore, the salary component of the pension calculation does keep its relative value over time.

4. *Short-service teachers.* Concern was expressed about a teacher who might only work a few years, quit, and never return to the paid work force. Our proposal would lock the contributions of such a person into the fund, but the person would eventually draw a pension in right of that service. While it is true it may not be a large pension, it would be reflective of the short career and relatively small investment.

5. *Facilitation of career changes.* Both writers were concerned that teachers might be discouraged from making career changes. The Pensions Committee believes just the reverse is true. A factor that inhibits career change today is the loss of pension credit where suitable portability agreements do not exist. We believe that if all workers had access to locked-in pension plans, with indexing and deferred pension provisions, at retirement all smaller credits from various terms of employment could be combined to provide a pension reflecting the person's total career. A change in careers under these conditions would not cause the loss of pension credit, hence change would be promoted not discouraged.

6. *The final issue is freedom of choice.* The committee does not agree that a serious erosion of an individual's freedom of choice will occur with the lock-in of pension contribution. It has long been the case that members of our profession do not have the right to individual choice in remuneration levels. Direct salary is a matter of collective bargaining, as is deferred salary, that is pensions. Where an individual's freedom of choice is exercised is in choosing whether or not to become a teacher. After that decision is made, matters of remuneration are subject to group decisions.

I believe Canada has undergone significant evolution in the provision of care for the elderly. Not so long ago, families accepted the responsibility of care for their own senior members. It was common for adult children to support their parents in their old age. Generally speaking, this is now no longer the case. We now have a multi-tiered approach of government plans, occupational plans, and private savings schemes through which society provides the mechanisms for the continuation of income for senior citizens.

The proposed policy changes to the teachers' pension plan recognize this evolution and will help to guarantee a secure old age for our members in direct proportion to the length of time that they were our members.

Rick Sullivan
Chairperson
Pensions Committee



Vancouver School Board Chairperson Pauline Weinstein and DESC Parent Coordinator Chris Taulu tell reporters that Victoria is risking the voters' wrath if further school cuts are enforced.

More ministry confusion

B.C. Ministry of Education Information Circulars are aptly named — considering the direction they lead people seeking definitive information.

Take, for example, the latest go-round on school transportation policy.

In the last *Newsletter*, we reported on Ministry Information Circular 67 (84-09-28) which required that a supervisor be designated for all extra-curricular trips (a teacher apparently being intended) and that the supervisor be required to ensure that all vehicles used — whether teachers', students' or parents' vehicles — be in good repair and meet all safety requirements. This directive now has been supplanted by Circular 81 (85-01-07) which removes the specific requirement for the supervisor to ensure the vehicles are in good repair — but the circular still refers to duties which would be beyond the expertise of most teachers.

The term "supervisor" means a person who exercises school board authority in accordance with approved board policies or directives for a specific activity within

the context of this circular. Clause 4(c) of the circular says that the supervisor should ensure that any special safety requirements connected with the trip are met. The meaning of this is unclear, according to federation lawyer Des Grady. "Does this mean safety requirements of the Motor Vehicle Branch or of the school board?" he asks. "It could also mean specific requirements set out for the particular trip by a school board."

Clause 4(d) requires that "... vehicles meet all the current requirements of the Motor Vehicle Act and the Regulations." To Grady, this also is fuzzy. "What are these requirements and will they now have to be set out in school board policy?" he wonders. "There are some 222 sections in the Motor Vehicle Act and in excess of 100 pages of regulations."

The wisest policy for teachers to adopt, says Des Grady, is to decline to assume the dubious role of trip supervisor until the responsibilities are clarified by the ministry.

In, presumably, another circular. Stay tuned.

Opportunities for summer study

If you are considering pursuing further academic study or studying abroad this summer, the following should be of interest.

Information is available through the BCTF Professional Development Division on the Salzburg (Austria) Summer School, a German language program, July 7-August 17; the University of London, English literature and culture since 1900, July 8-August 16; Oxford, English literature, history from 1870; and University of Birmingham (at Stratford-Upon-Avon), Drama and theatre in the Age of Shakespeare, July 1-August 9. Application deadline is **March 31, 1985**.

For further information on the above programs contact Thelma Weinreich in the BCTF Professional Development Division.

For the 12th summer, Western Washington University is presenting a study tour for teachers and administrators in Oxfordshire, England, from June 26-July 26, 1985. Entitled, "Elementary study in England", the credit program will involve students living with a British family and teaching in their school for a week, visiting an inner London school and spending three weeks in workshops at Oxford. Application deadline: **February 28, 1985**. For further information contact Dr. Marian Tonjes, Education Department, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA 98225, or phone (206) 676-3336.

The University of Warwick is offering a summer British studies program keyed to the needs of North American students. The program features credit courses

suitable for teachers in archeology, art history, drama, English literature, history and politics. Field trips, theatre visits (Stratford-upon-Avon is nearby), educational excursions and social events are also included. For information and applications contact: Dr. D. Mervin, University of Warwick, Coventry, England CV47AL.

Vacancies

Professional Development Co-ordinators

PD co-ordinators are sought for the following zones: Vancouver Island South, West Kootenay, East Kootenay, Metro, Central Mainland. Co-ordinators serve three-year terms as members of the Professional Development Advisory Committee. Applicants must be nominated by a local association or the district council within their zone.

Application deadline is **March 1**; appointments are scheduled for the April 12-13 Executive Committee meeting. For curriculum vitae forms or more information, please contact Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF.

* * *

Applicants sought for PD Associates in peace education

Qualified candidates are invited to apply for the position of professional development associates in peace education. Following special training with the BCTF, PD associates in peace education will serve as voluntary workshop leaders assisting teachers in learning about the methods and materials for teaching peace.

Criteria. The selection process will consider such factors as professional credentials, academic credentials, leadership qualities, commitment to and experience in peace education, ability to design workshops and geographic location.

Training. Teachers selected to be PD associates in peace education must be available for initial training from March 14 (evening) until March 16 (evening) and to undertake periodic retraining.

Commitment. Successful candidates are expected to commit themselves to at least five days service each school year and to serve two years. There is no honorarium, but the BCTF pays all workshop expenses.

Applications. For information and applications contact: Doris Wright, Professional Development Division, BCTF.

Canada, U.S. coordinate social security schemes

Canada and the USA have entered into an agreement to co-ordinate the American social security system with Canada's Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan. Full details may be obtained from the nearest Income Security Programs office or The Director of International Operations, Income Security Programs Branch, Department of National Health and Welfare, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0L4.

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